

OVER 30 BASEBALL

Brief History

By Don Gury: Founder and First Commissioner

I was watching the 1990 World Series. I don't remember which teams were playing but it was the worst played series I ever saw. Base running mistakes, dropped balls, booted I balls, errant throws... and everything imaginable. I wondered out loud to myself if there were any guys my age (I was 38) would or COULD be interested in knocking a ball around. I went to see the LTRC rec supervisor, Steve S. . . (I'm terrible with names) and asked how I could get this started. I put out an announcement about a meeting over the winter in the local free. My phone rang off the hook. (this was before cell phones) I had 100 guys lined up to attend a meeting in November. 80 showed up.

Stu was there and said he'd help get this underway. Many of the first managers were also there. We worked out a price per player of \$60.00 which included safety equip, bats, balls, helmets, catcher's gear, bases, umpires' fees. Just bare bones We talked about uniforms and stipulated that each player needed to supply a glove and a pair of baseball pants. No spikes were allowed from the Meantime I went to several supply houses and got prices on all the equipment we'd need to get started: Order times, quality ranges, and prices on uniform shirts. We set a Saturday date in March (sometime around St Patrick's Day, I believe). I was on the phone with the guys who were the most interested and got ideas how to run the drill and tryout portions of that day. THAT day arrived. Ed Kemery and 2 other guys and I were sitting in Ed's car listening to the Orioles spring pre-season game and watching it SNOW! BIG flakes, and all I could think about was no one was gonna show on this kind of day. Then we saw a big, round snowflake go sideways from over the hill. Then it went back again. Then another! "It's a baseball", shouted. Sure enough there were close to a dozen guys out there throwing baseballs in the snow! You had to see it to believe it!

Well, we got organized, did some stretching exercises together, and the sky cleared and we were on! Four teams were chosen: Royals, Indians, Black Sox and Cardinals. Stuart Fishelman, Kemery, (sorry, can't remember), and Kevin Lombardo were the respective first managers. I think the Royals won the pennant the first year. 1991 was a hot and dry summer, but we all had a load of fun and no one was hurt. We agreed to play again next year!

Dale Franke was the umpire-in-chief and the Mason-Dixon Umpire Association was the third team on the field, and still is far as I know. Dale retired and John Lackey took over. For \$35.00 a game for two lumps, I thought was a good bargain. It went to \$50.00 a game for two umps several seasons later.

We stayed at four teams for four years and our reputation spread across the county. Then we were 6 teams in 1995, 8 teams in '96, and 10 teams in '97, another or 2 wanting to come in but we no more space or time slots available. Over the years we added a riding tractor and thanks to a lot of guys volunteering their help in fabricating some of our field

maintenance equipment like drags, and tarps, and rakes and a home plate lining jig, we were becoming a respectable League- Especially when we made up all-star teams and went to play Harford County and Anne Arundel County teams AND WON!

Eventually the field became as it basically is now, due in large part to registration fees and other raisers and donations the players and their families made. We added fencing, and dugout benches, a storage shed and a batting cage. It was a good thing we did and good to see in that community. Lots of local people stopped by to watch and ask about the field. American Legion played there several and Calvert Hall High School practiced there "stadium" was built, not un-coincidentally looking like our diamond! We saw some definite talent over the years. With guys like Pat Brown, who could put pitched ball over the creek, and father and son act of Doc (the oldest player) and Bill Anderson, and smokin' Lefty Rex" Frost, who guys were afraid to stand in against, the double play team of John and Billy of the Orioles, the Muddog catcher of the Black Sox, Tony, who didn't consider his playing complete unless he brought half the diamond dirt home with him, our first female player, Brenda who starred with the Black Sox years later and tried to get a female team together, (and she could pitch, too!), lots of guys from all walks of life added so much to this League right from the very start. It would be wonderful if I reach my "golden" years and this game were still being played on this field by this Over 30 Baseball League.