

Chicago Women's Baseball League News

March 26, 2008

Hello Everyone,

Opening Day for the Chicago Women's Baseball League (CWBL) is less than ten weeks away. As such, we just wanted to update you about a few items to help you prepare for the upcoming season.

2008 Overview and Key Dates

League Tryouts: April 5 and 20

Tryout Fee: \$20

New Player Draft: April 20

Season Begins: Sunday, June 1

Season Ends: Sunday, Sep 14 (could go a week or two longer if we have tons of rainouts)

Location: Bedford Park Fields (6700 s 78th Ave, Bedford Park, IL)

Teams: Comets, Riveters, Skyline and Turtle Rocks

Number of Games: 12 + playoffs

Game Days: June 1, 8, 15, 22; July 12,20,26; August 3, 9, 17, 23; September 7, 14

Game Times: 9am and 12noon, with the exception of June 1 (11am and 2pm)

Player Fee: \$175

Player Fee Due: May 4

Opening Day festivities will include a BBQ. We'll probably have another BBQ or two during the season plus other social activities involving food.

You may have noticed that while we're playing 14 games with the playoffs, only 13 game days are listed above. We have to move one game due to a conflict with a tournament and are still finalizing where we're moving it.

We're hoping we'll get as lucky with the weather as we did last year (no rainouts until championship weekend), but in case we don't, we've scheduled several make-up days in July and August. Teams would play two games in one weekend in order to make up the games. When possible, we'll try to schedule both games on the same day.

Our field in Bedford Park is very nice, from both a player and fan standpoint. There is ample parking, a decent amount of seating (people may want to bring their own chairs), a play area for kids and nice bathrooms. The field is only a few years old and is well taken care of. Please note that dogs are not allowed at this field.

New Players

All new players must attend a tryout in order to be placed on a team. The tryouts will be held on **Saturday, April 5 from 9-11am** at BASH Sports Academy and **Sunday, April 20** at a place and time to be determined. Team assignments will be made at the draft on April 20.

If you are a returning player and have a friend or relative who wants to play this year, particularly on the same team as you, make sure she comes to one of these tryouts. We expect to be able to accommodate requests to keep friends and relatives together, as long as it does not grossly upset the balance of the teams. However, players cannot be added onto a particular

team's roster *after* the draft. Players who decide to join the CWBL after the annual draft will be placed in the player pool and picked in continuation of the draft order.

Returning Players

If she hasn't already, your manager will soon be asking you if you are returning to play in 2008. Please let her know if you're coming back or not. We need an accurate returning player count prior to the draft so we can make sure the new players get distributed where there is most need.

If you'd like to put yourself in the player pool to be drafted by another team or request a trade, please inform your manager and the League Committee Chair, Christine, (leaguecomm@chicagogems.com) via email by **April 3**.

Spring Workouts

Just as soon as things dry out, we'll be heading outdoors for group practices on the weekends. We're also working on setting up some clinics to help with specific skills.

In the meantime, get to the gym to work on your general fitness level and use the playcatch@chicagogems.com email list to contact your league-mates about getting together in smaller groups to go to the batting cages or play catch. You may also want to get your annual eye exam; it's hard to play baseball well if you can't see the ball clearly.

Additional Questions/Get Involved

If you have any questions, or if you'd like to help with some of the tasks involved with running our league, please email the League Committee at leaguecomm@chicagogems.com.

We've included a list of frequently asked questions at the bottom of this message.

Looking forward to a great season with all of you,

The Chicago Gems League Committee

Christine, Amy, Joelle, Elizabeth, Michelle, Annie, Alicia, Kristen and Stephanie

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: How do I get assigned to a team?

A: All new players must attend one of our two tryouts, which are on April 5 and 20. If you cannot attend one of these events, other arrangements can be made. Everyone who attends a tryout and then declares for the draft will be put into a player pool. On draft day, team managers will select the players for their teams.

Q: Can I request to play on the same team as person X?

Q: I played on Team Y last year. Can my friend join our team?

A: New players may request to play on a particular team and we will try our best to honor it, but the primary focus of the draft is to create/restock teams so that each has a good chance of winning each week. We want to have competitive games, because those are the most fun to play and watch. Although the league does have a mercy rule, we would prefer that it never or rarely be used.

Q: What will happen at the tryout?

A: Players will be asked to field (infield, outfield or both, depending on what positions you want to play, you are encouraged to do everything), throw and hit. Pitchers and catchers will be evaluated as well. The team coaches will evaluate each player on her fielding, throwing and hitting skills and record his/her findings. The purposes of the tryout are to give all teams a chance to draft all of the players and to get an idea of an individual player's skills.

Q: Can I come to both tryouts?

A: Yes, please do! Coming to practices is another way to show off your skills, since coaches and managers will also be attending these. Believe us, we'll notice your improvement. If you do attend both tryouts, you'll only pay the fee once.

Q: What does the tryout fee cover?

A: The cost of renting the facility. You'll also get a nifty t-shirt.

Q: I am out of the Chicago area right now for school/work/whatever but will be back in April/May/June/July. Is there any way I can play, since I cannot make it to the spring tryouts?

Q: I just heard about you gals. I missed the tryouts. Can I still play this year?

A: We are 99% certain the answer is yes. We anticipate teams will be adding to their rosters throughout the season. Late registrants will be placed on a team via continuation of the draft process.

Q: What size fields do you play on?

A: We play on full-sized fields. Bases are 90 feet apart and the pitching mound is 60 feet 6 inches from home plate.

Q: What rules do you use?

A: We pretty much play with the same rules as Major League Baseball does, with some exceptions, like there is a mercy rule, you can use a metal bat and we allow free substitution on defense. Our games are 7 innings.

Q: Are metal cleats allowed?

A: Yes.

Q: How much is this going to cost?

A: League fees for this year will be \$175, plus the cost of your uniform if you're a new player. These costs pay for fields, umpires, practice facilities, and some team equipment. Please know that we're aware of everyone's budgets and will plan uniforms accordingly. Furthermore, we don't want the cost to be prohibitive for anyone, so if you're committed to playing but need some financial assistance please let us know.