



Baseball & Softball

South Park Youth Association

Enriching The Community Through Youth Athletics

Spring 2012

It's Time for Baseball & Softball at SPYA!

Believe it or not, it's that time of year again—time to register for spring baseball and softball with South Park Youth Association! All of the information you need about registration, player evaluations, league groupings, and important dates is included in this newsletter, so please read it carefully. We at South Park are gearing up for another exciting season, and we hope you and your families are looking forward to the fun!

**REGISTRATION
BEGINS
SATURDAY,
JANUARY 28th**

To register your child for baseball or softball, stop by and see us at the front of Carmel Middle School or at Dick's Sporting Goods at South Park Mall on one of three consecutive Saturdays: January 28, February 4 (Carmel Middle School only) or February 11, from 10:00 a.m. until 1:00 p.m.

South Park continues to thrive due to the leadership and untold volunteer hours of many people. Consistent with the practice of other area youth sports associations, and to enhance our services, each family will be required to participate in hands-on volunteer support for SPYA. Please see the enclosed registration form for more details.

Please register as early as possible—this helps ensure that the evaluation and team assignment process goes smoothly and fairly. If you have questions about Baseball Registration, please contact Baseball Commissioner, Rob Davis at (704) 618-0092 or rdavis@spyasports.org. If you have questions about Softball Registration, please contact Softball Commissioner, Bill Borda at (704) 281-6704 or spyasoftball@gmail.com.



Thomas William Little

June 20, 1930—December 19, 2011

South Park's beloved founder Tom Little passed away in December at the age of 81. Tom won multiple awards for his contributions to youth athletics in the Charlotte area, built and ran SP's first concession stand at Carmel Middle School for years, and will be dearly missed for his good and caring nature. Thank you

Tom—from the literally thousands of families for whom you created opportunities for recreational sports and life lessons in a nurturing environment. Tom's legacy lives on in SPYA's awesome coaches and volunteers.

Keep up with the latest news at:

WWW.SPYASPORTS.ORG



Harris Teeter Steps Up to Bat with South Park Youth Association

Harris Teeter looks forward to getting to know both the families and players in South Park Youth Association and is proud to introduce itself as the organization's Grand Slam Sponsor for both the 2012 Spring & Fall baseball and softball seasons.

The company has been committed to the Charlotte community since W.T. Harris opened his first store on Central Ave. in 1936, and its partnership with South Park Youth Association is another way it can get involved. As Grand Slam Sponsor, Harris Teeter will support each T-ball, Coach Pitch, Softball and Baseball team throughout the 2012 Spring and Fall seasons. In addition, Harris Teeter has donated \$1,000 in gift cards to the organization. The entire sum of gift cards will be raffled off on Opening Day, April 14, 2012 at Carmel Middle School.

As well as sponsoring youth sports organizations, Harris Teeter supports local food banks, disaster relief efforts and United Way. Harris Teeter also supports education, grades k-12, through Together in Education, a program which allows parents to earn money for their child's school by

Continued on page 3

SPYA PARENTS ARE A PART OF THE TEAM, TOO!

Our goal is to make South Park Youth Association the safest and most positive instructional youth sports programs in Charlotte. To help us achieve that goal, please consider lending a hand - everyone can do something to help! Here are ways you can become involved, both on and off the field:

- ◆ **VOLUNTEER** your time and skills as an assistant coach or team parent, or offer to help maintain the fields and prepare them for weekly games. Take an active role in the South Park community and enjoy the season with your child!
- ◆ **JOIN** your child in committing to his or her team. Make sure your child attends scheduled practices and games, and get them to the fields on time!
- ◆ **COMMUNICATE** with SPYA Coaches and Commissioners about your child, your team, and the SPYA league - your ideas can help make South Park even better!
- ◆ **PITCH IN!** Always look for ways to keep our facilities at Carmel Middle School cleaner and safer—please don't leave it up to someone else.
- ◆ **HAVE FUN** and set a positive example for your children and his or her teammates. Teaching players good sportsmanship in a competitive athletic environment is our #1 priority at SPYA!

Baseball Information

Baseball practices will begin on or about Saturday, March 3rd. Games will likely begin on or around March 26th. Opening Day Ceremonies will be held on Saturday, April 14th. This is a special day of team building and community fun, and you and your family will definitely want to be there!

Each team will generally play one weekday game and one weekend game throughout the season. Coach Pitch, Minor League and Major League teams will play double elimination tournaments at the end of the regular season. All regular season games will be played by the end of the CMS school year on Friday, June 6th. Near the end of the regular spring baseball season, All-Star teams will be finalized for post-season play at the Coach Pitch, Minor and Major League levels.

FALL LEAGUE SUMMARIES

COACH PITCH

The fall Coach Pitch season was once again blessed with great camaraderie, good sportsmanship and a chance for our 7 and 8 year-old boys to learn the fundamentals of baseball. Four highly competitive teams coached by Andy Brassler, John Jeffries, Eric Zuehlke and Bob Ziegler helped inspire a love of the game and made sure that having fun was a top priority. The season was capped off by an exciting end-of-season tournament with a winner-take-all championship game that included a first inning triple play and went down to the very last at bat in the bottom of the sixth. Our 7 and 8 year-olds are showing great promise ahead of South Park hosting the Coach Pitch district tournament this coming June. It will be a great season to watch! - Bob Zeigler

MINORS

The Fall season ended in exciting fashion. The regular season was very competitive with all teams being very equal. SP also played against another association in the regular season and the end of season tournament with SP shining against the competition. The double elimination tournament was the highlight where 8 of the games were decided by 2 runs or less with some going extra innings and others decided in the final at bat. The championship came down to the SP Blue Jays versus the SP A's. The Blue Jays entered the game undefeated in the tournament. The first game was competitive with the A's extending the tournament with a 12-7 victory. In the deciding game we all watched a back and forth game that went into extra innings. The A's came out on top with a big hit in the bottom of the 7th inning to win the championship 13-12. We can only hope to see this repeated in the Spring! - Rob Davis

MAJORS

Our Majors division last fall enjoyed incredible parity among our five teams, while displaying tremendous success against teams from opposing leagues. The quality and depth of our 11 and 12 year old pitchers is impressive to watch. Coach Molnar's Mariners ended up sweeping the playoffs without a loss to take home the end of season Majors tournament hardware. This spring, we look forward to another great rec ball season in Majors, which will be followed by our record-setting 12 year old All-Star team hoping to make us proud with another post-season run to states in Leland, NC and the Dixie Youth World Series scheduled to be held in Bartow, FL this summer. This team has yet to lose a single game in five seasons of district All-Star play, which is remarkable! Good luck to all and we hope you represent us well in the final season of your youth baseball careers! - Ron Caldwell

DIXIE YOUTH SCHOLARSHIP

Dixie Youth Baseball awards \$2,000 scholarships each year to selected graduating Seniors who have participated in Dixie Youth baseball for at least one season. Please contact Baseball Commissioner Rob Davis at (704) 618-0092 or rdavis@spyasports.org, or visit youth.dixie.org for additional information and the required application form. Deadline for applications is March 1, 2012.

Softball Information

Softball teams will be assigned based on player age. Practices are generally held 2-3 times per week before the season starts, and then once a week during the season. Softball practices will begin the week of Monday, February 13. Each team will play approximately 12 games during the regular season— six at Carmel Middle School and six "on the road." Teams will typically have one weekday game and one weekend game. Softball games will begin Saturday, March 17. Softball Opening Day Ceremonies will be held on Saturday, April 14. A double elimination softball tournament will be held at the end of the regular season.

FALL SOFTBALL SUMMARY

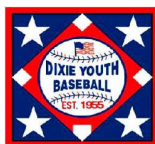
South Park Softball had a fun filled and successful fall season with 50 girls participating on teams in four different age groups within the always competitive Char Meck Softball league.

The youth movement is alive at South Park as our 8U softball team had a great season of learning and fun. Under the leadership of Coach John Robinson, the 8U Vipers played a competitive brand of softball as the team got better and better throughout the season. The team captured some big wins over some of Char Meck's best and played some nail biters in the playoffs.

The Stingers 10U softball team led by Janine Hill featured a team where most of the team was moving up from 8U and making the transition to kid pitch softball. While the team spent the first part of the season learning the nuances of the 10U game, they finished strong only losing one of their last seven regular games and made quite a bit of noise in the playoffs! Look for more from this group of talented girls in the Spring!

The 12U Firecats exceeded all expectations as the young team pulled off seven regular season wins and made a deep run in the playoffs. Led by Coach Drew Nicholson, the team is looking forward to more magic in the Spring season.

The 15U team made South Park history as the team finished the regular season with a perfect 12-0 record! Coach Jim Foulis' team was known across the league for their offensive prowess. The team posted double digits on the scoreboard in every regular season game. With a huge bull's eye on the back of their jerseys in the playoffs, every team brought their best stuff against the 15U Llamas. The team battled to third place finish in the end of the season tournament! - Bill Borda



SOUTH PARK TO HOST DISTRICT COACH PITCH TOURNAMENT

SPYA will be hosting the District 4 Coach Pitch All-Star tournament in June. This will be an exciting event with teams from around the District competing in the 7 year old and 8 year old All-Stars. The winner of the 8 year old tournament will earn a berth to the Dixie Youth NC State Tournament. We will need lots of volunteers for this event and welcome any assistance you can provide. Please check the box on the registration form if you will be able to volunteer for this event. More details will be provided as the tournament approaches.

COACHES CLINIC

A Coaches Clinic provided by Champions Baseball Academy will be held on February 25 at 11:00 a.m. Contact Rob Davis at (704) 618-0092 or rdavis@spyasports.org for details.

TOM LITTLE SCHOLARSHIP

The South Park Youth Association Scholarship Fund, established in the name of long-term President, Tom Little, awards one \$500 scholarship annually to a college student who has participated in SPYA athletics. If you have an eligible student who will be going to college next fall, please contact SPYA Treasurer Lynn Tucker at ltucker@spyasports.org or (704) 843-4221 for a scholarship application. Deadline is March 1, 2012.

WHICH LEAGUE IS THE RIGHT ONE?

BOTH BOYS' T-BALL (BASEBALL) AND GIRLS' T-BALL (SOFTBALL) LEAGUES are designed to teach the basics of the game to children ages 5 and 6 who have never played baseball / softball, or who have played only 1-3 seasons of t-ball. Children under age 5 may be permitted to play if the Commissioner and parents feel that the child is mature enough. In T-Ball, a softer ball is used for safety. Coaches pitch to the batters in order to develop player eye-hand coordination. If, after 4-5 pitches, the batter does not successfully hit the ball, he or she may hit the ball off of a "T" to work on hitting fundamentals. Winning (even keeping score) is not emphasized at this level. Our goal is to develop basic skills and concepts in a fun, and age-appropriate, competitive environment. All T-Ball practices and games will be held at Carmel Middle School. T-Ball players are NOT required to attend player evaluations. **A T-BALL ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING FOR PLAYERS AND THEIR PARENTS WILL BE HELD ON SATURDAY, MARCH 3rd AT 10:00 A.M. AT THE CARMEL MIDDLE SCHOOL T-BALL FIELD.**

COACH PITCH BASEBALL & 8-U MODIFIED FAST PITCH SOFTBALL LEAGUES are for players who have demonstrated sufficient T-Ball skills. Players in these leagues are generally 7 and 8 year olds. The field is larger and the bases are further apart than in T-Ball. The players in these leagues hit pitches thrown by their coaches (in girls' softball only, the first 3 innings of play include kid-pitch), and they will not be allowed to hit from a "T". South Park does not offer machine pitch baseball. We believe hitting pitches from a live pitcher is better for skill development. Score keeping, game strategy, and post-season All-Stars are introduced at this level.

MINORS BASEBALL & 10-U SOFTBALL LEAGUES are comprised primarily of 9 and 10 year olds. Players will face a fellow player pitching to them and attempting to strike them out. Pitching, catching, and base stealing skills are developed at this level. Minor league baseball teams will play each other and teams from neighboring Sardis Association, while 10-U softball players compete against other Char-Meck Girls Fast Pitch Softball Association teams.

MAJORS BASEBALL & 12-U/15-U SOFTBALL LEAGUES are where most of our 11 and 12 year old players participate in the program (13-15 year olds in our 15U softball program). Each team will be coached by experienced coaches who emphasize skills, strategies, teamwork, work ethic and good sportsmanship. The goal in these age groups is to continue challenging each player to improve his/her game in a manner that builds confidence and self-esteem. Our Major League teams will play each other 2-3 times, and each Sardis Major League team one time, during the regular season. Softball teams play in the Char-Meck Girls' Fast Pitch League, and participate in a double-elimination post-season tournament, which is always a highlight of the season!

PLAYER EVALUATIONS

Baseball players will be grouped into leagues according to their age and ability. At South Park, we make every effort to ensure that teams are balanced and that all coaches have the opportunity to draft teams fairly. This is why it is important to evaluate ALL players. If a player is exceptionally proficient, or lacking experience, for his age group, his parents might be approached to let him participate with an older or younger group—and it is important that families support the coaches' grouping decisions. We believe that matching the skill levels at each league produces the most rewarding experience for everyone involved.

Evaluations for the 2012 Spring Baseball Season will be held on Saturday, February 25th on the fields behind Carmel Middle School. Signs will direct you to the proper fields. Please be on time and dressed to play baseball (drop off only at the fields—parking is available in the upper lots).

Coach Pitch, Minors and Majors Player Evaluations*,
Saturday, February 25th
Last name beginning with A-L 1:00 p.m.
Last name beginning with M-Z 2:15 p.m.

Following evaluations, teams will be selected by draft and your child's coach will contact you with team assignments, scheduled practice and game times, and additional information.

*T-Ball Players do NOT attend evaluations.

BIRTHDAY DETERMINATIONS

For Spring Baseball, the league that the boys will play in is determined by how old the player will be on April 30, 2012.

For Spring Softball, the cut off date is how old the player was as of December 31, 2011.

QUESTIONS? Please contact:

Coach Pitch	Bob Zeigler (robert.c.zeigler@gmail.com)
T-Ball / Minors	Rob Davis (rdavis@spyasports.org)
Majors	Ron Caldwell (ronald.b.caldwell@baml.com)
Softball	Bill Borda (spyasoftball@gmail.com)



SPYA is affiliated with Dixie Youth Baseball, the second largest youth baseball association in the United States. Dixie Youth's goal is to teach fair play, honesty, and love for the game of baseball. South Park is represented in post-season Dixie Youth tournaments at age levels above T-Ball. For more information, visit youth.dixie.org.

South Park softball teams participate in the Char-Meck League. The league sponsors All-Star teams at all age levels for post-season play. Additional information will be provided during regular season, or you can check out their website at www.charmecksoftball.org



Continued from page 1

purchasing Harris Teeter Brand items and by filling prescriptions at Harris Teeter Pharmacies. Be sure your VIC card is linked to your child's school the next time you visit Your Harris Teeter.

Harris Teeter offers its customers the best quality products, excellent customer service and convenience. We understand you're busy running the kids from school to practice to games, so while you're sitting in the bleachers, check out what we have to offer through ht mobile, a Harris Teeter application you can download using your smartphone. With ht mobile, you can view your e-VIC offers, add e-VIC coupons, create your shopping list and even refill your prescriptions. When you pick-up your prescription, be sure to ask you Harris Teeter Pharmacist how you can earn \$200 in free groceries for your family through Harris Teeter Rx Punch Card Promotion..

For more information about our community initiatives, visit harristeeter.com.



February 11th

10:00 a.m. to
1:00 p.m.

Get an Additional 15% OFF

In addition to coupons distributed at registration, Dick's is extending an additional 15% discount to SPYA families. The discount will apply to purchases made on Saturday, February 11th. For additional information, visit the SPYA registration desk on Saturday, February 11th at Dick's Sporting Goods - South Park Mall from 10:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

SPONSORSHIPS

South Park Youth Association is making a concentrated effort to fund the best baseball and softball programs possible, and we need sponsors to make it happen!

Training, equipment, uniforms, and other needs **cannot** be fully funded by registration fees. If you would like to sponsor a team, or if you have any leads for potential team sponsors, please contact: Jim Kaspar at james.kasparnc@gmail.com or Lynn Tucker at ltucker@spyasports.org.

SPYA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

John Baron, Baseball, jbaron@spyasports.org
Bill Borda, Softball, spyasoftball@gmail.com
Larry Brown, lbrown@spyasports.org
Ron Caldwell, Baseball, rcaldwell@spyasports.org
Rob Davis, Secretary & Baseball, rdavis@spyasports.org
Darrell Murray, Facilities, dmurray@spyasports.org
Keith Register, VP & Football, kregister@spyasports.org
Rob Russell, Website & Lacrosse, russell@spyasports.org
Lynn Tucker, Treasurer, ltucker@spyasports.org
Mike Zalewski, Basketball, mzalewski@spyasports.org

SPYA ANNUAL MEETING

The South Park Youth Association annual meeting will be held on Sunday, March 25 from 7:30 - 9:00 p.m. The meeting is open to all SPYA members. Sports commissioners will give their reports, and new board members will be elected. New directors are needed for several positions. For meeting details, please contact Rob Davis at rdavis@spyasports.org

Thank You!

South Park Youth Association is grateful to the following contributors for their generous support of youth athletics!

GRAND SLAM SPONSOR (\$5,000+)

Harris Teeter

DIAMOND (\$2,500 - \$4,999)

Hendrick Honda

PLATINUM (\$1,000 - \$2,499)

Alston & Bird LLP

Archetype Mortgage Capital - Larry Brown

Audi of Charlotte

Bob Mayberry Hyundai

Carolina Indoor Tennis Club

Carolina Neurosurgery & Spine Assoc.

CresaPartners

Dick's Sporting Goods

Ferguson Box

HM Properties - Heather Bonner

Record Storage Systems

Roll Tide - Edwards Family

StandbyMD

Sterling Capital Management

Superior Stone

Webb & Allen Orthodontics

Wells Fargo Advisors, LLC

The Willow Group - Bill Grigg

YTM Construction & Yates Custom

Homes

GOLD (\$500 - \$999)

Brian Battle & Associates

Carmel OB-GYN

Carolina BG

Charlotte SouthPark Rotary Club

CORESTAFF Services

Flagship Capital Partners

GOLD (\$500 - \$999), cont.

Hull & Coleman

Lions Jewelers

Major Clean

Pesta Finnie & Associates

Popielec Family

Record Storage Systems

Roush Fenway Racing

Sellers Orthodontics.

Vannoy Construction

BRONZE BOOSTER (\$300 - \$499)

Ben & Jerry's

Laxer, Long & Savage, DDS

SILVER BOOSTER (\$200 - \$299)

Ron Caldwell

Hendrick Lexus

Brad Martinsen

BOOSTER (\$10 - \$199)

Burton and Joan Anderson

James and Kathleen Brennan

Michael and Tanya Clawson

Erica Coblentz

Bryan Mermans

Harold Murray

Al and Janice Nalibotsky

Time Warner Cable

Bob Ziegler

Anthony and Laruel Zitney



South Park Youth Association
308 Armistead Court
Marvin, North Carolina 28173-6645

MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

❖ Registration for Spring Baseball & Softball

Saturday, January 25th, February 4th* & 11th
Carmel Middle School - 10:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.
Dick's Sporting Goods - 10:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.
*Carmel Middle School only

❖ Skills Day and Player Evaluations

Saturday, February 25th at Carmel Middle School
Coach Pitch, Minors and Majors players only
1:00 p.m. (Last Name A-L)
2:15 p.m. (Last Name M-Z)

❖ Softball Practices Begin - Late February

❖ Baseball Practices Begin - Saturday, March 3rd

❖ T-Ball Organization Meeting for Parents

Saturday, March 3rd at 10:00 a.m.
Carmel Middle School T-Ball Field

❖ Softball Games Begin - Monday, March 17th

❖ Baseball Games Begin - Late March

❖ OPENING DAY CEREMONIES - Saturday, April 14th

