

Squirrel Hill Baseball Association
425 Kurt Drive
Pittsburgh, PA 15243

Thursday, April 14, 2005

Dear Players & Parents,

Welcome to the spring 2005 baseball season. It seems like just yesterday we were celebrating the 2004 campaigns at our annual Squirrel Hill Baseball Day at PNC Park. Due to your ongoing support, last year our league was able to provide good competition in a safe & enjoyable environment to more kids than ever before. It was also a very successful year on the field as both our Little League and Pony League teams captured the "Mayor's Cup". The Pony League team also topped off their season with the Guyasuta League championship.

Though it is important to acknowledge past successes, it is vital to continue to work to improve. We have spent those few short months since last October planning improvements in almost every aspect of our program. We thank everyone for all the great feedback and suggestions we have received, and we are so grateful to the large number of you that have volunteered your time to help with these ventures.

You may have already noticed some of the changes. Our "Spring Training" program was run by the Bianco School of Baseball and received many great reviews. Also, we began our spring season earlier this year and incorporated multiple team practices and exhibition games into our pre-season schedule. As the season progresses you will notice better practice equipment (batting practice machine & balls, Hitaway), league scheduled practices, and some better safety features on the field (safety base at first).

Ultimately, all the improvements benefit the kids, but we are also trying to improve the experience for the parents. Enhanced communications is the key. Beginning last fall we started a league-wide database. Please review the information listed on the team roster and either contact your coach or e-mail Sam Ginsberg (scg401k@aol.com) with any changes or additions. Gathering the correct information will make future seasons easier to organize. Also, e-mail will be an especially helpful tool for both in-season and off-season communications.

Our league has also registered a web site, www.sqhillbaseball.org (please note .org). In the next few weeks we expect to list all game results, standings and the league schedule. But the most valuable feature is the "Special Alert" section. That area will be used to provide updated game conditions on bad weather days. It will save everyone a ton of phone calls throughout the season.

On the team rosters is the schedule for the first two weeks of the season. We have found releasing the schedule in two parts provides many advantages. It gives us the ability to react to issues that arise in the early part of the season (competitive imbalances, inclement weather, and unexpected schedule conflicts) and it will also allow us to schedule games with some partners to our league. We plan to add games with teams from the Sacred Heart and Stanton Heights Little Leagues. This will give our kids the chance to play different area teams, occasionally at other local fields they haven't played on in the past. We expect the remainder of the schedule to be released during the week of April 25th.

I want to thank everyone in advance for what I'm sure will be a great season. As always please feel free to contact me with any questions or comments.

Sincerely,

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