

## 2015 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

### EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT

#### INTRODUCTION

The report will cover the period October 1, 2015 to September 30, 2016 (our fiscal year) and will highlight initiatives and activities approved by the Board and completed by the staff of St. John's Minor Baseball Association (SJ MBA) that are above and beyond the normal day to day scope of work.

#### ADMINISTRATION

Once again we closed the office from November/15 to April/16. However, our Board of Directors and anyone who needed information were able to contact the Executive Director by e-mail or phone during that period. This practice seems to work quite well and it appears that our members do not object to Mike's 'kitchen table' being the SJ MBA office over the winter.

Similar to last year, in April/16, we opened the office manned primarily by the Executive Director and with Kristyn Coley assisting with administrative duties when she was not supply teaching. Our first 'grant worker' started on May 13/16. Kristyn assumed the position of Baseball Coordinator and devoted much more time and effort to the program. This proved to be a much more manageable workload for both of us and improved the overall administration of our programs.

We entered into a 12 month contract with Ms. Triffie Parsons (30 hours per month) as our financial administrative person. Triffie is still a full-time employee of the Eastern School Board. We will offer her a similar contract this fiscal year.

#### ***Grant Workers***

SJ MBA enjoyed our most successful year in acquiring student grant workers:

Canada Summer Jobs	15
NL Post-Secondary	1
NL High School (Level 1-11-111)	6
Total	<b>22</b>

We, like other minor sport associations in the province, have a chore in providing meaningful work for all the grant student hours that we get; however, we did make some improvement this season. SJ MBA did give a grant worker to SJABA for the summer to work on the St. Pat's Maintenance crew.

## **BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

In November we held our Annual General Meeting and elected a new President (Ken Curtis), Vice-President (Kristyn Coley) and Board of Directors. We had a number of new directors who replaced those who left and filled our 12 positions.

## **PROGRAMS**

2015-16 was an excellent year for us. We increased our registration to 727 players; the most players we've had since 2002. We had a very busy year.

### ***Winter Ball***

In mid-November we opened On-line registration. This was the 3rd year of our three-year agreement with GHC (Sean Gulliver, Mark Healy and Glenn Cribb). In short, GHC plan, staff and execute the program. We are responsible for all administrative requirements, rent the facility and provide the equipment.

Winter Ball was a complete sell-out. Comparative numbers to 2015 are shown below:

	<b>SESSION 1</b>		<b>SESSION 2</b>	
	House	All-Star	House	All-Star
<b>2015</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>72</b>
<b>2016</b>	<b>119</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>121</b>	<b>90</b>

The program consisted of two 6-week segments with two 120 minute sessions (one for House and one for AA-AAA players). We charged \$225 per player per session (\$400 for two sessions). Attendance was open to players from all baseball associations in the region. Winter Ball was a success in all aspects.

***Note: We have successfully negotiated a renewal of our agreement with GHC for another three years. The agreement includes Winter Ball, Spring Training and All-Star tryouts.***

### ***Registration***

Our House League registration opened in early April with full on-line registration and payment. Although we still had parents who wanted to come into the office to pay by cash/cheque, we experienced a 75% success rate. We expect this will continue to increase over the next couple of years.

Fees remained the same as 2015. We did not need 'paid advertising', but did use our 'contra advertising' from Coast 101.1 FM during the registration period. We once again experienced a problem with late

registrations i.e. post June 1. It makes it much more difficult to produce schedules, finalize team rosters, etc.

Final numbers by division for 2016 compared to 2015-2013 are:

	<u>2016</u>	<u>2015</u>	<u>2014</u>	<u>2013</u>
T-Ball (5 years)	DNO	DNO	28	46
Novice-Rally Cap (6-7 years)	137	133	99	91
Rookie (8-9 years)	146	89	94	107
Mosquito (10-11 years)	170	152	159	144
Peewee (12-13 years)	170	130	108	104
Bantam (14-15-16 years)	85	93	77	75
Midget (16-18 years)	19	37	51	100
<b>Total</b>	<b>727</b>	<b>634</b>	<b>616</b>	<b>667</b>

**Note:** *In the younger divisions (Rally Cap, Rookie, Mosquito and Peewee) we are at maximum capacity given the facilities that the City makes available to us.*

#### ***All-Star Selection – Coaches-Teams***

In March, the All-star Committee chaired by Kevin Heffernan sent out an Expression of Interest (EOI) document re: coaching one of our all-star teams. Although it was a lengthy process, we staffed all teams with experienced coaches.

**Once again this year a father (if he was a coach) was confirmed only after all players including his son/daughter were selected, not vice-versa. Although a little cumbersome, this process helps us to further demonstrate transparency and equity in the selection process.**

SJMBA fielded twelve (12) all-star teams in 2015 in the following divisions:

Girls U12 – ***Provincial Gold***  
 Mosquito A – ***Provincial Gold***  
 Mosquito AA  
 Mosquito AAA – ***Provincial Gold***  
 Girls U14  
 Peewee A – ***Provincial Gold***  
 Peewee AA  
 Peewee AAA – ***Provincial Gold – 13 U National Atlantic Bronze***  
 Bantam A  
 Bantam AA  
 Bantam AAA  
 Midget AAA – ***Provincial Gold – Atlantic Gold***

In May, we conducted our all-star selection process. Once again, we engaged GHC to develop an evaluation matrix so that each player could be assessed in a transparent, equitable manner. **We asked all of the all-star coaching candidates to attend the try-out sessions for their age division.** Following the evaluation, we met with GHC, our all-star committee and the coaching candidates to select the players in each division who would be invited to an outdoor workout(s).

Following the outdoor workouts, we once again met with the coaching candidates and the all-star committee to make the final selection.

We continue to 'tweak' our process.

### ***DRILLZ Program***

We continued with the DRILLZ program headed by Ken McLean. He introduced a minor 'wrinkle' in 2016. He conducted two sessions for all Mosquito teams and two for Peewee. For the final 4 weeks, he ran individual team practices. Based on feedback from the all-star coaches review meeting, this new format was well-received.

### ***AAA Teams***

As per the clear message from our all-star coaches and parents, we developed 'hybrid' schedules for Mosquito and Peewee AAA teams. Unfortunately we only had MP Minor as the competition. All agreed that this was preferable to House league; in 2017 we will endeavour to secure additional teams to fill the schedule. The Bantam Tri-Com league continues to be a 'big success'.

### ***Mosquito AA-PW AA Teams***

In our all-star review meeting our coaching staffs for the AA teams in Mosquito and Peewee expressed the view that playing in House League was not conducive to skill development. They stated that removing an additional 12-13 players from the House League would not hurt the league (there are 170 players registered in both divisions). We will explore the possibility of playing against other associations; if they are not interested we will have our AA teams play in the House division above them i.e. Mosquito AA play in PW House.

### ***School Program***

Once again our school program was very successful with the exception of the Senior HS Tournament. A big thank you to Kristyn Coley who worked very hard on all of our school tournaments. Numbers over the past 3 years are as follows:

	<b>2016</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2013</b>
Sr. High	8-120 players	12-180 players	9-135 players	9 -135 players

Jr. High	17-255 players	11-165 players	9-135 players	12-180 players
Gr. 5-6	33-495 players	23-345 players	24-360 players	23-345 players
Gr. 3-4	18-270 players	4-60 players	8-120 players	10-150 players
<b>Totals</b>	<b>76-1140 players</b>	<b>50-750 players</b>	<b>50-750 players</b>	<b>54-810 players</b>

***Note: We did not complete the Senior HS tournament due to inclement weather. We refunded some registration money to 3 teams. One of the problems with our schedule is that the tournaments that do result in new registrations (Geoff Walsh and Classic) occur in mid-June. In 2016 our Rookie and Mosquito divisions were almost sold out by the time we held the school tournaments. We will try to address this problem in 2017.***

***We were very pleased with moving the Classic indoors to the Techniplex. As you can see, we went from 4 teams to 18.***

### ***Tournament Schedule***

It's always a challenge to develop a Tournament Schedule that does not conflict with other associations. All associations in the Avalon Region are expanding their tournament calendars and there are only so many weekends in the summer. Given that reality, we tried to provide as many tournaments as we could for every one of our all-star teams (A, AA, AAA) meshing our schedule with those of other minor associations in the region.

In scheduling tournaments, we also tried to provide 'quality competitive games' for all teams. Again this season we had a couple of interdivisional tournaments. We had positive feedback from all coaches so will continue this formula when we can.

### ***Day-Time Baseball Clinics***

SJMBA enhanced its day-time baseball clinic program in 2016. We used our most experienced grant workers for the DRILLZ program and our 'Drill Team' led by Johnathan Cooper, Andrew Janes and Dayle Prowse conducted clinics for the St. John's Boys & Girls Club, Mosquito-PW house players and Girls. Operating these programs brought in a little extra revenue and gave our grant workers some additional hours. In 2017, we plan to continue with a similar program.

### ***House League***

We tried a few changes in our House league program to improve the quality of competition, give the kids some additional AB's and cut down on the length of the games. We had two tournaments for each division this year (one mid-season and a championship). All house League teams played a minimum of 18 games.

***Rally Cap Program (T-Ball-Novice)*** – We hired a new student coordinator for our Rally Cap program in 2016 (Dayle Prowse) and selected Jaclyn Morgan and Victoria Curran to be 'permanent' assistants. 2016

proved to be our most successful season in Rally Cap since Kristyn coordinated the program. We hope that Dayle will remain with us for the next 3-4 years.

**Rookie** – Bob Fahey was our Rookie Coordinator in 2016 and did a great job. The kids and parents loved Bob. We had record numbers in Rookie and had to hold Tuesday-Thursday session at Wishingwell. In 2017 we will try to make sure that coaches and student workers know the skills that will be emphasized each week.

**Mosquito** – excellent season. We had 10 teams including one that was all girls. We negated the use of the batting tee to try to improve hitting skills and speed up games. Championship tournament had two divisions based on season standings – very popular.

**Peewee** – excellent season. We had 10 teams including one that was all girls. Championship tournament had two divisions – very popular.

**Bantam** – we expanded the age group to include 16 year-olds who did not want to play midget, but ended up with most of them playing midget house. We had an excellent year in Bantam ending with a very successful John Wickham Memorial Championship tournament.

**Midget** – We had one team that played in a 4 team regional league with two teams from MP and CBS. Our team only played 12-13 games due to a number of reasons (Summer Games, rain on Sundays, etc.). We gave a 50% refund to all players.

**Female Baseball** – Girls represent an excellent growth area for SJMBA. In 2016, we had a girls-only winter ball program; we had a girls-only Mosquito and PW house teams; we ran a ‘girls only’ day-time clinic to identify those girls who had an interest in playing in the provincial tournaments; we entered a Girls U14 in Summer Games, Provincial and Atlantic tournaments. Our Girls U12 won gold at the provincial tournament. We are making progress.

### ***Special Events***

Our special events in 2016 attracted good crowds and were executed with very few hiccups. Hats off to Kristyn Coley and our student work crew. Events included the following:

Festival of Baseball – Friday, July 15-Sunday, July 17  
Night under the Lights – Friday, September 16

All Parks – 34 teams  
Edgar Hartery Field

***Note: We did not apply for Blue Jay Camp in 2016 as MP Minor hosted it. We opted to only invite Rally Cap players to Night under the Lights. The Rookie parents were disappointed. Due to the numbers in Rally Cap and Rookie we could not accommodate everyone with one night. We will review for 2017.***

## **FINANCE**

As you will note in our financial statements we had a successful year financially. With revenues of approximately \$40,000, we now have a total surplus of \$100,000 in the bank. This surplus gives us some flexibility to do some extra things or the ability to weather some 'rainy days'.

## **MARKETING-PR-CORPORATE SPONSORSHIP**

In 2016 our registration increased to its highest level since the 'glory days' of the 90's. We did not distribute posters nor did we spend any money in advertising (except through Facebook). We did enhance our efforts in Social Media.

In my opinion, we are now enjoying the fruits of the best form of advertising 'word of mouth'. The news has spread (especially among the young families in our community) that we offer a quality program at a reasonable price. Our increased registration is concentrated in Rally Cap, Rookie, Mosquito and Peewee. That augurs well for our future!

We have three sponsors whose term has expired. I am now in the process of trying to sign them for another three years. Given the uncertainty in our economy, sponsorships will continue to be a challenge. However, I will be working diligently to maintain our revenues through this source.

## **THANK YOU**

I assumed my role as Executive Director in March, 2012. I will be entering my fifth season in 2017 and the position continues to be a 'labour of love'. I want to express a sincere thank you to Ken Curtis and all the Directors for their support and commitment. SJMBA is fortunate to have such a dedicated group of volunteers. We will be losing three directors this year – Kevin Heffernan, Gary Burt and Matthew Hudson. It has been a distinct pleasure working with these gentlemen.

To our all-star and house league coaches – Thank You! We could not offer our program without you.

To Kristyn Coley and Triffie Parsons – I sincerely appreciate your contribution to SJMBA and your patience in working with your truly.

To our student workers on grant and those whom are casual – your efforts are noticed and appreciated. Hope to see most of you back in 2017.

Respectfully submitted,



Mike Buist – Executive Director - SJMBA