MEMBER'S SURVEY – 2025

Managers' Survey comments in black.
Managers' Survey Review Committee comments in royal blue.
Supporting rule, or other information (relative to item).
Recommendations from the Survey Review Committee to the Rules Committee, or board, in red.

Positive Feeback:

- I had a very rewarding experience this year and only wish I could have played more games. The league continues to listen to new ideas and does a very good job of implementing them as well as monitoring them to see if they are fair and feasible for the league. Only positive things to say about all facets of the league and both glad and proud to be a member.
- As a 2nd season player in over 70 league, I'm grateful to my team member's encouragement throughout the season. Even some on other teams we played.
- I believe my Thursday morning finished last, I had fun meeting and playing with some guys I didn't already know. Great camaraderie! No bitching here! You guys did a great job in 2025, thank you.
- This was my 3rd year playing a full season schedule, and I want to thank all those involved in putting together the games, the events and the seasons for all of us. Even if we don't often say it, I know all the members appreciate everything you do. Keep up the good work.
- I thoroughly enjoyed the league and camaraderie surrounding the players. I had a blast. I wish I could play more, smiles.
- Thank you again and the others for their hard work making this league a success.
- Thank you for your email. I was happy with the 2025 season. I had a lot of fun and can't wait for 2026. No real feedback on my end.
- Thanks for a fun yr!!!!! Thanks for conducting this survey!!!!!!!!
- It was another great year! Keep up the good work!!!
- Overall, I think the 2025 season was great.
- All good from my viewpoint.
- For the most part I think the league is running pretty well and appreciate the time and effort put in by all the volunteers to make it happen! Thanks for all you do.
- This was my first year of playing and I really enjoyed it. I have no major complaints or suggestions for improvement at this time. Looking forward to playing again next year.
- Thank you for all the things and time you do to keep the league going.
- I don't have a lot to say, but I wanted to respond so you didn't think that your email was not ignored or not read. This was my first year playing in this league. I enjoyed it! Of course, winning helps a person to have a little more fun. Everyone seemed welcoming and for the most part had a good attitude and friendly competition. I really don't have much to offer. I would like to ask if you could list me by my middle name. Instead of Donald, I go by my middle name which is Dwayne. I appreciate your organization and you reaching out to your members.
- no complaints. see you next year.
- All in all, the Sr League is pretty awesome. Thanks for doing what you all do to let us keep playing within our age groups.
- Overall, I think things are running pretty good as far as organization and communications. Thanks, for all that the officers do to keep senior softball growing in the area.
- As this was the first season in the last 33 years that I did not manage a team, I don't have any insight into issues that may have come up during the year regarding the administration of any specific conference. As "just a player", I thought everything ran well and the teams in the Tuesday Black Bob, Thursday Draft and Saturday Competitive conferences played hard but had great sportsmanship. The equalizers applied for all of these conferences seemed about right.
- I joined the league in spring of 2022. I have found that I like playing senior softball and have met many players who have similar likes. For the most part I have noticed everyone getting along and joking all together. In all keep up the great work.
- Just wanted to say that I had a lot of fun this season. I really have no criticisms to share. I played for the Saturday morning orange draft team coached by Rich t. and he did a fine job. I think that I somehow played every inning of every game in one capacity or another except for two innings. League representation never seemed to be lacking as Gary Pycor never seemed to be too far away. Anyway, thanks to everyone for a great season and I'm looking forward to playing in a couple pick-up games before it gets too cold, See you at the Dec. meeting.

We (KCMSSL management) want to thank all who actually responded to our survey—i.e., those above—with your positive comments, along with anyone else who may (behind the scene) echo some of the same sentiments as those above.

Lifetime Membership:

- I have heard that when you turn 75 years young you don't have to pay player dues. I turned 75 this year and will celebrate another year around the Sun in February. Can you explain how this may work.

  This member has already been contacted on this, but for anyone else who may not understand the criteria qualifying someone for "Lifetime Membership", it is this. Each member will still pay his / her membership dues in the year he / she turns 75. Each year thereafter, the member's dues are waived, or are free. However, the member does need to notify their manager, or conference coordinator of their Lifetime status each year so he / she can contact one of our database's Administrators in order to mark the Lifetime Member's record accordingly. Otherwise, their manager will NOT be able to add him / her to the team roster. If you still have any questions, please get in touch with management.

The Cost of Playing:

- If the league needs to cut costs at all, the teams could umpire themselves and use a plywood home plate to assist in calling strikes like my teams do in Florida.

  Any conference wishing to "trial-test" umpiring their own games are welcomed to give it a try. As a matter of fact, although it is not yet been finalized, we had already been in discussion on this matter and have targeted one of our conferences to be a trial test conference for this idea.

- The team price for Hartman was surprisingly high this year. We had more teams than usual, which led me to think the price per team would have been lower.

  As it was explained to us, yes, there was one more total number of teams added to this conference this past season (lost one, but added two). This instituted the need for the use of all 3 fields at Hartman on Wednesdays. That creates a higher "field prep" cost, and the additional team generated additional games on the schedule. Thus, higher overall team cost.

All-Star Games / Picnic:

- I liked having the all-star games at Black Bob.

  Good to know.

- all-star weekend was a blast. The food was excellent. Oh, my one suggestion would be to have the home run derby when no games are going on so everyone can watch it.

  Thanks. We were also aware of the need to re-shuffle the skills portion of that weekend's events this past season. It was our 1st year at Black Bob, but we've been reconfiguring things, around the skills events, the past few years…attempting to come up with the perfect solution. We realize the HR skills contest, or "Derby", seems to be a time-consuming activity (combined with the other skills events). We've already devised "yet another plan" in an attempt to address this problem at next year's event.

ADA Assistance:

- Lastly, is there a way there could be a cheap display of the game scores for each game. The flip kinds with red and blue color background would be sufficient. I'm legally deaf and it helps to see what the score is. It could be hung on the fence at eye level behind the umpire.

  We have investigated purchasing a "flip score card" unit for the games in which this person participates, but foresee possible issues with the follow-through from those who would need to be willing participants. We have contacted this person's team manager in an effort to address his needs.

"North of the River" Conference:

- To get more people to play I would really continue to try and get a draft league going north of the river. My son lives up there and signed up but there were not enough players to make league. Thank God for Barry!!!!!!!!!! He found a league my son could play in on Sunday at Black Bob but it was a long drive from Liberty! Thank you, Barry!!!!!
- It would be great to get a league up north again, for us living north of the river it's a long trip to Olathe or Lee's Summit.

  This item will be an agenda discussion item at our upcoming Annual Membership Meeting. Anyone wishing to address this desire, in greater detail, is asked to be at the December 6th meeting. KCMSSL management is also in favor of a "North of the River" conference…but we need participants to make it happen. Only had 12 signed up to play this past season.

Sportsmanship:

- This is not a complaint, but just a comment. One player was on the roster for the team we were playing against, but didn't bat nor play on the field (he expected to play). So, we (The Rebels) added him to our roster for the night. There were some conflicts surrounding that issue.

  Understandably agree this would have caused problems. It was cooperatively-nice for the Rebels to demonstrate empathy towards this player, but hopefully this will not present itself again…so as not to generate any conflicts.
- Although, you could add a "no whiners" clause for a couple of the managers who taking every little thing way too serious. 😂😂😂 Some of us are just here trying to have fun and maybe win more than we lose.

  Yes, understand. But, there's a saying (somewhat) relative to this problem, "It takes all kinds (or sorts) of people to make the world go 'round". As much as we'd like for everyone to not be whiners, "It takes all kinds…."

Competitive Conference Configuration:

- Teams on Monday night Hartman Park women's have been asking for years for the organizers / coordinators to make a schedule of double headers. If we can do it on Thursday night--with even less teams, why is there such an issue scheduling double headers for Monday nights with more teams. Players come from all over KS and MO to play in this conference and therefore, double headers just make more sense. Solution? Go online, find a double header schedule for "x" number of teams for the Monday night women's softball conference. AGAIN, we've been talking about this for years.

  This is a matter compromise between the teams and the conference coordinator(s) on a number of fronts: First, all games would have to start earlier, so that the lights wouldn't shut off before the start of the 4th game. Starting earlier would also complicate the players getting to the fields on time for that 1st game. If all 3 fields were known to be available, we could utilize all of them. However, as mentioned in the item immediately above, use of all 3 fields would add expense (for field prep) to the overall cost of the conference. But again, if the two sides can agree / compromise, and / or the fields are available…yes, it is doable.
- A strong effort should be made to keep the Saturday morning competitive session at Roe (or elsewhere) going in 2026. Please give some open-minded thought to reversing the draft/competitive start times next year. Again, our leadership can puzzle this out. FW is probably not available Saturday mornings but the solution might be to find a place with four fields that is.

  We do need to have the players / teams willing to play in this conference, and be available to play. As of right now, we are not aware of teams being available. Bobby Gregg (coordinator) is only anticipating two teams returning. A 3rd team could be composed of players from the two disbanding teams, but someone would need to push that along, and right now no one has stepped up.

  This topic is scheduled to be part of the upcoming Annual Membership Meeting's agenda…to make members aware of the need for additional competitive teams on Saturday morning, in order to keep the conference alive. But if that does not happen, the hope is those wishing to play on Saturday will sign up to play draft.

Draft Conference Configuration:

- Like the visual draft versus the blind draft.
- I enjoy playing at the Frank White fields on Thursday. Keep that going!
- Love the change of playing games at Frank White Junior Park in Lee's Summit on infield turf.

  Glad this has worked out. But we know we did not please everyone. We did lose a few former participants (from both conferences combined) as a result of this move.

- The Monday and Thursday draft sessions at FW were well administered despite the difficulty of balancing affiliated players and unaffiliated players. Bravo to the coordinators. In addition, despite a few field issues, Frank White provided an enhanced environment. The coordinators and their assistants kept it fun.

  Discussions are scheduled to be had in an effort to address the so-called "tournament" players whose routine / periodical absences from participating causes conference-wide byes to occur. We cannot guarantee a one-solution-fits-all agreement to come from these discussions, but we are aware of the issue and are attempting to come up with a viable solution.

- I played on the blue team on Tuesday nights, till I injured my back so I'm impartial but I watched the lady manager who was a very good player manipulate the roster by bringing in younger better players and the competitive difference between the rest of the other teams was significant. I am of the opinion that if you speak with the other managers in my managers they would confirm this. The draft league is supposed to be a somewhat level playing field and if you look at the records of the 4 teams it is apparent this was not the case. I'm not sure how you go about regulating this but it needs to be looked at. Thank you for your time.

  We want to, first of all, make it known that the President (Clint Berger) and the Draft Conference Director (Barry Gordon) participated in each of the "blind draft" conducted for the 4 draft conferences we had this past season. Each one was truly a blind draft. That being the initial case, this report was also presented to the Independence Draft Conference Coordinator and we feel his response (below) shows he was not biased to any team, was not blind to what situations occurred that night, nor does it indicate any manipulation occurred. Even the best teams get "blown out" from time to time…could that have been the case here…can't say.

  In July she indicated 2 of her best players were hurt and didn't play for a couple of weeks (&) and might not play account of injury. She said had a friend that he was
  going to have come out. I usually don't have managers recruit their new players but I let this happen as I believed
  the Blue team needed a player and we didn't have any extra players at this time.
  The Blue team usually only had 10 or 11 players show up all year. I tried to assign new players to the Blue team
  but other teams were needing players from week to week to have eleven players, (Gold & Red) so the extra players
  were used there.
  I don't know if she had lesser players regularly not show up, I don't want to believe she did this.

  wasn't showing up to play & I called him & he said he had decided not to play this year, I didn't ask why.
  was suffering leg injuries and had back injury that kept him from playing after July 1st.
  didn't start playing until mid-June and then probably only played 6 or 7 times.
  I believe was only there about 8 weeks and was injured and didn't play the last 4-5 weeks.
  and only played 2 or 3 weeks also.
  New players to Tuesday night probably played better than they were rated. ( )
  Since a player from the Blue team reported this, they must have seen more than I could tell from the times the team I was on played against the Blue team.

- On a more personal note, I am still a working senior and work about 55 hours a week during daytime hours, so joining any other draft leagues during the week has not been a reality for me. And any other evening leagues seem to be too competitive for me to join. I have always tried to work a notch above my skill level because I find the criticism motivating and therefore rewarding, Rise to the challenge, you know?

  We do our best to accommodate the needs of our membership—relative to providing them a venue that matches. We also realize we can't have a conference without the necessary number of participants. At the same time,

some claim we don't attract the numbers needed (for a given conference) because we've "saturated the market", so to speak, with too many conference options. So, we try. As they say, d*mned if you do, and d*mned if you don't.

Field Conditions, or Surroundings:

- Unfortunately, this would cost money but getting better lights at Heritage Park would be awesome. Everything else is fine as far as I'm concerned.

  Totally understand, and agree, on the poor lighting at Heritage. I just talked to Cathy Seals (at Johnson County Parks & Recreation) and unfortunately, they have no plans to make any improvements (for 2026 at least) to those fields.

- I enjoyed my 2025 draft season games out at Roe Park on Saturday mornings overall. Really can't think of any suggestions needed other than we're all seniors and we really need a porta potty right by the fields. I'd be willing to pay an increased draft fee to cover the additional cost.

  We've addressed the distance to the restrooms, from the fields, with the city of Overland Park more times than we'd like to recall, which involved the suggested option of providing a porta potty closer to the fields. Our request was denied due to aesthetics, maintenance, vandalism, health reasons, etc. Sorry, but even though we have a very good relationship with the city of Overland Park, we do not see the current scenario / option changing.

Length of Games:

- Change all games to 6 innings. Make 6th the unlimited inning. No matter if score is 3-2 or 18-17 after 5. This will eliminate times we think the umps short us on time and I know it has happened in the past.

  Great solution to the games which you (or others) feel you were shorted relative to your allotted 50 minutes before the "open inning" is declared, but since you play your games at 7:30 / 8:30, I'm going to sadly say that setting the 70's games--prior to yours (at 5:30 / 6:30)—would more-than-likely push your games later into the night. Our suggestion, if you feel you are getting short-changed...have the manager, scorekeeper, or one of the fans synchronize their watch, or phone with the umpire's announced start time…and then set an alarm to go off 50 minutes later.

- Consider playing 2 innings at a time versus in and out every inning.
- This was my first year in the League as we recently moved here to Olathe. I have previously played many years in both Illinois and Arizona. I really enjoyed the League here and getting to know many of you. Most of our League games did not go the full 7 innings due to the time limit. We typically finished only 5 or 6 innings. My suggestion would be to do what we do in both Illinois and Arizona - we play 2 innings in the field and then 2 innings at bat. We do clear the bases after 3 outs, but we do not leave the field. This really speeds the game up and it is rare that we don't play the full 7 innings before the time limit ends. I am already looking forward to next year.

  The two responses above were suggested more than once since 2016, and ultimately implemented about….3 years ago, at our Black Bob Park venue. We have data indicating more innings did get played. However, the overall idea went over like a lead balloon. Flip-flop scenarios in the first game of a double-header combined with the same team being on defense starting the 2nd game seemed to be our biggest complaint. May be a mental issue, but was simply not accepted…so we are where we are. Guess we are going to need some more converts to your views on this before the idea is going to fly here in KC.

- The only thing that annoyed me was the start time for the Tuesday night Black Bob 65 and over. The start time for those games is listed as 7:30 but we never start until after 8:00. We all arrive at 7:00 to warm up then sit around for 45 minutes waiting to play. It would be great to change the start time to 8:00.

  This item / suggestion has been passed along to the Tuesday night Black Bob coordinators. Any such decision to change the start time for the 2nd set of double-headers at any one of our venues is, honestly, a coordinated decision to be made between the team managers and the conference's coordinator(s).

Game Times:

- Due to getting old and stiffer I only played in the Saturday draft league and it was a great time again!!! The 10:00 time was perfect for guys like me, that need a little more time to wake up and stretch!!!!!!! Last year I played in Saturday draft and then the competitive league right after which was too much for my body/mind.

  Along with the George Bernard Shaw saying we have on the home page of our website, he also is known to have owned this one, "Youth is wasted on the young". Meaning?... young people, while possessing energy and opportunity, often lack the wisdom or perspective to appreciate and use these advantages fully. In contrast, older people have the wisdom and experience that could have made better use of their youth, but they no longer have the physical advantages of it. Glad you are enjoying the Saturday morning conference.

Length of Season:

- I was disappointed in the short second season for Tuesday night, Black Bob 70-year-old conference. I may be wrong, but it seems we've typically gone to at least the end of September and maybe early October. I'm not sure why we had such a short 2nd half of the season.

  The availability of players / teams towards the end of September, and maybe even early October, has to be a consideration the conference coordinator is responsible for taking into account when the schedule is comprised. The coordinator's routine job is to survey the team managers relative to that matter. Sure, your team may have wished to play into October, but if your opposition is not going to be there to play you, it's simply not going to work. And if it's not going to work, then it makes no economic sense for the players / team pay for games what are not going to be played.

- It's Oct 20th and the weather is perfect for softball. But we spent July just trying to survive the heat while coordinators anxiously watched the weather app. Changing an organization like KC Metro is akin to turning a battleship but please apply some thought to creating a smart schedule for both draft and competitive leagues in 2026. That schedule might end the first session around July 4 and start the fall session around August 15. I'm sure savvy heads could figure that out. The break would help heal hamstrings and provide a convenient time for vacations. We're not twenty somethings any more.

  In all honesty, this response is being written on November 13th, and tomorrow's forecasted high temperature is 75, with clear skies…a spectacular day to play ball. But this past Monday, the morning low was 19 degrees, with flurries the night before. If someone has a weather crystal ball, you have a wonderful future ahead of yourself.

- Along the same lines, it made little sense to truncate the fall Tuesday session at Black Bob 70-plus after just five weeks, one being a bye. The stated purpose of ending the session before the Vegas tournament was puzzling to players not affiliated with tournament teams. We certainly wanted to play on those fine evening before and after Vegas. Heck, we could have played comfortably the last week of October in perfect softball weather. What's the hurry?

  Agree, no argument here. However, as stated in the first response above, all of your team's players may have wanted to play week-in and week-out, but you've got to have opposition teams to play. If your conference coordinator did his job, he surveyed the team managers in your conference to find out how many of them wished to play a 5-week 2nd schedule (ending in early September) versus a 10-week schedule, which—with Vegas Worlds involved—would have extended into October…when the tournament teams are back, but non-receptive to playing league ball anymore.

Players / Team Ratings

- As far at the ratings system, I am a true believer that the league is a 50 and over league and you should NOT get a reduction of your rating because of your age as it increases. I say this because there are a lot of 55- and 60-year-olds that are better ball players than some people that are 49-54 years old but these younger guys have a higher rating. Also, if you are 55 years old and older you choose to play in the 50-year-old league.

  Sorry, but we are responsible for addressing the bigger picture on this. We've claimed, since the start of the rating system, that it is not the perfect solution to the problem. But it is better than what we had prior to it being in place. Simply stated, if there are 55–60-year-old players that are not rated properly, then maybe they need their skills reviewed. And if they have already been reviewed, and the problem is felt to still exist, then maybe the 49–

54-year-old players need to be put forth for a skills review. But again, is the process perfect?…NO…but we are always open to tweaking the functionality, parameters, criteria, etc., of the system. So, feel free to provide us (Clint Berger – clintberger@hotmail.com) with any suggestions you have.

- I think the current league structure is limiting players. For example, in golf deciding which tees to play is often based on age, the older you are the farther up you tee off - the reality is you should choose a tee that matches your ability/handicap and not base it on age. Low handicap's tee off from back tees and high handicap's move forward and tee off closer to hole. I think we have the same issue with our leagues - except for all the leagues are considered "competitive" and automatically discourage less skilled participants. Blue Valley Rec has softball divisions grouped from A, B, C, D, E - the most competitive being A and working down the alphabet to the least competitive. If you win your league you move up, if you finish last you are given option to move down. I would like to see all leagues be 50+ or 2 leagues of 50+ and 65+ and then create divisions with similarly skilled teams grouped together. It would solve the problem we had on Tuesday with only two 65+ teams and yet there were players 65-69 that wanted to play, but there was no team for them to play on. If we have a 65+ league they could play for any team even if it was mostly 70 yr olds. Bottom line I think we could grow the league if we opened it up to all seniors and then grouped the teams by skill level instead of age - I think you could get a number of draft players playing in the night leagues in lower skilled divisions. This was much longer than I wanted it to be- probably because there isn't a simple solution to growing membership and participation. Let me know if you want to discuss or brainstorm how this would work.

  Not all of our conferences are "competitive" conferences -- https://kcseniorsoftball.org/?page_id=6773 .
  Yes, our Tuesday night Black Bob had only two 65+ teams. Yes, because we do not throw everyone into a one-fits-all conference and then try to separate them into divisions. Our conferences are based on age, and then based on skill levels within each age group (as a result of our player / team rating system). So, I think we're both accomplishing the same results, just taking different routes to get there. Sorry to say, we do not foresee making all conferences 50+, or even 65+. We simply cannot perceive the Dick Skinner's of our organization safely playing in a 50+, or even 65+ competitive conference…no matter what division he would be slotted into.
  The reason we were unable to find teams for the small group of 65–69-year-old players looking for a team on Tuesday night was because the majority of our teams have a stigma towards taking on more players than they feel is appropriate for their roster, or it's because they don't know the person well enough to absorb him / her on their roster.
  As to draft players playing in a night-time conference…most (but not all) draft players have issues seeing well enough at night. Yes, the majority of our members playing in the daytime draft conferences are retired from work, but those daytime conferences are attractive to our older, retired members simply because they are able to see during the day, but not at night.

Equalizers:

- As far as which team has to give runs due to a higher team rating, umpires should know which team needs to give runs and which team receives runs before the games start. I am not sure how well the umpires are communicated with regarding this before games but every week the umpires have no clue regarding this.

  OK, but from what we're being told (by all competitive conference coordinators) is that the equalizers are noted as such on each game's score card given to the umpire before the game. We will, once again, remind the coordinators accordingly.

- I play in the Tuesday's Over 75 yrs at Black Bob. I think that a team should have to choose whether they want the extra player in the field or take the runs, but not both. When a team has both, the other team is at a disadvantage. Please discuss this situation at your next meeting.

  Unsure of this report. This item was sent to the Tuesday night Black Bob 70+ conference coordinator (since we do NOT have a 75+ conference) and this was his response, "We did the run equalizers the same way in both divisions and all teams always played with 11 defenders."

- The biggest downfall is the points rating and "handicap points" being a high silver team playing in gold is tough. Trying to keep guys on the team year after year while getting smoked most of the time by tournament teams is the reason. being

rated a high silver against a high gold and receiving 3 or 5 points is not even close. I have no solution other than the board rates the players instead of the league. When the opposing team does it, all 10's come out for competitors and all 3's or 4's for players on your team, just to get a 3- or 5-point advantage.

Going to dissect this item into multiple responses below:

The thoughts relative to being the team receiving the 3, or 5 runs is always the same, "It's not enough". And the thoughts from the team giving the 3, or 5 runs is also always the same, "It's too many to overcome". It's just a matter of "on which side of the fence" you are.

It would be a bad situation trying to have the board rate the players. Currently, if we get a 10% response rate (on a player rating review) from the player's "peer" group, we are happy. And just for clarification, the player's "peer group" are those players with whom, or against whom, the subject player plays. The 15-person board's response rate, simply because the board members would probably not know the player, would be cut in half, if not greater. Thus, a single review response would not justify a player's rating results.

All 10's from the opposing team!! We realize that's an exaggeration, but just for the record, the player rating process has been in place for 9 years now. We've probably conducted around 500 reviews…with some players being reviewed more than once. We've had ONE person, during those 9 years, who responded with all 10's. All 10's would be a perfect player—never makes an out, never makes an error, etc., etc., etc. Anyway, in case anyone is unaware, our review results are broken down into a 3-layer set of numbers.

- The 1st layer are the raw data response figures.
- In an effort to alleviate "outlying" responses (such as all 10's, or all 1's) effecting the end result, the 2nd layer removes the top two, and bottom two responses of every 10 responses received
- And the 3rd layer removes all responses from the teammates of the player being reviewed. This is to eliminate any perceived collusion from teammates.

All that being part of the process, the final results are based on at least two of the three layers' results being the same. We have never even come close to having all three layers being different.

- I'd like to go back to not having to earn your handicap run. if we are at our bottom of the line up, we may go 3 and out and get no runs.

  Just for clarity, this "earning of each equalizer run each inning" was a test of the equalizer runs at Heritage Park only for the 2025 season. The scenario presented here was something we were aware of when we agreed to test it at Heritage. We realize that "earning" that equalizer run each inning is much easier to attain for stronger teams—i.e., those with a stronger line-up top-to-bottom. The weaker the conference, or team, the tougher to score that runner from 2nd base. This extent of this test rule will be reviewed / discussed further in our January Rules Committee Meeting.

Game Cancellations:

- I have a huge complaint. You HAVE to do something about the weather. We had sooo many heat outs or rain outs that I can't remember if we played more than two weeks in a row more than twice.

  OK, who "ticked-off" Mother Nature?? 😂 Hopefully the claims relative to "climate change", if that is some of the basis for the excessive heat-outs and rain-outs, are unsubstantiated and things will get back to a normal routine going forward.

- We've been thru this already, I'm simply reiterating it. We're adults. We sign waivers accepting the fact that if we get hurt, we can't hold the league liable for injuries etc. Every single one of us understands the risks of old men playing ball, and clearly, we're ok with it. Speaking on behalf of my team, we don't want OR need to be babied. I think we had games canceled twice this season due to heat, meanwhile, I had already done the weekly roll call for my team both times, and everyone was showing up, and not one player complained one word about the heat. I acknowledge that part of this issue was the conference coordinator calling the games once when he shouldn't have. What I think should happen moving forward is if it's forecasted to be hot at first game time, the league should contact the managers before any decisions are made, to find out if their players are still willing to play. If team managers are claiming not being able to field a full squad because of players telling them that it's too hot for them, that's one thing. But if they're not having this problem, LET US

PLAY! I'll say the same exact thing I did when this subject came up because of Covid, which was, "I checked with my mommy, and she told me I could play"...

Yes, we (as the Board) realize every player has signed the referenced waiver—in order to participate in the league. For those who wish to reference that waiver (which the vast majority probably have never done), you may do so here—as part of your online record: https://leaguesheets.com/league/6#player .

That being said, all of the almost-1,000 of us "realize" the risks of playing ball, and yes, we all claim we are OK with it…until we're not!! There's an old saying that applies to our general public outliers… **"You can't save people from themselves,"** which means you cannot force someone to change if they are not willing to, and sometimes the best you can do is just offer support. This phrase suggests that individuals must be the ones to make the choice to change their own behavior, often paired with related sayings like, "You can lead a horse to water but you can't make them drink".

Again, yes, each member's record possesses a signed waiver, but the governing body of the KCMSSL is still responsible to you—and to your loved ones, including your mommy—to NOT to have a single one of you die on the field during one of our league games. For those who may not recall, that has happened in the past…NOT a good feeling. It is because of this concern we conducted a heat-index study and added the resulting guidelines to our website: https://kcseniorsoftball.org/?page_id=31 . It is somewhat amazing how we use common sense when we can "see" the unacceptable playing conditions—like when the fields are under water, or we suspend play for 30 minutes when lightning strikes within 6 miles of the field. But we have trouble seeing the same warning sign, when maybe an even greater cause for our safety exists—when the heat index exceeds 100°.

Yes, all this said, we know some of you will still claim you're a "big boy" or a "big girl", and that you have checked with mommy and she agreed to let you play, but we feel it is still our responsibility to decide when the playing environment becomes too unsafe to continue. We could discuss where that line is, but clearly there is one. We have determined that when the RealFeel heat index reaches 100, play has become increasingly unsafe for players--and for umpires, who (by the way) get very little respite from the direct sun. Some would argue the index line should be lower, others that it should be higher. Regardless, in each case, there needs to be a line. If anyone wishes to make a reasonable argument either way, simply submit that request to the Board for a policy change. Additionally, you are free to request to run for a position on the Board. And once elected, you can lobby the rest of the Board for a change to our guidelines.

We could change policy to simply say a player can decide not to play at any time due to field or other environmental conditions. Most of us recognize, however (in line with your "we are big boys and girls" thought), that very few players want to be accused of "wussing out" and possibly leaving their team short of players. The urge is to "play through it." Ultimately the issue for the Board and others, who have considered the heat index issue, is not liability…i.e., we are not concerned about avoiding a lawsuit. Our first priority is the safety of all the players, umpires, and others attending a game.

All that said, we (the Board and others involved in this issue) appreciate your comments and those of others. They cause us to think, discuss, and consider the existing league policies on any given topic in light of those comments.

Umpires:

- Have the umpires carry a rulebook. We've had a few "mishaps" during a game where people were confused on league rules.

  Some of you may be too young to recall this old saying, "We can give them books and give them books, but they just chew the covers right off". We're unaware of anyone reading something if they absolutely don't want to. Our rule book is distributed to all managers, and the individuals in charge of providing us our umpires, at the beginning of each year. Mistakes / Oversights happen no matter who's involved. There was a call at the SSUSA World Championships in Las Vegas this past September whereby the Umpire-in-Charge errored on a call. It happens.
- We did have one umpire who seemed like he was looking for issues. I don't know his name, but he was of course male, white, I believe he had a beard and a pretty big beer belly. He just didn't have a good attitude and no sense of humor.

Almost like he didn't want to be there and maybe he didn't. He kind of put a damper on the games he worked. I might be forgetting something, but I just love to play even though I seem to have lost a lot of the skills I used to have. I look forward to playing again next year.

We know, and are aware of, the subject umpire. The issue is somewhat self-defeating. Call The Game (who we use to provide us umpires) is, as all similar businesses across the U.S., is struggling to find umpires—in general, much less "good" umpires. We can ask not to have "X" umpire do any of the games at a specific venue, but you may then end up without an umpire at all…which (jokingly) you may prefer, but is it what you really want.
With that being said, nothing has been finalized yet, but as an alternative we are entertaining the possibility of using the Tuesday night Independence conference as a test conference for self-umpiring our own games in 2026.
The comment above could be one reason for this test, but another reason is simply because that is part of the overall individual cost our members are having to pay in order to play our games (Parks & Rec. fee, umpires, lights, insurance, softballs, etc., etc.). So, sharpen up on our Rule Book. 😂

- I played at Black Bob 55 league Tuesday nights for Voodoo. <u>The umpiring was very good. One umpire even ran from behind the plate to get a better look at the plays at 2nd base!</u>

  We are aware of this umpired. A very good one…one that you feel may have made the wrong call, but because he gets-out-from-behind-the-plate, you are less prone to argue the call, or get upset with him because of the call.
- I really don't have any complaints. Sure, there are times when an umpire makes mistakes calling the player safe or out, but who hasn't made some sort of misjudgment.

  Absolutely.

Marketing:

- For greater participation & new players I would strongly recommend promoting fun for all skill levels and saying don't worry about not having played for a long time or even never having played that there is a place/team for them.

  Sadly, we do promote "fun for all skill levels", but it's a VERY tough sell. We are, admittedly, not doing a very good sales job on this. We see the lack of results ourselves. Wish we knew the answer. If anyone has the magic answer, please share with us.
- I'm not sure how or if this can be done but I think we could attract more members by linking to local recreation and city, county, state organizations to facilitate sign up. Places like Blue Valley Rec, City of Olathe, Overland Park, Johnson County, Kansas State Games, etc

  We are working on providing more exposure to our organization going forward. We used to only be on Facebook, but we have, just recently, been added as a group to Instagram, LinkedIn, Nextdoor, and soon-to-be on X. We, at the same time, attempted to get added to some of the local sports, and city sites, but was met with reluctance to help promote organizations attempting to sell the same product.

Rules:

Flip-Flop:

- "Flip flop" If one team is dominating the other team, how many points do they need to be up in order for the losing team to continue batting going into the "open inning"?

  Not sure if this question is in reference to the "Mercy Rule", or our "Flip-Flop Rule". **From page 12 of our 2025 Rule Book:**

  Mercy Rule: All games will have a mercy rule and shall end as follows: Scheduled 7 innings games will be 20 runs after 4 innings, and 15 runs after 5 innings. Scheduled 9 inning games will be 20 runs after 6 innings, and 15 runs after 7 innings. The Sunday Men's and Thursday 35+ Women's Conference will not have a Mercy Rule.

  Flip flop rules: When the unlimited-run inning starts, if the home team trails by at least seven runs, the original home team will bat first and bat first throughout the remainder of the game; the original visiting team will bat after the home team's final out only if the home team ties the game or takes the lead. In addition, if the visiting team does not have a seven-run lead entering the inning, but its lead reaches 10 runs in the top of that inning, the

teams will flip flop at that point. Managers and umpires shall note any runners on base, and the current batter, in case the home team ties or takes the lead. If this happens, the visiting team will finish its at-bat after the home team's final out. The flip flop rule will be printed on the back of each score card that the umpire will have. Note: Any manager who refuses to follow the mandatory flip flop rules will forfeit the game.

Pitching Screen:

- Please take a look at what I consider to be the least sensible game rule we have. It's never affected me, but I've seen it hurt teammates. That is counting a ball that strikes the pitcher's screen as the courtesy foul ball. A player hits the ball between the foul lines, into legal territory and because he hits an artificial piece of equipment that's there to protect the pitcher, he gets penalized. It doesn't seem fair. Hitting the screen, no matter the ball or strike count, should just be a no pitch and a do-over.

  Yes, the screen is there to protect the pitcher. We agree on that. But we, currently do not see the need to change the following relative rule. Guess we have trouble understanding what's is so negative about our rule…since the batter is allowed to repeatedly hit the screen without being called out for a 3rd strike foul. **From our Rule Book:** Any batted ball striking any portion of the screen as observed by the umpire will be declared a dead ball and foul ball. A batter can use up his courtesy foul by hitting the screen but cannot foul out by hitting it. Thrown balls are in play.

Home Run Rule:

- It is my belief that the silver league home run limit should be the same as the gold league.

  It would seem as though the best-case scenario here would be to play with the 1-up home run rule. That would deviate from our default rules, but due to the short fences at Heritage, it would probably be deemed acceptable by our Rules Committee.

- Lowering the homerun limit for an advanced team may be an option, let's face it, they can hit the ball when and where they want. it would at the least, give a team a defensive play to stop the runs. Gold league should be a 4-team batting practice for their weekend or world tournaments and the rest of us move down to silver and give runs.

  It would seem logical that the conference coordinator, in cooperation with the team managers, would be able to logically determine which teams need to be correctly positioned in the Upper division, and which ones belong in the Lower division…**IF** the vast majority of the participating teams' players' skill ratings are as accurate as can be.

Runner From Home:

- I'm glad the rule was changed allowing outfielders to throw out courtesy runners at first. One other change would be that if the courtesy runner can be thrown out at first, then he should also be allowed to advance.

  From our Rule Book:

  Courtesy-runners-from-home will be limited to a "single only" on the initial hit, no matter where the ball ends up in the field of play. However, all ground rules apply to the courtesy runner–on a ground rule double, or HR, and an overthrow that goes out of play or in a dugout, the courtesy runner advances as usual (awarded 2B, HR, or second base respectively). A courtesy runner from home does not advance on any passed ball or overthrow that does not go out-of-play or in a dugout. All runners already on base, can advance as many bases as possible, at their own risk, with each batter's at-bat.

  It's pretty much a given that a batter utilizes a courtesy runner because that courtesy runner is faster than the batter he / she is running for. Thus, the organization's compromise to allow outfielders to throw the courtesy runner out at 1st base, if possible.

  Another compromise is taken into account when NOT allowing that courtesy runner to advance past 1st base on the batted ball. It's safe to assume the "speed" skill, as part of the overall skill rating of the batter, is probably at the very low end of the rating scale…otherwise, why would he / she have a courtesy runner. With that being said, we're already altering the skill rating of the batter, and thus altering the overall team's rating, by allowing for the batter to have a courtesy runner from home plate. Thus, we feel it's fair, or a compromise, to not allow the courtesy runner to have the freedom to go past 1st base on the batter's batted ball.

Extra Innings:

- The extra innings rule due to a tie game should be clarified for all members to understand. There was some confusion among players and umpires regarding this rule.
- Extra inning. One pitch, one swing, correct? There was an allowance of a foul ball and umpire allowed the hitter to hit again.

The following is how the "test" One-Pitch extra inning rule for Heritage Park was presented to me by Monte Johnson—Thursday night's conference coordinator. If the Rules Committee agrees we want to put this in our Rule Book "as is", or with changes, then we will proceed accordingly.

For 1-pitch, it is either a ball/walk or a ball in play. Otherwise, it is an out with the exception of a ball that hits the pitching screen is a dead ball and then the batter gets another pitch. We implemented this at the start of this year as a Heritage-specific rule (only for extra innings). I believe the only difference from the description below is that we were counting a foul ball as an out.

GENERAL RULES FOR ONE-PITCH SOFTBALL (pulled from the internet)

In One Pitch softball, each batter gets only one pitch to put the ball in play. If the pitch is a strike and the batter doesn't swing or misses, the batter is out. If the pitch is a ball and the batter doesn't swing, the batter walks. If the batter hits a foul ball, they get one more pitch.

Here's a more detailed breakdown:

- One Pitch: The core rule is that each batter gets one and only one pitch per at-bat.
- Strikes: If the single pitch is a strike, and the batter doesn't swing, or if they swing and miss, the batter is out.
- Balls: If the single pitch is a ball, and the batter doesn't swing, the batter is awarded first base (walk).
- Foul Balls: If the batter hits a foul ball, they get another pitch.
- Fair Balls: If the batter hits the ball in fair territory, the play continues as normal, with outs and base advancement determined by the play.
- Other Rules: Some leagues may have additional rules, such as progressive home run rules, run rules, or roster batting, but the core "one pitch" rule remains.

Force out:

- How can we get around the bases loaded man on third situation? To avoid an automatic double play when a ball is hit to third baseman and he steps on third and tags out the runner that is headed to home plate. Someone did state that you can step off third and back on again to be considered "safe". I don't know the rule book on that.

We going to preface our response by stating that we hope we are understanding the sentence (highlighted in grey above) correctly:

The only way we see the runner on 3rd being able to step off the bag, and then come back again to be safe, would be for:

- the 3rd baseman to step on 3rd to force the runner from 2nd,
- and then the 3rd base-runner stepping back onto the 3rd base bag—if he had stepped off the bag to begin with--before the 3rd baseman is able to tag him.

But then there was no real need for the 3rd base runner to step off the bag to begin with, because if the 3rd baseman steps on 3rd first (before he tags the runner), then the runner never really has to leave the bag…since he has the right to stay on 3rd once the 3rd baseman steps on the bag to force the runner from 2nd.

There "is" a right way, and a wrong way to get that double play.

- The **RIGHT** way: The 3rd baseman has to tag the runner first—even if he is still standing on 3rd base. At that point that runner is out. Why? Because once that ground ball is hit, that 3rd base runner no longer has a right to 3rd base. That right belongs to the runner from 2nd. The 3rd baseman tags the runner out, and then steps on 3rd to force out the runner coming from 2nd base.

• The **WRONG** way: The 3rd baseman steps on the bag first (to force the runner from 2nd), and then tags the 3rd base runner—thinking he concluded a double play. If that occurs, the runner on 3rd base never has to leave 3rd base. He can remain on the bag because the force from 2nd base has already been eliminated. But if he does leave 3rd, and decides not to cross the 3rd base commitment line (to go home), then he has to return to 3rd before the 3rd baseman is able to tag him out.

Uniforms:

- The rule, if any, needs to be clarified regarding uniforms (do all players need to have matching shirts?).

From our Rule Book:

Each team will provide team jerseys bearing numbers at least six inches tall on the back with no identical numbers. As long as the team's name on the jersey or shirt is the same, the jersey or shirt can be a different color or design. Should two players have the same number, their manager must notify the opposing manager.
Borrowed and loaned players must wear their own team jersey.
PENALTY: Teams must give one run per out-of-uniform player to the opponent per game.

Loaned Players, Teams short on Players:

- The rule needs to be clarified for last-minute pick-up players or subs and where they can play in the field and bat and how it effects the team rating.

If the following (below) does not answer the concerns for this item, please contact Clint Berger – clintberger@hotmail.com , or 913.481.7937 for further discussion. **From our Rule Book:**
Short-handed teams may borrow league members, **only if they are short players**, to fill in as long as the player's age-adjusted rating is equal to or lower than the team's rating. Example: A High Silver team (with a maximum team rating of 6) can borrow #6, or lower number-rated players but no #7 or higher rated players. (For other rules involving "borrowed" players, see N.1.a. and specific rules for Women's, Co-ed and Draft teams.)

You can replace an injured player with a borrowed player (following all borrowed player rules) however the next time at bat for the injured player will be an out. After that out is taken, the borrowed player will have the ability to bat in the injured player's spot in the line up. The injured player may not return to the game.

1. Ten defensive players constitute a team in Platinum, Gold, Silver and Bronze divisions. Eight roster players must be present and ready to play at game time to prevent a forfeit (Exceptions: See N.2). Men's teams made up of all 65+ players, will be able to play with eleven (11) defensive players.
a. BORROWED PLAYERS. A team may borrow up to two league members only if they are short players, the League Members who are borrowed must have player ratings that are equal to or lower than the team's rating. Borrowed players must be declared to the umpire and opposing manager before the game. Failure to abide by this could result in a forfeit. Borrowed players must bat last in the lineup. If a borrowed player plays any position other than catcher, right field or right center field (for teams with eleven (11) defensive players) his team will give two runs for that borrowed player to the opposing team at start of the game, except for the Draft Conferences. When roster players arrive, they will replace borrowed players in the lineup. (See also Rule B on Page 9.)
2. Teams made up entirely of players age 65 or older may use eleven defensive players. These teams may borrow up to three players to complete their rosters. Borrowed players must be at least age 65 and meet ratings rules. If a third borrowed player plays any position other than right-center field, the team will give two runs to the opposing team at the start of the game.