



For Immediate Release

NEWS RELEASE

December 8, 2008

Minor League Baseball Executive Vice President/COO Tim Purpura's Opening Session Speech

LAS VEGAS--Welcome to Las Vegas and the 107th Annual Baseball Winter Meetings. I'm sure we are all looking forward to a great week as we gather to discuss our great game.

It is an honor and a privilege to address the Opening Session of these Winter Meetings. It is hard for me to believe that it has been almost one year since I took on this role with Minor League Baseball.

I am most grateful for the positive reception I have received from our membership, our Board of Trustees, our Council of League Presidents, and our great staff in St. Petersburg and I greatly appreciate this opportunity to serve you in this capacity.

We have set a very aggressive pace in this, the first year of President Pat O'Conner's administration. From Day 1, Pat has challenged us to charter a course to handle the important issues in our industry in a positive and collaborative manner. We have dealt with some extremely important issues that will shape our industry for many years to come.

Our membership has a tremendous track record of embarking on projects that are in the best interests of the game and our industry, sometimes sacrificing the interests of a particular club or league.

This season the Midwest League and the South Atlantic League stepped up to the plate and helped our industry fulfill its' longstanding commitment to transfer franchises between leagues in the interest of Player Development. We thank the South Atlantic League and the Midwest League for the spirit of cooperation they have shown and we thank them for exhibiting an industry oriented vision.

Another priority for us this year has been to continue working with our partners at Major League Baseball on a variety of programs and initiatives that will have long term benefits to both partners and our game.

I have always believed that the best, most productive relationships in business are ones that are born of partnerships between the parties. Partnership relationships often involve a high degree of push and pull, give and take, and back and forth, before the parties involved can get to a place where they are both comfortable with the outcome. And when both sides are committed to the process great things can happen.

This year our relationship has yielded the first ever joint Security Program which is headed up by the former Chief of Police of Port St. Lucie, Florida, Mr. John Skinner.

(more)

This program, which is an equal partnership with Major League Baseball, is designed to be a resource for our clubs in the areas of stadium security, alcohol management techniques, crowd control and overall risk assessment and awareness. From Major League Baseball's perspective, the program will involve protecting their most important assets, their players, from a variety of risk factors.

We have also spent countless hours as an industry this year working toward a bundled Internet-rights program with Major League Baseball Advanced Media that we believe will become a highly successful and lucrative business for both partners. With the strength of over 160 clubs and leagues, we will be able to increase the volume of information about Minor League Baseball that is available on the web and increase the saturation level of our game to the world-wide audience. While this area of our partnership has been controversial at times, I believe that we all should be proud of the work we have done within our membership, as well as with Major League Baseball, to bring the program to fruition.

Another program that has benefited from our relationship with MLB is our Professional Baseball Umpire Corporation, or PBUC. This season Justin Klemm has assumed the reigns from Mike Fitzpatrick as the Executive Director of PBUC and during that time Justin has worked diligently to expand our relationship with MLB Umpiring to create better training and evaluation programs for Minor League umpires.

This season we entered the marketplace with an interactive DVD that is a teaching tool for umpires at every level of baseball. This DVD has been distributed to all of our Minor League umpires and will become the starting point in the use of technology as a method to better teach umpires the proper techniques of umpiring with the goal of improving the caliber of umpiring at all levels of professional baseball.

The year ahead of us will no doubt be one of great challenges. We will face some hurdles as an industry that we have not faced in a long time. However, based upon my observation of Minor League Baseball and the people who own, operate and administer it, we are well equipped to face the challenges ahead with great vision, passion and confidence.

Good luck to you all, have a great week and Happy Holidays to you and your families.

###

Contact: Steve Densa, Minor League Baseball (702-943-3767)