

## ***Ottawa Tech Mixed Softball League Summary—2011***

*prepared by Daniel Cayouette  
President  
27 December 2011*

### ***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 2011***

Name	Title
Daniel Cayouette	President
Tim Dall	Vice President
Ian Holden	Commissioner, Website Management
Darryl Ryan	Treasurer
Brian Taylor	Registrar
Marc Gauthier	Equipment Manager
Paul Miles	Scheduler
Leigh Thorpe	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 2011 season, we had 15 teams down from 16 in 2010. The league had 313 players registered for the season with 211 men and 102 women.

Over the past 4 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 continued our affiliation 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. Our NSA contact was Leon <leon@nsacanada.ca>
2. We continued the practice to have the Captains Meeting to occur after the end of registration. This allowed us to make more concrete decisions since we knew the size of the league. We also identified clearly that a number of decisions would be made at the meeting and thus the attendance of teams was very good.
  1. The captains approved a constitution. The constitution clarifies how changes are made to the rules and to the code of discipline. It describes how a new president is chosen and how a new member of the executive is confirmed. It also spells out what happens if the league is dissolved.
  2. The captains approved the Code of Discipline. A few changes were also approved to give more discretion on penalties to the resolution committee. The resolution committee is now chaired by the vice-president and composed of 2 team captains that are not involved in the incident.
  3. The captains approved a new season and playoff format. This included continuing with a 1 tier format for the regular season and 4 groups of teams for the playoffs. The regular season was changed to a round robin of 14 games including a rain week. The playoff format was changed from a playoff weekend to a double elimination format during the week. Since there was no playoff weekend, there were also no paid umpers for the playoffs. For the top team group, independent umpers were provided.
  4. Another significant change was made to the umpiring for the regular season from an independent 3<sup>rd</sup> team to self-umpiring. This meant that teams did not need to send 2 people to ump games. This change was meant to further simplify the operation of the league and add more of a casual atmosphere to the games.
  5. The sportsmanship tracking and awards continued. Sportsmanship also now included how the other team did in their self-umpiring duties. This continued to provide information to the executives on the day-to-day operations of the league without having to attend every game.
  6. League fees and the budget was also reviewed and approved by the captains.
3. The federal government (PWGSC) took over the management of the Carling campus,
  1. The league was given till end of May to vacate the "Softball Cage" where the League's equipment was held. We informed the captains that we had decided to essentially stop maintaining a large amount of equipment. So, most of the equipment has been sold to "Play it again Sports" for \$500. The rest of the equipment has been distributed to the current captains and the "Softball Cage" was completely emptied by the end of May. The equipment manager, Marc Gauthier, also has a few extra pieces of equipment at his house.
  2. PWGSC Real Estate gave the league a verbal approval to use the Carling diamonds - Mark Pridmore [Mark.Pridmore@tpsgc-pwgsc.gc.ca](mailto:Mark.Pridmore@tpsgc-pwgsc.gc.ca).
  3. We never received an approved text for the player indemnity from PWGSC; so, we never proceeded to get any indemnity forms signed by the players.

## *End Of Year Executive Report*

4. We did not have any incidents this year which was wonderful. This was an improvement over the previous year.
5. For end of year prizes, each team was provided prizes from NSA of 2 fleece blankets and 1 ball hat. Each team could then distribute amongst themselves however they wished. The winners of each of the 4 playoff groups were provided with trophies.
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 2.54 which was an increase from the previous season of 2.47. The average range was between 2.54 to 3.31. The top 2 teams for sportsmanship was Double Diamond (3.31) and Bad News Researchers (3.23). Each team member received a prize for his or her achievement (a beer mug).
7. Considering the number of teams in the league, having 1 tier for the round-robin regular season and a longer playoff with 4 seeded groups tries to strike the appropriate balance. The league continues to have a couple of very strong teams and a couple of very weak teams with a whole bunch in the middle.
8. Darryl Ryan became the new League Treasurer. We also confirmed with the Royal Bank that all Leagues cheques continue to need to be signed by 2 officers of the League. We also officially changed the name of the bank account from "BNR/NT Mixed Softball League" to "Ottawa Tech Mixed Softball League". The current 4 officers of the League registered with the Bank are Daniel Cayouette, Darryl Ryan, Ian Holden and Leigh Thorpe.
9. Ian Holden became the new commissioner.
10. Marc Gauthier became the new equipment manager.

## ***Equipment***

### ***Legacy equipment***

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.

We have 2 equipment bins at the Carling East diamond and 1 equipment bin at the Carling West diamond.

Each captain also has a set of equipment (bases, bats, mask) that was distributed May 2011.

### ***New equipment***

No new equipment was ordered for the 2011 season, other than sufficient game balls. For the 2011 season our game ball continued to be 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***

**Starting Bank Balance: \$3,126.16**

<b><u>Expenses</u></b>	<b><u>2011 Budget</u></b>	<b><u>2011 Actual</u></b>
Equipment	\$1000.00	\$984.67
Diamonds	\$0.00	\$0.00
Trophies	\$1200.00	\$1527.76
Playoffs	\$1250.00	\$0.00
Exec	\$355.00	\$355.81
Web Hosting	\$200.00	\$201.14
NSA Fee	\$1600.00	\$1425.00
Misc.	\$0.00	\$0.00
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$5605.00</b>	<b>\$4494.38</b>

<b><u>Revenues</u></b>	<b><u>2011 Budget</u></b>	<b><u>2011 Actual</u></b>
Fees	\$3900.00	\$3750.00
Selling Old Gear	\$500.00	\$500.00
Correcting Balance	\$0.00	\$0.35
<b>Total Revenues</b>	<b>\$4400.00</b>	<b>\$4250.35</b>

<- Note: Interest

**Ending Bank Balance: \$2,882.13**

### ***Budget Summary and Assumptions***

We entered 2011 with \$3126 in the bank which is more money than we need to carry between seasons. For the 3rd consecutive season we tried to minimize our revenue in team fees in order to use up more of this balance. We spent significantly less than budgeted due to the playoff format change and not needed paid umps.

We continued to assume that we would be able to use the Carling diamonds at no charge. With this assumption, 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.

### ***Discussion of budget entries***

The following will help explain the financials for 2011, showing what we budgeted versus what we actually spent.

#### ***Equipment***

In 2011 we only spent money on balls for the season and to replace the lock on the east bin as the combination was not working anymore for some unknown reason. We did not spend money on lime as we did not have a playoff weekend. And, we did not need to replenish our first aid kits.

#### ***Diamonds***

For the 4th consecutive year, we have solely used the diamonds located at Carling Place which cost us nothing.

#### ***Trophies***

NSA Canada offered us \$60 of the NSA team registration fee back in prizes. Delivery costs for NSA prizes cannot be paid using \$60 portion of NSA team fees so will always be an expense.

We honoured the top 2 teams in Sportsmanship ratings. Since we did not have any playoff expenses, we decided to give trophies to the top teams of each of the 4 playoff groups. Non-NSA prizes were ordered through SGA Signs & Trophies in Bells Corners.

#### ***Playoffs***

Since we changed the format of the playoffs, we did not have a playoff weekend anymore. The largest playoff expense of paid umps was avoided.

#### ***Exec***

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

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

The league web site is hosted through SibName.com.

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

As part of affiliating with NSA, we paid \$95 per team which primarily provided us liability and health insurance. \$60 of the fee was converted to prizes at the end of the season. The \$95 was a bit higher

## *End Of Year Executive Report*

than the expected \$90 per team.

### ***Miscellaneous:***

There were no miscellaneous expenses this year.

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

Teams were charged \$155 each to help cover league costs plus the \$95 NSA team fee for a total collection per team of \$250.

### ***Selling Old Gear:***

This was an extraordinary 1 time cash inflow of \$500 based on selling most of our legacy equipment to “Play it Again Sports”.

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

This section is meant to capture thoughts or suggestions for future seasons.

1. 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 as soon as possible in early May and get the order in so that we have a better chance to get what we want at the best prices. We need to get something else than fleece blankets for next year.
3. To ensure that indemnity forms are done next year, the Registrar should prime the relationship with the federal government real estate prime - Ian McKim <Ian.McKim@tpsgc-pwgsc.gc.ca>.
  1. Ensure we complete NSA roster registration properly to ensure league members can make appropriate insurance claims.
  2. Ensure that contacts are identified for landscape work and diamond grooming during the summer.
  3. Identify whether some employees from the federal government may want to play softball.
  4. Ensure we have a sponsor contact in Ciena for the softball league.
4. Continue to 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.
5. Continue to use a single tier round-robin regular season.
6. The Web site needs a utility for allowing teams to manage their own contact details.
7. The playoff and regular season checklist and workflow should be reviewed and updated. 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.
8. The commissioner should review NSA Canada's rules to see if there are ones we should adopt. Specifically, these should be considered to add as league rules:
  1. 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.
  2. 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.
9. Update the code of discipline with the changes approved at the 2011 captain meeting.
10. Identify what would be done if we can not play at the Carling diamonds:
  1. Would city diamonds be available? How much and where?



## *End Of Year Executive Report*

2. Would we continue as a league?

## End of Year Captain Suvey

The following email survey was sent out to all captains:

To all captains,

We are preparing the year-end report and we wanted to capture your thoughts on the past year, the changes that we made and what to do for next year.

We made a number of changes this year to reflect our smaller size and to attempt to simplify our format. Tell us how that went. Please provide your response by end next week.

Specifically,

- How did the self-umping work? What were the benefits and disadvantages from your perspective? Would you want to continue this for next year?
- How did you find having everyone in 1 tier? Do you want to continue this for next year?
- Playoffs
  - We didn't have a playoff weekend this year but instead we had our playoffs during the week. What was the feedback from your team? Should we continue this or go back to a playoff weekend
  - The double elimination added a number of games to our playoff format. Was it too many games? Did that work out well? Should we continue this for next year or should we change back?
  - No paid umps. Due to the format of the playoffs during the week, we didn't get paid umps. Did that work for your team? Did you miss having paid umps for the playoffs? What should we do for next year?
- Sportsmanship. Is this still being useful? Should we continue for next year?
- More 6:15 games. This was critical to a number of teams for them to continue to participate. Did the time of the games work for your team?
  
- Are you planning on putting together a team for next year?

We are in discussions with Public Works for permission to continue to use the Carling fields for next year. We hope we can continue to use these.

Daniel

The results include the feedback from 6 teams. There has been no editing of the feedback from each of the 6 teams (except for one team's use of SUMMARY was removed to avoid confusion). There has also been no attempt to summarize or identify any trends in the answers. Overall, this feedback will provide input among others to the next captains meeting where decisions on the next year will be made.

- How did the self-umping work? What were the benefits and disadvantages from your perspective? Would you want to continue this for next year?

1. For the most part, this worked well, but some umps do it clearly in favor of their teams. The benefit is that teams don't have to worry about umping duties. I would like to continue but I would like the league to come out with stronger word that teams must have COMPETENT and fair umps.

2. For the most part I think it worked well. It did take us a while to get into a routine of making sure the umpires were in their spots in a timely fashion and to make sure we were sharing the duties amongst the various people at the game. A few people that are reluctant to umpire got more practice than they usually do which is good. It was a bit hectic when we were a person short but that's our problem. It could be my imagination but I think it made the games feel more "casual". (Not that they were terribly serious to start with.

The only complaint that comes to mind was the variability of the strike zone between umpires. Given that you can have different umpires between innings or sometimes mid-inning, it keeps the pitchers on their toes in terms of figuring out what is or isn't a strike.

3. "I think that the self-umping worked well overall. The benefits were that we were always guaranteed an umpire and I think that everyone tried to be objective and it added to the fun of the game particularly when your own team started to razz you. I would like to see it continued."

4. It worked well enough.

## 5. Definitely prefer self-umping!

6. Saw few problems with it, although I never saw the old system with dedicated umps either. The only time it was a bit challenging was when we had a small team, bases loaded, and few people left to ump

- benefits: no hassle of providing 3rd team umpires; disadvantages: for me, having to self-ump is distracting and takes away from enjoyment of our own games. I think i prefer 3rd team umpiring

- I agree with the distraction comment, but I didn't mind it enough to offset the value of not having the hassle of lining up umps for games.

- The self-umping worked well most of the time, but it is hard for a team to rotate umps according to the line-up, especially if the team is down a few people

- no preference for next year;

- How did you find having everyone in 1 tier? Do you want to continue this for next year?

1. It was hard to play with the upper teams. Specially, when we don't have 10 players because of summer vacations. Maybe there can be two tiers, and the bottom two of the top tier and the top two of the bottom tier can move up and down.

2. Some games were more lopsided than others but generally it seemed to be okay. Definitely better than being the worst team in the top tier. Not sure what else could be done given the small number of teams and the different skill levels.

3. " There was quite a disparity in the team's abilities and I think that two tiers would be better to make the games more competitive, given that we were only 14 - 15 teams total."

4. Being one of the top teams, it wasn't that bad.

5. There is never an easy answer here...tiers are ok, but not if they are too small (less than 6 teams is too small, imo). There are lots of creative ideas to make tiers mid-season and stuff, but I know that's much harder for the scheduler.

- 6. Sure, I think we'd plan on being Tier 1 anyway.

- 1 tier was fine. I guess it depends on number of teams next year as to whether we continue with this format.

- Everyone in 1 tier is good because we get to play a variety of teams, both good and bad - continue this for next year;

- Playoffs

- We didn't have a playoff weekend this year but instead we had our playoffs during the week. What was the feedback from your team? Should we continue this or go back to a playoff weekend

1. I think this worked well and we should continue.

2. Awesome - my guys definitely liked playing during the week as opposed to arranging their weekend around softball.

3. "My team liked it. Historically we always had a few no shows on at least one of the weekend games because of other commitments. I would like to see this format continued."

4. We really enjoyed the new format.

5. Having the playoffs during the week was good. Might want to look at the playoffs starting a little later (in Sept so that it doesn't conflict with August vacations though).

6. Definitely prefer the in-week format.

- While it is nice that everyone gets to play, I missed competing for the whole ball of wax. All said though, I think this was better. It was also better to have week games as it isn't easy to get people for weekend games.

- Playoffs during the week is good, it would be harder to get people for a full weekend - continue this for next year;

- The double elimination added a number of games to our playoff format. Was it too many games? Did that work out well? Should we continue this for next year or should we change back?

1. I think this worked well and we should continue.

2. I think it was okay. A few folks pointed out it that it seemed like a lot of games but really it was roughly the same number that we used to play during the regular season.

3. "We were eliminated after two games so I can't comment other than it seemed like a good idea."

4. We really enjoyed the new format.

5. The double-elimination format was excellent...keep it !

6. I liked having that many games.

- I liked playoffs during the week this past season. As for format, i thought double elimination had too much variation in scheduling and number of games - anywhere from 2 to 5. I'd rather see a round robin (4 team groupings), or single elimination (8 teams?) with A and B side depending on win/ lose 1st game.

- The additional games for double elimination are great - continue this for next year;

- I thought the best change was splitting the playoffs into groups; It made every game a good challenge.

- No paid umps. Due to the format of the playoffs during the week, we didn't get paid umps. Did that work for your team? Did you miss having paid umps for the playoffs? What should we do for next year?

1. If I remember correctly, I think we self-umped and there were some big disagreements. I think playoff make self-ump worst. I remember thinking that we should have paid ump.

2. Nope, don't need or want the paid umpires for the playoffs. Having the

umpires adds a "seriousness" to the game that isn't warranted - at least at our level anyway.

3. "I didn't miss the paid umps and I heard many comments from my team that they were glad to save the money."

4. Luckily we had impartial umps for our last 2 games. The fact that they were not paid umps did not matter.

## 5. We don't need paid umps.

6. yes, bring it back for playoffs! I'd also be keen to have paid umps during season (i don't mind paying higher fees for it).

- Paid umps would be worth it for playoff games, just to avoid arguments in heated games - get paid umps next year;

- Sportsmanship. Is this still being useful? Should we continue for next year?

1. Most of the teams have been around for a while so we are all used to each other. But once in a while, a few players do show poor sportsmanship. Although sportsmanship won't stop that, at least, it rewards teams that keep the game enjoyable. We should continue.

2. Not sure what my feelings are about this. This somewhat goes back to my comment about the games feeling more "casual" this year. With a couple of exceptions everyone seemed rather relaxed this year and I think that got reflected in the ratings which means the change in format had more influence on everyone's behavior than the ratings. I guess it doesn't hurt to keep it around.

3. " Yes I think so. I think it encourages teams to play and to also have fun doing so."

4. Always thought it was a waste. I thought that the umps should be the ones assigning the rating; not the other team. Scrap it!

## 5. This is useful to identify if there is a team with repeat "problems", but that's useful for YOU more than me, so you choose ;-)

6. not useful, let's drop it for next season

- Sportsmanship is good because it encourages people to behave - continue this for next year;

- More 6:15 games. This was critical to a number of teams for them to continue to participate. Did the time of the games work for your team?

1. This is ok until towards the end of the season when it gets dark earlier.

2. We are somewhat the opposite in that we have people that can more easily make the 4:45pm games. We can handle 6:15pm games but generally get fewer people out to those games.

3. "My team preferred the early start time and most of our games were that way."

4. We collectively preferred the 4:45 games but 6:15 worked OK.

5. We prefer the early games, but the number of late games was acceptable.

6. I liked a mix of both time slots, although I'm bit biased as I work beside the fields

- 6:15 games are perfect, no rushing after work - continue this for next year;

- Are you planning on putting together a team for next year?

1. I'm not the captain but I think so.

2. Yes.

3. "I think that we can field a team again and that would be contingent upon costs and where we would be playing the games."

4. Yes

5. Yes

6. Yes