

ROSEMOUNT TRAVELING BASEBALL TRYOUTS AND TEAM SELECTION SUMMARY

Thank you for your interest in the Rosemount Traveling Baseball Program. We realize that a keen area of interest for many parents, as well as players, is the tryout and team selection process. The intent of this document is to help answer many of the frequently asked questions about the tryout and team selection process as well as lay out the important policies regarding tryouts.

Rosemount Traveling Baseball tryouts are held at the Rosemount Irish Sports Dome. Tryouts are usually during the middle to end of March, or sometimes the first part of April (it often depends upon when the spring school break is scheduled). The precise dates and times for each age group will be listed on the Rosemount Traveling Baseball website. (<http://www.rosemountbaseball.com/traveling>)

Closed Tryouts

The entire tryout process is closed to parents, friends and family. The Traveling Baseball Board believes that keeping try-outs closed are in the best interest of the players and the tryout process. Our goal is to eliminate all distractions for the players so they can focus only on baseball. Traveling Baseball Board members will be in attendance to help facilitate the tryout process. The Board will also select additional personnel to assist with tryout stations. This may be, but is not limited to, Rosemount High School Varsity players, previous Board members etc. Board members are not allowed to participate in any drill during their son's tryout time.

What to Bring and Attire

Players should come prepared with the following:

- Glove
- Bat
- Batting Helmet
- Drink
- Baseball Hat
- Comfortable clothing is acceptable
- Players are **NOT** allowed to wear any clothing that contains their name or indicates in any way that they played on a traveling or other organization's baseball team in a previous season.

Baseball Bats

Bats must be in compliance with the established league bat standards. The bat rules vary depending on the age group. Please visit <http://www.rosemountbaseball.com/traveling-equipment> for further details.

Pinnie Jersey Assignments

Each player will be assigned a pinnie jersey with a number. This is to be worn at all times with the number facing forward for player identification. Each age group is randomly divided into small groups. The groups rotate through all of the stations at both of the two tryout sessions, and in the same order. During the second session, the participation order will be reversed from the first session. First to last, last to first.

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Warm-ups

Space will be available in the dome for players to warm up. Players will not be allowed in the dome more than 30 minutes prior to their designated age groups starting time. The arrival time is enforced to eliminate distractions to the players currently going through the trying out process. It is encouraged to consider doing some additional warm-ups at home prior to coming to tryouts.

Evaluation Stations Overview

Each age group generally tries out separate from the other age groups (14's and 15's are often at the same time). Each age group will have two tryout sessions, each of which will last about 1 ¼ - 1 ½ hours. The length of the designated time slots depend upon the total number of players trying out for each age group.

There are four main components of the tryouts:

- Hitting (40%); which is broken into 2 hitting stations:
 1. Underhand toss from behind an "L" screen
 2. Machine pitched hitting
- Infield (30%)
- Outfield (30%)

If your son participated in the Sunday Night Winter Clinic, these skill sets and expectations are taught during these sessions. The exact drill may not be duplicated, but the skills required will be taught.

Provisional Coaches

A group of selected qualified, provisional coaches, from each age group, will be invited by the Board to observe tryouts during the designated time for that age group. Selected provisional coaches are attending tryouts to personally evaluate players of their age group in order to potentially help with Coach Picks during the team selection process.

The provisional coaches can evaluate players on hitting, infield and/or outfield. Provisional coaches will be provided the same scoring card as the evaluators, however, if they choose to keep notes in a different manner that is up to them. This information, along with the previous season's statistics and coaches feedback (when available), can be used to make the Coach Picks during the team selection process.

The Board encourages the provisional coaches to evaluate all aspects of the tryout process, not just focus on one portion (just the hitting portion or just the defensive portion).

- The Board suggests that during Session One all coaches evaluate the infield and outfield stations.
- The Board suggests that during Session Two all coaches evaluate the hitting stations.

Note: If a Board member is a provisional coach, he/she is not allowed to work a tryout station at the time their age level is being evaluated. This will allow for that Board member/coach to give full attention to the evaluation process.

Board members, provisional coaches and evaluators are instructed not to communicate with any of the players. Players are called on by their assigned number...not by name.

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Tryout Evaluators

Unbiased evaluators are critical in our tryout process. These evaluators are hired for this event and are not associated with the Rosemount Traveling Baseball program, nor do they have any kids in the Rosemount Traveling Baseball program. For 2019 the Board has selected the Eagan Bandits town ball team as our tryout evaluators.

If the Board is satisfied with the evaluations provided the previous year, the evaluators may be used for the subsequent year(s). The Board's ultimate goal is to maintain an unbiased evaluation of the players and to place the players on the appropriate team where they can excel with their current skills.

There are two independent evaluators at each station with the exception of the underhand flip drill.

The Sunday night Winter Clinic training sessions will be operated and run by the Rosemount High School Coaching Staff. An evaluator will not be selected if they were involved in the current Sunday night Winter Clinic program. They will NOT be considered as tryout evaluators.

Parent Note

Please keep in mind that the evaluators are doing their best to evaluate players on their current skills. As parents we may have a tendency to evaluate our own son's skills at a higher level than may be appropriate. Playing at the wrong level is detrimental to your son's baseball skill development and the longevity of his baseball interest. Our goal is to have every player have fun and be successful at playing the game of baseball. Keep in mind that there is no perfect tryout system

Please accept and support your son's skills for what they are today and work hard with him to improve his skills. Thank you in advance for supporting the tryout process.

HITTING (40%)

All players are given practice swings that mirror the actual evaluated drill in a separate batting cage immediately prior to their tryout at the evaluated hitting stations. Players will be scored on a 1-10 system with a 10 being the highest.

Players will receive scores on starting stance thru the finished swing (i.e. balance) and total swing mechanics. Additionally, on the machine pitch drills; players will earn points for total contact based on the same 1-10 scoring system. Each player will receive (2) scores for underhand flips, (4) scores for machine hitting mechanics and (4) scores for contact results.

Bunting and hitting live pitches will not be part of the evaluation. Players should swing at all pitches that are strikes. Pitches that are strikes and not swung at will count as one of the eight hitting opportunities.

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First Session:

- **Underhand Flips** (8 balls per player) Ball is tossed into the strike zone underhand from behind an L screen located about 15-20 feet away. Score will reflect starting batting stance thru the finished swing and total swing mechanics.
- **Machine Pitch** (8 balls per player) Baseballs are pitched from distance and speed appropriate for age level. One score will reflect starting batting stance thru the finished swing and one additional score will reflect total contact results.

Tryout Speed Settings & Pitching Machine Distance			
Age	Session 1	Session 2	Distance
9 & 10	42	45	46'
11	45	48	46'
12	51	54	52'
13	57	60	54'
14 & 15	61	65	60' 6"

Second Session:

- **Underhand Flips** Same grading criteria as the First Session.
- **Machine Pitch** Same grading criteria as the First Session, except for the following...
 - During Session Two, the ball speed will be increased. This is done to see how the player can adjust and will ultimately separate the players in their batting skills. Ball speeds and pitching distances are again adjusted for each age group.

INFIELD (30%)

(Same drill for session #1 and session #2 for all age groups)

This drill is designed to evaluate players fielding technique/mechanics, footwork and arm strength. Infield ground balls are hit from a fungo bat by a designated adult. Each player will go through a practice station immediately prior to being evaluated at the grading station.

Each player will start on a marked spot between 2nd and 3rd base. When they raise their hand to indicate they are in a "ready" position, the first ground ball will be hit directly at the player. They should field the ball and throw to 1st base. Upon returning to the same starting spot the player should again raise their hand to indicate they are in their "ready" position, a second ground ball will then be hit either toward the 2nd or 3rd base side. The players will always need to field the ground ball and throw to 1st base. (A current player from Rosemount High School, board member or other independent helper will play 1st base and remains in the same position for the entire age group.) For U9-U13, the player then returns to the same marked spot on the infield, upon signaling with a raised hand, a third ball will be hit either toward the 2nd or 3rd base side (opposite side from where it was hit with the second ground ball). The player should again field the ball and throw it to 1st base. Note: U9-U13 players will get three ground balls compared to two ground balls for U14-U15 players at this position.

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Players will then go to a marked spot near 3rd base. When they raise their hand to indicate they are in a “ready” position, the first ground ball will be hit directly at the player. They should field the ball and throw to 1st base. Upon returning to the same spot near 3rd base the player should again raise their hand to indicate they are in their “ready” position, a second ground ball will then be hit either toward the 2nd or 3rd base side. They should field the ball and throw to 1st base. After the second ground ball has been thrown a third ball will be rolled directly at the player, simulating a bunt. He should field it and throw to 1st base. The drill will be scored the same for both the First session and the Second session to give the player two opportunities to demonstrate their skills.

Note: The balls will not always be hit in the exact same order in an effort to keep players from cheating to one side or the other.

The infield station is designed to evaluate fielding technique/mechanics but will also evaluate ARM STRENGTH. Since Rosemount Traveling Baseball DOES NOT evaluate pitching and catching independently; the evaluators are scoring the strength of the throwing arms in this drill. A “strong arm” should be demonstrated with velocity; no arc on the throw and accurate to the 1st baseman. An accurate rainbow throw to 1st base does not constitute a strong arm/throw. Sound mechanics; footwork, glove work and arm strength are the fundamentals for this part of the evaluation process.

OUTFIELD (30%)

(Same drill for Session #1 and Session #2 for all age groups)

Outfield fly balls are “thrown” from a pitching machine. Each player will go through a practice station prior to being evaluated at the grading station. Again, arm strength will be evaluated in this drill. The distance the players are asked to throw the ball will simulate a throw from the outfield to a cutoff person during a game. Players are scored on technique/mechanics, footwork and arm strength.

For scoring of the tryout, each player will start with one foot on a base. When they raise their hand to signal they are “ready”, a ball will be thrown via the pitching machine to an X marked on the floor. The location of the base will force the player to drop back and make the catch on the ball purposely thrown over their head. The player can leave the base as soon as the hand of the person feeding the ball into the pitching machine starts to go down. The player will need to catch the fly ball and throw it back with maximum velocity to the cutoff person (current Board member or Rosemount High School baseball player, which will remain the same for the entire age group.)

The player then goes to the next designated base and places one foot on the base. When he raises his hand the ball will again be thrown to the X. For U9-U12 players, the player should move sideways to the ball, catch the ball and throw it to the cutoff person with maximum velocity. For U13-U15 players, the player will need to move sideways and drop back simulating a ball hit deep in the gap, catch the ball and throw it to the cutoff person with maximum velocity. Again, a rainbow throw does not demonstrate a “strong” arm. Making a great diving catch does not indicate proper positioning. The goal is to get to the spot on time to make a solid, under control catch.

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The player then goes to a third designated base and places one foot on the base. When he once again raises his hand to signal he is ready, a third ball will be thrown to the X. For U9-U12 players, the location of the base will force the player to run up on the ball to make the catch. Upon making the catch the player should again throw it back with velocity to the same cut off person. For U13-15 players, the ball will be thrown as a ground ball (current Board member or Rosemount High School baseball player, which will remain the same for the entire age group). The location of the base will force the player to run up and make a play on the ball. Upon fielding the ground ball the player should throw it back with velocity to the same person.

SCORING SUMMARIZATION

- Hitting (40%)
- Infield (30%)
- Outfield (30%)

NOTE: All scores are collected from the evaluators and tabulated by a paid 3rd party who is independent of the RAAA Traveling Baseball Program. This independent 3rd party person is also hired to do the data entry work when team selections are taking place during the team selection process.

Rosemount Traveling Baseball Team Selection Process

Children of provisional coaches are not guaranteed spots on the team for which their parent has been named a provisional coach. The coach follows the player based on the player's earned tryout score. Players do not follow the coach based on the coaches ranking. A player's overall rankings are confidential and will not be shared with the public.

The number of teams organized at each level will vary depending on the number of players trying out. The number of players per team typically will consist of 11-12 players. In some rare instances there could be 13 players on a team.

Example: If 39 players try out for a particular level; three traveling teams would be formed; 36 players would be selected based on tryout scores/coaches selection. The remaining 3 players would not be placed on a traveling team and; therefore, have the option to participate in In-House Baseball program. If there were 35 players, then two teams of 12 & one team of 11 would be formed with the number and level of the participant per team being based on a number of factors including where the scoring breaks between rankings falls and potentially the provisional coaches input, if needed.

'AAA' Team Selection

The highest ranking eight (8) players based on the evaluators' total tryout scores will qualify for the "AAA" team. These (8) players are considered "locked players" and have earned a position on the team based solely on tryout scores. These (8) players cannot be removed by the Head Coach. The Head Coach then has discretion to fill out the roster from the remaining players ranked 9 thru 18.

If an injured player is deemed to be a "AAA" player and the Head Coach wishes to have the player on the team, then the Head Coach will have one less pick and can only select 3 players vs. 4 players. This

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process would repeat if multiple players are injured. This decision will be based on previous year's performances in Rosemount Traveling Baseball.

'AA' Team Selection

The next (8) highest ranking players from the remaining field will qualify for the "AA" team and are again placed in the "locked" position. These (8) players cannot be removed by the Head Coach. The Head Coach then has discretion to fill out the roster from the remaining players ranked 21 – 30.

If an injured player is deemed to be a "AA" player and the Head Coach wishes to have the player on the team, then the Head Coach will have one less pick and can only select 3 players vs. 4 players. This process would repeat if multiple players are injured. This decision will be based on previous year's performances in Rosemount Traveling Baseball.

'A' Team Selection

If there are enough players the potential exists to have multiple teams at the "A" level.

The Traveling Baseball Board will determine if there will be multiple teams at certain age levels. The Board may examine the tryout score rankings (scores only, no names) to see where the break in scoring occurs before determining if having multiple teams is a good idea. Another factor that goes into making this decision is the total number of teams in the program. We need to make sure that we have adequate field space for practice and games to support the additional teams.

History has demonstrated to us that when creating multiple teams at various age groups, they may be unable to compete with other communities. Spreading the talent out over too many teams makes for non-competitive baseball at the traveling levels. Traveling Baseball's goal is to put competitive teams on the field. More than likely some players will not be placed on a traveling team. When this occurs the In-House Baseball Program may be a viable option.

Balancing the Teams

In the event of multiple teams at the "A" level, selection procedures will be used to assure teams are as nearly balanced as possible. It is possible that certain players may be brought back for a separate session where the coaches will work with the Traveling Baseball Board to balance out the players for equal teams.

Coaches Selection Criteria

Discretionary selections made by the Head Coach will be based first on sound baseball logic and on the needs of the team. When available, coaches will be allowed to review the player statistics and coach reviews from the previous season to evaluate a player's performance. If players have played on a previous year's team, their prior commitment, character and parent issues may also be taken into consideration by the coach. If the Head Coach decides to select a player for the team outside of the top 12 players, then the coach must have a sound baseball reason which is approved by the Director and the other selected Board member(s). No player will be placed on a team over a more deserving candidate because they have previously played on a specific traveling team.

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Posting of Teams

After ALL coaches have made their player selections and the teams are formed, teams will be posted and communicated. Watch for details on the exact time of expected postings. Teams will appear in the 'My Teams' page of your Athletechs account.

Players will then be notified by coaches for the first team meeting to discuss the upcoming season and expectations.

NOTE: Do not call any Board member regarding your son's team placement. If you have a question, send an email to traveling-baseball@rosemount-aaa.org. An assigned Board member will follow-up with you.

Future Tryouts

The Rosemount Traveling Baseball Board continuously evaluates and compares our tryout process with a number of other surrounding communities, and uses the best practices where practical. The Rosemount Traveling Baseball Tryouts has a history of success and has been a model for other local baseball organizations. In the spirit of continuous improvement, we review our tryout process annually to consider if other skills should be added to the tryout process, along with the location and time of year tryouts are conducted. Before adding other elements to the tryout process, we want to be sure that we are confident in the implementation of any changes and that we can still effectively evaluate skill levels and manage to get the boys through the tryout in a timely manner.