**MEDIA ADVISORY**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Minnesota American Legion Baseball cancelled for 2020**

ST. PAUL — The American Legion Department of Minnesota Executive Committee, Minnesota American Legion Baseball Committee and Minnesota American Legion Commander Mark Dvorak have cancelled the 2020 season out of concerns for safety of players, coaches, umpires, fans and volunteers during the COVID-19 pandemic.

“Safety has always been important in American Legion Baseball,” said Director of Minnesota American Legion Baseball Randy Schaub of Danube. “As much as we wanted to play this year, we cannot take chances with the players, coaches and fans we oversee.”

The decision came during a morning video conference on Saturday, May 9. The Baseball Committee heard from Commander Dvorak and had input from state and national legal advisers. Statewide COVID-19 restrictions on gatherings would make playing baseball prohibitive.

“It was a difficult decision that affects many young people and their parents,” Commander Dvorak said. “The American Legion is a major proponent of the sport of baseball, and we hope to return even stronger in 2021.”

American Legion Baseball programs across the country have shut down, resulting in team insurance being unavailable through the national Legion Baseball program. The national level last month cancelled the American Legion World Series planned for August, and the national program announced Friday, May 8, it would provide no national-level support.

Minnesota Baseball Committee member Jim Peck has been involved in Legion Baseball for 57 years. “This is one of the worst days in all of my time in baseball,” he said.

The Minnesota committee originally met on April 11 and held off cancelling the 2020 season with hopes that state and federal officials might have good news for summer gatherings. Such hopes never transpired.

With 366 teams fielded in 2019 and 357 team signed up for 2020 , Minnesota American Legion Baseball is the largest among the 50 states.

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Participation in Minnesota American Legion Baseball dates back to 1923, and the first state tournament was held in Mankato 1926. It has been held every year since then, and Minnesota was among only three states with that continuous string of tournaments. 2020 has broken that run.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION and CONTACT INFORMATION FOR BASEBALL COMMITTEE MEMBERS:** [www.minnesotalegionbaseball.com](http://www.mnlegion.org/)

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