



2021 Baseball PEI Fall Forum Minutes
Saturday, 23 October 2021, 9 am
Credit Union Place, Summerside

In attendance:

- Walter MacEwen, President, Baseball PEI
- Janet Cameron, Director of Provincial Teams, Baseball PEI
- John Munro, Director of 13U Competitions, Baseball PEI
- Ian Clays, Director of 15U/18U Competitions, Baseball PEI
- Connor Myers, Director of Administration/Skill Development, Baseball PEI
- Joelyne Taylor, Director of Female Baseball, Baseball PEI
- Mike Richards, Supervisor of Umpires, PEIBUA
- Kevin McKenna, Bedeque
- Cory Gaudet, Charlottetown
- Andrew Cameron, Cornwall
- Patrick Kelly, Kensington
- Desi Doyle, Northside
- Bob Doyle, Sherwood/Parkdale
- Adam Smith, Stratford
- Tanner Doiron, Summerside
- Adam Connolly, Summerside
- Nick Hann, Summerside
- David Kenny, Summerside
- Lisa MacKenzie, Three Rivers
- Nicole Ready-Doucette, Western
- Alf Blanchard, PEI Junior Baseball League
- Randy Byrne, Executive Director, Baseball PEI

Meeting:

- 1) Walter MacEwen called the meeting to order at 9:06 am.
- 2) Several topics submitted by the Board of Directors, and created by the Board of Directors, for discussion were examined:
 - a. David Kenny from Summerside addressed the group about baseballs at the 9U group. The smaller, spongier baseball used at the 9U level – the Rawlings TVB850 – does not stand up well to outdoor play. Kenny took it upon himself to speak to Rawlings and to a sporting goods manufacturer in China. Kenny has designed a ball that is the proper size for 9U, is spongy/softer, and has been tested and is durable. Baseball PEI has approved the use of these baseballs for 9U play and teams can use those baseballs or the Rawlings TVB850 baseball. Associations, if they wish to use the Kenny 9U baseball, have to place their order with him by February to guarantee the baseballs will be available for the start of the season. The cost should be less for Kenny’s baseballs than the Rawlings baseball.
 - b. Randy Byrne talked to the people in attendance about the need to reexamine the competition structure of Baseball PEI, especially at the “A” level, and, to a certain extent, the “AA” level. The current structure was created when there were far fewer teams, but in 2021, there were 17 teams at 13U “A”, 23 teams at 11U “A,” and there have been between 10-12 teams at 11U “AA” over the past 2-3 years. As a result, there has been a wide gulf of talent in the “A” levels and even some “AA” levels, and a lot of lopsided games. It was agreed that the competition structure needs to be adjusted, and a subcommittee will be set up featuring some members of the Board of Directors of Baseball PEI and some folks from minor baseball associations to look at changing the competition structure to create a system that should feature more meaningful games. Whether it involved tiering during the season, or teams declaring they are more competitive or recreational, something has to change so there are fewer blowouts and players have more fun.



- c. Mike Richards of the PEIBUA led a discussion about the issues that were faced by the PEIBUA this summer. While the most umpires ever were registered – 120 – there were shortages of adult umpires and led to several postponements at higher-level Provincial Championships and in the new PEI Junior League. Some of the feedback was efforts need to be made to attract more adults and make it more attractive (just doing a game a week, a different certification system that reflects their experience and knowledge of the game, et cetera). As well, efforts must be maintained and strengthened to offer support for younger umpires to keep them in the job until they are older. Finally, there were suggestions about the PEIBUA maybe loosening dress code for umpires doing bases, supplying some gear (and cost-sharing between associations, the PEIBUA and Baseball PEI to help), associations to consider giving a discount on player registration to parents who are willing to umpires, and working with the assignors to give some umpires more consistent assignments, in terms of them being assigned at the start of the season in terms of certain nights they are available.
- d. Ejections were down from 2020, and most agreed that coaches and players were better behaved. That being said, there were still issues around a lack of respect between parents, coaches, players and umpires. Baseball PEI suggested creating signs that could be posted at fields reminding fans and coaches about the need to demonstrate respect and supplying 2-3 of these signs to each association to post at fields within their association. All agreed this would not hurt and it was worthwhile to pursue.
- e. Connor Myers discussed his summer as the Provincial Rally Cap Coordinator and spoke about his role, some trends he saw and gave some recommendations:
 - i. Association Rally Cap Coordinators should be determined earlier
 - ii. Baseball PEI develops a model 8-10-week template for programming for both 8U and 5U divisions of Rally Cap
 - iii. A list of equipment that each association should have for their Rally Cap groups should be created by Baseball PEI
 - iv. Create virtual coaching sessions for Rally Cap coaches/associations.All were in agreement that his recommendations were useful going forward.
- f. In 2021, there was a rule change at 9U where only seven players were permitted on the field. That rule was discussed and most in attendance agreed that the rule should be reverted so that nine players are permitted on the field. However, it was recommended that teams only carry ten players – so players can get more at-bats at each game, especially if all players are in attendance – and the group felt a rule should be passed at a player should be permitted to play a certain position only once each game.
- g. Girls baseball was discussed, and the number of female players has doubled over the past two years. However, many female players are still going to softball as all-girls teams are not offered in baseball. We don't have the numbers yet to offer all-girls divisions, yet we lose girls because we don't have all-girls divisions. The feeling amongst those in attendance was efforts should be made to establish an all-girls 9U division, and association boundaries are relaxed so these teams can be set up.
- h. Randy Byrne gave a short talk about the plans for offseason camps, including the hope to run four regional 13U camps again this winter and introducing 10U regional camps. The sentiment was that the 10U regional camps should be even more of a priority than 13U regional camps, as there are fewer opportunities for these players and there is more interest. Stratford, Charlottetown and Summerside are looking at doing offseason camps as well. Finally, there was a discussion about the summer clinicians offering a day or two at each association during the summer for camps.
- i. There was a brief discussion about efforts to try to get more volunteers in each association. David Kenny spoke about the need to reach out to parents/players and appeal to their sense of community to keep associations running and efficient.
- j. In 2021, each team in the 13U and 15U “AAA” leagues had a scorer, all games were scored via GameChanger, and the league statistics were posted online once a week. This was part of efforts, led by Walter MacEwen (who is the chair of the Baseball Canada National Scoring Committee) to train a competent complement of scorers on PEI for National Championships, and the hope is maybe to expand to the 11U “AAA” and 18U “AA” leagues in 2022. There were some issues with claims about errors marked as hits to help players' batting averages or hits marked as errors to help with pitchers' ERA, and so on, and some animosity about these statistics. There was talk about getting somebody impartial to





score each game and pay them \$40 per game; however, it was mostly agreed that it would be very difficult to find people willing to impartially score games. It was agreed that while it is important to train scorers and these games can be scored, these stats should not be made public and be just available to Provincial team coaches and head coaches for their own team.

- 3) The meeting was adjourned at 11:24 am.

