

MLL 2004 - Major League Teams

Commissioner - Dan Doyle

Baker Printing
Campbell's Boathouse

Carman Corp. Insurance
Hagan's Funeral Home

Moppert Brothers Inc.
Peterson & Peterson

MLL 2004 - American League Teams Commissioner - Joe Cavalcante

Bill Battey's
Emergency Care Training
Gardner Fox Associates
Kish Funeral Homes
Nellie's Homers
Meenan Oil
Rose Tree Getty
Rose Tree-Media Optimists Club

MML 2004 - Continental League Teams Commissioner - Mike Caramanico

Borough of Media
Colonial Parking
Keystone Digital Imaging
Media Police
Media Post Office
Norcross Construction
Office Basics
Record Reproduction Services
Sterling Healthcare
Taylor Rental
Upper Providence Police
Wilson Safe Co.

MLL 2004 - National League Teams Commissioner - Tom Mehalick

Axis Financial
Bevan 's Candy
Caramanico & Sons, Inc.
Children's Medical Associates
Fabian-Baber Communication
HAP
Gregory A. Hillyard, DMD
Kenny's Flowers

MLL 2004 - T- Ball League Teams Commissioner - Chet Brown

Brian O'Connor Associates
Buller & Father Service Center
Cavanagh Funeral Home
Fred Dotts
Media Anesthesia Associates, P.C.
Media Post Office
Streamline Office System Inc.
Upper Providence Township



MEDIA LITTLE LEAGUE

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NEWSLETTER

Spring 2004

Upcoming 2004 Events

Picture Day - MLL Complex

April 3 Rain or Shine

Share Drive

April 10 T-Ball & Continental Leagues

Opening Day - MLL Complex

April 12 Season Starts
April 17 Opening Ceremonies

Bat-A-Thon Meetings - MLL Complex

April 19 at 7:30pm Team Coordination Meeting
April 21 at 7:30pm Make-up Team Coordination Meeting
April 24 Team Meetings

T-Ball and Continental Night

May 14

Bat-A-Thon

May 15 Major, American & National Leagues
At the Media Little League Complex

Regular Season Ends

May 27

Playoffs Start

June 1 Major, American & National Leagues

Championship Day / Closing Ceremonies

June 19

Major League exceeds goals set in 2003

The average Media Little League member may not be aware of the fact that our Board of Directors formulated a list of objectives for each of the divisions in our league. Last year, the Majors division met and exceeded all eight of our stated objectives. The number of teams in the league is determined by the total number of twelve year old registrants. This strategy of making the number of teams flexible enables almost all twelve year olds to be selected to Major League teams and allows the Majors to be more inclusive while still keeping the most talented players available in this division. While attempting to ease the threshold for selection of twelve year olds, the Majors also has the objective of providing the highest level of competitive baseball in Media Little League.

Thanks to the leadership of umpire-in-chief Bob Fanelli, the volunteer umpires were better educated on the rules and on their responsibilities than ever before, resulting in games finishing on time and without controversy. Last season saw the beginning of a new tradition with the home-plate umpire leading both teams in reciting the Little League Pledge before each game.

We were again fortunate to have the services of Mike Caramanico, the man chiefly responsible for our field never looking or playing better. The new path cut out from the pitcher's mound to the home plate area was a practical and aesthetic improvement adding to the quality of our diamond, the best in District 19.

Field director, Joe Rabena, directed the reconstruction of the press box, which is now sturdy enough to last for several generations of Little Leaguers.

Despite some uncooperative weather, the 2003 season saw intensive coaching, practice and play from the six Major League teams who displayed a healthy emphasis on intelligent baseball and maximum effort with the ultimate goal of winning.

The Carman Insurance team, managed by Jim Still and coached by Ed Snow, left no doubt as to their superiority, impressively earning an undefeated regular season record then sweeping through the double elimination playoffs and finally winning the championship game, 4-0 over Baker Printing.

Congratulations to all the participants in the Majors on a successful and fun season.

Tony Antonello, 2003 Major League Commissioner

Volunteers Always Needed

Media Little League is a 100% volunteer organization, and we are firmly committed to creating the safest and best environment possible for your child. In order to provide the best possible environment, we need your help. Please get involved by signing-up as a volunteer. We need:

Team Parents **Snack bar openers and closers**

Bat-A-Thon Volunteers **Fence and Ad Book ads**

Umpires **Team sponsors**

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MLL's Coach's Pitch Division Underwent Major Changes Last Season

MLL's Coach's Pitch division, known locally as "Continental League", has traditionally been a transitional experience, somewhere in between T-Ball and "real" baseball, with all games ending in "ties", and no standings kept.

In 2002, League Commissioner Dan Doyle experimented for the first time in our history with a Post-Season tournament, which resulted in an eventual League Champion. In keeping with the limited-competition-spirit of the League, the championship was awarded based on number of outs recorded per game, and not on the number of runs scored in the game.

In talking with the "C-League" managers and coaches, 2003 Commissioner Jim Still listened to the constructive criticism from the 2002 season, and eventually, with the help of many, crafted a way to take Dan Doyle's experiment to the next level.

Last year, our 7 and 8 year olds (primarily, although some 6's play, too) have enjoyed a season in which:

- the first four games for each team were played as "exhibitions", without a winner or loser, and no score kept;
- the middle of the season were played with "modified local rules", as permitted by Williamsport, in which each game ended with a winner and a loser, based on most runs scored, but with a limit on runs per inning;
- the season ended by dividing the League into "A" and "B" divisions, based on season win-loss records, in an attempt to equally match the ability of a team to the level of its competition, and the League awarded Trophies (kids love hardware!) to the top finishers in each division's double-elimination tournament. This format also provided for more meaningful games for more teams, which is good.

Halfway through the season, the reaction to the new structure had been overwhelmingly positive. Quotes from a few of our managers, coaches, and parents include:

- "I was amazed to see how much more they concentrated after they realized it mattered";
- "It took us a little while to figure out the new rules, but, after the kids got the third out of the inning, and got to bat again, they were psyched up, and wanted to get back in the field and get three outs again next time";
- "We actually got a triple-play!" (it happens more often than you might imagine);
- And so on.

As an organization devoted to providing an atmosphere where each player is afforded the opportunity of advancing as far in baseball as his or her God-given ability and dedication will take them, we are very pleased to have found a way to provide a more challenging and rewarding baseball experience for our youth.

Is there a future Major-Leaguer learning his craft on one of our diamonds? Stop by the field one night this season and check out the action! You might be surprised how hard these little guys (and girls) play.

Jim Still, 2003 Continental League Commissioner

2004 Field Day dodges the weather, makes significant improvements

As volunteers woke up on the morning of Saturday, March 27, the weather was threatening to cancel one of the most important days in the Media Little League season, Field Day.

As predicted, rain had moved in overnight and was coming down in a steady drizzle. The night before, MLL President Scott Kotcamp had given the word that, regardless of the weather, Field Day was a "go" and volunteers should show up to accomplish as much as possible.

By 10AM, the rain had subsided, the grounds actually having been "loosened-up" and made easier to work with, and the sun was beginning to break through the clouds. Trenches had already been dug to the National League field to install power to the mound and water behind the backstop. Tractors ferried back and forth between the fields removing unwanted crab grass sod and returning with new diamond dirt specially designed for baseball fields. Sod cutting machines were worked around all of the infields followed by a steam roller to pack down and level the diamonds.

Any parties driving by on Field Day would have been impressed with an image of a large construction site bustling with laborers manning shovels, rakes, ladders, wheelbarrows and heavy equipment.

"It's amazing what can be accomplished when people come together like this", commented Pete McGough, Vice-President of MLL while standing near 2nd base at the National League field with a rake in his hand.

To participate in a Field Day is to witness first-hand what makes Media Little League baseball the unique and inspirational organization that it is. People from all walks of life coming together to rake fields, paint bleachers, haul dirt, pick up debris, scrub down the snack bar kitchen, hang fence ads, back-fill trenches, weld angle iron, sweat, joke and laugh together as they inaugurate a new season.

At lunch, a fine spread of roast beef and pulled barbeque pork was laid out for all the workers to enjoy.



Getting sweaty and dirty for the cause

Memorial Fund created for Fred Dotts and Mike Chapin

The Media Little League Board of Directors have created Memorial Funds in the name of Fred Dotts and Mike Chapin. The funds will be used in positive ways to support the League and reflect the contributions made by these two exemplary board members. Fred Dotts was a tireless teacher who inspired those around him to use the game of baseball as a philosophy towards being successful in life and gave 5 decades of service to the Media Little League. Mike Chapin also devoted enormous amounts of time and energy to the League and served as President 1981-1982. Both gentlemen will be missed, but their legacies will live on in the benefits derived from the use of their respective memorial funds.

National League to use pitching machine/live-pitching mix in 2004

After careful deliberation, a decision was made this year by the Board of Directors to implement a pitching machine, along with live pitching, at the National League level in 2004. Concerns had been raised about the need to keep the game moving and to get the players' interest levels up by having them hit and field the ball more often.

With power now at the mound on the National League field, the plan is to mix the pitching machine with live pitching during the game. As the season progresses, the pitching machine may



Matt Melone delivers another pitch with the machine

be slowly phased out to allow pitchers more time to develop their arms coming into the playoff season.

The National League will use an umpire behind the plate calling balls and strikes for both the hitting machine and the live pitching. The only difference will be that no walks will be issued with the pitching machine. All pitches from the machine will be called balls or strikes. Three strikes, called or swinging, will be considered an out. Balls outside the strike zone, although being called balls by the umpire, will not result in a walk, they will just result in extra pitches being made until the ball is hit or strike three is called.

Although some have advocated allowing walks with the pitching machine, that would essentially defeat the purpose of the pitching machine — getting the kids to hit the ball more often. During live pitching, normal baseball with walks and strikeouts will be played.

A set speed for the pitching machine will be established prior to the season and all teams will use the same speed. As the season progresses, the speed will be adjusted upwards and all teams will be informed and use the new speed.

The pitching machine will be a work in progress this year and the commissioner, managers and coaches will be monitoring the progress closely while sharing thoughts and ideas on how to improve the overall experience and level of play for everyone involved.

Tom Mehalick, 2004 National League Commissioner



Ready to pull the trigger in the Major League

We hope you have enjoyed our Newsletters. If you should have any ideas for articles in future Newsletters, wish to contribute an article for a future Newsletter, or have questions or comments, please do not hesitate to contact me via telephone at (610) 565-3243 or via email at jbaber@fabian-baber.com

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