



**Christopher Castro**

1. Up until the 2019 NBUA use to provide umpire's to college club baseball games. It went under the radar that NBUA was no longer doing these do to losing the bid. What would you do to try and win that business back and create additional opportunities for members to work higher level ball?

**It depends, is the contract a value-based award or is it a lowest cost award? If it is the latter, the only way to win is to undercut all other bidders to get NBUA back in the game. This is viable if qualified NBUA members are willing to accept reduced pay to work those games. If the contract award is value based, a case can be made that based upon the experience, training, and standardization within the NBUA organization, NBUA is the best value for their money. One way to increase the value of our bid is to increase the number of members that have attended a professional umpire academy. If we expanded the current NBUA scholarship program to send 2 members per year to a professional school, all expenses paid, we could further grow our professionalism.**

2. What, if any board positions have you held in the past, (NBUA or otherwise)?

**I have been elected President of two Little Leagues, one domestically and one internationally. I have also been the Chief Operating Officer of a small family owned corporation. My military leadership experience equates to civilian Sr. VP, and CEO positions.**

3. What are you going to do better than the current board members up for election? What suggestions would you offer to make NBUA an even better organization?

**I do not think in terms of doing anything better than anyone else. I would like to leverage my experience at TOPGUN and bring that mentality to the NBUA. TOPGUN is known for excellence and standardization in every facet of the organization. What is standardization? I can best explain standardization by describing a weakness I observed during training. Standardization is speaking with one voice during training, for example, I asked three different trainers the same question which resulted in three different answers. In terms of standardization, this is unacceptable – everyone conducting training must know the correct answer (not their personal technique) as well as the reason why it is the correct answer. To address standardization, I would like to establish a full-time committee to evaluate current and newer proposed mechanics changes in order to make recommendations to the board as well as membership. Ideally, several graduates of the professional umpire academy would be seated on the committee. Establishing a “train the trainer” curriculum as well as requirements for trainer certification will enhance standardization. Furthermore, evaluations could be tailored to include instructing / mentoring / standardization accuracy. This will guarantee that each new umpire is being instructed correctly and in the same manner by everyone. The key is speaking in unison with one voice in order to establish maximum professionalism.**

4. With COVID, people just not having an interest in umpiring, and aging umpires, how would you suggest we continue to recruit new umpires? What ideas do you have regarding recruitment, retention, and training?

**I think there is a potential resource within City run recreational leagues which is where I was noticed by NBUA. Most of those umpires are high school age and could easily become future 30-year NBUA umpires. Dave Carr (B-Tier) and I have trained youth umpires in both Auburn and Kent during the past 3 years; I envision these leagues possibly becoming our minor leagues and a steppingstone to NBUA membership. Taking this a step further, NBUA could potentially contract with the cities to provide training to their umpires and give NBUA an opportunity to directly**

**identify potential candidates for membership. Expanding our professional umpire academy scholarship program could also be a major selling point as well.**

5. How do you think umpires should handle it and/or correct the situation if players or coaches don't follow the COVID-19 safety rules as laid out by the WIAA and the Seattle Public Schools?

**This entirely depends upon the WIAA and SPS organizations and how they want to enforce their safety rules. Fortunately, MLB is going through this now and hopefully we will not need to reinvent procedures but simply implement well established protocols.**

6. NBUA's mission has always been to bring together a band of brothers (and sisters) of common cause: to support youth baseball and the great benefits it brings to our youths, by officiating the contests that coaches, parents, and players engage in voluntarily. Baseball has risks, just like other sports, equestrian events, scuba diving, sky diving, and other voluntarily activities in life. Are you in favor of letting consenting parties have umpires, or do you want to deny them umpires regardless what they feel is responsible?

**It seems this question is regarding the politics of Washington state COVID-19 restrictions. If entrusted with a leadership position, I could not support any actions designed to circumvent state COVID-19 restrictions. This is a liability issue; non-sanctioned, non-assigned events are not covered by insurance and most importantly, any spread of infection could result in lawsuits against NBUA.**

7. It seems unlikely we will be doing games this year, and if things don't change soon (exception: vaccine) we may be delayed next year. HS certainly will be, with the season starting after football. How do you suggest we handle NBUA training for COVID and post-COVID games - discussions and confrontations with coaches, players, and other personnel? What is your suggestion for how we should train on a standard way to handle these things for the organization?

**This is an ideal scenario for a standardization committee, as described above, to evaluate current MLB procedures and provide NBUA procedural recommendations to the board and membership. Once procedures have**

**been established and approved, a curriculum must be developed to train the membership.**



**Peyton Coffin**

*“As a preface, questions are asked that affect every one of us so they demand thoughtful, and unfortunately some long, answers but there are many subjects to cover. You can’t just knee-jerk into hopeful solutions and hope for the best. One of the reasons I’m finally seeking to represent you is that there will be a LOT of thought, research and work put into how NBUA will move forward in a COVID-influenced world and I would like to contribute to solutions that help you, keep you safe and protect you from liability.”*

- 1) Up until the 2019 NBUA use to provide umpire's to college club baseball games. It went under the radar that NBUA was no longer doing these do to losing the bid. What would you do to try and win that business back and create additional opportunities for members to work higher level ball?

**I was not on the board when the Community College games moved over to being assigned by the Northwest College Umpires Association in about 2014, so I don’t know all the details but I believe that the NCUA was and is in a better position to administer those games. The avenue, for the umpire desiring to move up, is to take a 3-man camp/clinic, be evaluated by the NCUA trainers and assigner and get assigned. The umpire can then work college games during the college season and NBUA games otherwise. It is more effective to work up to higher-level college games in one association, assignor and evaluation system rather than to rise to the CC level in NBUA and then must hiccup laterally and start over. NCUA is a pathway to NCAA if that is what is sought. Many of our umpires work both associations and are certainly supported and**

**encouraged because their additional training and experience benefits our other umpires both at our trainings and by our working games with those umpires. NBUA has plenty of games to cover with our current staff. I think the transition benefitted NBUA, NCUA and all umpires.**

- 2) What, if any board positions have you held in the past, (NBUA or otherwise)?

**Boards and similar positions:**

- **Rotary International Club of Singapore (Vocational Service Chairman 1 year, Community Services Chairman 3 years, Vice President)**
- **Alliance Technology Pte Ltd -- Multimedia Division, Board and General Manager**
- **Marina Ventures Inc, Board and President**
- **South Lake Tahoe Chamber of Commerce, Vice Chairman, Chairman**
- **South Lake Tahoe Winter Carnival, Chairman**
- **Ski The High Sierra Association, President**
- **Virgin Islands Hotel Association, Board (Allied member representative)**
- **Virgin Islands Advertising Club (American Advertising Federation affiliate), Founder and President**
- **Alligator, LLC, Partner**

- 3) What are you going to do better than the current board members up for election? What suggestions would you offer to make NBUA an even better organization?

**Answering the 1<sup>st</sup> question might be interpreted as criticizing a current board member and I'll decline to do so. They have all put in an inordinate amount of time on our behalf.**

**As to the 2<sup>nd</sup> question, many points are made in the answers to other questions, but it should be noted that the 1<sup>st</sup> two jobs of a new board member should be: 1. Shut up and 2. listen.**

**That said, I think we need to stay in touch with our brethren better. I'd like to have personal stories/game experiences published on our website -- in fact the entire website could use some improvements because it should be a recruiting and engagement tool. Years ago, Gooch and Philbeck (old timers) wrote a monthly "Behind the Mask" series and Nilson contributed "Nailed It!" -- a rules analysis. Can those be resurrected?**

**Inclusion leads to retention. Other sports have in-season training and meetings, but we do not because baseball is 5-days a week and twice (thrice?) on Saturdays and Sundays. I'd like to see a couple of in-season Zoom meetings and shared training video clips, rules questions & etc. Some redacted ejection reports with analysis can enhance training. A couple of war stories could be amusing and informative. We seem to like each other, so why not get together and talk/train/improve more? It works for other sports.**

**This year, with little or no contact between our members after training and no ejection reports to read, our board might have the time to consider programs to help us re-connect. Our younger umpires, especially, deserve to be included and encouraged.**

- 4) With COVID, people just not having an interest in umpiring, and aging umpires, how would you suggest we continue to recruit new umpires? What ideas do you have regarding recruitment, retention, and training?

**5 questions in one? Some are answered or touched on elsewhere, but a couple of topics are specific enough. Aging umpires: Last year, there was an excellent NASO Summit breakout on transitioning. Celebrate umpires who have served and are transitioning to a life where only a few people disagree with them, and even fewer yell at them. We do not acknowledge retirees enough, just one season they are not there. Let's honor them and use their examples to inspire our younger umpires.**

**Recruitment -- A few examples: I am trying to get an article published in the AARP magazine (world's largest circulation) that will focus on national recruitment. Local magazines like Pacific Northwest, neighborhood news magazines and Weekend Plus should like articles about ways people can stay healthy and earn some income. Community College bulletin boards should be targeted. We should advertise where**

**expenses allow and get time on sports radio with segments about umpiring. There have been some, but they are not focused on recruitment. The story in the Times last year had zero contact information. Rotary, Masons, Elks, etc. clubs are always looking for luncheon speakers (and you get a free lunch!). We can't seem to get into the Little League umpire community. Why not? Let's approach the Mariners' baseball announcers for some PSA's during games: "Hey, folks! Would you like to be a baseball umpire?" Last year we increased our outreach via recruiting cards. I'm open to your suggestions, too!**

**Training: Our training is excellent and the trainers and staff put in a lot of time and effort! But we always intend to have players to help with our training but don't and that would help immeasurably. We could eliminate the long lines for drills by breaking into smaller groups focusing on different aspects. I think there should be more Apprentice and "C" separation during training with breakout training on some subjects like game management. Mind you, even though I have participated in training for many years, I can't encourage change unless I represent you, so I need your vote and, if elected, I'll need your ideas.**

- 5) How do you think umpires should handle it and/or correct the situation if players or coaches don't follow the COVID-19 safety rules as laid out by the WIAA and the Seattle Public Schools?

**We shouldn't, pure and simple. It's not in our job description and our contracts with the schools and leagues should have an addendum that specifies this. I have suggested to the WOA through Todd Stordahl and Cindy C-Wilson and proposed to Tim Stevens that every team designate a "Protocol Officer" who takes whatever training necessary (even just read a pamphlet) and is responsible for all aspects of protocol enforcement on the field (or the court) and its vicinity such as the stands. We should ask two pre-game questions: "Do you have a healthcare professional, etc...?" for concussions and "Who is your Protocol Officer?" If the answer is not similar to "That assistant coach/school administrator/teacher/parent over there" then we do not work the game (and we get paid). Period. This applies to all recreation leagues as well.**

**Two questions arose in the NASO Summit breakout: Law and Liability. Can you be sued? Yes. Can you be held liable? Maybe. If a player**

**contracts COVID from a coach not wearing a mask can the parent hold you liable because you did not enforce the protocols? Not if there is an iron-clad agreement in place. “See that Protocol Officer over there? Go serve him the subpoena, thank you. Have a nice day.” We also have NASO liability insurance and Drew Smith, the man responsible for writing the policy, has confirmed that we are covered.**

**Can a school or league require us to wear a mask at all times and/or submit to a temperature check before a game? Sure, if it’s in the specifications published pre-assignment and we accept it. We need to make sure the WIAA and WOA protocols are on file and agreed to by NBUA -- and the same with every league.**

**There’s an additional consideration: HIPAA laws. If an official tests positive for COVID, is NBUA responsible for notifying the school/league of every game he worked in the last two weeks? Is the individual umpire responsible? Do we need to specify that in our Member Services Agreement? Does contact reporting on an independent contractor violate an official’s medical privacy parameters? We need clarification and we need consent.**

- 6) NBUA’s mission has always been to bring together a band of brothers (and sisters) of common cause: to support youth baseball and the great benefits it brings to our youths, by officiating the contests that coaches, parents, and players engage in voluntarily. Baseball has risks, just like other sports, equestrian events, scuba diving, sky diving, and other voluntarily activities in life. Are you in favor of letting consenting parties have umpires, or do you want to deny them umpires regardless what they feel is responsible?

**Just to put this into perspective, most coaches and leagues are not voluntary, even if engaging in the activity is voluntary. Most parents are employers since they contract, with remuneration, the league/coach for a quantity of coaching/games/tournaments and travel, etc. If a parent invests \$4,000/Summer, it’s not voluntary. Leagues are a business entity with employed (perhaps independently contracted) coaches and administrators. They have certain contractual responsibilities, liabilities and insurance, just as we do through our MSA and NASO.**

**Re: “Consenting parties have umpires... regardless” ... Not sure the implication but I’ll take a swing at it. All clubs, tournaments, leagues**

**should submit explicit COVID safety protocols to NBUA when they request NBUA's assignment of umpires. NBUA should publish those parameters when assigning games, just as we do with all tournaments and league-specific rules. If an umpire gets a game assigned for a league or tournament that has rules s/he does not think appropriate or that has a protocol s/he does not agree with (must wear mask as opposed to just can wear, no requirement for all support personnel/coaches to wear masks, etc.), s/he can just decline the game. There should be no penalty for declining within a set period, say 2 days, of the assignment.**

**But please don't imply that sky diving is necessarily risky to an old jumper (D license #3042). Sky diving/parachuting, in and of itself, is actually very safe. On the other hand, any immediate deceleration regardless of what you are doing can ruin your day.**

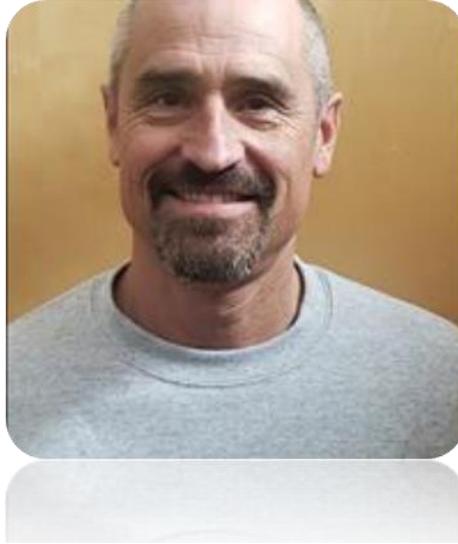
- 7) It seems unlikely we will be doing games this year, and if things don't change soon (exception: vaccine) we may be delayed next year. HS certainly will be, with the season starting after football. How do you suggest we handle NBUA training for COVID and post-COVID games - discussions and confrontations with coaches, players, and other personnel? What is your suggestion for how we should train on a standard way to handle these things for the organization?

**There will not likely be any "post-COVID" games, if that term defines the athletic contest situation in 2019, for the foreseeable future. Regarding discussions and especially confrontations with coaches, it should be specified that no one crosses the foul lines. For players on the field, if an umpire is approached there is one warning to stay back at 6 feet or whatever distance the umpire specifies at the time and an immediate ejection if that request is not honored.**

**Regarding training, if the agreements mentioned in answer #5 are memorialized, they will cover COVID-protocol game situations. We can supplement with more role play scenarios in training. In a seminar, Bob Delaney suggested dealing with situations from a care-frontation rather than confrontation perspective. If we can demonstrate that we care about the integrity of the game and care about a satisfactory and fair outcome it will help diffuse tensions. We should act rationally instead of react emotionally or defensively (like we see too much of in MLB – somewhat for entertainment value). Training should stress how we can**

**get the coaches' agreement that we should demonstrate to the players how adults deal with adversity.**

**I believe that one outcome of this unfortunate season is that players, coaches and umpires will treat each other with more respect, and even more politeness, in the future. If you'd like to have another board member who cares about your success and safety, vote to add me to your board of directors.**



**Lane Loland**

1. Up until the 2019 NBUA use to provide umpire's to college club baseball games. It went under the radar that NBUA was no longer doing these do to losing the bid. What would you do to try and win that business back and create additional opportunities for members to work higher level ball?

**I would like for NBUA members to work games at the highest level for which they are prepared and qualified. Obviously, we don't necessarily have the man-power to cover every game in King County +, but we certainly can make it a priority to pursue contracts that are in the best interests of our members. I want for all of our members to have the opportunity to grow and advance as umpires, and sometimes that means suiting up for different levels of games. Umpiring 11-year-olds can be fun. It is also important, however, for us to make sure we are doing everything possible to contract for games that reward our members – both in terms of pay, and in the challenge presented on the field.**

2. What, if any board positions have you held in the past, (NBUA or otherwise)?

**I have never held a board position for the NBUA or any other umpiring association. As a High School athletic director, I served with others to oversee all athletic programs in the WESCO conference, including individual**

**responsibility for the league's Cross Country programs and coaches. I also served as Social Studies Department Head and as the Dean of Students at Shorecrest High School.**

3. What are you going to do better than the current board members up for election? What suggestions would you offer to make NBUA an even better organization?

**As a relative newcomer to the NBUA (2020 would have been my second season), I don't have any specific complaints about our current Board of Directors. I believe that our organization is strong and continues to move in the right direction. The priorities for me would be to listen and then act energetically to advance the interests of our members at all times. I look forward to the opportunity to be involved and to take a more active role with the NBUA. My candidacy, however, is not at all based on any level of dissatisfaction with the current board.**

4. With COVID, people just not having an interest in umpiring, and aging umpires, how would you suggest we continue to recruit new umpires? What ideas do you have regarding recruitment, retention, and training?

**Recruitment and retention are critical for the ongoing health of our organization, and from what I can tell, Brian Rooney has done an excellent job in heading up those efforts in the last couple of years. Unfortunately, the job is a never-ending one, and should fall on the shoulders of everyone in the organization. I know that we have a minimal reward that goes to a member for recruiting a new umpire who works at least 25 (30?) games. It might help matters if we enhanced that reward and were much more intentional about promoting it among our membership. In addition, we need to continue to be aware of the fact that our most fertile field of recruitment lies within the existing baseball community. Direct recruiting presentations to high school, college, and men's league teams could provide the best return for the investment of our time.**

5. How do you think umpires should handle it and/or correct the situation if players or coaches don't follow the COVID-19 safety rules as laid out by the WIAA and the Seattle Public Schools?

**First, let me express the hope that COVID is not a long-term ongoing issue for us. Until we get back to that point, however, I really don't want for our members to be in the position of policing masks and/or distancing – that should be up to the coaches. At the same time, it is imperative that our members feel safe and comfortable while doing our jobs. Where does that leave us? Once the rules are established (by the school districts or the WIAA), it should fall upon the coaches to enforce those rules. Our role as umpires should be final and absolute – if a coach isn't enforcing the rules and the umpires don't feel safe or comfortable, the umpires should have the authority to immediately eject the coach and/or players, or simply end the game in a forfeit. On the other hand, if the umpires are comfortable with the situation on the field, they should be able to do their job of umpiring without worrying about enforcing COVID rules, just as we don't worry about grade eligibility rules or pitch limit rules. As individuals we will have different levels of concern and tolerance, and we need to recognize that reality. Give umpires enough authority so that all of us feel safe and comfortable, but don't make us the mask police.**

6. NBUA's mission has always been to bring together a band of brothers (and sisters) of common cause: to support youth baseball and the great benefits it brings to our youths, by officiating the contests that coaches, parents, and players engage in voluntarily. Baseball has risks, just like other sports, equestrian events, scuba diving, sky diving, and other voluntarily activities in life. Are you in favor of letting consenting parties have umpires, or do you want to deny them umpires regardless what they feel is responsible?

**It is essential that we present a united front as an organization, but that unity of purpose should be focused on maximizing opportunities for our**

**members. I assume this question is geared toward the reality of sports in the COVID world. As such, I don't want our organization to be the impediment standing in the way of games being played. Thus, if organizations are willing to play, we should stand ready to provide umpires – with the proviso, however, that nobody should be pressured to work outside of their comfort zone. Thus, our stance should be the same as it is otherwise, in that we will work games contingent upon umpire availability. If our availability is limited because some of our members choose to opt out – so be it. For those members who want to work, however, the NBUA should do everything possible to allow that to happen.**

7. It seems unlikely we will be doing games this year, and if things don't change soon (exception: vaccine) we may be delayed next year. HS certainly will be, with the season starting after football. How do you suggest we handle NBUA training for COVID and post-COVID games - discussions and confrontations with coaches, players, and other personnel. What is your suggestion for how we should train on a standard way to handle these things for the organization?

**The impact of COVID. More than any of us could have imagined and so obtrusive that I assume we're all aching to return to some level of normalcy. I watch the news and I follow what's going on in the world, but I readily acknowledge my lack of expertise when it comes to the virus and appropriate protocols for our return to the field. The one thing I would promise as a board member is my willingness to listen. I will listen to the advice we get from medical experts as well as the voices of our membership. I honestly believe that the collective heart of the NBUA is in the right place and I'm certain that we have the overall problem-solving ability to create a plan that will allow us to effectively return to the field in the spring. What is most important is an open-mindedness and a willingness to be flexible as we find an approach that works for the whole. I don't have the answers myself at this time. What I do have is a readiness and willingness to listen and to work with any and all others in our organization to find those solutions.**



**Hank Margeson-Incumbent**

1) Up until the 2019 NBUA use to provide umpire's to college club baseball games. It went under the radar that NBUA was no longer doing these do to losing the bid. What would you do to try and win that business back and create additional opportunities for members to work higher level ball?

**The decision by the local colleges to hire umpires was made by the local colleges. They did not invite bids for services as was their prerogative. That's the bottom line. I would counter that while college club games are related to local colleges, the NBUA is blessed to work games of much higher caliber including several Seattle Elite sponsored tournaments, Brandy Pugh tournament, En Fuego baseball, and PIL baseball.**

2) What, if any board positions have you held in the past, (NBUA or otherwise)?

**I am the current President of the Board, having served in that role for several years. Prior to that I served as Vice President, Bylaws/Policies and Procedures Director and Recruiting and Retention Director.**

3) What are you going to do better than the current board members up for election? What suggestions would you offer to make NBUA an even better organization?

**As a current member of the Board, I am committed to working on our finances, bringing in new members and engaging with our current members to take on leadership roles. I am thrilled with the number of great candidates running for election this year and am heartened that we have a good diversity of experience. One new program I will be looking to implement over the next few years is a robust diversity program. From attracting new umpires, to retaining those already a part of this association, to working together to ensure our leadership on committees and the Board are reflective of our community and membership.**

4) With COVID, people just not having an interest in umpiring, and aging umpires, how would you suggest we continue to recruit new umpires? What ideas do you have regarding recruitment, retention, and training?

**One thing I learned as the Recruiting and Retention Director was that during an economic downturn, people are looking for something to do that'll bring in some cash. And with the changes the association has implemented for how/when we pay our members along with changes by the WOA for paying us, we will quickly become quite attractive. At the same time, there's no better recruiter for NBUA than our members. We demonstrate our professionalism each game we work and are great ambassadors for umpiring.**

5) How do you think umpires should handle it and/or correct the situation if players or coaches don't follow the COVID-19 safety rules as laid out by the WIAA and the Seattle Public Schools?

**The responsibility for enforcing state guidelines should not fall on sports officials, umpires included. We have enough on our plate with umpiring the game and should not be tasked with enforcing COVID rules. That has been our position in the NBUA with our customers and it is the position of the WOA.**

6) NBUA's mission has always been to bring together a band of brothers (and sisters) of common cause: to support youth baseball and the great benefits it brings to our youths, by officiating the contests that coaches, parents, and players engage in voluntarily. Baseball has risks, just like other sports, equestrian events, scuba

diving, sky diving, and other voluntarily activities in life. Are you in favor of letting consenting parties have umpires, or do you want to deny them umpires regardless what they feel is responsible?

**I am and I have already demonstrated this when we were approached to provide an umpire for a couple cash games. It was my decision to allow us to solicit our members for volunteers who were willing to work the games.**

7) It seems unlikely we will be doing games this year, and if things don't change soon (exception: vaccine) we may be delayed next year. HS certainly will be, with the season starting after football. How do you suggest we handle NBUA training for COVID and post-COVID games - discussions and confrontations with coaches, players, and other personnel. What is your suggestion for how we should train on a standard way to handle these things for the organization?

**I have two thoughts here. First, since we know the high school season start will be pushed back, we may be able to delay launching our training. This will allow more time for protocols to be put into effect which would enable us to train in person. I've already reached out to Rich Lemieux, SCUBA's President, to express our interest in another joint training camp in 2021. If we were able to delay until better weather, we could do most or all the training outdoors. Second, the Board has been meeting via MS Teams for the past several months and knowing that there are other virtual meeting platforms available, I could foresee us doing some or all our classroom training in a virtual setting.**



1. Up until the 2019 NBUA use to provide umpire's to college club baseball games. It went under the radar that NBUA was no longer doing these do to losing the bid. What would you do to try and win that business back and create additional opportunities for members to work higher level ball?

**I would speak with the board members and those umpires that have worked these games to find out who they coordinated with and what was involved. We should still have plenty of information as to why we lost the bid or a good idea anyway. If we have the umpires who can work these games, then we need to see about re-instating those talks. I recall NBUA having umpires work those games for as far back as I can remember.**

2. What, if any board positions have you held in the past, (NBUA or otherwise)?

**I have not held any board positions in the past with NBUA. I was a member of our Little League board prior to joining NBUA, where I served as President and Umpire-In-Chief for two years (concurrently).**

3. What are you going to do better than the current board members up for election? What suggestions would you offer to make NBUA an even better organization?

**I think our current board and recent board members have done a great job to keep our organization at the top of baseball umpiring in our region. There has been improvement just about every year, especially the new "debit" card we were given this year for withdrawing when we want to—even though this unique season prevented its first use. I don't have any ideas/suggestions right now, but I do have a creative mind that is waiting to be put to use.**

4. With COVID, people just not having an interest in umpiring, and aging umpires, how would you suggest we continue to recruit new umpires? What ideas do you have regarding recruitment, retention, and training?

**Old-fashioned marketing in places people go—primarily grocery stores, and malls—posting signs or leaving business cards (thanks to Peyton). I think this, coupled with our past tactics would work well. Our training program has also changed to fit what works best while having top instructors who have been around a long time. Retention is something we are all a part of...making NBUA a safe, inviting environment with great teamwork and a “family” atmosphere. No competing, no ill-will....by helping each other and treating each other with respect, retention should come naturally.**

5. How do you think umpires should handle it and/or correct the situation if players or coaches don't follow the COVID-19 safety rules as laid out by the WIAA and the Seattle Public Schools?

**The game is for the kids. If they don't want to follow the rules—new as they are—then there can be no game. I don't think it is the umpire's job alone to enforce these new safety rules—all parties must be involved. Coaches from both teams and umpires must address this at the plate meeting and hold conferences during the game as needed.**

6. NBUA's mission has always been to bring together a band of brothers (and sisters) of common cause: to support youth baseball and the great benefits it brings to our youths, by officiating the contests that coaches, parents, and players engage in voluntarily. Baseball has risks, just like other sports, equestrian events, scuba diving, sky diving, and other voluntarily activities in life. Are you in favor of letting consenting parties have umpires, or do you want to deny them umpires regardless what they feel is responsible?

**There needs to be common safety requirements met for any type of contest. I would not want to umpire in an environment that I don't feel safe in. As umpires, we are already the decision-makers between two competing teams. Just because two parties are consenting, doesn't help prevent an unsafe atmosphere at the onset or during the contest. I need more than just "what they feel is responsible" before participating.**

7. It seems unlikely we will be doing games this year, and if things don't change soon (exception: vaccine) we may be delayed next year. HS certainly will be, with the season starting after football. How do you suggest we handle NBUA training for COVID and post-COVID games - discussions and confrontations with coaches, players, and other personnel. What is your suggestion for how we should train on a standard way to handle these things for the organization?

**Follow protocols in place, or what is mandated at the time of training—masks, distancing. I'm sure there are plans in place for next year's training, as I heard—because those involved in this past training up in Everett want to do an even better job next/this time around. If that's not possible, we go back to what we've done in the past. I don't think we can have a "standard way to handle these things" in an environment that is still as unpredictable as what we are going through. I think we have a flexible membership, and a good history with schools/venues we have used in the past for training. However, I really think our "new style" (large-scale camps, clinics...) have been very successful, and we should do what we can to make that work.**



**Greg Olmstead**

1. Up until the 2019 NBUA use to provide umpire's to college club baseball games. It went under the radar that NBUA was no longer doing these do to losing the bid. What would you do to try and win that business back and create additional opportunities for members to work higher level ball?

**Difficult to answer without history, but generally the board would set priorities for each year and I would support this being a priority. Then look at the details of the issues surrounding why we lost a bid and what it would take to regain it.**

2. What, if any board positions have you held in the past, (NBUA or otherwise)?

**PNFOA (football) board, declined to run again in 2019. My position was to contact ALL potential recruits (over 100 per year) before the year, set up training schedules and locations, training material and be the main trainer in classes and organize on field efforts.**

3. What are you going to do better than the current board members up for election? What suggestions would you offer to make NBUA an even better organization?

**Everyone running I believe would work well with the existing board and I doubt have any personal agendas. I have ideas for training new officials, retaining officials at all levels, and improving relationships with coaches to reduce incidents.**

**I'll work hard if elected and be relieved if not. But I'll keep umpiring baseball games to the best of my ability, have fun and hopefully improve.**

4. With COVID, people just not having an interest in umpiring, and aging umpires, how would you suggest we continue to recruit new umpires? What ideas do you have regarding recruitment, retention, and training?

**Referee magazine, WOA, etc always share good ideas in these areas. There are several reasons people choose officiating – love of the game, part time job/money, step toward a higher level career.**

**Finding recent coaches, players or LL umpires are likely the best avenue since those know what they are getting into.**

**I think we could make training more efficient with on-line programs and videos. Keeping people means we need to eliminate or minimize the bad experiences on field and perceived competitiveness / politics within the organization**

5. How do you think umpires should handle it and/or correct the situation if players or coaches don't follow the COVID-19 safety rules as laid out by the WIAA and the Seattle Public Schools?

**Consistency within the organization – figure it out in the off season and follow it the same way we would a new “balk” rule or “legal bat” rule. Follow guidelines in a non-combative way.**

6. NBUA's mission has always been to bring together a band of brothers (and sisters) of common cause: to support youth baseball and the great benefits it brings to our youths, by officiating the contests that coaches, parents, and players engage in voluntarily. Baseball has risks, just like other sports, equestrian events, scuba diving, sky diving, and other voluntarily activities in life. Are you in favor of letting consenting parties have umpires, or do you want to deny them umpires regardless what they feel is responsible?

**I'm not sure of the issue – I will just say if elected I'll listen to parties on both sides of any issue.**

7. It seems unlikely we will be doing games this year, and if things don't change soon (exception: vaccine) we may be delayed next year. HS certainly will be, with the season starting after football. How do you suggest we handle NBUA training for COVID and post-COVID games - discussions and confrontations with coaches, players, and other personnel? What is your suggestion for how we should train on a standard way to handle these things for the organization?

**If anything good comes out of Covid it will be that companies and organizations will find new ways of doing things they were never forced to look into before because it just worked. We won't be trail blazers, other**

**organizations can try different things. Studying remotely and putting time in “on our own” and minimizing group gatherings will be necessary. I think coaches and participants will be receptive to plans.**



### **Earl Smith-Incumbent**

1. Up until the 2019 NBUA use to provide umpire's to college club baseball games. It went under the radar that NBUA was no longer doing these do to losing the bid. What would you do to try and win that business back and create additional opportunities for members to work higher level ball?

**The NCAA has restructured how it assigns collegiate baseball. Associations will no longer be used in favor of one individual assigner first each division and region. Tom Hiler is the assigner for the Pacific Northwest. We currently have officials who work for Mr. Hiler. Many of these umpires have invested in their education through attending camps such as Billy Haze three-man camp (Black and Blue). Umpires that are interested in working collegiate baseball are encouraged to volunteer during the fall ball opportunities put forth by local college teams and coordinated by Mr. Hiler. This gives umpires a chance to work in the three man system while being vetted and instructed by veteran collegiate umpires. If you are interested in that process, I would suggest you seek out those umpires who coordinate and instruct during the fall ball sessions and ask for an invitation. I would also suggest that your resume include further education through the appropriate camps.**

2. What, if any board positions have you held in the past, (NBUA or otherwise)?

**I have been an at large board member for two years. I have tried my hand at being part of the evaluations staff and committee. I also attempted to be the elections committee chair last year as well as chairing disciplinary committees as needed. I can tell you there is a learning curve with everything. My professional life consists of being a field representative and prevailing wage compliance for Organized Labor. This experience has helped me shape the contracts we carry with our customers. I think I have contributed to the raise structure and equity for our members. We have to maintain those business relationships insuring fiduciary responsibility on BOTH sides.**

3. What are you going to do better than the current board members up for election? What suggestions would you offer to make NBUA an even better organization?

**I think that seeking a second term will help me contribute more efficiently to the workings of the Association. As is true in many organizations, the governing body can often have a bullseye on its back for not doing "more" or "enough". I have a better understanding of what our volunteer board accomplishes. I can say that all the volunteers that give of their time to the association do care about the quality of customers we serve, and about the wages and working conditions of our umpires. I think they all pay it forward and genuinely want every member to mature and continue to learn the vocation we call umpiring.**

4. With COVID, people just not having an interest in umpiring, and aging umpires, how would you suggest we continue to recruit new umpires? What ideas do you have regarding recruitment, retention, and training?

**Recruiting and retaining umpires is probably the hardest problem any association faces. It is partly economically driven in that economic downturns result in people seeking extra income. In a booming economy, we don't see those individuals seeking supplemental income. There are also the societal impacts of younger generations expecting immediate gratification for immediate effort. I believe that umpires are made in seasons as well as game by game. Today's climate makes it much harder to teach game management skills before the pressure created by players, coaches, and fans becomes overwhelming to the new official. I know we rely on social media and personal contacts to recruit currently. I think there is an untapped resource in looking to Little League officials. They are often times taking on a role that could benefit from our Association. How we reach out is critical. Many of these volunteers are in need of basic training. The outreach could look like a low cost to no cost basic field and cage work-day manned by our association members and would be a great introduction to what we offer.**

5. How do you think umpires should handle it and/or correct the situation if players or coaches don't follow the COVID-19 safety rules as laid out by the WIAA and the Seattle Public Schools?

**If there are protocols in place for the game of baseball to be played, everyone should adhere to them. If an umpire wishes to work within those parameters, that is a choice. If an umpire feels his or her health is too great to risk, again that is our choice. If players, coaches, and fans cannot adhere to the guidelines, then I believe an Umpire has the right to ask for the protocols to be observed or refuse to work. It comes down to your comfort level with the conditions you find on the field.**

6. NBUA's mission has always been to bring together a band of brothers (and sisters) of common cause: to support youth baseball and the great benefits it brings to our youths, by officiating the contests that coaches, parents, and players engage in voluntarily. Baseball has risks, just like other sports, equestrian events, scuba diving, sky diving, and other voluntarily activities in life. Are you in favor of letting consenting parties have umpires, or do you want to deny them umpires regardless what they feel is responsible?

**The NBUA has chosen to follow Jay Inslee's defines phases of reopening WA. If there is work assigned through the association, I am assuming that we will be in a stage that allows for the playing of baseball. Consenting parties should not have anything to do with a game being played, it should be safe to do so... Protective measures should be defined, and all parties should agree and adhere to those protocols.**

7. It seems unlikely we will be doing games this year, and if things don't change soon (exception: vaccine) we may be delayed next year. HS certainly will be, with the season starting after football. How do you suggest we handle NBUA training for COVID and post-COVID games - discussions and confrontations with coaches, players, and other personnel. What is your suggestion for how we should train on a standard way to handle these things for the organization?

**If we find ourselves officiating, then there will be defined protocols for everyone involved. My suggestion is to agree association wide with the protocols and demand that all parties follow them. If we do not hold ourselves to a uniform standard, we will again be riding the pines watching last years games on the television.**



### **Henry VonJouanne-Incumbent**

1. Up until the 2019 NBUA use to provide umpire's to college club baseball games. It went under the radar that NBUA was no longer doing these do to losing the bid. What would you do to try and win that business back and create additional opportunities for members to work higher level ball?

**I believe the best plan to create additional opportunities for members to work higher level baseball is to improve our product on the field. I think the key to a producing a better product is to develop and execute a strong training program and develop and execute a strong evaluation program.**

**The NBUA has always strived to develop a strong training program. I believe the training starts with emphasis on the basics: superior rules knowledge and superior mechanics knowledge, a product of the formal pre-season classroom, field training, and cage training.**

**Perhaps more important for gaining opportunities for higher level baseball is a robust evaluation program. To that end, the NBUA has developed its own evaluation app that supports our three-tiered evaluation program: 1) Full Evaluation, 2) Partner Evaluation, 3) Peer Evaluation. I support the evaluation program and full use of the NBUA app.**

**Regarding the Peer Evaluation, I'm a big advocate for a thorough and honest post-game de-brief. I believe one of our best opportunities to improve comes in the parking lot after the game – when we provide and receive feedback. And when completing the Peer Review online, document only what you discussed after the game with your partner. Don't include anything you did not already share with your partner after the game. No surprises!**

2. What, if any board positions have you held in the past, (NBUA or otherwise)?

**I am completing my first two-year term as a Board Member (year 2019 and year 2020). During these two years, I served as the NBUA Director of Training. Our Training team focused on the following:**

- a. Created a one-day Umpires camp in cooperation with 1) Snohomish County Baseball Umpire Association (SCBUA), 2) Official-Business/Sports & Recreation, and 3) current Major League, Minor League, and college umpires. The camp featured several current Major League, Minor League, and college umpires, was tailored for umpires of all levels, included indoor instruction, cage training, and field training, and provided training credit for local area associations.**
- b. Added a distinct B-Tier training program in order to focus on the skills required for promotion to A-Tier.**
- c. Added additional cage and field training sessions to the Apprentice, C-Tier, and B-Tier curriculum.**
- d. For the A-Tier and Tournament Tier umpires, added a lessons-learned session that summarizes the findings from our Full-Evaluations from the previous year.**
- e. Planned a 3-man mechanics training session which is geared towards those umpires supporting high school post season games, but open to the entire association. The training was planned to occur a few weeks before the beginning of high school post season play (but cancelled due to COVID19).**
- f. Awarded training credit for those umpires formally supporting cage training or field training for less experienced umpires. I believe this is a win-win scenario: it supports the age-old saying that the best way to learn is to instruct, and it creates a pool of**

**experienced umpires eager to support the training for less experienced umpires.**

- g. Awarded training credit for those umpires supporting no-fee intra-squad scrimmages. I believe this is also a win-win scenario: our umpires gain a valuable opportunity to get pre-season live action, and our association gains good-will from local area high school teams.**
3. What are you going to do better than the current board members up for election? What suggestions would you offer to make NBUA an even better organization?

**I am completing my first two-year term as a Board Member (year 2019 and year 2020) and I have learned a great deal about the responsibilities of the Board of Directors and about how our organization runs. I've learned that our board-members love the game of baseball, love to officiate, are true advocates of the organization, and commit a great deal of time and energy to the NBUA.**

**Nonetheless, I realize there are actions I can take to become a more effective board-member.**

- a. Know our team-members better. As an engineering manager at my workplace, I've learned I must know my team better in order to gain their trust. I need to learn how they work, their likes and dislikes, their family, and the activities they enjoy. Likewise, I feel I need to know our NBUA team-mates better. As an organization, we have learned that retaining our less experienced umpires is hugely important to our success and one key to retention is to know our team.**
- b. Any organization the size of the NBUA is going to have personnel issues that must be addressed by the Board Of Directors. I feel I must be a better advocate for the individual team-members – really understand their point-of-view when considering an issue.**
- c. I feel I can be more forceful when discussing issues – ensuring others truly understand and appreciate my position.**

**What can I do to make the NBUA an even better organization? I believe the best way to improve the organization is to improve our**

**product on the field. I am proud of the reputation the NBUA has in the local baseball circles. I once overheard a Tournament Director assure parents worried about umpire support: “Look, the NBUA is working our games, and if the NBUA says they’ll be here, they’ll be here - and be here early”. Last year, I overheard a local high school coach expressing his appreciation for the NBUA: “In our area, I’m not sure who will be working our games – so I always breathe a sigh of relief when I see NBUA on the caps.” We have built a strong reputation and I want to fully support improving our reputation.**

**I think the key to a producing a better product is to develop and execute a strong training program, and develop and execute a strong evaluation program. I believe a strong training program starts with emphasis on the basics: superior rules knowledge and superior mechanics knowledge, a product of the formal pre-season classroom, field training, and cage training.**

**The NBUA is also working to improve our evaluation program; in fact, the NBUA has developed its own evaluation app that supports our three-tiered evaluation program: 1) Full Evaluation, 2) Partner Evaluation, and 3) Peer Evaluation. I support the evaluation program and full use of the NBUA app. I also support our pre-game and post-game protocol, in particular an honest and thorough de-brief after the game. This is one of our best tools for improvement - so I will continue to promote the practice of pre-game and post-game debriefs.**

4. With COVID, people just not having an interest in umpiring, and aging umpires, how would you suggest we continue to recruit new umpires? What ideas do you have regarding recruitment, retention, and training?

**I believe the NBUA has a strong recruiting program in-place. For example, the NBUA had over 20 Apprentices in 2019 and over 15 Apprentices in 2020. These Apprentice classes represent significantly larger class sizes than other local associations.**

**What can we do better?**

- a. Each year, we see numerous prospective umpires contact us as the season nears but long after our training started. We should develop a “fast-track” training program that accommodates these late arrivers. This “fast-track” program includes dedicated

classroom and field-training sessions, and buddy-game's that provide the late arriver concentrated training to prepare for live games.

- b. Every year, we also see Little League parents that are excited about supporting baseball at the end of their season. We should likewise develop a "fast-track" training program that accommodates these Little League parents. This "fast-track" program includes dedicated classroom and field-training sessions, and buddy-game's that provide concentrated training to prepare for live games.

Retention is a key aspect of maintaining and building the organization. We've learned that the critical period of an umpiring career is the transition from year-1 to year-2; that is, if we can get our Apprentices to return for a 2<sup>nd</sup> year, the probability increases greatly that they will continue to umpire for the NBUA long-term. As such, we should strive to make their umpire experience as successful as possible, including the following:

- a. Continue the two-year mentorship program for new umpires.
- b. Increase the number of games Apprentices work with more experienced umpires. This not only gives the Apprentice umpires a broader exposure to different umpires and techniques, it increases the likelihood of an uneventful and successful game.
- c. Strive as an organization to know our team-members better. Of course, this should be an overriding objective for me as a board-member.

As the Training coordinator for the last two years, I fundamentally support a strong training program. There are a number of activities I will promote if I am selected to be the Training Coordinator again. These include:

- a. Continue to execute a one-day Umpire camp in cooperation with local associations, Official-Business/Sports & Recreation, and our local-area Major League, Minor League, and college officials. Earlier this year, the NBUA and Snohomish County Baseball Umpires Association sponsored the Seattle-Area Baseball Umpire Camp on 2/8/2020 at Everett Memorial Stadium. We were supported by two Major League umpires – Tripp Gibson and Mike Muchlinski – and several Minor League

and College umpires (e.g Brian Hertzog, Jacob Metz, Ryan Wilson). These officials want to be part of building-up our local area umpire team but they are unable to support all they events for which they are requested. The umpires appreciate when we can create an event that is attended by multiple associations and local Little Leagues. The camp this year was a success from an attendance perspective: over 130 umpires attended. Yet, there are several areas we can improve going forward: 1) reduce the number of attendees (which will increase slightly the \$15.00 fee we charged this year), 2) coordinate more live pitching – we ran out of live-pitching this year.

- b. Continue with the distinct B-Tier training program in order to focus on the skills required for promotion to A-Tier.
  - c. Continue with the additional cage and field training sessions for the Apprentice, C-Tier, and B-Tier umpires.
  - d. Continue the lessons-learned session for the A-Tier and Tournament Tier umpires that summarizes the findings from our Full-Evaluations from the previous year.
  - e. Continue to plan a 3-man mechanics training session which will be geared towards those umpires supporting high school post season games, but open to the entire association. I envision the training will occur a few weeks before the beginning of high school post season play.
  - f. Continue to awarded training credit for those umpires formally supporting cage training or field training for less experienced umpires.
  - g. Continue to award training credit for those umpires supporting no-fee intra-squad scrimmages – usually scheduled a week before the season starts.
5. How do you think umpires should handle it and/or correct the situation if players or coaches don't follow the COVID-19 safety rules as laid out by the WIAA and the Seattle Public Schools?

**I believe it is not the responsibility of the umpire to manage player or coach compliance to the WIAA or Seattle Public School COVID-19 safety rules. However, if an umpire believes the non-compliance to a safety rule increases the risk to himself/herself, then the umpire should alert the coaches for immediate correction, and leave the field if the situation is not corrected.**

6. NBUA's mission has always been to bring together a band of brothers (and sisters) of common cause: to support youth baseball and the great benefits it brings to our youths, by officiating the contests that coaches, parents, and players engage in voluntarily. Baseball has risks, just like other sports, equestrian events, scuba diving, sky diving, and other voluntarily activities in life. Are you in favor of letting consenting parties have umpires, or do you want to deny them umpires regardless what they feel is responsible?

**I assume this is in regards to return to play protocol in the midst of the current COVID19 pandemic. To that end, I support the WIAA "Guidance for Opening Up High School Athletics and Activities" (published in June) which defines Baseball as a Moderate risk activity. This means the WIAA will not resume Baseball competitions until most (or all) Washington counties achieve Phase 4 (or Phase 3 if all participants are wearing a mask).**

**I envision the WIAA will further evaluate the COVID19 situation as the 2021 Spring Sports schedule approaches and define specific participation requirements for all sports. As such, I envision the WIAA will define the expected protocol for baseball fans, players, coaches, and officials. Likewise, I envision each select-ball league will adopt similar protocol. I fully expect the NBUA will support and comply with the participation requirements defined by the WIAA and the individual select-ball leagues.**

7. It seems unlikely we will be doing games this year, and if things don't change soon (exception: vaccine) we may be delayed next year. HS certainly will be, with the season starting after football. How do you suggest we handle NBUA training for COVID and post-COVID games - discussions and confrontations with coaches, players, and other personnel. What is your suggestion for how we should train on a standard way to handle these things for the organization?

**The WIAA "Guidance for Opening Up High School Athletics and Activities" (published in June) declared that Baseball is a Moderate risk activity – meaning the WIAA will not resume Baseball competitions until most (or all) Washington counties achieve Phase 4 (or Phase 3 if all participants are wearing a mask).**

**Regardless if baseball is played with masks under Phase 3, or without masks under Phase 4, I envision there will be specific protocol established by the WIAA for fans, players, coaches, and officials. Likewise, I envision each select-ball league will adopt similar protocol. As such, I envision one-or-more training sessions – involving all Tiers – dedicated to communicating the required COVID19 protocol and the responsibilities of officials.**