



Merry Christmas!



Bristol Baseball Club

Newsletter Christmas 2010

We hope that traffic is flowing freely where you are and that everybody is keeping warm! Welcome to the last newsletter of this year.

I know at least some people are stuck at airports – let's hope all will make it home for Christmas!

Thanks to all who have responded to past newsletters. The feedback we have consistently had has been positive!

2011 and beyond

Below is our calendar. From this you can see we will start building our field in January – weather permitting of course. Volunteers please come forward! More below, but let us know if you can help by emailing contact_us@bristolbaseball.co.uk

More news is that we did not receive enough interest for the indoor training. We needed at least 20 to register, otherwise we cannot afford the costs, and we did not quite make that. This means we cannot make it

but if people are interested – please do let us know – we may still be able to arrange something. The idea is to do this every second Sunday. Anyone with an idea for a venue in the Bristol area is also encouraged to come forward.

Calendar 2011

The weekend of the 15th/16th of January – **field building**

The weekend of the 29th/30th of January – **field building**

Early January/February – **indoor practice** – TBC ?

February/March - **Spring league** – 4 local teams

Spring – **Level 1 coaching course**– Date to be confirmed.

We have 6 people interested – we need some more. Please register interest for this subsidised Level 1 course (2 days)

12th of March – **Umpiring course** (register now!) – Date to be confirmed.

In all cases, register your interest by emailing contact_us@bristolbaseball.co.uk

Fees due by February

Fees are due by February, please help the club by paying on time. The minimal payment is £50, and any further payments can come later. If people can afford to pay the fees earlier then this will help in buying materials for the new field and other normal expenditure like buying game balls and other equipment.

Raising funds

We are still awaiting news from grant applications. Likely we will not hear in time for our field building plans. But, nothing will stop us making a good start – especially with some freshly paid fees in the bank.

We can always do with ideas for raising funds or donations in kind.

Ideas for sponsorship are also more than welcome.

Building our new field

Two weekends in January are pencilled in for field building – weather permitting. This is to allow plenty of time before the season as well as being able to use the field for the Spring League.

Any volunteers – please come forward.

The field will be built in several phases and we will start with the basic cut-outs. This means a lot of digging just like we did almost 3 years ago in Southmead. We can bring lessons learned from that experience. More about this below in an article dedicated to our Southmead building experience.

Planning

It is likely we will be able to build our back-stop fence some time this year. Behind the scenes a lot of work has been done to this effect. South Gloucester Council has been very helpful and assisted us in looking ahead. We have an in-principle agreement, which makes Patchway Sports Centre our new home and will allow us to apply for Planning Permission to build our high-end facilities. This agreement will be formalised early new year. The Planning Permission will follow soon thereafter. Many thanks to the South Gloucester Council, Patchway Sports Centre, Patchway Community College and of course our own board for achieving this.

Our Southmead Diamond –

a story of much work by sometimes a few people



8 cubic meters of stone dust & 8 cubic meters of loam = 20 tonnes of material – not a bad result!

The diagram of a diamond looks cool, straightforward and relatively easy. In practice, actually measuring out a field is a lot of walking to achieve precise dimensions. Ross did this at the time and did a grand job. We managed to achieve a field with reasonable backstop – home-plate distance and with only a tiny green monster in right field. In other words, it fit snugly.

When we first started digging, we initially dug by hand and lifted out the turf of the back-stop circle and mound. Later we started using a turf cutter, which was real progress.

The turf cutter allowed us to do a lot more work in a precise manner. It is still hard work but we recycled our turf and even made 200£ selling it benefitting the club of course.

Underneath the backstop circle a hole of about 30 to 40 cm was dug which was filled with a mix of stone dust and loam. This is hard enough to withstand the cleats of the catchers, umpires and batter. Depressions were made during a game but with a bit of raking (and rain after) it was back to normal. The mound was built with in a similar fashion. The soil at Southmead was thick and somewhat clayey and this meant that our base-paths were simply stripped of the turf only. A thin layer of stone dust then was sufficient to make it all look good.

This summarises our field and it worked with just a bit of weed killing at the start of the season, maintaining our 'dirt' area.

With the lessons learned, we are confident our new field will be even better than what we had at Southmead.

Especially at the start, the field was built in not a very efficient fashion. This was especially true before we started using the turf cutter. We had a lot of people show up for the first two days of work - this changed a bit (!) and after we had crews of as little as two. Nonetheless we had our field.





Our Patchway Diamond – the plan

Again we have a field with an ever so slight slope. This will help drain the field in heavy rains, but it is likely we will have to plan for drainage channels. These may prove important as the grounds at Patchway are likely a bit more soggy.

We will dig a bit deeper this time (50 to 60 cm) and fill this up with a layer of sand and then our mixture of dust and loam.

We will use the slope from the third-base line towards the scrub area to put in drainage channels.

We will need:

Measuring tape (long), white paint spray cans, rolls of line and pegs, 10 tonnes of stone dust, 10 tonnes of loam, 10 – 20 tonnes of sand, 6+ spades, drainage pipes, a turf cutter, tarpaulins, 3 wheel barrows, transport for the materials.

Additionally, we will need volunteers! If you d like to volunteer, please contact us. This will help us plan for the two working weekends.

Field work weekends: 15th/16th of January and 29th/30th of January

This is weather permitting but please put these dates in your diary – if you can help, even for a few hours, this will be gratefully received!

Important: if you can supply any of the tools/materials above – please also let us know soon!



See you in a jolly new year – have a great Christmas Break!

Ps: contributions and suggestions to this newsletter always welcome.

www.bristolbaseball.co.uk