

WASHINGTON STATE AMERICAN LEGION BASEBALL

By Don Hays, Chairman

Annual Report to Department of Washington

February 13 2024

American Legion Baseball is alive and well in the State of Washington. We survived the pandemic and many of our teams still love the game of baseball. The Baseball Commission works year a round in meetings with our current teams and others that would like to join our program. As Chairman I could not do what I do without the hard work and dedication of the Baseball Commissioners. Of course we are always looking for new Commissioners to represent their District on the Commission. Our bylaws are structured so that there should be a District Commissioner for each of the 12 Districts and 4 Senior Commissioners that represent one of the 4 Areas of the State and 1 Chairman overseeing the Baseball Program for a total of 17 Commissioners. I currently have 7 and the math tells me I am 10 short. That issue creates a lot of work for the 7 Commissioners.

We have 3 Divisions in our program:

A Division (13-15 Years) AA Division (16-17 years) AAA Division (18-19 years)

The teams within each division will play like teams in their area of the state and the winners will advance on to the state tournaments in late July. The tournaments for this year will be located in: A State (Area 4), AA State (Area 2), and AAA State (Area 1). The dates for all 3 tournaments are July 27-31, 2024.

We take pride in our program each year because one of our main missions is to help the Department of Washington to increase membership. To do that we do the following:

1. Sponsor an Operation Comfort Warrior Baseball game with the Tacoma Rainiers – inviting 500 OCW qualified veterans and their families to a minor league baseball game at no charge. Coordinating with Department on membership tables available to recruit new members.
2. We encourage all our teams prior to their game to have all veterans to stand and be recognized before the game starts. We also encourage the local Legion Post to have a membership table at the games and tournaments.

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3. Every few year's we sponsor a Hall of Fame event to recognize people from the 4 areas of the state for their outstanding participation in American Legion Baseball. This includes players, coaches, umpires, volunteers and community members.
4. We host and sponsor a Operation Comfort Warrior website for the State of Washington to bring awareness to the brave men and women who have suffering injuries while serving our country. We provide links to the National OCW Website to encourage donations to the National OCW Program.

Challenges for 2024

1. Appeal to the Legion Posts around the state to nominate members to the Baseball Commission.
2. Increase the number of teams participating in our programs in all 4 areas of the state.
3. Implement the new guidelines established by National Headquarters on abuse awareness and training.
4. Continue our efforts to assist the Department to recruit new members to the American Legion Department of Washington. bn