

Lights Parents First Game Note

Logistics first.

Please have your ballplayer at the diamond by 6:45. Make sure they are wearing a warm, long sleeve shirt, and some long underwear under their baseball pants isn't a bad idea. Spectators should be prepared as well – blankets are customary at early season East Pony late games. Bring extras.

A note as our season starts...

Sometime in late June or early July, our season will be over. We'll have played 30 – 35 games, and hopefully have won the last three, in addition to a bunch of others along the way. We'll have a season ending celebration, and some of our boys will go on to All Stars, some will continue their high school seasons and some will hang up their cleats until they play softball later in their lives. Our 13 year olds will return for fall ball, and pass on East Pony and Lights traditions.

Part of the charm of baseball is every game contains hundreds of small dramas; pitchers facing hitters, baserunners testing fielders, a long fly ball against a stiff south wind, managers plotting against each other, umpires thinking through how to make up for missed calls...

I don't pretend to know how each of those hundreds of small dramas will play out in any single game.

But I know two things for certain.

I know each of our ballplayers will try their best. Not one of them wants to make an error, or walk a batter, or strike out. I've promised them they'll never have a coach give them trouble for anything except a lack of hustle, or other evidence of disrespect for the game, or team. I'll ask that you do likewise, and be 100% positive during the games. Baseball looks much easier from the spectator side of the fence than it actually is, and we don't need a single negative comment coming through the chain link – even if directed at the umpire or other team.

Having been at this for eight years, the one thing I am most certain of is the time our boys play together on the field is a piece of magic. Boys, becoming young men, facing challenges and working together, while playing a difficult game.

If I have one piece of advice ... it is ... enjoy the magic. July will get here soon enough. And though you'll think you're weary of cold nights and hot days at Garfield Park then, years on ... you'll wish you could spin the clock backward, to that time your son and his eleven teammates were a determined but happy band of ballplayers, playing the national pastime, for no other reason than they love it.

Enjoy the show. Go Lights.