

## ***Ottawa Tech Softball League Summary—2010***

*prepared by Ian Holden  
President  
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### ***Mandate of the Club***

The mandate of the Ottawa Tech Softball League is to provide the opportunity for adults to play softball with colleagues in an organized league each summer.

### ***League Executive for 2010***

Name	Title
Ian Holden	President / Website management
Tim Dall	Vice President / Diamond Coordinator
Daniel Cayouette	Commissioner / Treasurer
Brian Taylor	Registrar
Jim Alexander	Equipment Manager
Paul Miles	Scheduler / Website management
Leigh Thorpe	Exec at large (Past President)
Al Lounsbury	Playoff Coordinator

### ***Mission of the Executive***

The mission of the League Executive is to manage league operations with a goal towards maximizing the fun elements for those participating in the league. As required, the League Executive will make decisions for the benefit of the majority in league operations.

### ***Membership***

During the 2010 season, we had 17 teams register though only 16 teams participated beyond the end of May. One team was unable to combine with enough players from other teams to continue playing past the 3rd week of May. The league had over 240 players registered for the season.

Over the past 3 seasons, the number of teams in the league has remained somewhat stable with slight fluctuation either up or down. The last big drop in team count was in the 2007 season.

## *The Season In Review*

1. We affiliated with NSA Canada primarily to get indemnity insurance for the executive. For the team fees we paid we additionally received indemnity insurance for the team captains and additional health insurance for all participants. For 2/3 of the team fee, we received credits for NSA prizes which we used to create team prize packs at the end of the season.
2. We moved the Captains Meeting to occur after the end of registration which allowed us to make more concrete decisions since we knew the size of the league. For instance, we were able to get a consensus on the playoff format, tier format and league fees since we knew 17 teams had registered. Additionally, the meeting was announced as important (almost mandatory) indicating that decisions would be made at the meeting which raised the attendance. In the past, having the meeting during the registration period made too many factors hypothetical and harder to get opinions from team representatives.
3. For the regular season, the exec decided to place all teams in one single tier, everyone playing everyone once. In the preseason scheduling, with 17 teams in the league, this provided 17 weeks of a season. Team would play 16 games and have 1 open week as the "odd" team. Games were also not scheduled for the week of July 1st creating an open week for everyone thus forming the traditional 18 week period the league used. When the team folded in late May, the schedule was modified so that the team which was off for the week would now play in the game previously involving the folded team. Games from the 1st 3 weeks that the folded team had previously defaulted were now rescheduled using the same formula. In the end teams played 17 games over the 18 week period. Rescheduling games after the season had started was very time consuming.
4. Playoff format was determined at the Captains Meeting (not during the season as it has been in the past). Format decided upon was to break teams into groups of 4 based upon final standings. Within each group, teams would be seeded from 1 to 4 with 1st seed playing 4th seed and 2nd seed playing 3rd seed in the opening round. Winners of the 2 opening round games would then play each other for their 2nd game while the losers played in the other game. Team who won both games in the group was declared the group winner and provided some prize pack. Teams played one game on Saturday and one on Sunday with all games officiated by EOUA umpires.
5. For end of year prizes, in addition to items we ordered from the NSA, we distributed SloPitch Ontario bags that we had in storage from years ago. This collection of items allowed us to provide each team with 4 prizes that they could then distribute amongst themselves however they wished. This was intended as a "spreading of good cheer" since every team received something. Teams could randomly distribute the prizes to team members or use them to recognize specific team members for something during the season (most games umpired, most games played, best play of the year, etc) as they desired. Team prize packs consisted of
  - 2 NSA fleece blankets;
  - 2 SloPitch Ontario bags;Three of the group winners were provided with 15 NSA T-shirts while the top group winner was awarded a small trophy declaring them 2010 league champions.
6. Sportsmanship ratings were continued this season, with a general increase overall in the ratings. No team received a season average below Good (2.00) with the lowest rating being 2.47. During the season, we had the fewest number of Poor or So-So ratings submitted in the past couple of seasons. At the end of the season, the top 2 teams were rewarded prizes for having the best Sportsmanship during the season.

## *End Of Year Executive Report*

7. The single tier format had some supporters, some detractors and many neutral views. Without direct data, I do believe the single tier did help the league realize the highest sportsmanship ratings for a season in a few years. Teams also got to play opponents that they hadn't seen in many seasons. Lastly, while some may not have enjoyed all their games, especially if playing a team significantly higher than them in the standings, I do not believe we got it completely wrong in organizing the league in this manner. The league tends to have a couple of very strong teams and a couple of very weak teams with a whole bunch in the middle. Trying to determine where to split the league into half always causes the exec heartache trying to determine where to place teams. Consider that over the past 3 seasons, we've had 3 different league structures where historically the league was structured pretty well the same from year to year, with only slight movement of teams up or down in tiers.
8. Daniel Cayouette worked over the summer on updating our league documents to help better define the composition and roles of the Executive and extract some league Constitution or Bylaw materials from our league rules. This material will be published on the league web site before the end of 2010 so that league members can review it with an acceptance vote at the 2011 Captains Meeting. Daniel is also working on revising the Code of Conduct the league uses for managing issues that arise at games.
9. Jim Alexander created an excellent organization for the bins at the diamonds. Now many loose items are contained in boxes making it easier, for example, at a glance to see how many unused or used balls are in the bins.
10. The league bank account was moved from Comtech back to the Royal Bank (in Bells Corners). We've had an account at the Royal Bank for many years but with Carling Campus changing tenants, at some point Comtech will no longer be easily accessible to us.

## ***Equipment***

### ***Legacy equipment***

The league has a sizeable equipment base remaining from the past when we had 30+ teams that we provided bases, bats, and masks for. Since 2009, the league has only used the 2 diamonds at Carling Place (3500 Moodie Drive) and provides 2 sets of game equipment in the bins located at the diamonds.

Over the past 3 years we have continued to donate bundles of equipment to worthwhile groups that are identified to us as we reduce the stock that we are simply storing. We do not foresee being a league as large as we were 10 years ago and just storing the equipment unused from year to year doesn't make sense.

We do take the best available equipment we have on hand and replace what is in the bins at the diamonds each season.

This legacy set of equipment is largely stored in the lab 5 basement of Carling Place which we will lose access to soon so planning for relocation must occur.

### ***New equipment***

No new equipment was ordered for the 2010 season, other than sufficient game balls. For the 2010 season our game ball was 375 lb. maximum compression and .47 COR. We haven't ordered new bats since there are so many makes and varieties out there combined with players having their own personal preferences. Most teams provide their own team bats using the league equipment to augment as appropriate.

### Annual Projected Budget And Actual Spending

	2010 Budget	2010 Actual	Delta
<b>Expenses</b>			
Equipment	\$1,000	\$924	-\$76
Diamonds	\$0	\$0	\$0
Trophies	\$1,000	\$1,116	\$116
Playoffs	\$1,500	\$1,138	-\$362
Exec	\$175	\$106	-\$69
Web Hosting	\$175	\$187	\$12
NSA fee	\$1,620	\$1,530	-\$90
Misc	\$0	\$75	\$75
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$5,470</b>	<b>\$5,076</b>	<b>-\$394</b>
<b>Revenue</b>			
Cash Reserve	\$4,631	\$4,631	
Fees	\$2,400	\$3,400	\$1,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$7,031</b>	<b>\$8,031</b>	<b>\$1,000</b>
<b>EoY Cash Reserve</b>	<b>\$1,561</b>	<b>\$2,956</b>	<b>\$1,394</b>

#### Discussion of budget entries

The following will help explain the financials for 2010, showing what we budgeted versus what we actually spent. We entered 2010 with \$4631 in the bank which is more money than we need to carry between seasons. For the 2nd consecutive season we tried to minimize our revenue in team fees in order to use up more of this balance. Our original budget estimated we would have 12 teams in the league, based upon our thoughts that a few teams from the previous season wouldn't return. We did actually lower our End of Year cash reserve at the end of the 2010 season from the year before. We currently have \$2956 in the bank. Our target would be to end a season between \$1750 and \$2250 considering the expenses we have to pay to start a season before we have collected team fees.

#### Equipment

In 2010 we only spent money on consumables for the season - balls, lime, first aid kits and various storage boxes for the equipment bins.

#### Diamonds

For the 3rd consecutive year, we have solely used the diamonds located at Carling Place which cost us nothing.

#### Trophies

NSA Canada offered us \$60 of the \$90 NSA team registration fee back in prizes. In line with our desire to spread goodwill across the league, the exec decided to offer each team a prize pack of 4 items that

## *End Of Year Executive Report*

the teams could decide how to distribute amongst their teams. In addition each playoff group winner was given a prize set for their team. Lastly we honoured the top 2 teams in Sportsmanship ratings.

Our costs were slightly higher than we budgeted since we did not order our NSA prizes early enough so we had to settle on some items that were slightly more expensive than we had budgeted for.

Delivery costs for NSA prizes cannot be paid using \$60 portion of NSA team fees so will always be an expense. Non-NSA prizes were ordered through SGA Signs & Trophies in Bells Corners.

### ***Playoffs***

Our playoff costs are primarily for EOUA umpires. We required the services of 24 umpiring positions (8 for games on Saturday and 16 for games on Sunday using 2 umps per game). Additionally we continued to rent a Port-a-Potty for the weekend, located near the diamonds.

### ***Exec***

This category is used to cover meals for the executive following various meetings or during the playoffs.

### ***Web Hosting:***

The league web site is hosted through Sibername.com. The costs were slightly higher due to HST coming into effect this year.

### ***NSA Fees:***

As part of affiliating with NSA, we paid \$90 per team which primarily provided us liability and health insurance. \$60 of the fee was converted to prizes at the end of the season.

### ***Miscellaneous:***

The team that folded was refunded \$75 of their team fees.

### ***Team Fees:***

Teams were charged \$110 each to help cover league costs plus the \$90 NSA team fee for a total collection per team of \$200.

### ***Future Plans, Improvements & Lessons Learned***

This section is meant to capture thoughts or suggestions for future seasons. It is not guaranteed that anything listed below is guaranteed to be included in a coming season.

1. At the 2010 Captains Meeting, I announced that this would be my last season as League President. I've been in the role for 3 years and feel it is time for someone else to take this leadership role. I wish to continue assisting the league but wish to step down to the role of Web Master, improving our web site and web materials. As with any offseason period, members of the exec will consider their ability to continue in a role. We always welcome members of the league who decide to volunteer their time and/or expertise in the organizing and operation of the league.
2. Determine what prizes we want from NSA by July and get the order in so that we have a better chance to get what we want at the best prices.
3. Ensure we complete NSA roster registration properly to ensure league members can make appropriate insurance claims.
4. Recommend that if a team doesn't have the solid 15 committed members by the appropriate pre-season deadline, do not let the team continue. Modifying the schedules after the season has begun is too much work, unless you are simply going to forfeit all the games the team was to play. This still leaves the umpiring commitments for the team to be re-assigned in some manner.
5. If a single tier is not used next season, about the only recourse left we haven't tried is to run the season in two sessions. The first session would have teams play a limited number of equally ranked teams in a short round robin. Then based upon the results from this session, teams would shuffled if required and then a second session would take place. If playoffs are involved, they would be based upon the results of the second session alone. A week (two at the most) would need to be appended to the end of the first session to allow for rainouts to be played. Additionally, any game rescheduled should be rescheduled aggressively -- possibly later in the same week (e.g. a Monday canceled game might be rescheduled for Thursday of the same week). The rankings for the 1st session would be based upon previous season results, possibly reflecting playoff games also.
6. The Web site needs a utility for allowing teams to manage their own contact details.
7. At the Royal Bank, we are known as the "BNR/NT Mixed Softball League". A formal vote, with minutes, is required at the 2011 Captains Meeting to indicate a name change to "Ottawa Tech Softball League" which then can be presented to the Royal Bank. Or we continue to require the old name on any cheques or money orders paid to us.
8. We have a checklist for the playoffs that works well for us. We need the same thing for the complete season, covering pre-season, in-season and off-season actions with which league roles are responsible for what. A thought is to have this as a Wiki document on our web site since this allows for easy additions and changes in one spot. But having it in some form is necessary to ensure deadlines or actions aren't missed.

## *End Of Year Executive Report*

9. Should review NSA Canada's rules to see if there are ones we should adopt. Additionally a couple of rules came out during the playoffs (since we had official umpires) that we need to decide whether we create a league rule around or ensure all teams know the official rules. One was a ruling that a player could not be tagged out on a play at the plate - that the only play for the defense was to have control of the ball and touch the plate. The other was that there is now a difference between foul tips between Fast Pitch and SloPitch. SloPitch no longer requires an arc be involved in the flight of the ball to determine if a foul tip has occurred.
10. With the Canadian Government taking a long term lease on Carling Place campus and the current plans that sometime very soon we will lose access to the softball equipment storage in the basement of lab 5, the league needs to keep in contact with appropriate Real Estate primes. Who will maintain management of the diamonds? Who will be responsible for the landscape work in the summer?
11. With the Canadian Government taking over Carling Place, this could provide us with a source of people wishing and able to play late afternoon softball games in the west end!