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IN SOUTH DAKOTA

SOUTH DAKOTA BASEBALL UMPIRE ASSOCIATION MEETING
February 4, 2024 11:30 AM
Arrowwood Cedar Short Report
Oacoma, SD

1. The meeting was called to order by President Matt Clark at 11:35AM. 33 members were present.
2. The 2023 Winter Meeting Minutes were reviewed.
Motion to approve: John Witcraft Second: Jake Samp Approved.
3. The 2023 Financial Report was presented by Treasurer Scott Kortan.
Motion to approve: Jason Vaith Second: Doug Ruesink Approved.
4. Announcements:
 - A. 372 Registered members for 2023. 91 new members in 2023.
 - B. 2023 Hall of Fame Inductees: Hall of Fame Committee: Fred Obermeier, Rock Rockafellow, Brock Sundall, John Witcraft.
 - Gene Danielson, Salem
 - Honorary: John Kirchner, Lennox
 - C. 2023 SDUA Dick Ruddell Scholarship Winner: Scholarship Committee: Bert Ready, Joe Schlimgen, Rock Rockafellow
 - Teegan Schlimgen, Sioux Falls.
 - 2 Applicants in 2023.
 - D. 2023 State Champions:
 - Amateur: Canova (B), Sioux Falls Brewers (A)
 - American Legion: Dell Rapids Post 65 (B), Harrisburg Gold Post 45 (A)
 - Junior Legion: Lennox (B), Sioux Falls East Post 15 (A)
 - VFW 16U: Parkston (B), Dell Rapids (A)
 - High School: Tea Area (B), Pierre (A)
 - E. 2021 Sportsmanship Awards:
 - Amateur (Richard "Rock" Rockafellow): Lesterville (B), Aberdeen (A)
 - American Legion (Porter T. Talcott): Dell Rapids Post 65 (B), Rapid City Post 22 (A)
 - Junior Legion: Winner/Colome (B), Sioux Falls East Post 15 (A)
 - VFW 16U (Lou Thury): Mount Vernon/Plankinton (B), Vermillion (A)
 - F. American Legion "Big Stick" Winners:
 - Logan Winkler, Tabor Post 183 (B Sr.)
 - Sawyer Tolk, Sioux Falls East Post 15 (A Sr.)
 - Quincy Phillips, Winner/Colome (B Jr.)
 - Kasen Christiansen, Sioux Falls East Post 15 (A Jr.)
 - G. SDUA Deaths:
 - Andy York, April 7 • Allen Olson, April 28 • Duane "Stub" Miller, November 3
 - H. 2024 State Tournaments:
 - Amateur – Mitchell: August 7-18
 - "A" Sr. Legion – Brookings: July 30-August 3
 - "B" Sr. Legion – Salem: August 2-6
 - "A" Jr. Legion – Pierre: August 1-4
 - "B" Jr. Legion – Groton: August 9-11
 - "A" High School – Sioux Falls: May 24-25
 - "B" High School – TBD: May 31-June 1
 - I. The State Tournament Umpire Application will be released soon. Deadline to apply is April 1, 2024.
 - The application and application review process were discussed. A question was asked regarding the SDUA-implemented mandatory 3-year probation period for post season eligibility. The District Umpires will discuss this in their April meeting.

J. 2024 Legion Regional Tournaments:

- “A” Sr. Legion – Highest Seed Hosts: July 25-26
- “B” Sr. Legion – Sites TBD: July 23-28
- “A” Jr. Legion – Sites TBD: July 26-27
- “B” Jr. Legion – Sites TBD: July 29-30

K. 2025 State Tournaments:

- Amateur – Brandon
- “A” Sr. Legion – Watertown
- “B” Sr. Legion – Milbank
- “A” Jr. Legion – Rapid City Post 22
- “B” Jr. Legion – Milbank
- “A” High School – Sioux Falls
- “B” High School – Sioux Falls

L. PayPal: 216 members used PayPal to pay dues in 2023.

- 2024 Usage Fee: 3.49% + \$0.49 per transaction.
- Checks and cash still OK.

M. High School Rulebooks (NFHS):

- Ordered 120 books through the SDHSAA @ \$7.00 per book.
- Orders must be placed by March 2024 for the 2025 NFHS Rule Books.
- SDUA sold 80 Rulebooks to the SDHSBA at cost.

N. New Member Exam:

- Online: 219 completed exams Hard Copy: 8 completed exams
- Average Score was 23/30.

O. Ejections: 38 reported ejections in 2023. Amateur (5), Legion (15), High School (13), A (2), VFW (3)

P. SDUA T-Shirts are available for purchase. Contact Matt Clark for details or visit the SDUA website.

Q. SDUA Caps can be purchased at Dauby’s in Sioux Falls, Harve’s Sport Shop in Mitchell, and at ump-attire.com.

R. Website – Keep visiting.

S. The SDUA honored its 25-year umpires in 2023 with a commemorative plaque:

- Tony Beste, Yankton • Al Hansen, Sioux Falls
- Brad Tucker, Rapid City • Mark Zalme, Sioux Center
- Future 25-year umpires:
 - ◊ 2024: Roger Metzinger, Mark Struck ◊ 2026: Ryan Fuller, Chris Mercado, Yogi Millslagle
 - ◊ 2025: Jesse Devine, Tim May, Bert Ready

T. The SDUA honored Scott Deutsch and John Witcraft as 40-year umpires with a commemorative plaque and lifetime pass to the SD State Amateur Tournament and SD State Sr. Legion Tournaments.

- Future 40-year umpires:
 - ◊ 2024: Greg Warren ◊ 2025: Joe Schlimgen ◊ 2026: Bryce Holter

5. Officer Reports.

President: None

Vice President: None

Treasurer: None

Secretary:

- Thanked the association for their patience as he has been busier than in years past and hasn’t had as much time to stay current with his duties.
- Discussed an email from a youth group in New England who was very complimentary of the SDUA website.
- Reminded the association to visit the website often and let the Secretary know if anything needs to be added so it’s helpful for our members.
- The new member exam is due for a rewrite. It should be rewritten to reflect the NFHS Rulebook which is the rule book now sent to the members (instead of the MLB rulebook). Also, the paper copy of the exam will be discontinued. The electronic exam is automatically graded, and the turnaround time is instant instead of taking many days to register a new member.
- During lunch, each meeting attendee was asked to fill out a card. These cards will be reviewed and implemented in the District Clinics.
 1. One item (rule or mechanic) you would like to see covered at the District Clinic.
 2. One Mechanic you struggle with the most on the field.

6. Report from SD Amateur Baseball.

A. Joe Schlimgen: State Tournament went well.

B. Rock Rockafellow: Asked that more umpires apply for the State Amateur tournament.

C. Brock Sundall: SDABA will discuss the last 3 years of MLB rule changes and communicate the SDUA which rules the SDABA will and will not be adopting for their games. The League-specific rules will also be updated.

7. Report from SD Legion Baseball.
 - A. President Clark will reach out the Legion Athletic Commission to determine what recent MLB rule changes Legion Baseball will and will not be adopting.
 - B. Senior A and B State Tournament umpires are selected by the Legion Athletic Commission.
 - C. Junior A and B State Tournament umpires are hired by the tournament host.
 - D. Encouraged members to have their local towns to apply if interested in hosting a state legion tournament.

8. Report from High School Baseball. Brock Sundall:
 - A. 15-run mercy rule was adopted for 2024.
 - B. One-way coach to catcher communication devices are allowed in 2024.
 - C. Wrist bands must be worn on the player's arm. They are not allowed to be worn on the belt.
 - D. State A Tournament will be a 2-day tournament.
 - E. State B Tournament will remain a 2-day tournament. It will not be held at Sioux Fall Stadium this year. The tournament site is undetermined.
 - F. Postseason umpire application will be posted on the SDUA website. Deadline is April 1st.

9. Old Business:

A. Members of the Arbitrary (Appointed by President Clark):

- Doug Ruesink: Term Expired in 2023. Doug was reappointed. Term Expires in 2026.
- Joe Schlimgen: Term Expires in 2024.
- Rich Kotrba: Term Expired in 2025.

B. District Umpires:

District	District Umpire	Term Expires
1	John Witcraft	2023 2026
2	Brandon Carda	2024
3	Austin Richey	2025
4	Ace Boschee	2023 2026
5	Mike Carda	2025
6	Joe Schlimgen	2023 2026

District	District Umpire	Term Expires
7	Dan Lund	2024
7	Doug Ruesink	2025
8	Scott Hoeke	2025
9	Al Hansen	2024
9	Johnny Kirchner	2023 2026
10	Connor Singhisen	2023 2026

- John Witcraft was reappointed to District 1.
- Ace Boschee was reappointed to District 4.
- Joe Schlimgen was reappointed to District 6.
- Scott Hoeke was appointed to District 8.
- Johnny Kirchner was reappointed to District 9.
- Connor Singhisen was reappointed to District 10.

C. Liability Insurance:

- Do we purchase for 2024?
- 2024 Premium is \$750. Same as previous years.

Motion to approve: Rock Rockafellow Second: Jake Samp Approved.

10. New Business:

A. SDUA Hall of Fame:

- For the past several years, the SDUA HOF inductees have been honored at the Amateur Baseball Hall of Fame banquet. In the last few years, the SDUA's inclusion in these banquets has slipped. The SDUA HOF Committee and the SDUA officers will work with the Amateur Baseball banquet to ensure our inductees are properly honored with biographies, etc.
- Rock Rockafellow explained that the Honorary Umpire is nominated based on their contributions to baseball in South Dakota and isn't necessarily umpire specific.
- President Clark asked the District Umpires to provide qualified umpires and honorary candidates to the HOF committee. The invitation was also extended to all SDUA members. If you have a candidate that you feel is qualified for the SDUA HOF, please contact a Hall of Fame committee member or the SDUA.

B. Winter Meeting execution:

- Recent year's meeting costs have increased considerably. The 2023 meeting cost was \$1,237.12, which averaged \$47.58 per member in attendance (26 members attended the 2023 meeting).
- The SDUA officer's intention is to keep the meeting in the central part of South Dakota. Chamberlain has been a good location for us in the past number of years.

- The SDUA officers have looked into other meeting locations in the Chamberlain area.
 - ◊ Brock Sundall offered St. Joseph's School, as they have conference rooms with projectors and video equipment. Use of the space would be free of charge. The SDUA would likely make a donation to the school.
 - ◊ SDUA officers will look into meal options. A few members have volunteered to prepare a meal. We will look into catering options as well.
 - ◊ Final arrangements for a meeting location will be made as we get closer to the 2025 meeting.

C. District Meeting/Clinic:

- Overall, the impression of the 2023 clinic format was positive. We look to improve in 2024.
- The 2024 clinics will follow a similar plan with the intention of adding some improvements:
 - ◊ Make an effort to host the clinics at facilities that will allow for better mechanic and "on-field" training (gyms and hitting facilities, instead of bars, restaurants, and classrooms).
 - ◊ Try to add video training to the clinics.
 - ◊ We will use a committee that will travel to each clinic to host. This worked well last year in conveying a more uniform message across the state. These clinicians are to be determined. As in 2023, they will be paid mileage to attend these clinics.

D. Communities not using SDUA Umpires: Some communities are intentionally not using SDUA umpires for their VFW and Class A games. Main reason was cost savings. Discussion was had regarding how we work with these communities to encourage them to use our members. Prove to them that our members are worth hiring.

E. Open Floor:

- Jesse Devine: There was a mix up between the SDUA and the SDHSAA when ordering NFHS books for 2024. Since we received only 120, do we order more so we can provide enough books for each member as was approved at the 2023 meeting.
 - ◊ We purchase books from the SDHSAA at \$7.00 per book. Retail price is \$12.00.
 - ◊ It was voiced that not all members need/want a rule book.
 - ◊ The Secretary will add a question to the renewal form asking if that member requires a rule book and will send a book accordingly.

Motion by Jake Samp, Seconded by Mike Carda to order 100 more NFHS books, with the contingency to order more as needed. Approved.

- Rock Rockafellow: Addressed the meeting saying many of us need to take more pride in our membership in the SDUA. He feels we are pricing ourselves out the game, thus leading to financial stress to the teams. He charged us to ask ourselves if our intentions as umpires is to make money or to help baseball? Take pride while on the field.

11. District Umpire Meeting. Meetings are set for April 14, 2024 and September 8, 2024.

12. Election of Officers:

A. Treasurer

1. Joe Schlimgen nominated Scott Kortan, second by Jason Vaith.
2. With no further nominations, motion by Rich Rockafellow to cease nominations and cast unanimous ballot, second by Jason Vaith.
3. Approved.
4. Scott Kortan elected.

B. President (proceedings led by Secretary Devine)

1. Reed Harter nominated Matt Clark, second by Austin Richey.
2. With no further nominations, motion by Rich Rockafellow to cease nominations and cast unanimous ballot, second by Joe Schlimgen.
3. Approved.
4. Matt Clark elected.

13. The 2025 Winter Meeting is set for February 2, 2025.

14. Motion to Adjourn by Doug Ruesink, second by Yogi Millslagle. Approved. Meeting Adjourned at 2:10PM.

The SDUA Officers thank the attending members for their attention, participation, and dedication to the SDUA.

Respectfully submitted by:

Jesse Devine

Secretary - SDUA