

Bennington Athletic League

Yearly Update

Dear League Parents;

With many new families joining our league this year, we would like to say THANK YOU for choosing to register your children with our league, entrusting their playing experience to us and countless hours of your and their time. For those returning...THANK YOU for supporting the B.A.L and our program for your player(s) once again.

Over the Fall and Winter, your B.A.L. Executive Board has been working tirelessly to preserve and plan yet another exciting season of youth ball. We are proud to announce that we are almost 70 teams, 735 players strong, with over 175 dedicated volunteer coaches.

The B.A.L. is a Nonprofit, community youth league. It was built embodying the spirit of parent volunteerism, and stewardship to the youth that it serves. It is a teaching league. Not only are we trying to teach our children to play this amazing game, we are trying to develop, train and retain our parent volunteer coaches --- giving them the best possible environment to develop skills and sportsmanship in our youth. Raising the bar every year that they play.

Volunteerism & your Fundraising Support within our league is paramount. As our league grows, so do our operations and expansion expenses. The Parent Volunteer Hours (DIBS) that we require our parents to complete (unless they opt to pay for them), help complete all necessary tasks that would otherwise need to be paid for out of the league's pocket. We are not a corporate club organization, yet we are a community league offering value rich, recreational and competitive levels of play. Your DIBS hours allow us to keep our registration fees affordable for ALL families and allow us to focus our fundraising efforts on concrete capital projects that will enhance our program, and facilities in our community for years to come.

As you complete your DIBS volunteer hours over the course of the 2020 season please know that your participation and support are the backbone of our youth program, helping to build our youth positively, and providing them experiences with their friends that will not soon be forgotten.

Capital Expenditures

Over than last 5 years BAL has made the following major improvements:

- Expanded Parking Lot – (partnered with the City of Bennington – adds 200 stalls)
- New concession stands at the High School field
- Heritage Field – (partnered with the BPS District)
- Field 1 Lights – purchased and constructed lights
- Field 1 warning track and fence replacement
- Cage Nets – replaced all netting on our batting cages
- Cage Turf – replaced turf in all batting cages
- Pitching Mounds – replaced all portable pitching mounds on all fields
- Field 1 – replaced yellow fence cap
- Repair all batter and catcher boxes on all fields

Growth of the League

We've experience incredible growth as the school district has grown so rapidly and with that growth comes many challenges. Scheduling practices and games for this many teams are a monumental challenge as we split those games between 7 fields. We project nearly 900 home games in 2020 not including tournaments. That much traffic on our fields creates wear-and-tear so maintenance also becomes increasingly important and challenging to stay on top of (field maintenance will cost nearly \$25,000 in 2020).

BAL has been cautious to not grow our Badger Blue ("Select") program to rapidly in order to keep our Badger White ("Rec") program thriving. This balance is difficult to maintain. We strive to keep players in Bennington, but we cannot be all things to all families. Our rec program from 8U-14U will continue to play in the EAA\Two Rivers League which is comprised of many area towns. We are working closely with Elkhorn and other communities to provide the best experience possible for the players.

YEAR	LEVEL OF PLAY	# OF PLAYERS	# OF TEAMS
2015	Badger White (rec)	414	37
	Badger Blue (select)	79	8
	Total	493	45
2020	Badger White (rec)	536	50
	Badger Blue (select)	191	17
	Projected Total	727	67

This season will mark the last for some of our board members as they have kids aging-out of the program and starting high school. If you have interest in serving on our board of directors, please contact any of our current board members or contact me directly.

Have a great season,

Brad Baumert

President