

2021 KIRKWOOD ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION BASEBALL NEWSLETTER

A belated welcome to the 2021 season at the Kirkwood Athletic Association, as we (technically) begin our 61st year of serving the youth of St. Louis! Each year we listen to feedback from managers, coaches, parents and players in an effort to improve the baseball experience at KAA, and 2021 is no exception.

Unfortunately, Covid-19 had other plans for KAA in 2020. Unprecedented disease (and St. Louis County) kept us out of the park for all but a few weeks in the Summer and forced us to make some very difficult decisions in order to keep the park open in 2021. RIGHT NOW, it looks like we will be able to play league games AND tournaments in 2021, albeit with the Covid-19 restrictions we put in place last Summer while we were open. Park improvements for 2021 include additional flood resistant upgrades in the concession stand, and throughout the park, to help minimize the chances of a repeat of 2019 and the continued implementation of Covid-19 protocols, which will be posted around the park and on our website. KAA has continued its partnership with Engage Sports of Des Peres, MO, to provide online registration, as well as improving our scheduling and rainout makeup capabilities. On our website, coaches can register, pay league fees, and check standings, all from the comfort of your favorite electronic device.

KAA is also happy to announce a closer partnership with Greater Midwest Baseball in 2021. GMB will increase its presence at KAA allowing for more tournaments and greater competition, all while keeping the same price structure for KAA league teams. Eric Hooper will have more details about GMB's increased presence at the park on the GMB website: www.greatermidwestbaseball.com.

In 2021, KAA continues our policy of no work duty for parents, nor mandatory fundraising, while continuing to ensure good competition, umpiring and fields. In 2020 we had over 110 teams play league baseball and softball. While several of those have "graduated" out of KAA, we are receiving numerous inquiries about space for 2021. We have tried our best to simplify registration and payment procedures for 2021 given our website capabilities. If you are a team with a 2019 or 2020 credit, please contact our office directly for additional information on properly applying those credits in 2021.

RIGHT NOW our plan is to begin league play for both baseball and softball the first full week of MAY. We realize that is a month later than usual, but we want as many people as possible to get vaccinated and perhaps get a tournament or two played before our regular season

begins.

We will continue to have our 4 free practices, in April instead of March, and as a way of saying thank you, we are increasing the league schedules to 14 games for baseball (and 12 for softball) WITH NO INCREASE IN PRICE.

PAYMENT SCHEDULE FOR TEAMS FOR 2021

Team deposits of \$500.00 per team are due **NO LATER THAN April 1, 2021**. The balance of the league fees, or \$1250.00, is due two weeks later, or April 15, 2021. The 2021 fees will remain the same at \$1750.00 per team for live and machine pitch leagues. As another way of saying thank you, teams will **NOT BE** wait-listed this year. Please note, for returning teams, the slot remains with the manager of record in 2020, **NOT THE TEAM**. If the 2020 manager is not coming back, he/she must send an email to the office advising who they are designating for their slot, if anyone. The slot can be designated to only one person.

ALL teams should register online at KWDA.com. ALL TEAMS now have the option of paying by check OR credit card.

KAA will provide game balls for each league contest, including machine pitch games. 5U & 6U teams will be notified when they can come to KAA to pick up their 6 game balls.

MANAGERS MEETING:

We will schedule a VIRTUAL managers meeting in the near future, most likely the second week of April. Additional information will be provided as soon as possible.

We highly recommend that you have a team representative present for this meeting

FREE PRE-SEASON PRACTICE FIELDS:

Once your deposit has been received, you may schedule your team's four free preseason practices at KAA. These fields are provided on a first come/first serve basis until filled, and are shared with KAA softball teams, as well, on the same basis. These practices must be at the same time and on the same day each week and will last 1 hour and 50 minutes. Practices will begin on **Saturday, April 3** and conclude on **Saturday April 24, 2021**. In the event of inclement weather, the fields will not be available for practice, and no rescheduling will be available. The KAA rainout line and Facebook page will be updated daily regarding field conditions and availability.

LEAGUE SCHEDULE:

The 2021 season begins on Monday, **May 3, 2021**, and is scheduled to run through **mid to late July** depending upon rain out reschedules or Covid-19 issues. Teams can register for 2 divisions of play, assuming there is room, just not in the same age group. The exception is 8u, where teams may register for both machine pitch and live pitch (so long as a separate fee is paid for each).

Baseball games will typically be played on Monday, Tuesday and maybe Friday evenings as well as an occasional Wednesday or Thursday evening for the older age groups. We will make every effort NOT to schedule league games on Fridays or Saturdays in order to accommodate tournament schedules. In the event of double headers during the season, every effort will also be made to avoid split doubleheaders.

*KAA will, for the first time, offer a **14** game season, with **9** games completed considered a full season. In the event of inclement weather, KAA will provide rainout make-up dates; our first rainout makeup weekend will be in June; other dates will be in July. In the unlikely event a team does not play at least 9 games, a credit for the missed games, up to 9, may be issued for 2022. KAA DOES NOT PROVIDE CASH REFUNDS FOR GAMES WHICH ARE NOT PLAYED.*

REGISTRATIONS & RESCHEDULING RAIN OUT MAKE-UPS THROUGH THE KAA WEBSITE

Through the Engage Sports system, KAA has the capability to allow teams to register and pay online for leagues. Rainouts of league games can be taken care of as well UNLESS KAA ADVISES TEAMS THAT AN ENTIRE NIGHT IS BEING RESCHEDULED. As our tournament partner, GMB will handle registrations for “house” tourneys through its website: www.greatermidwestbaseball.com

GREATER MIDWEST BASEBALL & KAA “HOUSE” TOURNAMENTS

We are excited to announce that we are again one of the host complexes for Greater Midwest Baseball. GMB will host tournaments at KAA during weekends throughout the season, dates to be determined. KAA league teams will receive a \$25 per team discount for any “house” tournaments as in the past when KAA ran them. GMB’s website is www.greatermidwestbaseball.com for registration information.

FIRST TIME 5U & 6U TEAMS

New teams, which are paid in full, will be provided up to 15 shirts and hats, as well as initial team equipment, consisting of catcher’s gear and 5 batting helmets. This is one time only per team, so 5u teams returning at 6u the following year will not be issued additional equipment or uniforms.

TROPHIES

KAA baseball is a trophy league. Trophies are awarded to the first place team in each division of each age group. Winners receive a \$100 credit for awards of their choosing. Machine pitch teams in the 5u-8u age groups receive a \$50 credit for participation awards. The first place 8U live team(s), will receive a \$100 credit, just as the other live pitch divisions.

ROSTERS

KAA has an “open” roster policy. Players may be added at any point in the season. For insurance purposes, new players must appear on the roster. This can be done by submitting a supplemental roster to the KAA office by email, fax, mail, through the registration website or by placing it in the KAA drop box prior to the new player playing in his/her first game. 2021 rosters MUST be in the office prior to the first game for insurance to be in effect. 2020 rosters are not “carried over” to 2021. Even if you had the exact same players for 2020, and now 2021 as well, you must submit a new 2021 roster. Forms are on our website. Email roster addendums to: office@kwdaa.com.

BORROWED PLAYERS

This is an issue that comes up, in one form or another, every year. This is KAA policy: American level players may be borrowed by National level teams in the same division, or play up an age group in either division. National level players are strongly encouraged to stay rostered only on National level teams for their age group, but can play up an age group just as American level players. While KAA does not want teams forfeiting games for lack of players, KAA also does not want American level teams loading up with National level players/pitching in an effort to create an unfair advantage against other American teams. I.E. NO DUAL ROSTERING.

PARK RULES

KAA relies on concession revenue to keep costs down and avoid mandatory concession stand duty for parents. As such, NO OUTSIDE FOOD OR BEVERAGE IS ALLOWED IN THE PARK. HOWEVER, PLAYER WATER/DRINKS ARE ALLOWED TO BE BROUGHT INTO THE PARK.

No smoking, E-Cigs or Vaping is allowed within the fenced in areas of the park at any time.

No pets, of any kind or size are permitted, with the exception of service animals.

No hitting of balls of any kind into fences or backstops.

Covid 19 Guidelines will be published on our website and throughout our park and must be followed AT ALL TIMES. **FAILURE OF A TEAM, IT'S PARENTS OR SPECTATORS TO FOLLOW ALL GUIDELINES MAY RESULT IN THE OFFENDING TEAM FORFEITING ITS GAMES SCHEDULED FOR THAT DAY OR NIGHT.**

KAA has had a few incidents of vehicle break-ins over the years. As such, KAA highly recommends leaving all valuables at home, or hiding them from sight in your vehicle. KAA assumes no responsibility for items left in vehicles.

Due to construction, **PARKING IS NOT AVAILABLE AT THE FAMILY GOLF CENTER IN 2021.** The City of Kirkwood will ticket and/or tow any cars parked on the grass across Marshall Road from the KAA complex. In order to provide access for emergency vehicles, no parking is allowed in the area in front of the main gate by Marshall Rd at any time.

Managers are ultimately responsible for their teams' conduct and sportsmanship at all times. This includes players, assistant coaches, parents, and all other supporters, in their interaction with other teams, umpires and KAA staff. Please notify all of your parents/supporters that failure to obey park rules may result in their, and your, ejection from the park, and may also result in a forfeit of your team's game(s). This includes compliance with any Covid-19 guidelines posted in the park or guidelines issued by the St. Louis County Department of Health.

Again, the members of the KAA Board thank you for selecting our park to play in. We hope you, your players, and your families have a great experience at KAA. We look forward to providing your youngsters an outstanding baseball experience. Best wishes for a successful season.

2021 Board of Directors

Kirkwood Athletic Association

Any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the following people:

Andy McDowell KAA Baseball Coordinator: amcdowell@fdic.gov or 314-302-0229

Kristi Swiderski and/or Matt Killiany, KAA Office Managers at: office@kwdaa.com
314-822-3686 Mon-Fri 10 a.m.-3 p.m.