

## Juuust A Bit Outside #14

I was thinking I might begin this rendition with the joke I didn't tell at the banquet. Well, I can't because there really wasn't one. The banquet did have its positive vibes. The awards were all well received and well deserved. The presence of Tom Sowinski's daughter and son-in-law was memorable to say the least. The realization that the guys who were just like us were 80 years old and getting jackets was a wake-up call. We all should be looking to do the best we can as long as we can.

Quality Cabinets had an outstanding season and post season. Dr. Mead had an awesome turnaround and came so close to busting through the doors and drawers. Congrats as well to the One Pitch Champs the Red Bulls. November 3 to March 25 went by way too quickly. I cant wait till November 2.

Other stuff of interest to some will be the fact that 187 men have already signed up for next season. Some are reserve sign-ups, but we probably already have enough for 16 teams in the hopes of getting close to 18. Many new folks signed up later in the season and some will be coming off the injured reserve list. **Also a note here: we hope to not put a new reserve on a team until we have seen him play at least two games as a sub. Often rating day does not really do justice to the players' true abilities.**

We could possibly be playing all teams once and one random team twice for 18 games. This is all speculative, but possible. If the women have five teams of 10 again next year their game times will be 9:00 and 10:30. 10 players opens more area for hits and runs and longer innings. That would put the men playing at 12:15 and 1:45 Mondays and Wednesdays following the women. Some men's games may have to start at 9:00 but I think **that** sun is uncomfortable whereas the 3:00 sun is a major safety hazard.

More stuff...we are looking for someone or some group to pick up the Superbowl Squares fundraiser. If you or a buddy would like to take this over that would be a great help to our league's coffers. We have two entertainment fundraisers set for next season. One is a comedy show titled Moms Unhinged with three female comedians and the other is The Rolling Stones sound alike band.

With the retirement of Jim Beall as our IT and communication master, we will be looking at someone to pick up where Jim left off. Logistics still to be worked out as Jim will stay on as a guide until the transfer is complete.

After 12 years playing at Citrus Park, I'm starting to think about how much longer I have to do this thing we do here...think we are still as good as we were back in the day. Some guys seem unbreakable. Some are cracking a bit and some are questioning playing or managing or coaching or watching. My best friend back home in Ohio says it's simple. You were a coach so do an evaluation of yourself. Are you helping your team in some way. Can you hit, catch, throw or run well enough to make a difference. Can you protect yourself safely? ( I know I should wear a helmet and probably not slide). Do you know the game well enough to manage or coach? I'm sure I'm not alone with these questions and would welcome any advice or thoughts from those in the same situation

Thank you time! There is no way I could do my job as Men's League President without the help of the many volunteers who work tirelessly to make this softball league possible. There are some however that I must single out for being available to answer my questions and give me their guidance. Number one is Sue Gerome, my wife of almost 54 years and my best friend for 59 years. It's where I turn for common sense and objectivity. Jimmy Beall, the most conscientious caretaker of the league. Spike was always available to answer questions regarding league history and always full of...league knowledge. Ian McGuffin was meticulous regarding our league rules and policies. Sheila Fowks made working with women and men's league issues an uncontentious and amenable operation. Gary Fulton and Jeff Bennett were willing to do whatever task was needed. I hope to be able to count on these folks and others to help guide me through my role as League Executive Board President for the '26-'27 season.

I'm hoping to continue Juuust A Bit Outside for at least another year. Please use this vehicle to ask questions or give suggestions regarding league issues or the Cleveland Browns.

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No Joke!