

## **Northwest Washington Little League Prep Baseball**

For nine years NWLL has organized a prep division for players who are 13 years old. All players who are either currently 13 years old or will be 13 years old on April 30, 2010 are eligible to play. Stated differently everyone in our majors division this past spring who was 12 years old as of April 30, 2009 is eligible to play prep ball this fall. I am writing to encourage you to register to play in the prep division this fall. If your son or daughter wishes to play in both the prep and majors divisions, you may register for both, but pay just the fee for the prep division.

In many ways our prep division is a transition between Little League baseball and baseball as it is played at the high school level and beyond. In addition to introducing leading and stealing (and all that goes with it), the biggest change in the game will be in the size of the diamond. We play on the 75-foot diamond, which is half way between the 60-foot Little League diamond and the full 90-foot diamond. This intermediate or transition distance (sometimes called the "Pony league" distance) is recommended by many responsible, professional coaches urge for this age group. We stress skill development without forcing younger kids to face what many find to be the overwhelming physical challenges of the 90 foot diamond. Our play at this distance keeps kids in the game while they grow and develop.

Teams in the prep division will be coached by paid professionals. We have been very successful in the past in attracting extremely good coaches. Among our past coaches are John McCarthy, Antoine Williams, Rodney Brock, Bobby St. Pierre, and Pete Robinson.

NWLL Prep baseball has been remarkably successful, not just because of the outstanding coaching the players have had or the skills they have learned, but because of the large numbers of kids who have kept playing baseball and advanced to high school teams.

Our players will be asked to make a greater commitment than had been the case with their Little League teams. They are required to take responsibility for their equipment, be prompt and present for games and practices and learn the essentials of becoming an athlete. The financial commitment is greater as well, primarily because of the need to pay the professional coaches. Our registration fees are \$280 for those who register before August 1, 2009 and \$300 for those registering after that date. As always, NWLL is committed to providing every child an opportunity to play regardless of financial circumstances. Anyone who would like to request a fee waiver should feel free to do so.

The prep teams will play at Friendship on Sunday afternoons. The season will start after Labor Day and will continue through the beginning of November. Games will be at 4:30 initially. As the days get shorter we will try to move the start times up.

This will be my first season as the new commissioner for Prep/Senior division. My 12-year old son will also be playing in this division this fall, having played in the Majors this past Spring. For those who don't know me, I have been active as coach or assistant coach in the Majors, AAA, AA and T-ball for the past 5 years. Please contact me via email ([amberreal@aol.com](mailto:amberreal@aol.com)) or phone (202-256-3922) if you have any questions.

Glenn Williamson, NWLL Prep and Senior Commissioner