



Little League.....Big Fun!!

Hello Roland Park Baseball Families!

It has been a while since I last wrote, but that it is not for lack of things to say. While all of us endured this difficult year, and bear its weight still, RPBL has not been idle. I will recognize the hard work of our volunteers in a later edition, but at the moment there are other things consuming our attention. As the league hibernates this winter, our organizers are already at work mapping out plans for what promises to be another challenging spring season. How that season will look when compared against prior years is uncertain, but know that with the well being of our participants in mind, we will make our best effort to bring the league back in full this Spring.

That is as much as I dare say about the future. So until then, from all of us at RPBL - enjoy the holidays, stay close with family and friends (*masked & 6ft apart, unless-living-under-the-same-roof*), and we will see you when the days grow warm next year.

Best Wishes,

Chuck Fancher, 45th Commissioner of the Roland Park Baseball Leagues

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Spring is Coming!

Registration opens Sunday!

RPBL is proud to announce the return of our premier event, the Spring Recreation

Baseball League. Dates of specific events of the season will not be set until locations and processes unique to this year are settled, but do plan for RPBL to be one of your Spring activities. Look for the official announcement or check our website at www.rolandparkbaseball.com.

Team sponsorships

Past and future supporters of Roland Park Baseball Leagues, it is the time of year that we line up sponsors for our 60+ spring recreation league teams! If you, or a business or organization you know, would like to support RPBL, please consider the team sponsorship. There is no better way to show your support for our community than to adorn the jersey of a Moose, Knight, Shamrock, Falcon, or Cub with your name or logo.

For more information on sponsorships go to www.rolandparkbaseball.com/team-sponsorship/ or write to Roland Park Baseball at rolandparkbaseball@gmail.com.

Thinking About Coaching? You should!

Do you find yourself at a loss for things to do in each spring? Here is a RPBL secret: as a parent of a Roland Park Baseball League player, you are *already* qualified to try your hand at *Coaching!* RPBL welcomes one and all.

Each spring RPBL needs two or three - sometimes 6 for Tee Ball - coaches and assistant coaches to fill out our teams, and as always, the parents of RPBL step up to the challenge, many of them coaching a team in any sport for the first time. We offer clinics in the early spring, meetings with league coordinators, and a plethora of other information to get you into form by Opening Day. If you are interested, please indicate this when registering your child, or email me directly at chuck.rpbl@gmail.com.



BALTIMORE BASEBALL BITS

by Shawn Boehringer, Trustee Emeritus and former RPBL coach



Charles Albert “Chief” Bender

Editor's Note: This newsletter was originally scheduled for November in honor of Native American Heritage Month.



Remembering Hall of Fame pitcher Charles Albert “Chief” Bender, for November’s Native American Heritage Month. Bender was a clutch performer for the Philadelphia Athletics from 1903 to 1914. In 1910, he posted a record of 23-5 with a 1.58 ERA and helped the A’s beat the Cubs in the World Series.

In 1911, he went 17-5 with a 2.16 ERA, as the A’s became the first AL team to win back-to-back World Series. Bender threw 3 complete games in the ‘11 Series, winning games 4 and the clinching Game 6. In ‘13, the A’s won their third World Series in

4 years with Bender completing and winning Games 1 and 4. In 10 career World Series starts, Bender completed 9 games, won 6, and had an ERA of 2.44.

Bender coached in the minors (sometimes as player-coach) and major leagues after his successful big league playing career effectively ended with a stint with the Phillies in 1916 and 17. In 1922, he managed the International League's Reading (PA) Aces followed by a year with the IL Baltimore Orioles in '23. From 1924-1928, he managed the baseball team at the U.S. Naval Academy in Annapolis. In 1925 he was also on the coaching staff for his former teammate Eddie Collins' White Sox and made a one inning appearance on the mound. During several off-seasons while playing in the big leagues in Philadelphia, he sold sporting goods at Wanamaker's department store and eventually owned his own store.

Bender was born in Crow Wing County, Minnesota in 1884, a member of the Ojibwe tribe, and spent much of his early life living in poverty on the White Earth Reservation in NW Minnesota. He persevered through racist and demeaning comments from opponents throughout his career and was often caricatured in the press or portrayed as a cartoon. Despite the bigotry he often encountered, Bender maintained a kind disposition and was remembered fondly by teammates and those he coached and played for. Longtime roommate and fellow pitcher Rube Bressler said of Bender: "He was one of the finest and kindest men who ever lived." Respected for his intelligence on the diamond, Bender was a Renaissance Man, skilled at diverse interests including trap shooting, gardening, oil painting, and billiards. He lived to see his election to Cooperstown but passed away from prostate cancer in 1954 before his scheduled induction ceremony. He is buried in Roslyn, a Philadelphia suburb.

If you have an aspiring sports writer in the family that would like to contribute to the RPBL Newsletter, have them contact me, Chuck Fancher, at chuck.rpbl@gmail.com. Topics can be provided, or may be one's own. Material should pertain in some way to youth baseball.

Governor's Service Award Goes to Trevor Khouzami

In the spring of 2016 the trustees were presented an idea for a fundraising event different from others. Unlike the ones for funding our league operations, this one would leverage the RPBL name and organization to raise money for baseball teams in the Baltimore City schools. That September, Trevor Khouzami's idea - the RPBL Fall Classic Wiffleball Tournament and Home Run Derby - was played for the first time raising thousands of dollars for school programs. It has been played three more times since.

2020 posed a challenge to be sure, but undeterred, Trevor, now joined by Wyatt Winstead, have twice now engaged the players of Roland Park Baseball Leagues in online Fortnite tournaments to help fund food deliveries during the pandemic. These have raised roughly \$10,000 this year to bring food assistance to residents of our region affected by the pandemic.

For this and other charitable efforts, Trevor has been recognized by the state of Maryland with the Governor's Service Award. You can read more about that [here](#). Congratulations! Well deserved.

Trevor (left) and Wyatt working the 2019 Fall Classic Wiffleball Tournament.



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More to Look For

Travel Baseball: The tryouts for the spring travel season were suspended due to pandemic concerns. These will be rescheduled for sometime next year.

Baseball for All National Tournament: The all-girls tournament scheduled for Aberdeen, Maryland that was canceled last summer is planning to return this summer.

Cooperstown Tournament: As of now the Cooperstown tournament is expected to return this summer.

More details of each of these will emerge over the coming months.



PLAY BY THE RULES QUIZ

#1 - With a batter at the plate, the second baseman starts waving her hands wildly up and down in an effort to distract the batter. Was the second baseman violating a specific baseball rule?

#2 - With a runner on first base the batter hits a grounder that goes under the diving first baseman. The ball then strikes the runner. Which statement is correct?

1. The runner is out because the runner is always out when hit by a batted ball.
2. The runner is safe because the ball had already passed the first baseman.
3. It depends on whether the umpire judged the second baseman could have made a play.

4. It depends on whether the umpire judged that the runner could have gotten out of the way of the ball.

#3 - Can a run score when there is a triple play

Answers to Issue #7 Play by the Rules Quiz

#1 - Correct answer is "c," obstruction. The only other baseball term offered as an answer was "interference."

#2 - The correct answer is "true," at least according to how professional umpires are likely to officiate the play. The problem lies with the fact that the *Official Rules* fail to define the "act of fielding" a batted or thrown ball.

#3 - The correct answer is "c," ground rule double. The position of the ball when it is touched is the important thing in regard to whether the ball is fair or foul, not the position of the player.

#4 - The correct answer is "c," R1 scores and the batter-runner is awarded second. Advanced umpires are the ones who can correctly award bases on overthrows, and readily distinguish between interference and obstruction.

Answers in the next addition of the RPBL Newsletter. Past newsletters will soon be available at: [RPBL Newsletter Archive](#)
