

By TOMMY BRYAN, *sports editor*

LEBANON -- The competition is expected to be as hot as the weather later this week when the Continental Amateur Baseball Association 14U World Series opens play on a baseball field near you.

Some 33 teams have completed paperwork and are scheduled to participate in the sixth annual event, sponsored by the Lebanon Sports Commission. The field is up from the 27 teams playing in the 2009 event and marks the most ever teams to participate in Lebanon's CABA World Series.

"We don't want to grow too fast, we are looking to have a quality tournament rather than a large number of teams," said tournament director Johnny Davenport. "If we get much bigger we will have to change some of our activities. This is about the biggest group we can get in the Floyd Center for the opening banquet."

Pool play will begin Saturday, July 17 on six local diamonds including two in the Baird Park Complex -- Veterans Field and Eskew Field.

Other fields scheduled for competition include: Cumberland University's Stockton Field, Friendship Christian School, Mt Juliet Middle School and Wilson Central High School. All fields with the exception of Cumberland are equipped with lights.

The elimination phase of the tournament should start Wednesday, July 21 with the championship game on tap for Friday, July 23.

Teams are assured of at least six pool games with the top team from each pool advancing to the championship bracket.

The Wilson County Bulldogs and the Lebanon Diamond Devils are the only local entries. The Bulldogs, coached by Kevin Gaines, finished second in the USSSA state tournament last month

CABA series draws 33 teams

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in Knoxville and features rising freshmen at local schools. The Diamond Devils are coached by Lebanon High head baseball coach Tracy Slone and will include rising freshmen at LHS.

Other Middle Tennessee teams include: the Smyrna Shoetiques, Nashville's Hit After Hit Knights, the Tennessee Doers Black out of Nashville, the Smyrna-based TN Blueticks along with both the Nitro teams (Red & Blue) out of Spring Hill.

The 2010 tournament will again have an international flavor as a team from Nuevo Leon, Mexico is entered. No less than seven teams from Illinois are participating as well as squads from such far-flung locales as Edmonds, WA; Brooklyn, NY; Hamden, CT; and Peabody, MA.

"We are expecting 1200 - 1300 people in town for the tournament," Davenport said. "Almost all the host hotels in Lebanon are sold out for the week and many teams are staying in Mt. Juliet."

Here's a tentative schedule of events:

Friday, July 16 Check-in. / Coaches Meeting / Opening Ceremony / Banquet at the Jimmy Floyd Center.

Saturday, July 17 Tuesday, July 20 Pool Play begins

Wednesday, July 21 Friday, July 23 Championship Bracket Play

Saturday, July 24 If Necessary.

Day Passes will be \$7 and will be available at all venues. There will also be a tournament pass available for \$30. Children 10 and under will be admitted free.