

DYBA TRAVEL SOFTBALL HANDBOOK

DYBA MISSION STATEMENT

The purpose of the Deerfield Youth Baseball and Softball Association shall be to help promote and maintain high moral character as well as good mental and physical health in the young people involved in the baseball and softball programs. This objective will be attained by providing supervised athletic games. The supervisors shall bear in mind at all times that the attainments of exceptional athletic skill or winning of games is secondary to the objective herein.

Deerfield Travel Softball Mission Statement

Deerfield Travel Softball was created by DYBA to provide a higher level of competition for talented and motivated DYBA softball players who are willing to commit a great deal of time to the improvement of their skills in a team focused environment. Teams will work hard to win games, but winning will never become more important than teamwork and good sportsmanship. Deerfield Travel Softball will ask players to work toward excellence, not perfection. Softball is a fun and challenging game that requires players to develop the ability to overcome mistakes and to look forward to their next opportunity. Ultimately, the development of skills and team focused play will be the guideline for our program, which we believe will create better softball players and better people. Focus on skill development is critical to the program.

DYBA Travel Softball Program Management

1. The DYBA Board of Directors will determine a Director of Travel Softball for each new board year and announce the Director(s) of Travel Softball at the Annual Board Meeting. The Director(s) of Travel Softball shall be responsible for the general oversight of the Travel Softball Program. Per board approval a co-director can be appointed/elected.

2. The Director of Travel Softball will present team manager recommendations to the DYBA Board for approval prior to appointing a team manager. Once approved by the DYBA Board, the manager will then be responsible for the operation and oversight of all activities associated with their travel team. Additional coaches may be named to help the manager run the team, and team parents can be used to handle other duties such as scheduling, uniform sizing, etc. All Managers, Coaches, and Tournament Volunteers are subject to DYBA Board Approval and must complete a DYBA conflict of interest form and a volunteer form.

3. The Director of Travel Softball has the option to assemble a Committee, chaired by the Director of Travel Softball and composed of a subset of members of DYBA. Such a committee may be formed to review Travel policies, act as a steering committee, or for any other reason deemed necessary.

4. The DYBA Board of Directors will identify the incoming Travel Softball Director no later than the September Board meeting; however, the outgoing Travel Director should determine the August tryouts dates as a final responsibility for the new Travel Director to

oversee. At all times, the DYBA Board of Directors will have oversight and final say regarding issues that pertain to the Deerfield Travel Softball Program.

5. Parents of travel softball players must dedicate time to the operation and running of the Travel Softball Tournament.

Deerfield Travel Softball Teams

The travel softball program will attempt to field as many teams at each age level determined by ASA and/or NSA guidelines based on the number of girls trying out at each age level. Based on numbers of girls who tryout, we will look to add more players to field additional teams rather than cut players. It is understood that in some cases cuts will have to be made. If there are two teams at each age group the teams will be known as Red and White. If enough girls try out at the 10U level, efforts will be made to field an instructional team.

Travel softball teams base age determinations on a January 1 cut off. 10U teams - will consist of girls who are 10 years of age as the calendar turns for the upcoming year. For example for this year if a girl was born on January 1, 2003 of the appropriate level she would be 10U eligible for the 2013 season even though she will be 11 for the entire season. This is based on ASA age guidelines and the same will hold true for 12U, 14U, and 16U.

Travel softball is a commitment. Players and their families are expected to make travel softball a priority. Directors and managers reserve the right to transfer players to other teams and alter playing time based on player commitment, attitude and attendance. Players, families and guests are expected to adhere to all applicable DYBA Codes of Conduct.

Out of District Players

Players from other communities will be allowed to tryout for Deerfield Travel Softball teams with the understanding that priority will be given to girls from the 60015 zip code no matter the skill level when selecting teams. In circumstances, where there may be need or desire for the out of district player on a Red team, the travel committee will make the final ruling.

In cases where Deerfield may not be able to field a White team at a certain age but does have Deerfield girls who still want to play travel, it is permissible to openly recruit out of district players in order for the Deerfield (60015) girls to play travel.

Playing Up

The travel softball policy regarding girls playing up an age group is that it is not allowed. Even if a girl will be spending a 4th year at 10U she will not be allowed to play up. Any appeals of this process are subject to the DYBA Community Participation Guidelines. If a family/player requests to play up in accord with the DYBA Community Participation Guidelines and the request is granted the Travel Director(s) reserves the right to place the player on any team at any level.

The exception to the Playing Up Rule would be in the case of 16U softball. Freshman girls who have played their freshman season under IHSA rules (43 ft. pitching plate) will be allowed to age up since they have already had a high school season at 16U guidelines even though they are 14U eligible.

House League Requirements and Conflicts

All travel players through 6th grade must play in the Deerfield Spring House league. This also applies for out of District players; however, the out of district player can petition to have the house requirement waived. For example, it is doubtful a travel girl from Highland Park can opt out of the house requirement due to the proximity of the towns. A girl who is playing for DYBA but comes from the Evanston area may not be required due to logistics.

As far as conflicts between a house league function and a travel function, house league games take precedent over a travel practice and games. Managers of House and Travel teams are encouraged to work together if travel teams create conflicts. The House Spring Softball Schedule is designed to leave open at least two weeknights, Saturday afternoons and Sundays for travel activities. Travel managers are directed to schedule their games during these open times during the Spring House Season.

No travel games may/should or practices should be scheduled during the House playoffs. If Travel activities are scheduled during House playoffs, the Travel activities must be cancelled if there is a conflict.

Travel games and practices take precedent over house league practices.

Travel Tryout Process

1. All eligible players interested in playing travel softball will be required to attend the tryouts for the next season if they wish to make a team. Tryouts will be closed to parents. Travel teams will be selected based on tryout performance along with input from previous year's coaches and managers. It is within the discretion of the Travel Director(s) and/or coach conducting the tryouts and selecting the teams to consider other information, and to schedule makeup tryout sessions to accommodate unique circumstances, including but not limited to: injury, sickness, a family emergency, religious commitment or a tiebreaker to determine team selection.

2. The Director(s) of Travel Softball will be responsible for organizing the tryouts, selecting the coaches who will evaluate and rank the players, and updating the participants during the selection process. The Director(s) of Travel Softball may be involved in team selection or player evaluations during the tryouts. If any additional information is required to determine team selection, the Travel Director(s) will gather and provide that information to the tryout evaluator(s) for their review.

3. Players will be registered and identified during tryouts by a number and/or color code. Coaches from the DYBA travel softball program will evaluate compiled data on all the

players at the tryouts and select the teams. As most of the coaches in travel softball have girls playing they are not allowed to evaluate at their own child's age level. Typically, two teams are rostered with 11-12 players on each team. Player specific skill sets can be considered in team formation. Parents: Please understand that a placement decision for a Red and/or Gray team is never perfect. Tryouts are difficult for the players... please don't emphasize or belabor team selection with your player regardless of which team they are placed on. All placed players should be congratulated and encouraged. A parent's disappointment regarding team selection is damaging to your own child's spirit. In addition, being overly enthusiastic if your player makes a Red team sends the wrong message as well.

Travel Deposits

The DYBA Board will determine the deposit due at try outs. A player may not try out without the deposit being made under the method required.

Try out deposit requirements may be altered at the discretion of the DYBA Commissioner. Requests for alterations of the deposit requirement must be made at least seven (7) days prior to the try outs.

The amount of the deposit may be up to the full amount of the upcoming season fee.

If a child is offered a spot on a Deerfield travel team and the roster spot is turned down the deposit is forfeited. Further, the player may not try out for a DYBA travel team in the following calendar year absent approved waiver by the DYBA Board of Directors. If a child is cut from a team the deposit will be returned.

Uniform Numbers

Uniform numbers are usually selected by the player. In rare cases where players on the same team have the same travel number, the more experienced player in the DYBA travel program, and in the case of players with the same years of experience, older player, will be allowed to keep her jersey number, while the younger player must select another number.

Additional Expenses and Commitments

Travel fees will not include additional equipment costs such as replacement bags, out of town tournament fees, additional private lessons, team dedicated funds, etc.

Some teams will participate in one to two out of town tournaments that will require additional expenses associated with playing outside of the Chicagoland area.

The official travel season will begin with the start of the DYBA House season unless otherwise described. Teams will participate in off season training beginning as soon as the fall after the tryout period. Fall and winter practices are optional. Players are encouraged to attend as skills are developed and team unity is formed.

All families are expected/required to assist the program with Deerfield Softball Tournament work, if one is held, team organization and field maintenance activities.

A Message to Parents

Parents are asked to be supportive of their players and their coaches. Part of being supportive is trusting that your coaches are making decisions that are best for the team and leaving coaching decisions up to them. Parents are encouraged to practice with children on their own time, using your coaches' suggestions to work on improving individual skills. Interaction with players during games and practices is discouraged, so that players can give 100 percent of their attention to their coaches and their teammates. Only positive cheers and words of encouragement are appropriate during games from parents, who are required to remain seated in the bleachers away from the dugout. There will be no tolerance of criticism or arguments with umpires. Smoking and/or drinking alcohol is not allowed at a Deerfield Travel Softball game. All Parents are required to sign and abide by the DYBA Code of Conduct. Travel Softball games can get very intense, which can be fun and exciting, whether they are wins or losses. We ask that everyone work to make that intensity fun and not unnecessarily tense. As with all aspects of the Deerfield Youth Baseball and Softball Association, the DYBA Board of Directors has ultimate authority over the Deerfield Travel Baseball Program.

From Mike Matheny's Blog: June 2, 2013

The results of a thirty year survey given to collegiate athletes may surprise you. When asked, "What was the worst thing about playing your sport as a kid?" The overwhelming answer from these athletes was..."The car ride home with my parents." OUCH!

The study also showed that the major offenders were not the whacked-out, over the top screamers, but the parents that typically kept quiet during the game who could no longer keep their frustration in once the car door shut. The study also noted that nearly 70% of the kids that were involved with a youth sports team quit by the time they were 13, and one of the reasons for this was the fractured relationship with their parents due to the sport. There were even some kids that stated that they believed they could possibly get their parents back to normal, if they just quit playing the sport altogether... How sad.

This might be a time for all of us to take a breath and check ourselves. I know that many of us have pretty good insight into the sports that our kids play, and we may be correct that we even know more than their coaches. But, are we willing to risk our relationships with our kids, just to give them some advice before they even have time to take their jersey off? Truth be told, we also were probably not as good as we think we were, and time has allowed us to forget just how hard it is for a kid to be successful at a sport.

So, what is the answer? Just ask the kids. The kids in the survey said that the greatest thing that their parents told them after a game was "I love watching you play." The kids did not want to hear that their coach was wrong, or the Ref was blind, or that they should not have thrown a 3-2 change up...they just want to know that we enjoy watching them.

If you agree with this at all, make a pact with your child. Tell them that you do, in fact, love watching them play, and that you will do your best not to critique them right after the game. I am guessing that they will thank you and will enjoy THEIR sport even more.