

Guidelines / Responsibilities of STLMSBL Team Managers

January, 2008

- 1) As with all STLMSBL teams, the Manager is the official league contact for each team. All Manager's MUST have e-mail access or regular communication with a designated player with e-mail access for the communication of league information.
- 2) Each Manager is expected to pass along league and division information to all players on his team (usually via e-mail).
- 3) Manager's are expected to attend league Managers' Meetings as scheduled and announced by the Board of Directors, generally in January and March, prior to the season opener as well as the league-wide meeting in December. If a Manager is unable to attend a meeting, a representative (usually the Assistant Manager) can be designated to attend instead. Each team MUST be represented at the Managers' Meetings. Representatives will only have voting authority for division issues if notification is sent by the Manager to the Division President prior to the meeting. Attendance by a designated representative constitutes 'official' attendance for league and division purposes. If a team is not represented at a Managers' Meeting, it is the team and/or Manager who face potential consequences, not the player who failed to show up in your absence.
- 4) Manager's are expected to be aware of, assist with the enforcement of, and pass along (to each team member) all league and division rules. Managers must print a copy of the current year rules from the website and carry with them to all games.
- 5) Managers are responsible for leaving dugouts and fields clean and orderly with all trash disposed of properly or taken with you. Our league officers work extremely hard to secure fields; it is up to the managers to make sure the league doesn't lose the privilege of using them for lack of discipline and respect. Remember, the league does know who is using the fields at what times if there is a problem.
- 6) It is the Manager who is responsible to the League to make sure all team league fees (i.e. player fees) are paid in full, with complete roster forms and player waiver/registration forms submitted in a timely fashion to prevent any potential late penalty. Managers suspected of mishandling players fees may be prohibited from managing in future years.
- 7) Managers must avoid forfeits, if at all possible. It is the Manager's responsibility to carry enough players on his roster to accommodate for vacations and injuries throughout the season. At the discretion of the Board of Directors, a team repeatedly forfeiting games may not be allowed to return the following season, or the Manager may not be allowed to manage in the league again.
- 8) Line-up cards from scorebook must be completed legibly by each manager and given to the home plate umpire prior to the start of each game. The final score must be agreed to by each manager and acknowledged by their signature on the line-up cards.

9) Within 3 days of each game, the Manager must update game results and player participation for each game on his team's website provided by the league. Accuracy is essential as this produces the official standings and playoff eligibility.

10) It is the responsibility of each manager to bring official MSBL game balls to each game (2 per game) which will be provided by the league.

11) Communicate with your players on ALL League issues. The Manager is responsible for making sure all players know all rules (Game Rules, Player Conduct Rules, special Divisional Rules, etc.). If you will be cutting a player, do all you can do to make sure that player knows his options for joining another team.

In addition, Managers typically arrange practices and required uniform/equipment purchases for their teams.

Acknowledged by: _____

Manager of: _____

Printed Name: _____

Date: _____

Following are contributions from MSBL Team Managers, and their thoughts about running a ball team in the MSBL:

28+ Manager's Suggestions:

Don't confuse a baseball team with a democracy. Take charge from day one. Make decisions. Take the consequences. If you took a Manager job because you want to bat cleanup and play shortstop, reconsider. Your primary role is to serve your teammates.

Help each player have success. For one player this might mean pitching a complete game. For another it might mean just having one good inning on the mound. Different players will contribute in different ways depending on their abilities and experience.

Be a conduit between your players and the league. Listen to both. Talk to both. Insist that your players communicate with you directly, and not through another player or by word of mouth or rumor. Do the same - communicate directly.

You are the only one who should take on any discussions with umpires regarding rules and umpires decisions. Same for discussions with opposing Managers regarding any part of the game. Same for league officers, schedule maker, etc. Make sure your players know that arguing with umpires, other Managers, and those who run the league is off limits. While getting input from players is important, remember that as the Manager, it is your responsibility to make decisions and to lead the team. You can't lead if all you're doing is collecting feedback and passing it along.

Plan. Know what you are going to do before you get to the ball park. This applies to games and practices alike.

Place high expectations on your players. At the very least, expect them to communicate their availability for every game and expect them to be punctual. Insist that they give you good concentration for three hours at a time, whether they playing or sitting.

Expect injuries and absences. (This is especially true for players who are new to the league.) I tend to carry eighteen players on my roster. Every year our average attendance per game is between thirteen and fourteen.

The goal for me at the beginning of each season is to create a team that does justice to the game of baseball. We try to play the game correctly. If we do that, two things follow: we have fun and we tend to win ball games.

38+ Manager's Suggestions:

I feel the Manager's top responsibility is to ensure everyone has a good time. Guys our age are paying to play, and, everyone wants to feel like they're contributing. That doesn't necessarily mean everyone gets the same amount of playing time and gets to play all the positions they want. The Manager should ensure the team maintains a professional atmosphere and that everyone treats one another with

respect. Constant and clear communications are essential. It is advisable that the Manager drafts team rules and guidelines which are presented to the team in advance of the start of the season.

The point of this is that it is not about winning - it is about having fun and treating your teammates, the other players and the people involved organizing and running the league with respect (including of course, the umpires). We are all adults (some younger, some older) and this is a venue which allows us for a reasonable price and commitment to run around (on very good baseball fields) and act like children for a few months a year, trying to reclaim our youth. It doesn't take but a few people that don't understand that to mess it up for everybody else.

The Manager should get to know each player individually and take the time to speak with them on a regularly basis regarding how things are going. The Manager should be open to criticism of his/her performance and should openly ask for suggestions. People love to criticize, and, they love to know their viewpoints are seriously considered. The Manager should be very careful to treat him/herself the same way the players are treated. If the Manager also the field Manager, this particularly applies to playing time and allotted positions on the field.

I feel that the most important role of the Manager, other than the obvious one of making sure you field a team, is to recognize this last point. You must recognize when there are players on your roster that don't get it. You must further realize that if there are these types of players in your midst, that you must deal with them in a way that either convinces them to act with respect to the others in the league or that you must ask them to leave. The league has very little patience in this area.

On the mechanics of running the team, my advice is that each Manager should enlist the help of a coaching 'staff'. It is a big commitment to try and do everything single handedly. There will be times when you cannot perform your duties and you need a responsible party to step in and, most importantly, field a team for each and every game. Forfeits waste everybody's time and in most cases, cost the league (i.e, each of us) money.

Success in this league, in my opinion, is based on the following criteria (in order): (1) Fielding (for every game) a responsible (competitive, if applicable for your league) team that doesn't violate the league rules with respect to conduct. (2) Your players having fun (3) Winning (a distant third). The best way to ensure your success is to make sure ALL your players understand that the list goes in the order listed above and not the other way around.