

IRONDALE BASEBALL LEAGUE



HANDBOOK FOR TRAVELING BASEBALL

INTRODUCTION

The goal of the Irondale Baseball League Traveling Baseball program is to develop players with quality baseball and interpersonal skills, capable of participating at the high school level. We strive to produce players of sound character and principles. We want our players to be proud representatives of our Irondale community. We will insist on good sportsmanship and proper behavior both on and off the field. We will grow athletes with baseball skills and knowledge, grounded in the spirit of teamwork. Our desire is for everyone to have fun and enjoy the season from the players to the coaches to the parents and the fans. We want our opponents, their fans, and the umpires to enjoy the experience of participating in Irondale baseball. It is our ultimate goal to produce a program that will be recognized as a standard of excellence by other communities. We want you to be a part of the experience. This handbook will assist you in gaining a better understanding of our program and hopefully answer any questions you may have. Please take the time to read it in its entirety. Thank you for being part of IBL Traveling Baseball.

Mission & Philosophy

Our mission is to assist athletes in developing advanced baseball skills and provide the opportunity to compete with other players of similar abilities. Our objectives are to provide an organized program for the youth of the community that will:

- promote physical fitness, stamina, and agility;
- develop self-confidence;
- develop respect for others, teamwork, pride in team and community;
- teach the fundamentals of baseball;
- incorporate the spirit of good sportsmanship in victory or defeat;
- allow every player to have an opportunity to participate and develop;
- play in a safe and healthy environment;
- build character and set priorities in our lives;
- Allow everyone to have fun and enjoy life.

General Information

Commitment

Traveling baseball requires a significant time commitment from both players and parents, from April through July, and possibly into early August. Every player's presence is important and he/she is expected to attend all practices, league games, and tournament games. Commitment from our parents to have their child at all games and practices on time and with the necessary uniform and equipment is critical for the efficient operation of the team and the coaching staff.

Tryout Fees

This \$30 fee is used to cover facilities, hire outside evaluators, provide the necessary equipment and supplies, and for any other miscellaneous costs specifically related to the tryout and evaluation process. The tryout fee includes a partial registration payment of \$175, which is non-refundable if a player is rostered on a traveling team. Players not rostered will be placed on a recreational team at the appropriate age level. The \$175 fee covers the recreational league registration cost.

Registration Fees and Expenses

In addition to the tryout fee, those players who are selected for a traveling team will pay the remaining registration fees to cover the team's expenses for participation in league games, tournaments, umpires, equipment, uniforms, field usage, field maintenance and improvement, association administration and support. Additional money may be required as determined by the coaches and parents of each individual team to support costs such as indoor practice space rental, or other miscellaneous team expenses. Any additional tournaments, including State Tournaments, are decided on a team-by-team basis and individual player fees will be collected by team coaches or managers accordingly.

Refunds

Refunds requested after team formation and before **March 1st**, will be granted a refund minus transaction fees, only in the case where there is a medical reason. This will require written documentation from a doctor supporting a medical issue that prevents the player from participation at any point during the season. Once a refund is approved and processed, the player will not be able to participate in the current season. No refunds issued after **March 1st** for any reason. Refunds will be assessed any transaction charges IBL has incurred, either in the original registration or via the electronic refund process. Once registration closes, all refunds will be assessed a \$50.00 processing fee. No refunds will be given if the player or their relative has been dismissed or suspended due to unsportsmanlike behavior, or failure to comply with behavior guidelines. Additionally, no refunds will be granted if a person registers using fraudulent information. Approved refunds will be processed no later than two weeks after the approval date.

- 1) If a player is not placed on a traveling team, the partial registration payment of \$175.00 may be refundable upon request. If no refund is requested, the player will automatically be registered for recreational baseball through IBL.

Volunteering

Volunteering from both players and parents is essential to IBL and the success of our traveling organization. IBL requires two (2) volunteer hours by parents and/or players each season.

Families must provide two (2) physical checks postdated to July 1 of the following year for \$80 and \$120, made out to IBL, at fall tryouts.

The \$80 check will only be cashed if a player/family is unable to complete the two (2) volunteer hours. Once hours are completed, the \$80 check will be destroyed.

The \$120 check will return 12 Moneyball tickets that the family can sell or parents can choose to enter their own names (must be aged 18+ to enter) on the tickets. Completed Moneyball tickets must be returned to the team manager when sold, prior to the drawing. The \$120 check will be cashed on July 1 for all families, allowing everyone time to recoup their upfront cost.

The following individuals are exempt from submitting the two (2) volunteer hours checks: IBL Board members, Head Coach, two (2) Assistant Coaches, Team Manager.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

The IBL is an inclusive youth baseball association that focuses on youth participation opportunities for all players. IBL understands that “reasonable accommodations” must be provided for an individual who can establish that he/she has a disability and is “otherwise qualified” to participate in IBL traveling baseball.

- **Otherwise Qualified** - Participation in IBL traveling baseball is determined through tryouts and the resulting overall score. Tryout participation will not differ from player to player and no modifications of tryout stations shall be made.
- **Reasonable Accommodations** – Reasonable Accommodations will be made to players who qualify based on tryout results and are placed on a traveling team. The head coach of a traveling team should be notified of any player(s) on the team, who may fall under the ADA guidelines. Coaches adhere to the coaching responsibilities agreed upon by the IBL, and will make practice/game accommodations as necessary.
- **Requested Modifications** – Modifications that transform the nature of the sport of baseball are not considered reasonable accommodations. Rules outlined with traveling baseball gameplay cannot be changed or modified.

Tryout Preparation

It is the responsibility of each player to come prepared to tryouts. Tryouts will focus on hitting mechanics, hitting results, infield and outfield mechanics. Arm Strength will also be evaluated on both infield and outfield drills.

At the time of registration, players may also choose to try out for pitching and catching positions. The scores at these positions will not be used for automatic placement but may be used during coach picks. IBL will offer tryout preparation for families registered for tryouts. Players **must** be registered for tryouts for the upcoming season to participate. Tryout preparation will include infield/outfield drills, throwing progression and hitting drills. Dates and times for tryout preparation will vary, and will be listed on the IBL website.

Tryout Dates

Tryout dates are scheduled in the fall for the following year. Tryout dates and times will be listed on the IBL website.

Player Eligibility

MYAS/Gopher State community-based baseball determines boundaries for IBL, which will align with the Irondale High School borders. With IBL forming its traveling program in 2019, MYAS agreed to let players continue with their previous associations, should they want to do so. SAYB (which aligns with Mounds View HS boundary) and IBL leadership have agreed that players may continue to play in the association they participated in during the 2019 season, even if that is not their “home” association after SAYB’s and IBL’s new boundaries have been established. Aside from that exception, players must play for either SAYB or IBL depending on where they live or go to school.

The following scenarios best illustrate whether this change may impact you:

- 1) If you live outside the Irondale High School borders (but within SAYB’s boundaries) or do not attend a school that feeds Irondale High School, you can play baseball through SAYB.
- 2) If you live within the Irondale High School borders or attend a school that feeds Irondale High School, you can play baseball through IBL.
- 3) If you participated in SAYB in 2019, but you attend a school that feeds Irondale High School or live within the Irondale High School borders, in 2020 you have your choice of continuing to play for SAYB or moving to IBL. This is a one-time only decision and players must remain with the chosen association for the remainder of youth baseball through the age of 15.

4) If you participated in IBL in 2019, but you attend a school or live outside of the Irondale High School borders, you can have your choice of continuing to play for IBL or moving to SAYB. This is a one-time only decision and players must remain with the chosen association for the remainder of youth baseball through the age of 15.

5) Any new player (i.e., a player that did not play baseball for SAYB or IBL in 2019) will have to register for the organization whose boundaries cover player residence or school they attend. Please note that players that attend or live within the Valentine Hills Elementary School registration area may choose to play for either SAYB or IBL in 2020, but players must remain with the chosen association for the remainder of their traveling baseball seasons through the age of 15.

Ages and Levels of Play

IBL Reserves the right to combine age groups based on registration and evaluation results. i.e. a 9U player may be placed on a 10U team. IBL does not accept friend requests at any level. IBL will make every effort to keep players on their age-appropriate sized field (11-under, 12-13 intermediate, 14-plus full size)

Tryouts Participation

A player must participate in all scheduled tryout sessions unless a medically excused absence is granted prior to tryouts. All absence requests must be presented to the Program Director prior to tryouts. Vacations or other personal activities are not an excused absence. Attendance will be taken at the beginning of each tryout session. Players absent without being excused may be disqualified. Extenuating and unusual circumstances will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis but are not guaranteed an excused absence. The board will do everything possible to accommodate school functions, but the player is still ultimately responsible for attending the tryout session. A player who does not have an excused absence will NOT be considered for the AAA team (or highest team offered at the age level). Any player with an unexcused absence will miss the opportunity to move up in level of play. An unexcused player may potentially be placed at the single A level (or lowest team offered at the age level) if there are no cuts and there is an opening. Players who attend the tryouts will have priority over an unexcused absence. Participation in a state or national competition for a community or school-based organization is considered an excused absence if the Traveling Baseball Director is notified in advance and if reasonable efforts to attend tryouts are not possible.

Injury or Illness Absence

A player who has registered for tryouts and cannot participate due to an injury or illness may be excused, prior to the start of the tryout session, upon delivery of a doctor's note describing the player's limitations to the Traveling Baseball Director. A player excused due to injury or illness must present a signed doctor's release indicating that the player is medically unable to participate in the tryout process due to the nature of the injury or illness. A player who misses more than 50% of the scheduled tryout sessions due to illness or injury, and provides a doctor's excuse, will be reviewed and evaluated by an existing panel of Board Members. The Board will review these unique situations, and a decision may be rendered based on a variety of factors and input relating to previous experience or precedence, past or present coach input, or many other potential factors relating to past participation in our program. These situations should be avoided whenever possible, and ultimately will be assessed as the board. Players with an excused injury or illness who can't participate in the tryout sessions will be placed in the pick zone at the level he played the previous season. The head coach will have the option to use one of his picks for this player. The player will not have the option to move up but could potentially be moved down if the head coach does not pick the injured/sick player. If a player is able to participate in part of the sessions and is either injured during tryouts, or becomes sick, the scores from the parts of the sessions he attended will be used. Any player unable to try out who has not previously participated in the IBL Traveling Baseball Program will be placed at the Single "A" level only if there is an opening available.

Tryout Player Evaluations

Every player's baseball skills will be evaluated by a team of impartial evaluators provided by the IBL Board. The evaluators will be people who are known to possess the knowledge necessary to evaluate a player's skill at a particular level. Evaluators will not be related to any of the tryout participants involved in their assigned age level.

The evaluation scores will be the primary basis used to select the players for each traveling team. A board member for each age level will organize and facilitate the tryout sessions, but will not participate in the actual player evaluation scoring process. Call backs will be utilized if necessary as needed by age level.

Players Transferred to Recreational Baseball

Those players not making a traveling team will automatically be registered for the IBL recreational program, unless the registration payment paid at the time of the tryout registration is refunded. No further payment is required for players who are automatically transferred to the recreational program.

IBL Traveling Team Formation

All traveling players must participate in tryouts each year. Any exceptions must follow the tryout rules as written.

Traveling Team Formation Committee

The traveling team formation committee involves the IBL board positions listed below:

- President
- Vice President
- Travel Director
- Age Level Director
- Age Level Coach (where necessary) for coach picks

*Player performance is not public information to coaches, parents or players. To be respectful of a child's privacy, tryout numbers are seen only by the persons forming the teams. Those members may not share this information. If a number is questioned, the age level director for that age group and/or the registrar may be consulted for review.

If players are determined to be moved up or moved down based on age/ability/team numbers, the team formation committee will form the team/s and present to the board for approval prior to team being formed.

Age-Driven Tryout Philosophy

It is the goal of IBL to keep players in the same grade together where possible. It is the right of IBL to move a player up (or down if age permits) in order to form as many teams as possible. Age qualification is as follows: Players should register with their age/grade level. If their birthday falls after May 1, a player has the choice to register for one of two different levels. Players in this birthday range should stay with their age level once a decision is made, and seek approval from the Travel Director before changing age groups.

Players will not be permitted to register a grade up. All players will register at their age/grade level. Any movement past their grade, is by IBL discretion in order to form a full team at any level. This will vary year by year based on numbers for that year. This will be proposed by the team formation committee and brought to the board for approval. This process can/may change from year to year based on registration numbers/tryouts as approved by the board.

Team Formation Process

IBL forms teams based on tryouts, with the exception at the 15U level. 15U players will attend tryouts on the same date as all the other age groups, but teams will not be formed following tryouts. Instead, an eligibility list will be made based on tryout evaluation scores. The eligibility list will start with the highest rated player from 15U tryouts and follow in descending order, until all 15U players have been listed. 15U team formation will occur during the spring of the current season. The formation of 15U team(s) will consist of the team formation committee and input from the current Irondale High School Varsity baseball coaching staff.

A top team is formed (top team does not necessarily mean AAA) and if enough players remain at that age group, a middle team will be formed, and so on until there are not enough players to form a team at that age group. This process will pertain to all age groups and levels of play.

1. 9U-19U (IBL plays up to 15U as of now, but that could change)
 1. Top Team
 2. Middle Team
 3. Lower Team

*All based on tryouts and coach picks

*Players with siblings where age permits in the IBL have the option to have both players on the same team by entering a written request to the traveling director. Both players would need to play on the lower level team where applicable but must have registered

Coach Selection

Coach selection is necessary at all age groups. The process to select the “Head” coach at each age level will be as follows:

1. Coaches will have volunteered on the registration form.
2. All head coaches will participate in an interview process.

The Board will interview coach candidates separately. Any members with players in that age group will leave the room so the other members can make an unbiased vote.

If there are multiple volunteers for the “Head” coaching position, and multiple teams at that age level the coach selection process will be followed. If a coach is selected as a lower team coach, they reserve the right to pull their player to the lower level.

Prior to team formation, the IBL will have coaches assigned, provided there are enough volunteers to be the Head Coach at all age levels. If there is not a coach for a team, the league will continue to promote an open coaching position.

If there is no head coach volunteer at any age level, the board will move to other volunteers as checked on the registration forms in order of 1. Assistant Coach 2. General Helper until they are able to secure a coach.

Automatic Placement/Coach Picks

Within each age group the IBL will attempt to form a Top (not always AAA) team and middle team (not always AA) team.

The Top team will automatically have the Top 6 players, according to tryout scores, with the highest combined scores. The next 4-6 players will be selected to fill out the team by the Head Coach of the Top team.

The 2nd team will automatically have the Top 6 players left, according to tryout scores, with the highest combined scores. The next 4-6 players will be selected to fill out the team by the Head Coach of the 2nd team.

This procedure will continue until all teams are formed.

*Team sizes will be 10 to 12 players, if a coach feels it necessary to have less than 10 or more than 12 that coach can request in writing for approval from the board.

Games and Practices

Once teams are formed, offseason practice can start, based on team availability. In-season/outdoor practice will begin once cities open the baseball fields. League play begins in April and continues into July, with approximately 12-16 weekday league games, plus four regular-season tournaments played on weekends. Postseason tournament play (state and national events) is by invitation and depends upon success in qualifying tournaments throughout the season. IBL teams will compete in league playoffs, typically with 1 game each week starting the second week in July and ending after 3 rounds of play in late July. League playoffs are through Gopher State based on district standings.

Uniforms

Traveling Baseball requires players to order uniforms. Players should attend a uniform fitting, typically held in January, to determine if a new one is needed for the season. Uniform fitting and uniform distribution dates will be communicated by email and posted on the Traveling Baseball website. Sample uniforms will be available at the fittings. Uniforms consist of two different jerseys, a hat, baseball pants, socks and a belt. Non-standard team jerseys are not permitted under IBL policies.

Equipment

The Traveling Baseball program supplies:

- New, league-approved game baseballs
- Practice balls and nets
- Catcher's gear, if necessary (including helmet, mask, chest protector, glove & shin guards)
- First aid kits & scorebooks

Any damage caused by negligence or intentional abuse will be reimbursed by the player and/or parents. Failure to do so will result in denial from any further sport participation in any IBL program by the player or any other member of his/her family. Each player must provide his/her own glove, proper shoes, bat, black batting helmet, and personal protective equipment. Parents are responsible for providing any additional safety equipment that they choose to use. Properly fitted, correctly sized equipment is very important to a player's success, especially in terms of gloves and shoes. Most leagues require the wearing of athletic supporters with a hard protective cup. The use is required by the Traveling Baseball Board. Players must wear cleated baseball shoes with hard rubber or metal cleats according to the age rules of MYAS. (see "League Specific Information").

Bats

Bats are an item of equipment, which like gloves, need to be fitted to the individual player and also comply with league-sanctioned rules. Parents should consult coaches and/or specific league rules (see "League Specific Information") before purchasing bats. Visit the MYAS website (www.myas.org) for information on bat standards for each age group. The traveling baseball program does not provide batting helmets or bats as part of the team's equipment bag. It is very difficult to anticipate the combination of bat lengths and weights that any given team would require, and therefore a large and very expensive inventory would need to be maintained, thus resulting in additional costs to the program

Umpires

All umpires are provided to us by certified umpiring associations. While our expectations regarding the quality of umpiring may be high, we must always exercise patience, understanding, good sportsmanship, and respect for their efforts. The character of our players, coaches, fans, and community will be gauged by the message the umpires carry out into the baseball community statewide.

Coach Evaluation

Parents and players are asked to complete an evaluation at the end of each season on their experience with the traveling baseball program and their coaches. This is your most significant opportunity to express your opinions and to help us make improvements. Contents of evaluations are confidential and are only viewed by the Traveling Baseball Program Director and select members of the Board. Please take advantage of this opportunity. The evaluation will be sent at the end of the season.

Suggestions

The Traveling Baseball Board, and all of our volunteers, value your opinions. If you have suggestions for improving the program, the best way to communicate them is to include them on the evaluation forms you are asked to complete at the end of the season. Please include as much detail as necessary for us to understand what you would like to see discussed or possibly implemented. If evaluations are not timely, you may submit suggestions to any Traveling Baseball Board member, but please put them in writing so they receive the attention they deserve.

Suggestions specific to your child's team are also appreciated, but should be held in private with the coach and at least 24 hours after a practice or game/tournament.

GENERAL POLICIES

Attendance

Every player's presence is important and expected for the entire season. Unless otherwise exempt by the coach, all players are expected to attend all practices, league games, and tournament games. Excused absences will be granted for school and religious events; however, it is expected that the coach will be notified in advance of such events. Unexcused absences may result in a reduction of playing time. (Out of season sporting activities are not an excused absence.) Unexcused absences may result in a 1 game suspension. This will ultimately be the decision of the head coach and the entire team should understand the head coach's expectations PRIOR to the start of the season.

Suspensions

The Traveling Baseball Board reserves the right to suspend any coach, parent, or player who violates the IBL Code of Conduct/Ethics provided by the IBL Board of Directors and or any rules/conduct/ethics described by the IBL Traveling Baseball Board. Suspensions will be documented and distributed to the IBL Board of Directors. A coach or umpire may suspend any player, parent, or assistant coach who acts in an unsportsmanlike manner. Subsequent violations may result in the player, parent, or assistant coach being removed from the program. All violations must be reported to the Traveling Baseball Board.

Player Removal

Once a team is selected, a coach cannot remove a team member solely because of lack of skills. A player may be released for the following specific reasons:

- Frequent, flagrant disregard of the player's responsibilities.
- Continued play in such a manner as to endanger others and/or self.
- Displaying an uncaring attitude, this resulted in not applying oneself, thus hurting the team's competitive potential.
- Failure to work within a team environment (placing self-interest before the teams).
- Repeated unsportsmanlike behavior. Before requesting the removal of a player, the coach must discuss the situation with the Age Group Coordinator and the player's parents in an attempt to correct the situation. The discussion should include an objective description of the behavior and of the intended discipline. If this fails to correct the situation, the coach must then notify the appropriate Age Group Coordinator and the Traveling Director who must approve any further action. The Traveling Director must, in turn, notify the IBL Board of Directors of the action taken within 48 hours of its occurrence. Written documentation must be given to the Traveling Baseball Board.

Playing Time

Minimum playing time for 9-14 year olds (Including 14/15 A) will be four defensive innings per game on average during the season. No player shall sit more than two consecutive innings in any game unless for disciplinary reasons. The starting lineup will provide an opportunity for every player to have a place in the batting order.

* Some game situations (e.g., 10 run rule) may prevent this from happening in a specific game.

** State and qualifying tournaments for 14 year olds may use a 9 man batting order so an equal number of at bats for each player during tournament play is highly unlikely. During any such tournaments, playing time rules for 14 year olds will be 2 innings defensively. Note: If a player is in the lineup as a designated hitter (DH), he/she may not receive any defensive playing time for that game.

There is no minimum playing time for 15 AAA or AA. Play time will be determined by the 15 AAA/AA coach.

Coach Selection

The team formation committee will take no longer than ten days to meet for setting teams. The committee will then get Board of Directors approval to be able to post teams no later than the 2nd Friday after tryouts.

Once a Coach is approved by the Board of Directors to coach a traveling team for IBL they would not have to go through the interview process year after year, but must show interest in coaching in future years by checking the box on registration for tryouts or by emailing the board. If there are concerns with that coach based on prior year evaluations or a Board of Directors member that raises an issue regarding that coach, the coach would have the ability to reapply to be voted in/out by the Board.

If there is an approved coach, that coach can attend their child's age level tryouts to observe only for future coach picks in forming their team for that year.

If there is an age group(s) with no approved coaches, The board has the authority to interview and select anyone that applies to be the head coach without having to interview all applicants. If a situation occurs when the board feels there are multiple qualified candidates that would go to an interview/board approval process.

- The Board has the authority to not interview all interested candidates at any age group.

Anyone who desires to be a head coach must check the box at the time of online player registration or contact the Traveling Baseball Board or Program Director before the selection process is completed. Interviews and selection of Provisional Head Coaches will typically be held in the first quarter of the year. Provisional head coaches chosen by the selection committee will be allowed to attend the tryout process in order to evaluate the players for the coach's player selections.

Selection as a Provisional Coach in no way guarantees that the coach's child will be selected for a given team. All candidates are informed during their interview that their status as coach (if selected) will be provisional upon their child qualifying for that team via the tryout/evaluation process. If the player qualifies for a different team, or no team, the Provisional Coach will be excused, and a new coach will be selected from the parent/coach applicants of the players who were chosen for the team.

Primary selection criteria include past baseball coaching and playing experience, personal coaching and human development philosophies, organizational skills, strong moral and ethical characteristics, support of traveling baseball and IBL policies/procedures, and the applicant's commitment to devote several hundred hours to the program during the season. They end in September with equipment check-in, season reviews, recommendations/feedback, and performance evaluations. All coaches interviewing for a head coaching position must provide (3) references and phone numbers from their most recent baseball coaching experience. While it is important that a traveling team coach have expertise in the sport, it is just as important for the coach to have the welfare of individual players and the players' character and confidence development foremost in mind.

Coach Removal

Removal of a team coach is a very serious situation and must be dealt with in a fair and open manner. Coaches may be removed for the following reasons:

- Failure to perform duties.
- Conduct detrimental to the player, the team, the organization, and/or the parents.
- Abusive behavior, whether physical or psychological, towards players, parents, opposing players, another coach, spectators, umpires, volunteers, or league officials. In order to remove a coach, a written complaint must be submitted to the Program Director. If there is sufficient justification, a hearing before the Traveling Baseball Board will be held. The vote of a simple majority will be sufficient to dismiss the coach. Written documentation must be given to the IBL Board of Directors.

Behavior

The highest standards of sportsmanship will be expected from the players, parents, coaches, umpires, and spectators. Conduct that will not be tolerated includes verbal abuse, tantrum-like acts, profanity, physical aggression on or off the field, and acts intended to cheat the spirit of the rules or to intimidate the umpires. Umpires may use their discretion whether to issue a warning or to immediately eject the violator (coach, player, or spectator) from the game. The umpires and/or coaches are responsible for reporting all incidents to the Traveling Baseball Board. Subsequent violations may result in suspension from play and/or attendance. If a parent or player has a problem with the performance of an umpire, he/she should direct his/her concerns to the team's coach. The coach represents the IBL Traveling Baseball program and should be the only person communicating with the umpires. One of the objectives of the program is to teach respect for the officials and the proper procedure for dealing with any problems with the umpires. Unless playing in the field, at bat, on base, on deck, or coaching, all players shall remain on the bench. It is mandatory that each batter, on deck player, runner, player in a coach's box, or non-adult bat/ball assistant on the field wear a batting helmet that meets NOCSAE standards. Players will treat their coaches, parents, teammates, the umpires, and the opposition with respect. After each game, the participants will line up and shake hands. Spectators are restricted to the areas that are "out of play" and away from the benches.

Inclement Weather

In case of inclement weather, the head coach will determine if there will be a practice. At games, the home team's head coach is responsible for determining whether the game will be started. Once play begins, the umpire is responsible for determining whether play should be halted. In all cases, unless you receive a call or notification from your team's coach, you should appear at the site of the game or practice as scheduled. Weather conditions can vary widely even over short distances, so our policy is to make the decision at the field site. Games and practices will be suspended when lightning is visible. If you (parent/guardian) are not able to be present during an event, be sure that your child knows another parent who will be present and with whom he/she can take shelter if bad weather suddenly threatens.

Blood Policy

A player or coach who is bleeding or who has an open wound shall be prohibited from participating in the game until appropriate treatment has been administered. If medical care or treatment cannot be administered in a reasonable amount of time, the individual will have to leave the game. (The length of time considered reasonable shall be in the umpire's judgment.) Once the bleeding has been stopped, the player or coach may reenter the game. If there is a substantial amount of blood on the uniform, it must be changed before that individual may participate.

Drug and Alcohol Policy

IBL Traveling Baseball mandates that all players/coaches participating in an IBL youth activity should refrain from the use of alcohol and/or a controlled substance. It shall be a violation of this policy for a player/coach, while participating in an IBL youth activity, to use a beverage containing alcohol, or use or consume, have in possession, buy, sell, or give away any controlled substance. Once a violation has been brought to the Traveling Baseball Board's attention and a decision has been made, the player/coach will be informed of his/her ineligibility by a written letter from the Program Director.

- a. First Violation: Upon notification by the Board, the player/coach shall lose eligibility for the next two consecutive games or two weeks of a sport season in which the player/coach is participating, whichever is greater. No exception is permitted.
- b. Second Violation: The player/coach shall lose eligibility in traveling baseball for that sport season. No exception is permitted.
- c. Accumulative Penalties: Penalties shall be accumulative beginning with and continuing throughout the player's/coach's participation in any and all IBL activities.

Equipment Abuse

Under no circumstances will the abuse of equipment be tolerated. Umpires and coaches are instructed that each instance of equipment abuse will result in that player sitting on the bench for the remainder of the game. At the umpire's or coach's discretion, one warning may be given. If any of the equipment is abused and results in any damage; the player and parents will be held responsible for reimbursement. Players may be suspended from participation in future IBL programs until reimbursement is made.

COACHES' RESPONSIBILITIES AND RIGHTS

The coach is a teacher of baseball skills, a manager of the functions necessary to run a team, and is responsible for the social, psychological, and physical development of all players in his/her care. He/she is accountable to the players, the parents, the Traveling Baseball Board, and the IBL Board of Directors.

Coaches' Responsibilities

- Obey and enforce all IBL rules.
- Complete a background check.
- Have a valid concussion certificate.
- Complete IBL training requirements for the Positive Coaching Alliance / Trusted Coaches.
- Treat all players in an equitable and fair manner.
- Demonstrate good sportsmanship, self-control, and proper behavior.
- Ensure good sportsmanship and proper behavior of team players, assistant coaches, parents, and spectators.
- Attend the Coaches' Meeting and the Parents' Meeting.
- Attend all MYAS meetings and functions.
- Assure that all players receive playing time that is mandated by the Traveling Baseball Board.
- Teach the players to have fun and enjoy competition.
- Help the players to develop a healthy, competitive attitude toward winning and losing.
- Assess an individual player's strengths and weaknesses to help each player improve.
- Encourage and compliment players; use only constructive criticism.
- Attend a minimum of 90% of their team's practices and games.
- Care for the equipment that is issued to them. If any equipment is lost or damaged, coaches should report the problem to the appropriate Age Group Coordinator.
- Conduct a preseason parents' meeting. At this meeting, the coach should set the tone and expectations for the season, distribute team schedule, roster, team rules, and collect any additional fees that are due.
- Arrange for team photographs if not participating in Traveling Baseball negotiated picture day.
- Schedule field time for practices and any make-up (home) games with the other coaches.
- Report any problems with fields to the appropriate Age Group Coordinator.
- Recruit parent volunteers as necessary.
- Return equipment at the end of the season.
- Provide suggestions to the Traveling Baseball Board for improving the program in future years.
- Provide player evaluations to the Traveling Director for improving the team selection process in the future year.
- Arrange to have an alternate attend any required functions (e.g., coaches' meetings, etc.) that they are unable to attend.
- Adhere to the IBL drug, alcohol, and tobacco policies.

Coaches' Rights

- To be treated with respect by players, parents, volunteers, umpires, league officials, the Traveling Baseball Board, and the IBL Board of Directors.
- To be made fully aware of the rules and policies under which they must function.
- To have access to necessary safety equipment and practice fields.
- To expect full cooperation from parents when they are asked to assist.

PARENTS' RESPONSIBILITIES AND RIGHTS

Your child's participation in the Traveling Baseball program will require a significant contribution of your time and effort. Parents can contribute many things to support their child, team, and the program.

Parents' Responsibilities

- Let your child know you love him/her, win or lose, whether he/she plays well or not.
- Compliment and encourage. Let the coaches handle coaching and criticism. Coordinate your efforts to help your child's development with the recommendations of the coaches. Support your coaches. Remember that they are responsible for many children in addition to yours.
- Don't compare your child to other players and be honest with yourself and your child about his/her abilities.
- Regard each player on the team as your own.
- Keep negative comments to yourself. Express concerns only to the coach and in a straightforward, fair, and objective manner.
- Teach your child to have fun and enjoy competition. Don't tell him/her that winning does not count because it does, and he/she knows it. Instead, help him/her to develop a healthy competitive attitude toward winning and losing.
- Demonstrate good sportsmanship and proper behavior. Don't criticize officials, coaches, or other parents or players.
- Ensure the good sportsmanship and proper behavior of your child and your guests.
- Get your child to and from practices and games on time.
- Inform the coach in advance whenever your child will miss or be late for a practice or a game.
- Provide a copy of your child's birth certificate at the first parent/coach preseason meeting.
- Volunteer to assist the coach whenever possible.
- Volunteer your time and talents to make our hosted tournaments a success, if applicable
 - Adhere to the IBL volunteer policy and team/league fundraising initiatives. All volunteer & fundraising efforts benefit the players in the program!
- Cheer, cheer, cheer.

Parents' Rights

- Have your child treated fairly and with respect.
- Have your child practice and play in a safe and healthy environment.
- Have your child coached by effective and qualified adult leadership.
- Have your child engage in practice and playing activities that increase his/her skills and enjoyment of the sport.
- To be fully informed by the coaches with respect to schedules, team philosophies, team rules, and your child's strengths and weaknesses.

IBL Parent/Guardian Code of Conduct

As a parent/guardian of a child involved in an IBL program, I/we agree to abide by and follow the rules and guidelines listed below:

- I/we will respect the property and equipment used at any sports facility, both home and away.
- I/we will encourage good sportsmanship through my/our actions, by demonstrating positive support for all players, coaches, and officials at every game or practice.
- I/we will promote the emotional and physical well-being of the athletes ahead of any personal desire to win.
- I/we will provide support for coaches and officials working with the athletes to provide a positive experience for all.
- I/we will demand a drug, alcohol, and tobacco-free environment for my child, and agree to assist by refraining from their use at all IBL events, home or away.
- I/we will remember the game is for the athletes and not for the parents.

- I/we will demand that my/our child treat other players, coaches, officials, and spectators with respect regardless of race, creed, color, sex, or ability.
- I/we will treat all players, coaches, and officials with dignity and respect in language, attitude, behavior, and mannerisms.
- I/we will inform the coach of any physical disability or ailment that may affect the safety of my child or the safety of others.
- I/we will inform the coach, within a reasonable period of time, of any anticipated absence from a game or practice my child might incur due to sickness, injury, vacation, or any other reason.
- Parent bullying, verbal or physical abuse and any other misconduct to any player, coach, other parent, and other team, umpire, or Traveling Baseball Board member will NOT be tolerated. The board will be aggressive in its disciplinary actions. Parents failing to abide by the rules and guidelines will be subject to disciplinary action. This action could include, but is not limited to the following actions listed below.

Parents will NOT be allowed to contact ANY Board Member for 24 hours after posting of tryout results. Any communication thereafter must first be done in writing by filing a written complaint to the Traveling Baseball Program Director. The complaint will be addressed by a committee of 3 board members of a different age level. Anyone NOT following this 24-hour rule will receive a verbal AND written warning immediately. I/we also agree that if I/we fail to abide by the aforementioned rules and guidelines, I/we may be subject to disciplinary action. This action could include, but is not limited to the following:

- Verbal Warning
- Written Warning
- Parental Game Suspension(s)
- Parental Season Suspension
- Parental Banishment

These actions may not be necessarily taken in an escalated manner, and IBL Traveling Baseball Board reserves the right to select and apply any penalty depending upon the situation.

PLAYERS' RESPONSIBILITIES AND RIGHTS

Players' Responsibilities

- Have pride and confidence in yourself, your teammates, and your coaches.
- Be attentive and work hard in practice and games. Make your best efforts to perform the tasks as directed by the coaches.
- Be a competitor, perform up to your full ability, and contribute to team unity. Compliment teammates and let the coaches handle criticism.
- Show respect toward your coaches, teammates, and parents.
- Show respect toward opposing players, coaches, umpires, and spectators.
- Keep your (personal and team) equipment clean and in good repair.
- Maintain a responsible attitude toward your health. Be aware of, and adhere to, the IBL policies on drugs, alcohol, and tobacco.
- Remember that baseball is a game and keep it in perspective with family, school, and/or church activities and responsibilities.
- Demonstrate good sportsmanship and proper behavior.
- Remind your parents that you need to be at practices and games on time.
- Inform the coach whenever you will miss or be late for a practice or a game.

Players' Rights

- To participate at a level that matches your maturity and ability.
- To play as a child, not as an adult.
- To participate in a safe, healthy environment.
- To be treated fairly, with dignity, and with respect.
- To have fun in sports.
- To have an equal opportunity to develop your abilities and strive for success.
- To have good coaching; to be taught the fundamentals and strong character development.

PROBLEM RESOLUTION GUIDELINES

When a player or parent has a question regarding the general policies or procedures of a traveling baseball team, they should address their questions to the coach of their team. Choose a time and place that is convenient for both parties involved (not prior to or during a game or practice) and address your questions in an appropriate manner (keep the conversation polite, private, and out of the earshot of other players or parents). If a question is not answered satisfactorily and a player/parent feels the need to pursue the matter further, they may contact the appropriate Age Group Coordinator, but should do so only after exhausting all efforts with the coach and his/her assistants. When approaching the Age Group Coordinator, the player/parent should follow the same guidelines as those stated above. When a player/parent has a major concern about the handling of the team or individual player, they should:

- Adhere to the "24-Hour Rule" which requires a player/parent to wait at least 24 hours before approaching a coach on the matter.
- Choose a time and place that is convenient for all parties involved (not prior to, or during a game or practice) and approach the situation in an appropriate manner (keep emotions under control, discussions polite and to the point, and also private and out of the earshot of other players & parents).

If the problem persists or cannot be resolved between the player/parent and the coach within 72 hours, it should be brought to the attention of the Age Group Coordinator. At this time, the Coordinator will act as a mediator between the player/parent and coach. All parties involved will meet to discuss the situation and strive for a solution. If the problem cannot be resolved at that level within 72 hours, it should be brought to the attention of the Traveling Baseball Program Director. Again, all parties involved will meet to discuss the situation and strive for a solution. The Program Director shall communicate in writing with the IBL Board any necessary mediation and outcome of that mediation. If mediation still is unable to resolve the issues and all of the above steps have been followed, the Program Director shall inform both parties in writing within 5 days that the complaint has been referred to the IBL Board of Directors. The decisions of the IBL Board of Directors will be final. If the Program Director is the subject of the grievance, a written complaint should be submitted directly to the IBL Board of Directors.

AGE SPECIFIC INFORMATION

9-11 Year Old's

- "AAA" and, "AA" (9-11-year olds), and "A" (10-11-year old's) teams will be formed for each age level where possible and will play in the MYAS League and in weekend tournaments. If registration numbers justify it and resources allow, additional teams may be added wherever possible.
- Bases will be 60 feet apart for 9 & 10-year old's and 65 feet apart for 11-year olds.
- The pitcher's mound is 46 feet from home plate.
- Players will pitch to the opposing team, and there will be no adults on the field except for the umpires and coaches in the 1st and 3rd base coaches' boxes.
- Curve balls & breaking balls are not allowed at this age level, only fastballs and changeups may be thrown.

12-13 Year Olds

- “AAA”, “AA”, and “A” teams will be formed for each age level where possible and will play in the MYAS League and in weekend tournaments.
- Bases will be 75-82 feet apart for 12 & 13-year olds.
- The pitcher's mound is 52 – 54 feet from home plate for 12 & 13-year olds.
- 12 & 13-year olds are allowed to lead off and pitchers will pitch from the stretch.
- Pitchers may start to throw curve balls/breaking balls at this age level
- 13-year olds are in their first year where metal cleats are allowed.

14-15 Year Olds

- “AAA”, “AA” and 14/15 “A” teams will be formed for each age level where possible and will play in the MYAS League and in weekend tournaments.
- Bases will be 90 feet apart (full size).
- The pitcher's mound is 60½ feet (full size) from home plate.
- Metal cleats are allowed

Published 11-19-2020

Updates published: 03-10-2022

Updates published: 03-13-2024

Updates published: July 2024

Updates published: July 2025