



THE PONY EXPRESS



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New Newsletter Format

By Gregg Hall

Starting with the WinterBall season and going forward, we will have a new system for getting the newsletter to you. Going forward, we will have an opt-out where you may save \$5 on the cost of registration by taking the newsletter either via email or the web. For those who do not have access to the internet, you may still receive the Newsletter in the traditional way.

We will still mail out the spring and winter registration forms.

Printing the newsletter is very costly and time consuming. We are hoping that most will choose this new option, thereby saving both the league and themselves some money. It will also allow us to have better and faster communication with the members of the league. So when you register next time, please provide an email address and check the box to receive the newsletter electronically. You're helping the league, you're helping yourselves, and you're saving a tree.

Newsletter Editor

We are additionally looking for a new newsletter editor. If anyone is interested, please let any of us on the list at the left know of your interest. It is one of our easier board positions!

All-Stars

By Gregg Hall

We had an exciting run this year in the Post Season All-Star play. We had 3 teams advanced to the Zones in their respective Divisions. In Mustang, the National A team won the Tournament here in town, advancing to the Sections, where they went undefeated and earned the right to advance to play in Chino Hills in Southern CA.

In Bronco, the National A team also won their first 2 tournaments advancing to the Zones in Wittier. The Bronco team did very well at this high level, ending up in the top half of the Zones.

The Colt Division played teams from the San Jose area during the regular season. This year the Morgan Hill Athletics finished the season with a 14-0 record and then went on to win the Sectional tournament without losing a game. The Colt Sections were held at Live Oak High School. MHPB was fortunate to have a great volunteer program lead by Tam Bouslog and Laura Moquin to manage the gate and to run the snack shack. Volunteers were also responsible for maintaining the field during the tournament and we really enjoyed a tremendous amount of support.

The Athletics then received a bye to the Zone tournament that was held at PAL stadium in San Jose. Unfortunately, the Athletics lost two error-filled games in the Zone: first losing 9-6 to S.J. PAL and then 10-5 to Clayton Valley. For the second year in a row, the winner of the Colt World Series emerged from our Zone. This year the World Series winner was from Santa Clara. In Colt, the Morgan Hill Athletic team took the local tournament in undefeated fashion and earned an automatic birth into the Zones. Unfortunately, they lost their first 2 games of the season at the zones and were knocked out.

We would like to thank all the players, parents, coaches, and fans who went out and supported our teams this year. The league does not provide any financial help for the All-Star teams, so both the Mustang and Bronco teams that had to head to Los Angeles, were doing so at their own expense. Thanks for supporting your kids, and way to go All-Stars!

WinterBall to Start September 14.

By Byron Lengsfeld

This year we plan to hold the WinterBall draft the week of September 9th and to start practices the following weekend. Application forms are available in this newsletter and also on the WEB at WWW.MHPB.ORG. MHPB sponsors WinterBall programs in the Pinto (7 and 8 years of age) through Colt (15 and 16 year olds) Divisions. In the past, the upper divisions have played a travel schedule where teams from Salinas and/or San Jose participate. WinterBall is an instructional league with a typical regular season consisting of 5 to 6 scrimmage games with a competitive tournament held at the end of the season, The scrimmage games are only played on weekends and there is, at most, one optional practice held during the week. In WinterBall every player on the team is in the batting order and free substitution is allowed during the scrimmage games. Open Registration for WinterBall will be held at Mountain Mike's on Wednesday, August 31 from 12:30 to 2:00 PM and on Wednesday, September 4 from 7:30 to 9:00 PM.

Rules

By Gregg Hall

Did you ever wonder how we came up with "that" rule?? Well, now is the time that the Operations Committee is taking up discussions of new rules that will be implemented this year. If you have an issue that you think would be best addressed by a rule change, then please email it to playeragent@mhp.org and we will make sure that it is discussed.

Also, I would like to take this opportunity to encourage everyone to take the time in the off-season to read the rules and refresh your memory. The Constitution and Bylaws of MHPB are posted on the website. The rules of Pony Baseball may be found at Pony.org.

The rules of Baseball can be found under the link Section on MHPB.org as well. Knowing the rules will make us all better players, coaches, and fans.

Is it all about winning?

I like to think that I am as competitive as the next guy. And I know that everyone loves to win. However, I would ask you all to think about which is more important, winning or the children playing ball? I would ask each and every member of this league to keep their focus where it truly belongs, and that is helping every player to improve their skills, prepare for the next level of play, and to have fun.

Remember, this is a kids game. We, as the adults, should keep that in perspective. Why did you let a Bronco aged pitcher throw 100 pitches? Was that about what was best for the player, or was it about a coach wanting to win a game? I would submit to you that it was more about the coach's ego than the players. Let the kids be kids.

I guarantee that if you had told that pitcher he was doing a great job, but his pitch count was up around 80 and you are protecting his arm, he would have understood it.

And how about little "Johnny", the 12th best player on your 12 member team, the one that has seen one at bat and 3 innings in right field every game of his life? I would bet that Johnny would love to play at 2nd base or somewhere else just once or so. Is it really so important to win that you have no place for Johnny? That is not to say that there are not some players out there who couldn't defend themselves on a liner up the center, and a coach has to be aware of that as well, but if the player is not a danger to himself, then let him play; they earn it by showing up each and every day to practice and games.

And finally, you say your child is a shortstop, or a pitcher, or any other position on the field? Well how can you possibly say that? These are children. You have no idea how they will develop or what their interests may be. Let's strive to teach our players to be ball players, not say that some 8-year-old child is now a shortstop and then never give them the opportunity to play 1st base. The majors are full of players that had played somewhere else when they were younger, but were moved because of what the team needed, or didn't need. So let's teach the children the game, pass on our love for it, and let the children decide where they want to go with it.

We have a new board!

Please see the front of this newsletter for the new board positions, and give them your support in this new season.

2003 SPRING TRAINING GET READY FOR YOUR SEASON

*Free workouts with coach Ralph and the
Morgan Hill Coaches Group*

WHERE: Live Oak High School Varsity Field

WHEN: EVERY Sunday starting January 5th thru
February 2ND.

TIME: 10 AM. TO 12 NOON

WHO: Boys and Girls 10 Years old and up

Get in shape with the big boys. Guest coaches are Brandon Villafuerte (Padres AAA team), Adam Montarbo (Padres A team), Benji Dequin (Expos A team), as well as Live Oak Varsity and Junior Varsity players.

Winterball Registration Form

You can obtain the form from the website at www.mhpb.org. It can be found on the home page, on the Winterball page or on the registration page.

