



## **2019 AABA House Leagues Information**

### **Alexandria Area Baseball Association (AABA):**

The AABA Baseball association is a local baseball league that is overseen by a board comprised of volunteers from within the Alexandria community. Each board member typically serves a 3 year term. The association has evolved since its inception (in the 1980's) to its present form, which typically consists of (Qty 30) teams made up of 3<sup>rd</sup> through 9<sup>th</sup> grade players. All the leagues are fast pitch with pitchers throwing from a mound (leagues do not use a pitching machine or a batting tee) with the regular season starting in early May and operates through the middle of July with the playoffs and championship games being completed typically by the end of the month.

The association also operates a website ([www.aababaseball.org](http://www.aababaseball.org)) and Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/aababaseball/>) that is updated with each team's roster, the team's record, official game schedules, playoff brackets, practice times, Etc. The website also has links reflecting the active board members contact info as well as links to the specific league rules being implemented for a given age group. Once our season begins, the website will be updated with the times and locations for regular season play any pending makeup games as well as the playoff and championship schedules. The official schedule is not created until the quantity of teams participating has been determined.

### **AABA House Leagues:**

The AABA places participants into the appropriate league based on their grade level (determined by the grade they were in during the current school year) versus their actual age. These leagues are participatory type programs and pending the creation of a waiting list, all players will be placed to a team regardless of their experience or talent level.

**Northwood's League:** Made up of this year's third and fourth graders. Team names reflect the Northwood's League (collegiate age) that our local Alexandria organization used to participate in. These teams play on the Woodland Elementary School fields as well as at Fillmore Park. After opening day, this league will continue to play on Monday and Wednesday nights with game times scheduled for 5:00 PM & 7:00 PM. Each team will be playing approximately 14 regular season games and participate in a mid-season tournament held over the weekend at the AAHS (pending the development of the schedule, available fields and the cooperation of the weather).

**Minor League:** Made up of this year's fifth and sixth graders. Team names reflect the Minor League associated with professional baseball organizations. These teams will also play on the Woodland Elementary School fields as well as at Fillmore Park. After opening day, this league will continue to play on Tuesday and Thursday nights with game times scheduled for 5:00 PM & 7:00 PM. Each team will be playing approximately 14 regular season games and participate in a mid-season tournament held over the weekend at the AAHS (pending the development of the schedule, available fields and the cooperation of the weather).

**Qty of Teams Fielded:** The Northwood's & Minor leagues are currently capable of supporting (Qty 13) teams in each league (reflective of the current equipment and team jerseys we have in inventory). The maximum head count in each league has been limited (in the past) to 169 player participants (13 teams w/13 players). However, the board strives to keep the quantity of players per team to 11 or 12. Depending on the actual quantity of participants and number of volunteer coaches, we will add or eliminate teams being fielded for a given season. Where it gets tough is when the head count could warrant an expansion to the league but in doing so would create teams with only 10 players on a team. With families taking vacations, etc. (which often occurs at some point during the season), teams with several players absent on a given week could create a forfeit situation. For this reason, we often have a small waiting list for late registrants. The quantity of teams being fielded & quantity of players being placed to each team is one of the many functions the AABA board members need to address.

**Make up Games:** Will be rescheduled by a board member functioning as the Director of a particular league. Make up games would typically be scheduled on Fridays but could possibly be schedule on a weekend if warranted. If weather causes a significant amount of rain outs, it could be possible that not all the makeup games will be rescheduled prior to the end of the season.

**Playoffs & Championship Game:** Teams will be seeded based on their performance during regular season play. The regular season operates on a point system where each team earns 2 points for each win and 1 point for any ties. The league may be subdivided to divisions with the teams with the most points in each division earning a divisional champion tee shirt. At the conclusion of the regular season, the association board will create a single elimination playoff bracket with the teams being "seeded" based on the points earned regardless of which division they were in. All teams will participate in the playoffs with the final four teams facing off for the 1<sup>st</sup> through 4<sup>th</sup> place finishes for each league. Awards will be provided to the 1<sup>st</sup> through 3<sup>rd</sup> place finishers after completion of the playoffs.

**Major League:** Made up of this year's seventh and eighth graders as well as any ninth graders who have chosen not to participate in the Junior Legion baseball program. These teams will play on the Discovery Middle School fields. This league typically plays on Tuesday and Thursday nights with game times scheduled for 5:00 PM (Discovery West), 6:00 PM (Discovery East) and 7:00 PM (again on Discovery West). The games may be played at AAHS pending availability. This age group may also have the opportunity to play at the Knute Nelson field in downtown Alexandria. Each team would be playing approximately 12 regular season games (pending the development of the schedule, available fields and the cooperation of the weather).

**Qty of Teams Fielded:** The Major leagues are currently capable of supporting (Qty 8) teams in the league (reflective of the current equipment and team jerseys we have in inventory). Depending on the actual quantity of participants and number of volunteer coaches, we will add or eliminate teams being fielded for a given season. Where it gets tough is when the head count could warrant an expansion to the league but in doing so would create teams with only 10 players on a team. With families taking vacations, etc. (which often occurs at some point during the season), teams with several players absent on a given week could create a forfeit situation. The quantity of teams being fielded & quantity of players being placed to each team is one of the many functions the AABA board members need to address.

**Opening Day of Competition:** The Majors season does not start until after the middle school (Jr High) baseball season has completed. Considering that most of the players have already been participating in the middle school program, the teams immediately start regular season play within a week or two of the middle school program coming to conclusion.

**Make up Games:** Will be rescheduled by a board member functioning as the Director of the Major league. Make up games would typically be scheduled on Mondays or Wednesdays but could possibly be schedule on a Friday or weekend if warranted. If weather causes a significant amount of rain outs, it could be possible that not all the makeup games will be rescheduled prior to the end of the season.

**Playoffs & Championship Game:** Teams will be seeded based on their performance during regular season play. The regular season operates on a point system where each team earns 2 points for each win and 1 point for any ties. The league will award a regular season champion tee shirt to the team with the most points earned during regular season play. At the conclusion of the regular season, the association board will create a single elimination playoff bracket with the teams being "seeded" based on the points earned. All teams will participate in the playoffs with the final four teams facing off for the 1<sup>st</sup> through 4<sup>th</sup> place finishes. Awards will be provided to the 1<sup>st</sup> through 3<sup>rd</sup> place finishers after completion of the playoffs.

**AABA Registration & Participation Fees:** The 2019 registration information is available on the website ([www.aababaseball.org](http://www.aababaseball.org)). We have recently moved to an on line electronic registration process. The 2019 season registration fee is \$125.00. This fee is reduced to \$85.00 for each additional sibling(s) also participating in any of the house leagues.

**AABA League Rules:** The current rules each league operates under are available on the website (<http://www.aababaseball.org>—specifically look for a link for the rules located under each league). These rules are updated from time to time with items being modified, added or clarified as needed. Please note that each league currently has a set of rules that govern the specifics regarding how an official game is played, specifics regarding the fielding / batting positions as well as any limits regarding the participation in those positions. The rules are not intended to be all inclusive, but to specifically address what is unique to the age group for a given league. When not clarified, the association would default to the National High School rules governing baseball prior to making a ruling / interpretation.

**Baseball Bats:** One of the many questions we receive is in regards to what is considered a compliant bat for each of our leagues. With the recent changes in technology, many other leagues (such as Little League, Babe Ruth, as well as within our High School programs), have already adopted the new standards where USSSA or USA Baseball rated bats must be used. All bats used in game situations will need to have the USSSA or USA Baseball stamp to be legal. The AABA provides each team with two of these bats. No souvenir wood bats are allowed for use in any of our leagues.

**AABA League Provided Gear:** The league provides the team jerseys, player's caps and a team equipment bag for use during the season. With the exception of the Majors, baseball pants, socks and other desired garments need to be provided by the player's parent / guardians. It is usually best to wait to see what team your son will be drafted to prior to purchasing the items as most teams prefer to be color coordinated. Please note that shoes w/metal spikes are not allowed in our Northwood's & Minor leagues. Highlights are noted below.

**League Provided Equipment:** Jerseys, baseball caps (player to keep), batting helmets, game balls & equipment bags (equipment bag contains batting helmets, catchers gear, bats, Etc). League issued equipment will need to be returned (with the exception of the players caps). Regarding batting helmets: Based on insurance and safety issues all helmets used during games must be issued by the AABA.

**Additional League Provided Equipment for the Majors:** The league will also provide the baseball pants, coordinating belt & socks in addition to the jersey for our Major league participants.

**Parent / Guardian Provided Equipment:** Gloves, pants & socks (if participating in the Northwood's & Minor leagues), athletic protector, shoes (non-metal) and if desired, player owned baseball bat(s) & catchers gear. The coaching staff will be responsible for evaluating the condition of player owned gear such as bats and catchers gear for fit, functionality and safety. An athletic cup is encouraged and required for the catcher's position.

**AABA Clinics:** The association has offered baseball clinics for the players, coaches & umpires to further enhance their baseball experience while participating in the AABA program. Please visit the association website (<http://www.aababaseball.org>) for additional details, dates and times for events being offered through the league. Many of the clinics will be offered at no additional expense to the players as long as they are a registered participant in one of the leagues. Others may have a small fee to offset some of the costs to host such an event. Please note that the association website may also list training events that are not necessarily catered directly to the participants within the AABA programs (such as programs offered through the LAR & YMCA or private parties).

**Photos:** We currently have a photographer under contract. More details will follow.

## AABA Processes:

Please visit the AABA website ([www.aababaseball.org](http://www.aababaseball.org)) for the specific dates & times regarding all of the events being offered.

**Player Evaluations:** The purpose of evaluation is to try and get a general idea of the ability of each incoming player to a given league. *Please note that this is NOT a tryout to make a team. Pending the creation of a waiting list, all players will be placed to a team regardless of their experience or talent level.* Each player will be asked to go through a series of baseball activities such as pitching, hitting, fielding, fly balls and running. At each station they will be evaluated on their current skill level and technique. We want these evaluations to be as non-biased as possible with the participant's scores being utilized by our volunteer coaches during the team(s) drafting process. Evaluation information is to remain **confidential**.

Players participating in the evaluations will be grouped into groups of 5 and escorted through the evaluation process. Each participant will be assigned a number for the ease of our evaluators to score the players on their current skill level and technique(s). An evaluator is someone who has sufficient baseball expertise, in AABA's judgment, to evaluate the skills of the player-candidates. The AABA will decide, within its sole and absolute discretion, which it will use as impartial evaluators to judge the baseball skills of its participating players. It has been a common practice within the association to utilize the coaches of the Minor league teams to evaluate the Northwood's League participants and the Northwood's League coaches as the evaluators of the Minor League participants. **Times and location may change due to weather.**

**Northwood's League Specifics:** Each "new" incoming player and any returning 4<sup>th</sup> grader will be required to attend and be evaluated. There is no guarantee that returning players to this league will be drafted to the same team they previously played on.

**Minor League Specifics:** Every participant (new or returning) to this league will be required to attend this event. There is no guarantee that returning players to this league will be drafted to the same team they previously played on.

**2019 Season Player Evaluation Date:** April 13<sup>th</sup>, 2019

**Evaluation Location:** Alexandria Area High School Gym, Alexandria, MN (**Subject to change due to weather**)

10:00 Northwood's League Players with last names (A-M)

11:00 Northwood's League Players with last names (N-Z)

12:30 Minor League Players with last names (A-M)

1:30 Minor League Players with last names (N-Z)

**Major League Specifics:** Every participant (new or returning) to this league will be required to attend this event. There is no guarantee that returning players to this league will be drafted to the same team they previously played on. Please note that the evaluation event for the Majors will not be scheduled until June (towards the end of the middle school baseball season).

### **Unavailability, Injury or Illness Prior to Try Outs:**

If a participant is unable to attend the tryout date set by AABA due to a conflict, injury or illness, the AABA board will need to be notified. The board can be contacted via the email addresses found on the website ([www.aababaseball.org](http://www.aababaseball.org)). However, all participants must have their current registration completed and appropriate financial obligations (registration fees) paid prior to the registration deadlines. The board will then look into how best to fit the player into the draft process considering no evaluation data has been collected.

**Player Draft:** This event is usually hosted at AAHS Room B182 and is **NOT** attended by the parents or the players. The volunteer coaches and AABA board members will meet at this time and participate in an organized process to select or "draft" players to the teams. The purpose of the draft is to create equal teams in each league containing similar player talent levels. There are a number of draft rules that try to assure that this occurs and the evaluation information is to remain confidential. Coaches select players for their teams based on their knowledge of the players or the results of the evaluations. Pending the creation of a waiting list, all players will be placed to a team regardless of their experience or talent level. The results of the player's draft (the team's rosters) will be posted on the website. The head coaches will then be tasked to initially contact each of their drafted players for introductions & provide details regarding their first practice.

**Coaching Staff:** AABA board members and coaches are not compensated – the association is currently run by volunteers. AABA board members will recruit the head coaches for each of the teams prior to the drafting of the players. The AABA board members will inquire of the parents / guardians of the registered players for any interest in assuming this responsibility. Head coaches will be responsible for the recruiting of volunteers to fill support needs such as the assistant coach, scorebook and statistics record-keeper and a parent coordinator to assist with the managing of any team related activities as well as the collecting and sharing of the teams contact information. No predetermined coaching staffs are allowed. All coaches in the dugout are required to complete the Trusted Coaches Program. Information on the program may be found on the AABA website ([www.aababaseball.org](http://www.aababaseball.org)). A coach must draft the player for his/her parent to coach with them.

Coach's sons/daughters must also participate in the evaluation process. This is due to the "forced" picks that occur during the draft process. A "forced" pick situation will always occur because it is intended that the coaches registered player(s) will be drafted directly to the coach's team. It is just a question as to when this will occur during the drafting process. With the desire to keep the talent levels on each team as even as possible, the evaluation data collected will aid the board in determining where the coaches player(s) will be "forced picked" as we move through each round of the draft process. This process allows for the drafting of players with a little more talent & experience prior to encountering the "forced pick" scenario. The "forced pick" scenario will occur in a draft round where the coaches registered player(s) name would be listed with other players of similar playing ability.

**Practice Schedules:** Upon the drafting of the players to each of the teams, the coaches will then contact each player and set a practice schedule before regular season begins. They will also provide any specifics regarding the preferred colors of the teams for their pants, socks, Etc. The players will receive their jerseys & caps at their first practice. The coaches are responsible for scheduling practices and coordinating with the parents / guardians on all team related subject matter. It is anticipated that each team will have at least two practices schedule prior to the start of regular season play.