

2026 The Legion Baseball Centennial

It's really been 100 Years!

I was asked by numerous coaches, a few parents, the Minnesota Twins, and one Legion director to come before this committee. These people have shared their thoughts and concerns and feel they have no access to this group. So, I reached out to Randy.

There are issues and concerns and even hopeful promise that needs a voice. I know I take a risk being here as some of the views are challenging. Many views I am simply relaying to you. Some opinions I share.

Five years ago I did not really know what went on around the state or even in neighboring baseball programs – both Legion and Youth. I did not know.

I have been involved with Legion Baseball for over 45 years I coached in the Excelsior and Edina programs. Both programs are blessed with large feeder programs, good coaches, dedicated players and families.

I did not look at statewide issues as I focused on my team and program responsibilities.

Coaching was a part time position.

My real job was in the financial services where I worked as a financial analyst, portfolio manager and a financial advisor. I spent a few years in New York.

The world was always changing. Evolving and growing. As they said on the job, get with the program or get left behind.

Driving Words

- From Mom – Good was never good enough. You can always do better.
- From my baseball coach – You have to keep working at it, keep improving. When you stop, you plateau. When you plateau, you will get passed.
- From a tennis coach – You only get better by playing with and playing against better players. Who you run with counts.
- From a B School professor – Successful businesses, like successful people, follow the Excellence Process. Its about questioning and examining
 - 1) Assess your world and your markets – where are they going not where have they been.
 - 2) Re-evaluate and reassess everything. Products, programs, services, people and performance – everything gets reevaluated.
 - 3) Refine, develop, and even change course. Never stand still
- From a Wall Street Legend – 85 years old and venerated on Wall Street – Asked how are you relevant at your age? The power comes from knowing that you don't know. You ask questions. You listen to people and opinions before you offer one of your own. You let the facts and data guide you. I stay open to the changes around me and ahead of me.
- The Edina players motto in 1982 and 83- They believed in the Excellence process – Effort, Focus, Adapt Overcome.

Definitions for Baseball Structures

- 1) **Single Community Team** – High school, local youth programs organized around the single high school boundaries, Minnesota Legion.

- 2) **Multi Community Teams** – High school all-stars, college teams, National Legion Zones (zip code teams), amateur ball teams, Minnesota Legion all-stars, club teams, national travel teams, elite teams. (All “Legion” is not the same! Minnesota team models are NOT national zone models)
- 3) **Providers** –
 - a. Non-Profits like Legion, community organizations, community membership groups like MYAS and the MBL (youth)
 - b. For Profit Private Businesses – Iceman, Blizzard, Mash, Pine Tar Academy, P2P, and many more (a growing list)

All Stars in Review

- 1) **Idea Stage** – I was asked to a Meeting - A Junior Legion reorganization meeting. Why me? I actually did not want to attend. What did it have to do with me?
 - a. Surprisingly, the meeting leader was not there to impose his ideas. The meeting Leader asked each person for one idea to help advance Legion baseball (junior level I guess). My single team cap had to come off. This was about the state program.
 - i. People at the table were worried about private travel team pressures. You needed to win the kids at junior legion, or they would be lost forever.
 - ii. I was the last guy at the table, I did not know what I was going to say.
 - iii. I blurted out – All Stars – build it they will come. The high school all-stars worked well – why not Legion? Kids liked being called all stars and parents like to puff out their chests. Build it for Legion and they will come!
 - iv. Most were interested. One fellow wanted to block it right away with any negative that could be thrown out there. Kill the idea Before a proposal could even be sketched out.
 - v. That person was not invited to future meetings. Just say no was not an acceptable start to a process.
- 2) **Proposal** – Brought to Leadership – Brandon and Randy.
 - a. It seemed like this would be a new development for Legion. They approved.
 - b. To us they said – we trust you to do a quality job and to build something positive.
 - c. From us – to partner you need to have some skin in the game – modest sponsorship
- 3) **Beta Test 1** – Small. Junior focused. Built data management systems. Reached out and coaches responded. It worked. Sort of.
 - a. Excellence Process – Tore it all down and Evaluate. Made a major focus shift. Evaluated parent and player comments. We listen our college coach advisors. We evaluated everything we could think of. And we changed.
- 4) **Needed a Beta Test 2 – Beta 2 remained small**
 - a. Shift to senior level was spot on. That was a Fundamental change – we were wrong the first time.
 - b. Senior coaches were a bit difficult to engage.
 - c. Beta 2 was very successful it seemed. A dozen college coaches came to watch.
 - d. Evaluated all of it again. And decided to go full blown All Stars. We changed sites and went to build it.
- 5) **All Star 1 and Junior Beta Test 1**
 - a. Big undertaking – Turf costs, full weekend of activities, new uniform costs. Huge budget jump. Introduced player fee to juniors. We managed.
 - b. Scheels came on even though it seemed that we were not a “business fit” – Roseville versus St. Cloud.

- c. Our task group shrank from 7 to 3 when we moved sites. Focus effort adapt.
- d. Players went from 60 to 130. Teams from 4 to 8. Had about 160 kids nominated from all over the state.
- e. Tried to engage local baseball groups. Tried to get volunteers. No response. Barely got enough coaches for the Junior site.
- f. Introduced “branding” and “wearables “ – mom terms.
 - i. Practice jerseys under lettered. 130 went out to the communities
 - ii. Game jerseys were purchased by players – 30% - 25 went to the communities.
 - iii. The areas “best ballplayers” went home with logo wear. And they wore it.
- g. All Star 1 worked well enough. The quality of the players and play was outstanding. 25 college coaches attended
- h. Junior Beta went well enough to create the Junior All Star for 2024.
- i. Tore it all apart and planned 2024. Still, we were a committee of 3. But armed with great technology to maximize efficiencies. Always believed – Build it they Will Come. It worked for high school so why not Legion?

6) All Stars 2024 – Senior Yr. 2 and Junior Yr. 1

- a. 155 Players on 11 teams. Everyone in all-star jerseys – we bought 7 sets.
- b. Senior tournament players came from 58 communities – Juniors from 52. The entire state.
- c. Coaches from around the state referred to the buzz about Legion and all stars. Many coaches volunteered to come and coach and help out. Awesome.
- d. Interest exploded. Nominations doubled to over 320. That were two kids for every jersey. Another 11 teams of kids that want to play Legion baseball after their playoffs ended.
- e. Data management systems worked flawlessly despite the last-minute tsunami of nominations. Built a financial management and billing system. Now we are building a bar coded point of sale and inventory management system.
- f. Expanded on the branding and wearables concept finding Internet bargains and built an inventory I did not think would sell.
 - i. Short sleeve hoodies not jerseys were given to each player – 155 into the community
 - ii. Players bought 50% of their game jerseys putting 80 into communities triple the year before.
 - iii. In response to requests for merchandise - wearables at bargain prices – we almost sold out
 - 1. 120 Tees shirts – superlight tough fabric and under lettered. Just 2 colors – 111 sold at \$10
 - 2. 50 extra hoodies with 9 left - \$15
 - 3. 50 of 50 shorts – gone
 - iv. Over 450 pieces of Legion branded wearables left All Stars and went across the state with a continued life.
- g. Connected to the area business community. Signage. Discounts and Freebies. No one wanted to give away cash. But the premiums were great.
- h. Website had over 30,000 visits – way over previous year; Televised 10 games (over budget) – 3400 views – triple projection.
- i. Local communities and the local Legion were absent.
- j. But the mayor and Visit Roseville people showed up.

- k. The weather was great. Crowds doubled. The ceremonies went well. A couple moms cried. One mom suggested a drone flyover video. It's in the works.
 - l. We had positive cash flow – but due to the weather – the gate, merchandise sales and expense management. Bad weather? We would have had a deficit to cover.
 - m. We had coaches come from all over the state to help out. Wonderful guys wanting to promote Legion and to ask what more can be done.
- 7) All Stars 2025 – No More Time on The fields**
- a. Already breaking down 24 to analyze what went well, what needs improvement, what went poorly. Who helped out and who wants to join the crew for 2025. We built it up enough for people to want to join us.
 - b. We are planning a 2025 – assuming that the Legion Board agrees.
- 8) 2026 is Minnesota Legion Baseball's Centennial Year – 100 Years old.**
- a. Are there any plans? Where are you headed with it?

Status & Funding for 2025

- 1) Ask – Firmly place All Stars on par with a state tournament. An annual event that is your Board event. This is not a Bruce and Mike program. It is for All Legion baseball. We are working to build an event team that will take the event over just as the transfer from Mike to Jack in Juniors.
- 2) Ask – Be Upgraded to the Tier 1 A Level - \$2500 and 6. Why? Inflation!
 - a. There has been growth and development of Legion All Stars far beyond your previous annual \$2000 investment and likely far beyond your expectations
 - b. The weekend is likely the largest American Legion weekend event in the state
 - c. All Stars are the kids and families identified as the top of the heap in Legion talent and deserve your support.
 - d. The commitment is modest and affordable.
- 3) 2nd Model – Upgrade to the D1 State Tournament level - Same ask as #1 but with the addition of meal money
 - a. Meal money at D1 is handed out as a reward or premium for your top 16 teams. Its been your “habit” for years
 - b. \$10 times 150- times 3 days - \$4500 additional.
- 4) I am strongly against the 2nd model for many reasons:
 - a. The national dropped meal money. It may have been a good idea back then, but it offers little value now. Its pure expense. And the expense has no lasting value.
 - b. Check-in Test: Hoodie versus Chick Fil A, Portillos, Canes, and Dunkin. Not one of the first 40 kids checking in took the food. Our kids wanted a wearable versus free food.
 - c. Lasting Value? No kid staples his McDonalds receipt to his shirt or jersey and wears it around at school or baseball functions.
 - d. Only residual value of meal money is enjoyed by Mr. Whipple – squeezable Charmin.
 - e. We gave out meal money in Excelsior on trips – but it was the kids' money being returned to them. Not sponsor money from Scheels or general funds or dollars taxed to the other Legion teams.
 - f. College coaches have pointed out that meal money likely violates the Legion Amateur rule.
- 5) **Conclusion – We believe we have earned your support. Please continue as the title sponsor.**

MLB Twins – With Two Matters

A phone call came less than 48 hours before tournament launch. It was the Minnesota Twins with a couple of things on their minds.

- 1) We want to publicly endorse this event. Sorry for the late notice.
 - a. Questions first – How many communities? How are you organized? What relationship do you have with the state organization/state board? How much funding do they provide? What support do you get? Why did you start this? How long have you been building it? Who does your website? Is this the only possible program for Legion or could there be more?
 - b. We support community baseball – some information from around the state – Baseball Day in Minnesota in conjunction with partners and the high school coach's association; etc.
 - c. Provide Legend Rod Carew around the opening ceremonies, the Twins will waive the \$10,000 appearance fee, we should publish it and communicate to our people, and they will put it out as well. Staff will attend ceremonies as well as check out our operation at the site. Catch some of a game as well.
 - d. Promised to follow up for next year well in advance.
- 2) The second topic was far more serious.
 - a. The growth of private baseball is alarming – never has it grown faster with more teams and more kids on rosters – During the Legion summer season.
 - b. It is growing geographically and demographically (age groups)
 - c. Private baseball is growing unchecked with no visible response or alternatives on the table. The market has shifted. Kids want to play with kids from other communities but they have to join private baseball to do so.
 - d. The next round of private development may be worse – diversify from the elite/college national circuit programming into league play, playoffs, and regional tournaments (our bread and butter)
 - i. That is directly a copy of and a challenge to Legion itself.
 - ii. They already have dominated in the quality player department
 - iii. The “bone” they gave to Legion, the 18-year old, will be needed for the next wave – league play.
 - iv. Prices will be competitive, and selections will be ala carte. Field commitments are reportedly being lined up.
 - v. Businesses want to grow. Investor capital has increased.
- 3) I was asked: Do I think there is anything to do beyond All Stars? We haven't seen anything new from Legion. Yes – I do.
 - a. Legion has 5000 players; has 1000 coaches; has 375 Legion posts. It has the size and base from which you can mount a pretty good fight.
 - b. I listed several possible programs. Commented that I believed are far easier to conceive and introduce these programs than what it took to develop a statewide all-star program. I believe many programs and coaches are ready and able to help implement.
- 4) Do I think Legion (the Board) has the political will? That – I said – I do not know.
- 5) I said I would review some data and notes and get back with them.
- 6) Perhaps you can take these issues to your Board? Yes I will make that effort.

Data – By the Numbers & By the Coaches

1) Senior Tournament Data

- a. Percentages: 30% of the All Stars were metro. Only 26% of the players were metro 2025 grads.
- b. Number: Players – 85. Metro players 26. Metro players graduating in 2025 (the seniors) – just 22
- c. The Metro is 62% of the state. 3 ½ million people.
- d. Are you telling me that there are just two dozen topflight metro players in the class of 2025 available playing Legion ball? Two dozen out of 3 and ½ million people? We get players from coaches' nominations. They tell us who their top players are and who they think has college potential. They said these 22 were their best. (I missed one that I know of).
- e. Were they all topflight players? No, not all.
- f. 26% being Metro was lower than I thought, and the lowest number I have seen.

2) The All State & All Metro Junior and Sophomore List

- a. We collect published lists and try to reach out to all the Legion coaches about their kids that are Legion rostered.
 - i. There were 22 players listed with 14 being metro.
 - ii. Four (4) were on Legion rosters – two each metro and outstate. That is Legion at **19%** of the talent list.
 - iii. One metro kid was injured. One metro kid was not nominated by his coach for whatever reason we don't know.
 - iv. Both outstate kids jumped at the all-star opportunity. Both had committed to D-1 schools.
 - v. Both these top players were split kids – they played elite club full time and Legion part time. We were criticized for taking them into all-stars. We don't do politics.

3) The PBR Top Ranked Lists

- a. PBR (Prep Baseball Report) is essentially the Kelly Blue Book of college hopeful baseball players in Minnesota. The Twins worked in conjunction with PBR to stage the Baseball Day in Minnesota. PBR represents the best data available. I think it is useful.
 - i. Top 112 Minnesota Players – Class of 2025
 - 1. 29 players of the 112 are rostered on Legion teams – 26%
 - 2. 12 of the top 66 Metro players were Legion – just 18%.
 - 3. Of the state 29 Legion rostered, 16 were nominated for Legion All Stars. 13 were not nominated. I am investigating the discrepancy.
 - 4. 26 of the 29 Legion players listed a travel team. 90% of the top Legion kids are in club baseball.
 - 5. Of the top 68 pitchers, just 17 were in Legion or 25%
 - 6. There were 34 top metro pitchers, 8 played legion (again just 18%).
 - ii. The Class of 2026 – The numbers mirror the 2025 class. 25% of the top talent plays Legion.
- b. Legion used to have 100% of the talent. 75% to 80% of the top talent is gone from Legion. That should bother each of you. National Legion says they are having a comeback of sorts. But their model is multi community and that's not what we have here. Yes I am talking mostly about D1. Most every observer has said the quality of player and quality of play has seriously deteriorated – like wearing varsity uniforms but on JV and sophomore level players Maybe its ok. Maybe its fine to collect team fees and use the number of teams as the current measure of success. I have always believed in the excellence the quality of Legion. What would happen in a corporate situation if one lost market share to such an

extreme level and was being threatened by even worse? One would think there would be some action taken.

4) **What do Coaches say?** I spoke with over 90 coaches during the summer (as before). Two other guys with our group talk to another 50.

- a. Metro: A few, very few are holding their own. Summer community baseball is a far cry from what you would see in the high school version.
 - i. American Legion folks have proudly pointed out that Legion is the program of choice for the kids that just graduated from high school. But the 18 has no other choice! The Private baseball club design has excluded the 18-year-old from their programs. They have been geared to the underclassmen seeking national college exposure. Club owners refer to the 18s as the bone left for Legion. However, that exclusivity for Legion will likely disappear as clubs roll out their expansion into league play and more. At cut rate prices. When Legion has to compete for the 18s, well good luck then
 - ii. Champlin is making a comeback. St. Michael says they are getting some of their better talents to play Legion versus club after a few years of being nearly all-club. Excelsior says they have few club players. Osseo has held up and so has Farmington. Shakopee has a lot of club kids but fewer conflicts with their Legion team. The common denominator: most success has very strong affiliation between the high school program and summer programs that often involves an active high school coach.
 - iii. Edina finally “blew up to club” in the embarrassed words of no less than ex-Twin Gene Larkin. It was the worst Edina team I have seen in 45 years.
 - iv. Eden Prairie had all nine of their top junior class leave for club.
 - v. Burnsville had no quality junior class players. Prior Lake - most all of their best players were club. Wayzata - with the exception of one top player in the 25 class, their best players went club. Hopkins coaches try to recruit the top players. Barely any stay. St. Louis Park reported that they had their best class (sophomores) with nine players. One played Legion, the other eight went club. Legion state champ Farmington had two all-metro righthanders that played club (and they still won the Legion state tournament!). High school powerhouse East Ridge is barely a recreation team. Powerhouse Woodbury (Blue) dropped Legion altogether.
 - vi. Large sections of the metro geography have little to no Legion, or say they have no top talent. This talent drain virtually affects everyone with less competition. The level of competition has worsened. There is no way around that. Any observer of Legion sectional playoffs will tell that they are watching JV baseball at best.
 - vii. The Multi Community team model dominates the quality and near quality player levels. Minnesota Legion says – if you want to play with kids outside your school -leave. Club owners snicker and call Legion their best business partner – their best advertising.
 - viii. Metro coaches appear numb as they work hard to recruit players. These guys are continuing to work hard with what they have to sell. They don’t see hope on the horizon. And one all star weekend for a couple of their kids cannot move the needle by itself.
 - ix. Outstate coaches worry that the Metro is so far eroded in quality, and they worry knowing that they are the next round of targets. Many cite kids around them that have been “picked off” by clubs – full time.

- x. No one is left claiming that Legion has the best players or is the best brand of baseball anymore, and certainly not in the metro.

5) Conclusion – The Twins and the Our Data, PBR Data and the Coaches are in alignment. There has been an enormous shift in the market and that has had no response. Twins – It has gone unchecked. The National might be coming back – but they have a multi community model now.

Hope, Weapons and Money

Back in the day. everyone played Legion. Board members needed to put on playoffs, find sites, find hosts, sign up teams, do paperwork, and wrestle with rules.

A Board of Directors managed what was largely the same routine every year. They owned the market and even after the market was changing, the routine did not seem to change.

But businesses were free to develop and grow.

Today there is a Belief around the state – that changes or new things are really not welcomed by the Legion Board. We point out All Stars and a New Tier 1a for starters.

Many out there do not appreciate what it takes to keep the show on the road. 360 teams with substates in two and a half Divisions with Junior and Senior levels is a big undertaking. You gotta do it. With volunteers that only meet a few times a year.

But it is a changed world/ And it will not unchange. The National Legion went to zones. Minnesota stayed with the single school model. The Market moved to multi community teams. Minnesota stayed with the single school model. The National says things are improving. The data in Minnesota shows talent continuing to leave.

Can Nothing Be Done?

Yes. Of Course. There are a lot of folks that want to rally to the Legion flag. Yes, a lot of ground has been lost. That is the penalty for inaction. It will take time to claw back. It will take People, Programs and Prime the Pump Money. And I do not think it is that hard. It is not risky to try either.

THERE ARE PROGRAM TEMPLATES THAT ARE ALREADY OUT THERE TO BE USED. JUST LIKE LEGION ALL STARS WAS A COPY OF HIGH SCHOOL ALL STARS.

The Program: Things That Can Be Done - Things That Must Be Done

1) 2025 - Beta Test and Develop Fall Ball Teams – The Second Season

- a. An extensive fall ball program already exists. It is open architecture with fields and weekend tournaments in the metro as well as a couple of out of state tournaments. It is operated by several clubs but allows for other types of teams to enter.
 - i. Legion players already participate as do Legion coaches. However, those Legion players must become Club players – they join private club teams to be able to play. These players come from all over the state to play on the weekends – Duluth, Alexandria, St. Cloud, Rochester – everywhere.
 - ii. You have Legion coaches that created their own clubs You have legion coaches create a club and put it under the private business umbrella for branding,

- management systems and insurance You have Legion coaches employed by clubs to run some of their fall teams
- iii. The point: They (players and coaches) are already in fall ball but they have to join a private club to do it. Legion provides no option but to push kids into private club programs – the Best Friend of Clubs is Legion.
 - iv. There were 320 Legion players nominated for All Stars wanting to play after the season.
 - v. We surveyed parents and players after their All Star experience. 78% wanted to play in tournaments during August and September.
 - vi. Better players keep playing. Legion says go somewhere else. Join the enemy!
- b. **Create 4 pilot teams to be entered into the fall program.** Much of the cost would be borne by player fees. Club fees run \$1100 to \$1700 on average for a player. Legion should be able to create some price advantage, but a huge differential is not required.
- i. Initial Incentive Funding - \$1000 to \$1500 per team - \$4,000 to \$6,000 in total
 - 1. \$500 for a coach
 - 2. \$250 for insurance
 - 3. \$250 for new baseballs
 - 4. \$400 - Maybe pay half of a jersey and provide a cap
 - 5. \$100 for who knows
 - ii. But We think that a Fall Team can be self-funding without needing Board dollars. A blessing from this Board is likely all you need.
 - iii. Kids apply in the late spring and early summer. Many Clubs have early summer tryouts.
 - iv. Solicit coaches and a project manager and make it happen.
 - v. Set aside the money now. If nothing develops, put it in your bank account. Waiting until spring or playing delay tactics will waste 2025. People need to plan.
 - vi. Do not INVENT – just duplicate. 1,200 coaches – 5,000 players. Do the math and find 60 kids and 4 coaches to make a Beta trial.

2) **Create and promote a Legion Baseball Coaches Association**

- a. Set aside \$1,000 to support the development of the association. If nothing develops – pocket the money.
- b. The MSHSL has a Baseball Coaches Association that has been instrumental in advancing high school baseball in Minnesota
 - 1. Many Legion coaches are members of the high school association – a very effective group and a hard working group
 - 2. The past president directs Anoka Legion baseball
 - 3. The current president is involved out in Plato MN – Both big proponents of Legion and fans of All Stars. Both are waiting for a sign from you before they would act.
 - 4. The Legion Board are few in number and busy with other things. There is much that can be done that you likely do not have the time or possibly haven't the interest to take on more duties and initiatives.
- ii. Coaches PROVIDE MANPOWER. They are already the ones doing the heavy lifting and they are the ones fighting the battles and keeping Legion baseball alive in their communities. But these Legion coaches have no voice and perceive the Board as being remote and inaccessible.

- iii. The Legion Board should welcome the potential for ideas and assistance. Some members will not want “outside” voices, especially if they have new ideas or if those voices have criticisms to offer. Both should be welcome – the Excellence Process
- iv. Establishing and building a coach’s association will be critically important to the resurgence of Legion Baseball in Minnesota. They will bring more energy, more know how, and more manpower to the table.
- v. In other states, coaches elect the board members.
- vi. These guys know that working together is essential to make progress for everyone.
- vii. This is long overdue. If nothing develops, bank the Hamilton and be happy you at least tried.

3) Create and Promote In Season Hybrid Tournament Teams – The Zip Code Teams

- a. National Legion is already doing it as a replacement format for forming teams. For teams that would compete in playoffs. ZONES.
- b. Minnesota can create weekend hybrid “Zip Code” teams WITHOUT changing your Single School Format for league play and playoffs.**
- c. Our survey of all star players and parents (as expected) had nearly 80% wanting IN SEASON all-star competition at 2 to 3 tournaments with most preferring to stay with their home teams for league and playoffs.
- d. We call over 120 coaches to create 11 teams for an 87,000 square mile zone called Minnesota. I will call back several coaches who expressed interest to get confirmation for a pilot program for 2025.
- e. Scheduling demands determining now if there is any viability to a test program. If there is interest as we expect, we will submit a proposal to Randy. This is different than All Stars where we had to build it to see if there was a market. Here you need to see if there is interest
- f. How hard would it be for:
 - i. [REDACTED] to make five phone calls to Delano- Cold Spring – Litchfield and other buddies in a ten or twenty mile radius? There is talent there. Ready to go.
 - ii. [REDACTED] to make calls to Paynesville Morris or Alexandria Fergus Falls and Detroit Lakes or any other programs to create a Zip Code team?
 - iii. Or [REDACTED] to call Bemidji and any other coaches in his area - and he knows them all.
 - iv. What about [REDACTED] forming a southwestern team and hosting a tournament? Put them together with Montevideo and Dawson and others – you have a good team.
 - v. How about [REDACTED]? There are tons of teams in that area including LeSeuer and New Ulm. There is a branch of the Blizzard in St., Peter. They are ready to go.
 - vi. Duluth says there already is a mechanism in that neck of the woods.
 - vii. Would [REDACTED] connect up with Hopkins or St. Mikes? Would Metro guys use the mechanism to fight for more players?
 - viii. Would stand alone teams like Excelsior prefer to play against Zip Code squads? Or do they prefer single team tournaments in Burnsville or Grand Rapids or Delano?

- g. Build it they will come. Test it.
- h. Costs – potentially recouped by player fees:
 - i. Set aside \$1,000 for each of 8 pilot teams –
 - 1. \$250 for insurance
 - 2. \$250 for baseballs
 - 3. \$500 for uniforms and caps
 - ii. Set aside \$1,000 for each of three tournament hosts to cover umpires and baseballs
 - iii. Total set aside - \$11,000
- i. Really it is likely that costs would be \$0 and if you charged a team registration fee, you could even count 8 new teams in your total.

4) Find State Directors from your Board that want to help develop Legion 2026 and beyond.

- a. A development task force or subcommittee should be organized for direct Board level involvement on the development program
- b. Reality is that Board member ownership of every program is critical. It can be a fun area for Board members to integrate.

- **NONE OF THESE INITIATIVES IS RADICAL OR NEW.**
- **WOULD PEOPLE JOIN?**
- **YOU HAVE NO RISK IF THEY DO NOT.**

Conclusion

If you think things are hunky-dory out there then I have wasted my time.

We started this all-star initiative. It forced me to see things from a statewide perspective.

I never really had to pay attention to a state before.

- It's been a lot of listening. A lot of idea sharing.
- Tons of phone calls and conversations with people I never knew before. Coaches. Players. College coaches. High school coaches. Moms and dads.
- There were a lot of new observations and tons of data to digest.
- People are restless.
- Some People are not very positive about Legion directions (or lack of directions) and they are openly critical of the Board of Directors even without knowing their names.
- Such finger pointing and bashing will NOT solve any problem

I have outlined a Doable Program that needs to be adopted Now or Soon. Clubs are signing up players now. Coaches will be planning schedules and fields for games and tournaments. After your spring meeting signups for Fall Ball will occur based on communications over the winter and spring. High school coaches will focus on school ball well before it begins.

Build It They Will Come

This ain't rocket science.

This is Low Risk Stuff.

If no one comes to in response to initiatives then that would speak for itself.

The decision is your decision.

Thank you for your time