

## Juuust A Bit Outside # 9

I hope everyone had a very special and Happy Thanksgiving. Also, I hope Black Friday didn't hurt too much. It's been a minute since the last newsletter. Lot's happening. Here we go.

In all the previous newsletters I always knew where to start but this one is more difficult because there are several topics to address. So, guys, **we will have 16 teams this season**. Last-minute confirmations pushed us from 15 to 16. Last minute dropouts have made finalizing teams a bit of an issue. More than the usual number of injuries and surgeries kept about 20 of our regulars from competing on teams this year. We look forward to the return of all who wish to play.

We have **new C.P. Softball bat stickers**. All bats need to be approved by one of the six bat approvers...Jim Beatty, Arlene Johnson, Sue and Tom Green, Rich Ickes and Barry Seabrook. New stickers need to replace the present stickers. Read the bat specifications in the rules section of C.P. Softball website.

FYI...I have commissioned **Joanne Thomas to research the history of C.P. Softball**. We are attempting to compile as much information regarding our champions, records, leaders and more. We still have great resources living in the park. We hope to have some of the information included in our **2026 Yearbook which will be coordinated by Jeff Bennett**.

Near the end of last season **smoking areas** were defined and posted on the bulletin boards and C.P. Softball website. We are adding to this a **No pets in or near the stands or Tikki Hut policy**. Service dogs on leash are permitted wherever necessary. You are certainly welcome to bring your pets to the ballfield on leash and stay on the grass area north of Diamond 1 and from the center field scoreboard to the right field foul pole behind the outfield fence... On Diamond 2 from the left field foul pole to the right field foul pole behind the outfield fence. There have been issues with folks stepping on and tripping over pets and getting entangled with leashes. Other issues have been lack of clean up and constant barking.

The **pitching screen** has certainly been a conversation starter and ender over the last year or so. **There will be a vote regarding the screen issue on January 2, 2026, at the 8:00am Men's meeting in the Royal Palm**. There will be two choices.... basically, without all the verbiage right now, the screen width will be 30" and screen height will be 6' for either choice. **Absentee voting** was approved for those who cannot attend...vote by e mail: [dangerome24@gmail.com](mailto:dangerome24@gmail.com) by Thursday, January 1 at 6:00 P.M

Option 1. Screen is mandatory for all pitchers

Screen is placed 30 feet from home plate

Pitch must go over the screen and not around it, or else illegal pitch

Pitch hitting the screen is illegal

Batted ball hitting the screen is a dead ball

Pitcher must remain behind the screen until the ball is hit

Thrown ball hitting the screen is in play

Option 2. Screen is optional. Pitchers not using the screen must wear face mask and

Shin guards

Screen is placed 6 feet in front of rubber offset right or left

Pitcher will pitch the ball from the right or left of the screen and then must

Move behind it until the ball is hit

We are playing this pre-season with both rules by alternating weeks so that most will have an opportunity to experience both and make a more informed choice. Last year's screen rule came out of concern for the safety of our pitchers. With that rule in place **no** pitchers were hit by a batted ball. Only 3.5 batted balls hit the screen per game on average. Narrowing the screen width from 48 to 30 inches has added to the pitchers' defense and the batters up the middle offense. The older screen rule worked as well. It gave pitchers choices to use the screen or just gear up. Leaving the screen out there all the time would save some time. We all would be doing the exact same thing each pitch. There are pros and cons to each choice. You should choose what is most important to you. Lots to think about but whatever the vote comes out that's what we'll do and end the drama of the screen.

What the heck does **veer** mean? I believe a dictionary says it means **to turn right or left**. For our purpose it means **don't run into another player**. We will have this issue clarified for all very soon. This preseason we played with slide or give up.

**Random notes...**The commitment line from 3<sup>rd</sup> base is 25' from the back of third base towards home by our rule. It has been only 20 ' for some unknown reason.

Opening day games could be backed up from 9:00am to 10:00am to be more realistic and to accommodate a few special presentations.

**The last day of fall ball will be Wednesday, December 17. Traditionally, teams have been announced mid-December and that will hold true this year as well. We are planning a team reveal party after the last game(2:00pm ?) Wednesday, December 17<sup>th</sup>. Hot dogs beer and hopefully a large video screen showing one team at a time on a 4 minute loop.**

I will update all as things evolve. Please talk with me in person, by phone, email or text if you have questions, suggestions or concerns. 216-973-8598

Danny