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APPEAL

TO: BBF

DATE: 13 August 2019

SUBJECT: Triple-A League Regular Season Final Standings

CASE BACKGROUND

In the final week of the Triple-A League regular season affected teams sought BBF to deliberate on how to complete the regular season schedule in view of the fact that Oxford Kings had four games remaining to be played (two doubleheaders).

The BBF determined that the only game which will be played is the doubleheader between Oxford Kings and East London Latin Boys. The other doubleheader between Oxford Kings and Herts Londoners would remain not played when determining the final standings.

During the conference call the BBF informed the affected teams that if Latin Boys win both games, Oxford Kings would be eliminated and if Oxford Kings win one game and lose one game versus Latin Boys, they would be tied with Herts Londoners and Oxford Kings would finish ahead of Herts Londoners in the regular season standings due to a superior head-to-head run differential, however the email stated that:

“This will need to be checked and confirmed once the games have been played.”

(See Annex 1 for copy of the email from the BBF summarising the rescheduling decisions during that conference call)

On Sunday, 11 August 2019, Oxford Kings and East London Latin Boys played their games and split the doubleheader.

Herts Londoners asked the BBF to confirm the final standings in view of the 3-way tie between Herts Londoners, London Mammoths and Oxford Kings.

The BBF sent their response confirming that London Mammoths finish in third place, Oxford Kings in fourth and Herts Londoners in fifth place (See Annex 2 with a copy of BBF's response)

APPEAL

Herts Londoners have considered the response from the BBF and hereby appeal the decision.

GROUNDINGS FOR APPEAL

During the conference call to determine the issue of rescheduling the remaining games, the BBF stated that in the event that Oxford Kings split their doubleheader versus Latin Boys they would finish ahead of Herts Londoners on the basis of superior head-to-head run differential. The Herts Londoners representative at the conference call did not question this particular interpretation of the rules at the time as he assumed that the BBF is applying the tie break rules correctly.

Furthermore, the BBF email after the conference call stated that:

"This will need to be checked and confirmed once the games have been played."

After the games were completed, Herts Londoners reviewed the BBF Handbook which states that:

Resolving Ties in League/Divisional Standings

The BBF will apply the following criteria for resolving final positions in league or divisional standings in situations where two or more teams finish in a tie -- either by virtue of identical win-loss records or where teams have played an unequal number of games but the "Games Behind" difference between them is zero. In either case, the tie would be broken by using the following criteria in the order given:

The team that has forfeited the fewest number of games during the season is placed first; the team that has forfeited the next fewest number of games is placed second and so on.

1.1.1. If still level, then the head-to-head results between the tied teams should be used to establish placing.

1.1.2. If still level, then the team that has conceded the fewest runs in games between or among the tied teams is placed first, the team that has conceded the next fewest number of runs in those games is placed second, and so on.

1.1.3. If still level, then the average number of runs per game conceded excluding games involving forfeits, by the tied teams across the whole of the league season should be used to determine placing.

In view of this, the BBF should review its decision and apply its rules as stipulated in the BBF Handbook. The 3-way tie in this case would be broken on the basis of the head-to-head record between the three tied teams and would result in the three tied teams finishing as follows:

3. Herts Londoners (4-2)
4. London Mammoths (4-4)
5. Oxford Kings (2-4)

In the event that the BBF decides not to apply its rules as they appear in the BBF Handbook and instead interprets that the conference call constituted a mutually agreed “deviation” from the BBF Handbook to resolve the tie between Oxford Kings and Herts Londoners, then that still leaves Herts Londoners and London Mammoths tied and when applying the BBF tie-break rules Herts Londoners should finish ahead of London Mammoths in the standings.

SUMMARY

For the reasons stated above we respectfully request that BBF applies its official tie-break rules as stipulated in the BBF Handbook which would imply that Herts Londoners would finish third, Mammoths fourth and Kings fifth. If the BBF interprets that the conference call constituted a mutually agreed “deviation” from the BBF Handbook, then the remaining tie in the standings between Herts Londoners and London Mammoths should be resolved in accordance with the official BBF tie-break rules which would imply that Herts Londoners finish ahead of London Mammoths.

If you require additional information, please contact us.

Respectfully submitted

Herts Baseball Club

ANNEX 1

Email from the BBF summarising the rescheduling decisions during that conference call

On 8 Aug 2019, at 22:25, BBF wrote:

All,

First of all, thank you all for taking the time to be on the call tonight at such short notice.

The decision that was agreed on unanimously was that Oxford Kings will play a double header at East London Latin Boys on Sunday 11th August.

The remaining rained out games between Oxford Kings and Herts Londoners will not be played as time will not allow this ahead of the playoffs starting on Sunday 18th August.

Therefore, the final league placings will be determined by win differential in the case of any team that has not played the full set of league games (In accordance with the BBF 2019 Rulebook).

The BBF have agreed to fund an official umpire for the games as requested by the home team.

Playoff schedule will remain as published.

It was understood by the group that if:-

Latin Boys win both games, then Herts Londoners will proceed through to playoffs.

Oxford Kings win one game, then Oxford Kings will proceed through to playoffs by dint of the fact that both Oxford and Herts will end up tied on 10 wins, but Oxford will have a 1 run advantage over Herts in games played head to head.

This will need to be checked and confirmed once the games have been played.

I will now contact ■■■■■■■■■■ regarding Umpire(s) for this Sunday and confirm back to home team.

Please let me know if you think I have missed anything important, or mis-interpreted anything.

Thanks

British Baseball Federation

ANNEX 2

BBF email of 13 August 2019 confirming final standings

From: BBF

Date: 12 August 2019 at 23:38:38 GMT+1

To: Herts Londoners, Essex Redbacks, Oxford Kings, London Mammoths, ■■■■■■■■■■■■

Cc: ■■■■■■■■■■■■ ; ■■■■■■■■■■■■ , Kent Bucs , Richmond Knights,
■■■■■■■■■■■■■ , East London Latin Boys

Subject: Re: August 11th AAA Games

Reply-To: BBF

All,

I have now reviewed the results of the last weekend's games, the final standings, the 2019 BBF Rulebook, and what I believe was the consensus of the group that met via teleconference last Thursday evening.

As is clear from the number of e-mails and messages I have had over the last 12 hrs, there are many and differing opinions on what the outcome should be.

I will try to address the issues raised - one at a time.

1. The order in which deferred games should be played. - Although there is no written rule on this, and because the teams involved could not agree a course of action between themselves, I chose what I considered to be the fairest method to decide - play in original schedule date order. Oxford Kings @ Latin Boys was scheduled for the 7/4/19, whilst Herts Londoners @ Oxford Kings was scheduled for 16/6/19. Therefore the games to be played first were to be Oxford Kings @ Latin Boys. The group consensus on Thursday 8th was agreement to this.

2. The outcome of the remaining unplayed games between Herts Londoners & Oxford Kings - It was agreed that it was impractical to try to schedule these games before the first playoff game (scheduled for 18/8/19). These games would therefore be left unplayed and no result would be declared.

3. The possible results of the games on the 11/8/19 and the consequential impact on the standings. - The group consensus was that one of two outcomes could occur:-

a) Latin Boys would win both games - Oxford Kings would be eliminated from the 2019 AAA playoffs.

b) Oxford Kings and Latin Boys would win one game each - Oxford Kings and Herts Londoners would be tied on ten wins each. They would also be tied on 1-1 in head to head. Oxford Kings would qualify for the 2019 AAA playoffs by dint of a one run advantage over Herts Londoners in head to head (7-6).

A third outcome (undiscussed) was that Oxford Kings would win both games and would therefore qualify for 2019 AAA playoffs by dint of having won 11 games to Herts Londoners 10 games.

Therefore in this scenario, the league standings would be:-

3rd London Mammoths

4th Oxford Kings

5th Herts Londoners

Oxford Kings proceed to 2019 AAA Playoffs, Herts Londoners eliminated.

However, it was clearly stated in my summary email post the meeting that these outcomes would need to be checked post the games being played.

Here lies the problem.

page 16 of the 2019 BBF Rulebook says as follows:-

The BBF will apply the following criteria for resolving final positions in league or divisional standings where two or more teams finish in a tie, either by virtue of identical win - loss records or where teams have played an unequal number of games but the 'games behind' difference between them is zero.

The tie will be broken by using the following criteria in the order given:-

1. Fewest forfeits places first
2. Head to head results between tied teams should be used to establish order.

Therefore following the rulebook, three teams are calculated as being 8 games behind and therefore tied.

London Mammoths $((19-5) - (11-13))/2 = 8$

Oxford Kings & Herts Londoners $((19-5) - (10-12))/2 = 8$

No team suffered any forfeits - all three teams tied.

Head to head:-

Herts Londoners 3 - 1 London Mammoths

Herts Londoners 1 - 1 Oxford Kings

London Mammoths 3 - 1 Oxford Kings

Overall

Herts Londoners 4 - 2

London Mammoths 4 - 4

Oxford Kings 2 - 4

Therefore in this scenario, Herts Londoners and London Mammoths proceed to 2019 AAA playoffs and Oxford Kings are eliminated

FINAL DECISION

At the 2018 AGM a unanimous decision was taken that the BBF leagues would move from principles based decisions to rule based decisions. In light of this it would seem only right that the second scenario here be followed.

However, a meeting of AAA managers was held on the evening of the 18/8/19, and a number of decisions were taken that the group agreed to abide by.

First of those was to adhere to the play order for outstanding games - the initial dispute between the Oxford Kings management and the Herts Londoners management.

Second was that the remaining outstanding matches would be declared 'no result'.

These two, group agreed decisions, were fundamental to removing impasse and allowing a result to be come to.

Despite the ascertainment that a single win for Oxford Kings would take them through to the 2019 AAA playoffs was wrong according to the 2019 BBF Rulebook, it was the consensus of the group that this would be the outcome.

No objection to this decision was raised during the meeting or subsequent to the meeting and prior to the games being played.

Therefore the considered view of the BBF League Commissioner is that the final league standings for the 2019 AAA League are as follows:-

1. East London Latin Boys
2. Essex Redbacks
3. London Mammoths
4. Oxford Kings
5. Herts Londoners.

Top 4 teams proceed to 2019 AAA playoffs.

Herts Londoners are eliminated at this point.

I understand that this may not be the outcome that some were looking for, it is inevitable that one team would have to be ruled against.

I believe that I have tried to weigh up all of the events, circumstances and decisions of the last week in coming to this outcome, and hope we can now all move forward towards the climax of the 2019 season.

I understand that perhaps not everyone will agree with this ruling, but I hope that you will all be able to see that due consideration has been given to all of the available evidence when coming to the decision.

Best Regards

British Baseball Federation