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February, 2018

Dear Coach or Manager:

This year will be the 24th Freeport International Baseball Invitational and we are hoping to honor Ralph (Sonny) Westerman who was the founder of this event. Sonny passed away just days before our event last year and we did not have enough time to put together an occasion during the Invitational to honor him. So this year, at various times, there will be special events held in his honor. We hope that we will have lots of teams, especially teams who have participated in the past from other countries, as well as from various parts of the United States participate. As you probably know, in the past we've had teams from Mexico, Puerto Rico, France, Germany, Netherlands, Israel, Japan, Australia and of course Canada. It would be a wonderful experience for your team members and adults who accompany them.

It will again be a Wooden Bat Tournament. We hope to provide a few complimentary bats to each team. The dates for this year are July 16 - 21. Usually we don't play games on Monday, July 16, but it is a day when teams can do some practicing, see some local sights, get settled in. The managers meet that evening at the field in Freeport. By the way, games are played at several fields and all of them are close to the Allegheny River and north of the City of Pittsburgh in western Pennsylvania. International teams do not have to pay an entrance fee.

These are some of the other things we do for our visiting international teams: If you fly into the Greater Pittsburgh Airport, we will pick you up there on a bus and deliver you to the Freeport area - either a motel or a host home (more on host homes later in this letter). If you fly into New York City and take the Mega Bus to Pittsburgh, we can meet you at the bus stop. We will bus you to and from games each day - you could expect to play 2 games a day. Depending on the Pittsburgh Pirates schedule, we may be able to obtain discounted tickets for you. We are currently thinking it would be good if visiting teams would go to a game on Sunday or Monday, July 15 or 16 - by doing so it won't interfere with our game schedule for Freeport International. You will have the

opportunity to play in the USA vs. World game which finishes the week Saturday evening, July 21 (followed by fireworks). This is not an all-star game, but each international coach or manager will have the opportunity to place a few players on the World team. Some other events - on Thursday of that week we have the Sonny Westerman Oldtimers' Game at the Freeport field. There are usually former MLB players in attendance, playing and/or signing autographs, and often a few former Pittsburgh Steelers (our beloved football franchise). Saturday morning there is a 5K race run in Freeport that is locally popular. It's a little too early to give you a definitive schedule, but this will give you an idea of how the week would go.

Now, regarding host homes. I do think your players would get a better feel for American life by staying in host homes. Host homes will take at least 2 players and will give them a place to sleep, use of a bathroom, of course, wash the uniforms, and any other laundry, and feed breakfast and often another meal during the day, and provide snacks as well. Host homes will be provided on a first come basis, so early registration will help to insure that your team can be hosted in homes. Coaches/managers often prefer to stay at a motel rather than a host home, and that is your choice. If so, you might want to consider renting cars or vans for ease of transportation. You may also rent vans to transport the whole team if that is your preference.

We are hoping to have a girls' softball tournament the same week. If you have any contact information for girls' softball teams who may be interested, have them contact Dave Brestensky, at 724.525.9078 or dmb5@consolidated.net. Plans are nearly in place for a Junior Tournament which would be held on Friday and Saturday. Let us know of your interest and we will provide details to you.

We look forward to you and your team being a part of our 24th annual event. Please keep in touch and let us answer any questions you might have.

Cordially,
Chuck Sarver

Chuck Sarver, President
Freeport International Baseball Invitational

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Enclosures: Registration/Motel Information; Schedule of Events

FREEPORT INTERNATIONAL BASEBALL INVITATIONAL IS NOT
RESPONSIBLE FOR LOST ITEMS