

By TOMMY BRYAN, *sports editor*

LEBANON -- Despite rumors to the contrary, the City of Lebanon's Junior Pro Football League is still alive and kicking. There has been much confusion since the recent forming of the Lebanon Youth Football League under the umbrella of Tennessee Youth Football Alliance (TYFA).

"We're two different operations," said William Porter, Director of the Lebanon Recreation Department.

The City of Lebanon has sponsored junior pro football since the late 1970s with a junior league for kids ages 7, 8 and 9 and a senior league for players 10, 11 and 12. Last year, we had more than 275 participants, not including cheerleaders," Porter said.

"We'll continue to offer Junior Pro Football as long as we've got children wanting to participate."

The difference between the two operations is very similar to recent trends in youth baseball and softball. Some parents want their children to play league (or rec) ball. This means almost no out of town travel, games during the midweek and a reasonable participation cost. Those wishing to go this route will probably stay with the City of Lebanon's Junior Pro program.

Other parents are looking for their children to participate in "travel ball" which usually includes out of town road games roughly every other Saturday against similar teams and a higher participation cost per child. Those who are looking for a "travel ball" experience would most likely be interested in the TYFA -affiliated Lebanon Youth Football.

Porter says the City's Junior Pro League will still play senior league games on Monday nights and junior league games on Thursday at the Walter J. Baird Junior High Field. Games will feature four, eight minute quarters followed by a running clock "fifth quarter" to ensure playing time for all participants.

Jr. Pro football alive & kicking

Friday, April 30, 2010

Registration cost for the Junior Pro League is still only \$30 per player which includes a jersey and a post-season trophy. Registration for this fall's league is currently being accepted at the Harold Dean Greer Recreation Building in the Baird Park Complex.

For more information, call the City of Lebanon's Recreation Dept. at 449-0303.