



## **OHIO VALLEY WOODEN BAT COLLEGIATE BASEBALL LEAGUE**

From the President's Desk

20 Aug 2019

We had another great season in the Ohio Valley League! The 2019 season saw several significant changes. We welcomed our 9th franchise, the Franklin, KY Duelers. In their inaugural season, they were very competitive and saw their community support grow as the season progressed. We also adopted a "10 run rule" that was well received. For the first time in OVL history, the new President was not part of the management or ownership of any team.

This was our third year of divisional play, and once again our playoff pairings were not finalized until the final day of the season. While it was an exciting season, it was also a very wet season. We had a significant amount of rain forcing the cancellation of numerous games this season. We had several rescheduled games that had to be rescheduled two and three times as the rain just kept falling. In the end, due to the diligent efforts of everyone involved all the teams played at least 35 of the 40 scheduled games. Most of the teams played 37 or 38 games. Henderson came from 4<sup>th</sup> place early in July to win the Eastern division by ½ game. Hopkinsville led the Western division for most of the season and captured the division title for the 3<sup>rd</sup> year in a row. The post season tournament proved very interesting. Three of the first round series were sweeps. In the second round, Dubois County beat Henderson 2 games to 1 while Hopkinsville swept Paducah. The championship round was a sweep by Hopkinsville as they posted a perfect 6-0 in the tournament to win all three rounds and the Championship.

In lieu of an All-Star game, the OVL selected the **Jones Brothers Towing and Trucking Company All League Team**. The coaches provided nine votes and the fans provided the 10<sup>th</sup> vote through Twitter polling. A great deal of discussion ensued about who was selected and even more discussion about those players not selected. Our goal was to garner some recognition for our players this year, and I believe we accomplished that goal, even for those not selected.

After our post-season tournament was completed, the OVL had two teams participate in the second "Bluegrass World Series" in Louisville, KY. Dubois County returned as the previous BWS winner. Owensboro went to the tournament as the 2018 OVL champions. They were joined by an independent team from Mississippi and the Louisville Stars (a team of former major league players). Both OVL teams played well and enjoyed themselves. They created lifetime memories playing against former professionals who were very gracious and obviously having fun playing baseball again. The OVL was well represented and once again received a great deal of publicity while participating in this charitable event.



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I would like to extend my thanks to all of the workers behind the scenes that make “*Your Hometown Baseball*” possible; the scorekeepers, Public Address announcers, scoreboard operators, radio announcers, concession stand workers, merchandise table workers, grounds crew, ticket takers, ushers, video personnel, bat boys/girls, statisticians, host families and all others that make it possible to provide quality baseball to our local region and to the nation via the internet and Game Changer. I want to recognize two individuals. Our Webmaster and league scorekeeper, Zach Bulleit, who stayed up late every night to post all the games’ box scores and maintained the league’s stats. I received many thanks from parents and media members for the efficiency of our web site and daily social media postings. Second, Brianna McManus for travelling to every park in our league to gather photos and conduct interviews in our first league wide effort to improve our overall social media presence. Many thanks to both individuals for their work and dedication this summer.

Thanks to all the coaches and their staffs who spent their summer helping to develop the players' skills. Plus understanding the importance of why these guys were playing summer ball. While these young men play summer baseball to improve their skills, they also have many opportunities to develop character as men. Thanks to each club as they provided opportunities for personal growth through visits to Boys and Girls Clubs, nursing homes, hospitals, skills camps for our youth, parades, and a host of other community activities.

Also, thanks to the umpires for without them the league would not survive. They, like the players, spend their summers honing their skills as umpires and make sure the game is played in the correct manner. I cannot express my gratitude enough to them for the job they do and their dedication towards making the OVL one of the premier leagues in the country.

A BIG thanks goes out to the dedicated fans, sponsors, advertisers and owners. Without each of you, we would not be able to have an Ohio Valley League! Whether your team was winning or losing, you were always there giving your full support. Your support makes it possible for our league to provide “*Your Hometown Baseball*” entertainment to our communities each summer.

*Your Hometown Baseball*



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I want to thank all the college coaches across the nation that sent their players to our league. We appreciate your trust in us to help develop these young men into better players and men. Also, thank you to parents and other family members! For some, it was the first time that your son/relative has been away from home for the summer and you are sending them hundreds of miles away to an unfamiliar town to play baseball. It also gave each family an opportunity and place to spend their vacation thus experiencing our fine Southern Hospitality!

In closing, please remember that baseball is just a game (albeit the greatest game known to man) and we owe it to all of you and the players to provide the best possible environment to participate in while building lifetime memories. Always remember, these guys will be men longer than they are baseball players.

Respectfully,

*John M Bruce*

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President