

Village of Orland Park Media Relations

NEWSRelease

Frederick T. Owens Village Hall

14700 South Ravinia Avenue - Orland Park, IL 60462

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 25, 2009

Media Contact: Quincy Bejster, Athletic Supervisor
Village of Orland Park Recreation Department
708/403-6279

Orland Park Recreation Department Prepares Players for Spring Ball *Veteran Sports Coach Leads Village's Programs*

ORLAND PARK, IL – A sure sign of spring in Orland Park is families preparing for the upcoming baseball and softball seasons.

“We’ve had a number of people comment on how eager they are to start the baseball season, putting the past winter behind us,” said Orland Park Trustee Brad O’Halloran, chair of the village’s Recreation and Parks Committee. “The village is thrilled to be able to offer a number of programs that help kids of all ages get ready for the 2009 ball season,” he added.

Many of the village’s sports programs are led by Veteran Coach Dick Conrad, of Orland Park.

“Coach Conrad has been coaching for the last 35 years,” said Orland Park Recreation Athletic Supervisor Quincy Bejster. “Most people in the area will remember the 28 years that he spent at Carl Sandburg High School, where he served as department chair and coached football, girls’ basketball, boys’ basketball and boys’ baseball.”

“I enjoy teaching fundamentals, the basics of the game, the things players need to know to be successful at hitting, throwing, catching and running,” Conrad said. “I also see kids grow and mature and see their confidence grow, which is great,” he added, “They score and think it’s super because they learned the basics.”

Reservations are currently being accepted for private indoor pitching and hitting lessons with Conrad. Open to boys and girls age six and older, these one-on-one lessons include instruction on batting, bunting and pitching. Hitting lessons are taught using batting tees, a pitching machine and live pitching. Each lesson is tailored for the participant’s age and skill level and lessons are available through early June. Costs vary dependent on the number of lessons with multiple lesson packages available. Lessons may be scheduled by calling or visiting the village’s Sportsplex.

Coach Conrad will lead the village's FUNdamental Baseball Clinics for players age seven to eleven, March 31 through May 19. This program meets on Tuesdays from 5:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. The cost is \$68.00 for residents, \$102.00 for non-residents and \$63.00 for Sportsplex members.

New to the village's spring sports line up is the Spring Tune-Up Clinic, offered for one day only, Saturday, April 4th. This indoor comprehensive baseball clinic will emphasize fundamental improvement to enhance each player's skills. Participants will work on throwing, fielding and hitting in the batting cages. The Spring Tune Up Clinic is open to ballplayers age four to age thirteen and older. Six different time slots are available for specific age groups with the youngest participants, age four to six, working on t-ball fundamentals. The clinic costs \$10 or \$15 for residents and \$15 to \$23 for non-residents, all dependent on age.

"We wanted to offer something to help ballplayers of all ages get back into the swing of things before their seasons begin," Bejster said. "We're excited to offer this all-inclusive one day clinic so boys and girls can practice with kids their own age and get ready for the season ahead," he added.

On Saturday, May 2, boys and girls are invited to test their skills and compete for a chance to represent their community in the regional and state competitions for the Aquafina Pitch, Hit & Run Competition. Check in will begin at 8:00 a.m. with the competition beginning at 8:30 a.m. There is no charge to participate in this contest which will be held at the Doogan Park Ballfields, behind the village's Cultural Center at 14760 Park Lane. Pre-registration is required.

"The Orland Park community is very fortunate to have so many adults who take the time to volunteer to manage and coach their kids' teams once they join the many sports organizations in town. The Village of Orland Park is happy to be able to help create the sports foundation on which kids continue to build as they progress," O'Halloran said. "And, we're very lucky to have someone of Coach Conrad's caliber on staff at the Sportsplex. These kids are learning from one of the best coaches in the Chicago area and we're thrilled to have him on staff at the village," he said.

Registration and further information about Orland Park's baseball and softball training programs are available at the Village of Orland Park Sportsplex, 11351 West 159th Street and at the Franklin E. Loebe Recreation Center, 14650 South Ravinia Avenue. For more information, call the Recreation Department at 708/645-7529.

-30-

PHOTO CAPTION

Baseball and softball players can get ready for the season at the Village of Orland Park Sportsplex, learning from Veteran Coach Dick Conrad on Orland Park. For more information, call the Orland Park Recreation Department at 708/645-7529.

