

## Gromko, Dan - IP

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**From:** Gromko, Dan - IP  
**Sent:** Friday, May 27, 2016 7:56 AM  
**To:** thomas.ciesla@gmail.com; 'mponpipom@aol.com'; jaykeller55@gmail.com; 'wwillard@newjerseylaw.net'; 'Richard Muratore'; bobebner19@gmail.com; Brian Lauducci (brian@lauducci.com); 'akak644@comcast.net' (akak644@comcast.net); 'Christopulos, Peter [JJCUS]'; miller8340@gmail.com; 'David and Jamie Lanka' (djlanka@comcast.net)  
**Cc:** 'tcantillon@yahoo.com'; 'Mike Kalinak'; 'Chris Repetto'; 'Phil Wengryn'; 'Nataliewong2004@aol.com'; Darren Cray (darrencray@hotmail.com); lewedee@verizon.net  
**Subject:** RE: Travel Committee Meeting Notes 5/16/2016 - NEXT meeting Monday 6/13/2016

To: Travel Committee Members

Attendance:

Dan Gromko  
Mike Kalinak  
Natalie Wong Kalinak  
Pete Christopulos  
Matt Ponpipom

This meeting advanced discussion brought about at our last meeting with regard to Team Formation. The decline in player participation as boys age through the program was particularly severe from 2015 to 2016. Pete Christopulos provided the following analysis from league data:

Recreation League	2016	Played 2015, Left 2016	Decline (%)
Rookie	59	0	0
A	38	2	5.0
AA	40	4	9.1
AAA	46	11	19.3
American	49	16	24.6
National	66	18	21.4
Pony	44	60	57.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>296</b>	<b>111</b>	<b>27.3</b>

Views cited as reason for decline were:

- Loss of interest due to Lack of Challenge
- Using age as a criteria for Team Eligibility (Currently April 30)

Opinions on Benefits and Consequences were presented including those of absent Committee members. Options going forward:

- Option 1: Keep Status Quo
- Option 2: Form Teams by Field Size (8U, 9U, 10U = 46/60) (11U, 12U = 50/70) (13U, 14U, 15U, 16U = 60/90)
- Option 3: Form Teams by aligning with the School Calendar or similar criteria. (Aug 31 – Dec 31)
- Option 4: Form Teams by Grade Level only without regard to player's age.

Option 1  
PROS:

P1-1 Requires least amount of work.

CONS:

C1-1 Doesn't address the perception that older boys continuing to have to "play down" will further erode interest and participation.

C1-2 Decline in participation continues or worsens in future years.

Option 2

PROS:

P2-1 Best possible Gold Level Teams formed as player ability only would be used to determine selection to a Team.

P2-2 Multiple Travel Teams would still be formed depending on the number of players trying out. (Gold, Blue, White, etc.)

P2-3 Consistency in placing players on their appropriate Field Size without some having to "play up or down" due to a calendar rule.

CONS:

C2-1 The oldest player would determine the level of District Tournament Play eligibility. (8U or 9U player who is good enough to make the 46/60 Gold Team would have to compete against 10U competition)

C2-2 Summer Travel League participation would likewise have to follow the oldest player determining the level of play for the team.

C2-3 Older players who are not selected to a Gold Team would have to "play down" in age such that a 10U player could be assigned to a team with a lot of 8U players.

C2-4 Decline in participation continues or worsens in future years.

C2-5 May affect competitiveness and therefore participation in District Tournament for some age group(s).

Option 3

PROS

P3-1 Would align players for the most part by School Grade Level, without any "playing down at grade level"

P3-2 Players stay in the program by playing with their friends.

CONS

C3-1 Would still cause an older player to "play down" if his birthday happened to fall beyond the cut off date. (8/31, 9/30, etc.)

C3-2 Would have to compete in District Tournament Play against Teams who continue to use 4/30 as their cutoff date for eligibility.

C3-3 Summer Travel League participation would likewise have to follow the oldest player determining the level of play for the team.

C3-4 May affect competitiveness and therefore participation in District Tournament for some age group(s).

Option 4

PROS

P4-1 Would align players exactly by School Grade Level.

P4-2 Players stay in the program by playing with their friends.

CONS

C4-1 Would have to compete in District Tournament Play against Teams who continue to use 4/30 as their cutoff date for eligibility

C4-2 Summer Travel League participation would likewise have to follow the oldest player determining the level of play for the team.

Actions:

1. Natalie will send Pete updated files containing all Recreation and Travel participants for 2015 & 2016 to complete his analysis.
2. Make a recommendation following next month's meeting (6/13/2016)
3. Milestone timeline of deliverables for implementation. (July)
4. Define Somerville player eligibility for all levels of Travel. (July)
5. Determine Tryout date(s) to be held in September (August)
6. Finalize Tryout Process, Scoring, Evaluators, etc. (August)

End.

## Dan Gromko

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ITT



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**From:** Gromko, Dan - IP

**Sent:** Wednesday, April 20, 2016 8:58 AM

**To:** thomas.ciesla@gmail.com; 'mponpipom@aol.com'; jaykeller55@gmail.com; 'wwillard@newjerseylaw.net'; 'Richard Muratore'; bobebner19@gmail.com; Brian Lauducci (brian@lauducci.com); 'akak644@comcast.net' (akak644@comcast.net); 'Christopulos, Peter [JJCUS]'; miller8340@gmail.com; 'David and Jamie Lanka' (djlanka@comcast.net)

**Cc:** 'tcantillon@yahoo.com'; 'Mike Kalinak'; 'Chris Repetto'; 'Phil Wengryn'; 'Nataliewong2004@aol.com'; Darren Cray (darrencray@hotmail.com)

**Subject:** RE: Travel Baseball 2016

To: Travel Board Members - Meeting Notes from 4/18/2016.

Attendance:

Tom Cantillon

Natalie Wong Kalinak

Jay Keller

Phil Wengryn

Pete Christopulos

Matt Ponpipom

Tom Ciesla

Mike Kalinak

1. Financial review of payments made by Team and Monies still owed. (See attached and please remit to me, Mike or a Board Member if still owing)
2. Summary form requested received from two Managers. Please send when available. Also, now that the NPGL and perhaps other fees are known, you may update files previously sent for accuracy.
3. NPGL Registration is now open. All Teams playing in this league should register on the NPGL website and remit payment directly.
4. USABL Registration (14U) likewise should be arranged through their website with payment made directly.
5. Insurance Certificates will be available shortly. Mike Kalinak will notify all when ready, but this should not prevent or delay registration.

6. Rich Muratore emailed a summary of the District 10 Tournament Venues to all on Tuesday 4/19/2016. Please email Rich if you have any questions about this Tournament.
7. Tryout process discussion covered the following:
  - a. Tryouts for 2017 to be held at WOP in September or October. (Date TBA)
  - b. The evaluation form (Diamond Nation) used for the last two years is satisfactory for use during 2017 tryouts.
  - c. Evaluators will include all Gold and Blue Team Travel Managers.
  - d. End of Season evaluation by each Gold and Blue Team Manager should be part of the overall player evaluation.
  - e. Outside Evaluators: Diamond Nation evaluators with few exceptions were felt not to have been any better at evaluating our boys than those who did so from Branchburg Baseball. Pitching scores in particular were suspect among the DN evaluators due to the way observations were conducted and relatively small sample of pitches. We have the ability and option to invite third party evaluators to our Venue for 2017 whether it be DN, Zoned, or some other and this needs further discussion and resolution.
  - f. A suggestion was put forth to align Teams by Grade Level rather than the Cal Ripken Method currently used. Older players having to play down was cited as a possible reason for early defection from the Travel Program. It was felt that this subject deserves further consideration and those in favor would tabulate a list of players from the 2016 Travel Rosters to see what kind of impact this may have had. Those to be included on the list should include players who have left the program for discussion as to whether or not they would have remained in Branchburg Travel Baseball under this scenario. I have comprised a list for Grade 7 and others at the meeting stated that they would do the same for younger grades for further discussion at subsequent meetings.
  - g. Review and re-write as necessary for Somerville players who seek to play in Branchburg's Travel Program is needed for 2017.

End.

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**From:** Gromko, Dan - IP

**Sent:** Sunday, April 10, 2016 8:53 PM

**To:** [thomas.ciesla@gmail.com](mailto:thomas.ciesla@gmail.com); 'mponpipom@aol.com'; [jaykeller55@gmail.com](mailto:jaykeller55@gmail.com); 'wwillard@newjerseylaw.net'; 'Richard Muratore'; [bobebner19@gmail.com](mailto:bobebner19@gmail.com); Brian Lauducci ([brian@lauducci.com](mailto:brian@lauducci.com)); 'akak644@comcast.net' ([akak644@comcast.net](mailto:akak644@comcast.net)); 'Christopoulos, Peter [JJCUS]'; [miller8340@gmail.com](mailto:miller8340@gmail.com); 'David and Jamie Lanka' ([djlanka@comcast.net](mailto:djlanka@comcast.net))

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**Subject:** RE: Travel Baseball 2016

Travel Board Members,

Our next meeting will be April 18, 2016 at 8:00 pm (Whiton Hills Community Center) Please mark your calendar.

Agenda:

1. Financial Summary of BBC Travel Fee (\$135 per player)
2. Travel Summary Form Status.
3. Update on NPGL (All Branchburg Travel Teams except 14U)

- 4. Update on USABL (14U)
- 5. Update on District Tournament, remind of duties expected by Branchburg Teams.
- 6. Tryout Process & Player Selection 2017

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