



# **Lionville Junior Hillcats Operations Manual**

**May 8, 2023**



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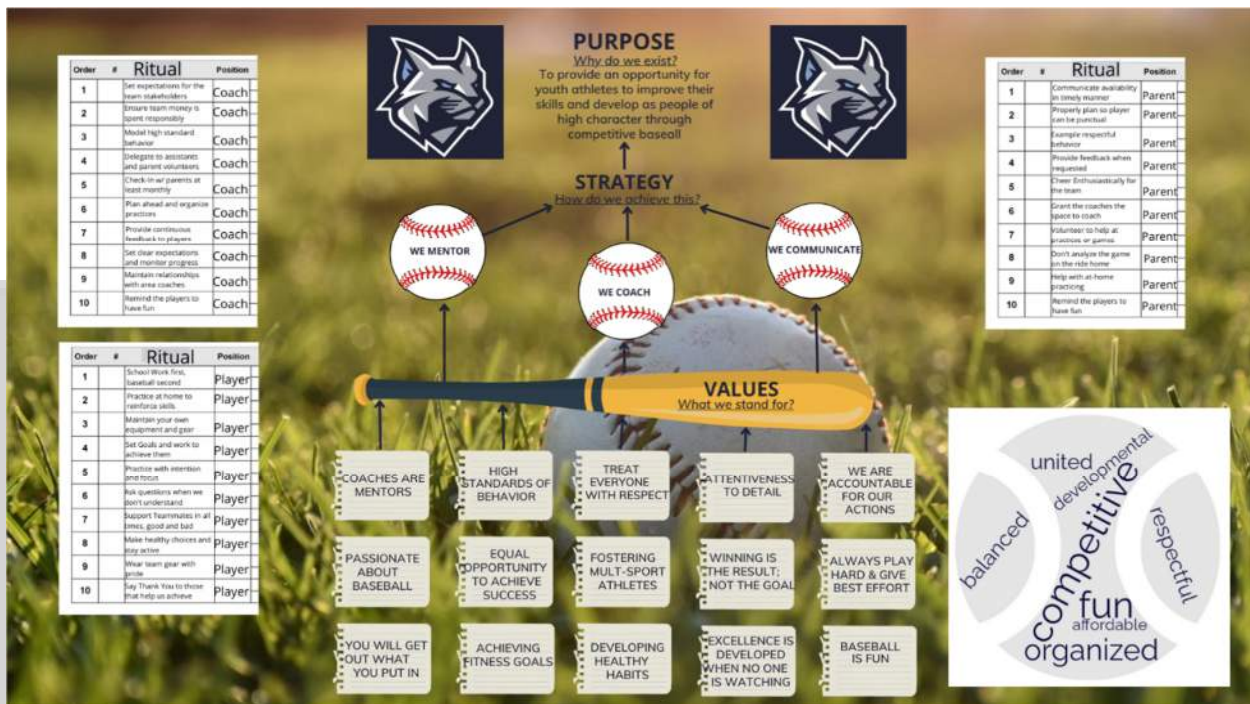
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## Culture & Principles

Lionville Junior Hillcats exists to provide an opportunity for youth athletes to improve their skills and develop as people of high character through competitive baseball.

### Hillcats Cultural Design Map



## Relationship with Recreational Baseball

The LYA Travel Baseball program was established to supplement and enhance LYA's Little League program, not replace it. During the months of July-March, fully rostered Hillcats players should play Hillcats baseball, not rec. Practice or B players should be encouraged to play fall-ball to supplement their Hillcats time. During the Spring Baseball season (April-June) all Hillcats players should be encouraged to play recreational baseball. The Hillcats must schedule around the recreation season during this time. Prioritization should generally be as follows for 12U & under:

- Rec practice > Hillcats Practice
- Rec Game > Hillcats Practice
- Hillcats Game > Rec Practice
- Hillcats Tournament > Rec Practice or Game
- Rec Game = Hillcats Game → Communicate with Coaches



# Commissioner Role & Responsibilities

## Selection & Term:

The commissioner shall be nominated by the President of Baseball and approved by the LYA Board of Directors. The Commissioner's term is 4 consecutive full seasons. Commissioners may serve consecutive terms with no limit on the quantity served. If a commissioner resigns or is removed, the President of Baseball shall appoint an interim commissioner to finish that season. At the conclusion of that season a new formally nominated and approved commissioner will commence their 4-year term.

## Responsibilities:

The commissioner shall solicit for coaches for new teams at each level and nominate a coach for confirmation by the President of Baseball. The commissioner will be responsible for orienting the new coaches.

The commissioner shall work with the LYA Executive director to set up an organizational program for managing registration, teams, schedule, etc.

The commissioner shall submit, and get approved by the Board of Directors, a budget for the full season by the start of the new season. The commissioner shall solicit feedback from the coaches and obtain their proposed budgets prior to submitting the full program budget.

The commissioner approves all expenditures by the coaches.

The commissioner will inquire to other local travel leagues/experiences to ensure the Hillcats offerings remain similar and cost comparative.

The commissioner shall, at the conclusion of each season, solicit feedback from the Hillcats families and provide a report back to the coaches and President of Baseball.

The commissioner shall, at the conclusion of each season, meet with the coaches to review prior season feedback and create an action and communication plan for moving forward.

The commissioner shall maintain the Logo artwork, uniform standards and ensure consistency across age groups.

The commissioner shall keep the Hillcats website updated through the LYA Administration.



The commissioner shall coordinate social media posts through LYA Administration.

The commissioner is responsible for ensuring coach scheduling doesn't conflict with other LYA activities.

The commissioner is responsible for following the LYA Code of Ethics.

The commissioner shall maintain the Hillcats Cultural Design Map & Manual.

The commissioner shall be accountable for coaches, parents, and players following Hillcats Culture according to the Hillcats Cultural Design Map.

## Head Coach Role & Responsibilities

### **Selection & Term:**

The commissioner shall nominate the head coach for any newly established team, or an existing team in need of a new head coach. The coach will remain the coach for the age group the team begins at and ages up along with the players. Retention of the coach will be at the discretion of the commissioner and will be based on metrics such as: adherence to Hillcats culture, player retention & parent feedback. A commissioner's recommendation to relieve a coach of their responsibilities must be submitted to the President of Baseball who must get approval from the Board of Directors.

### **Responsibilities:**

The coach shall recruit and encourage eligible players to try out for the Hillcats.

The coach shall work with the commissioner to set up their team in the organizational program for managing teams, schedule, etc.

The coach shall submit for approval by the commissioner a budget for the full season. The coach shall be responsible for managing the costs and revenues for the team in accordance with the budget. The coach will obtain approval from the commissioner for all expenditures.

The coach shall be responsible for recruiting players to try out for their age group.

The coach shall coordinate & schedule tryouts with the commissioner. Execute tryouts for the players to determine roster spots.





The coach shall have the lead responsibility for Safety for their team and is required to comply with the LYA Safety Manual.

The coach is responsible for ordering uniforms and team gear.

The coach shall handle all scheduling responsibilities for practices, workouts, games and tournaments. They shall coordinate scheduling of activities with the LYA calendar and scheduling tools.

The coach shall coordinate and run organized and effective practices.

The coach shall ensure that there are umpires/officials at the games.

The coach shall communicate with parents/families to keep them informed of upcoming events and team plans.

The coach shall communicate with players and parents about their development.

The coach shall be responsible for ensuring the fields and facilities for LYA are maintained before, during and after use by their team.

The coach shall be responsible for following all applicable league and tournament rules and regulations.

The coach shall, at the conclusion of each season, encourage Hillcats families to provide feedback.

The coach shall, at the conclusion of each season, meet with the commissioner to review prior season feedback and create an action and communication plan for moving forward.

The coaches are responsible for following the LYA Code of Ethics.

The coach shall be responsible their team following Hillcats culture according to the Hillcats Cultural Design Map

## **Players Role & Responsibilities**

### **Selection & Term:**

Players are selected via the Tryout Process described in this Manual.

With approval from the commissioner, the coach may elect to award roster spots to players in good standing from the prior season regardless of tryout performance.



The roster is required to have at least 12 full-time players unless approved by the Commissioner and President of Baseball.

Final roster must be over 65% from LYA families – anything less must be approved by both Hillcats Commissioner & LYA Baseball President.

Players selected are committing to being a member of the team for a Full Season. Players may work directly with the coach to determine availability and commitment level for individual portions of the season.

### **Responsibilities:**

The players are responsible to give their best effort in what the coaches and their parents/caregiver ask them to do, in pursuit of growing as a baseball player and as a person.

The players are responsible for taking ownership and accountability of their own skill development.

The players are responsible for completing two (2) service hours over the course of the Full season in support of LYA initiatives (field clean up, maintenance, snack bar duty, volunteering, etc.)

The players are responsible for following the LYA Code of Ethics.

The players shall be responsible for following Hillcats culture according to the Hillcats Cultural Design Map and doing their best to help their teammates do the same.

## **Parent/Caregiver Role & Responsibilities**

### **Selection & Term:**

Parents/Caregivers of players by accepting a roster spot are becoming part of the Hillcats Family and agreeing to be part of the culture.

Parents/Caregivers of players selected are responsible for helping their player keep their commitment to participating for a Full Season.

### **Responsibilities:**



Parents/caregivers are responsible for getting the players to all team events at the time the coach requests.

Since parents/caregivers will receive communication from the coaches via email, team management site, etc., they are responsible for sharing all pertinent information with the player.

Parents/caregivers are responsible for inputting their players availability for team events so the coach may properly plan.

Parents/caregivers are requested to assist with game assignments as they are able.

The parents are responsible for providing support and transportation for the players in completing two (2) service hours over the course of the Full season in support of LYA initiatives (field clean up, maintenance, snack bar duty, volunteering, etc.)

Parents/caregivers are requested to, at the conclusion of each season, or when otherwise requested, respond to feedback requests and surveys by the Commissioner.

The parents are responsible for following the LYA Code of Ethics.

The parents shall be responsible for following Hillcats culture according to the Hillcats Cultural Design Map.

## **Player Selection**

### **Tryouts:**

Players will try-out based on their league age. Players must get approval from commissioner to play up an age-level.

Every team is required to hold a tryout prior to selecting the roster for the full season. There will be a minimum of two tryout dates so that there are multiple options for players to attend. Every effort should be made by the coach to accommodate players being unable to make the set tryout dates due to vacations, illness, injury, etc.

The coach may get assistance for tryouts from parents of prospective players, however no assistant coach that is a parent of a child trying out can be 'named' until the roster is finalized, unless the assistant is the parent of a player with an automatic roster spot (see below for details).





There is also required to be an independent evaluator at each tryout appointed by the commissioner. They will be someone not affiliated with the age-group (i.e. President of Baseball, former Hillcats coach, Hillcats commissioner) The independent evaluator will submit their report directly to the commissioner to be used in final roster approval.

### **Approval:**

The final roster will be submitted to the Hillcats commissioner before final approval and roster spots awarded.

### **Notification:**

Coaches should notify all players of the status of the tryout via phone call, in person or video call.

### **Replacement Players:**

If a player permanently leaves the team, the player can be replaced on the active roster. The replacement player must come from the practice or B roster if applicable, or from the pool of players who previously tried out.

### **Practice Players:**

Some teams may elect to construct their roster with Practice Players depending on the final tryout results. Practice Players can be structured uniquely to that individual team depending on the quantity of players and the current status of the practice players. Practice players are eligible to pay a reduced amount from the full-time players.

### **“B” Team:**

Some age groups may have enough players to construct a 2<sup>nd</sup> team, referred to as a “B” Team. This team may only be formed with approval from the commissioner, which will be contingent upon having a qualified coach and a plan that meets the standards of the Hillcats Cultural Design Map.

### **Callups:**

If a team is short players or would like additional substitutes or bench players for a game, it is permissible and encouraged to call-up a player from the age group below.



### **Pre-Awarded Roster Spots:**

Special accommodations may be made to award roster spots prior to try-outs on a case-by-case basis. These scenarios must receive approval from the Hillcats commissioner and President of Baseball. Requests must be made in writing by the Head Coach along with justification. The reasons must demonstrate strict adherence to the Hillcats Cultural Design Map.

## **Assistant Coaches & Volunteers**

### **Assistants:**

Assistant coach positions can not be officially named until roster spots have been awarded. Assistants are expected to follow the same standards and behaviors as the Head Coach and help implement their vision for the Team. Assistant coaches must meet all the same LYA requirements as the Head coach for background checks and trainings.

### **Volunteers:**

Any other team volunteer that has direct or indirect interaction with the team are expected to follow the same standards and behaviors as the coaches and be a model of the implementation of the vision for the Team. If the volunteer position will have consistent direct interaction with the team they must meet all the same LYA requirements as the coaches for background checks and trainings. Volunteer positions may be continual (i.e. Team Photographer) or change event to event (i.e. scorekeeper). We encourage parents and family members to volunteer to help the coaches and assistants, so they may spend most of their time coaching.

## **Uniforms, Attire & Equipment**

### **Jersey:**

The Hillcats team will supply a jersey, hat, pants, socks and belt. Hillcats players are expected to wear all components of uniforms to the games. Hillcats will maintain two jersey types a primary & alternate. Each team may elect to do one, the other, or both. The jersey components will be ordered to the specifications indicated by the program.

### **Team Gear:**



The Coach will be responsible for budgeting or purchasing any additional team spirit gear. This could include practice shirts, sweatshirts, parent shirts, hats, etc. The team gear will follow the logo standards. There will also be a Team Store opened several times a year by the commissioner wear families will have the option to by spirit wear, at their own additional expense.

## **Equipment:**

The Coach will be responsible for budgeting to purchase equipment and training supplies for the Team according to their needs. At a minimum this should include practice balls, game balls, a hitting net and hitting tees. Hillcats teams are requested to refrain from utilizing LYA equipment other than the fields and facilities. The coach may elect to purchase team gear such as catcher's gear or a team bat. If this is done, then all gear purchased by the team will be made available for any player to utilize.

## **Items supplied by Player/families:**

Some items that may be required to play are NOT supplied by team. This includes a standard fielding glove, protective cup, batting helmet, and bat. Players may utilize their own catcher's gear, or other equipment provided it meets safety requirements of LYA & whatever governing authority for the game/tournament that is being played.

## **Financial Policies**

### **Payments:**

There will be a payment after accepting a spot on the roster for a full season before a player is officially rostered. This will be the "Fall Payment". There will be a second payment prior to the spring called the "Spring Payment". The payment covers the costs of uniforms, games, practices, league fees, tournaments, ump fees, field maintenance, training, equipment, winter workouts, entertainment, and whatever else the coach is planning for the season.

### **Cost Range:**

The Hillcats Program strives to be affordable for a Travel Baseball Experience. It is our goal to be among the least expensive in the area. As the age goes up the range



goes up as well to allow for additional experiences. Any budget submitted outside of the proposed range must be submitted with an explanation and be approved by the President of Baseball. Minimums are set to ensure the Coach is planning enough activities and experiences to make Hillcats a desirable destination for a Travel Baseball experience. Maximums are set to keep Hillcats cost-effective and competitive with other local travel experiences. The costs below are the anticipated ranges for the Full season based on the age group.

8U: \$700 - \$1000  
9U: \$800 - \$1100  
10U: \$900 - \$1200  
11U: \$900 - \$1300  
12U: \$1000 - \$1500  
13U+: \$1100 - \$1800

### **Partial Season:**

If a player replaces another player in the middle of a season, a prorated cost will be agreed upon by the coach and commissioner. The fee must be paid prior to the player participating in any team activities or being added to the roster.

### **Expenses Incurred:**

Any expenses associated with travel, transportation, entrance fees, etc are not covered under the team budget and season payment and are the responsibility of the parents/caregivers to pay directly to the vendor.

### **Refund Policy:**

In accordance with LYA's no refund policy, refunds will not be granted on an individual basis for any purpose. Team-wide partial refunds can possibly be granted with approval of the LYA Board of Directors if planned events (i.e. a tournament) are cancelled.

### **Fundraisers:**

Teams are permitted to run their own fundraisers to supplement their budget. Team fundraisers must be submitted to the Commissioner for Approval. The team that runs the fundraiser keeps the money raised and can either add it to their budget or utilize it to offset the minimum cost per player.

## **Events**



## **Practices:**

The quantity of practices will vary at different times of the season. Practices will be age appropriate and designed to enhance players skills and development. Practices can be conducted on the baseball field or at the batting cages. Practices should be high energy so players do minimal standing around and waiting. Practices should be planned out in advance so that the skills they are learning build upon each other. Players should make every effort possible to attend practices so they can learn and grow along with their team.

## **Training:**

Coaches may choose to schedule cross-training activities as part of their program to complement their baseball development.

## **Games:**

Coaches will schedule games during the Fall & Spring Seasons. The coach may elect to participate in a local 'league'. Anticipate having at least one game every weekend and likely more depending on the age group. Depending on the type of game, the approach by the coach may change on how aggressively they pursue winning. For example, a scrimmage against another local team may be set up for the express purpose of moving players around to different positions. Regardless of the game type, the Hillcats will not 'win-at-all-cost'. Player Development and improvement will always be the priority.

## **Tournaments:**

Coaches may schedule tournaments during the Fall, Winter, Spring or Summer. Tournaments usually take place over a weekend, and sometimes can involve an overnight trip depending on the location. Each team will evaluate its preparedness to compete in tournaments and make determinations on the value of playing. Tournaments are more expensive than regular game play but can serve a purpose for competing against different teams and expanding the level of competition.

## **Special Events:**

Hillcats teams are encouraged to become like a 'family'. Schedule special events and gatherings when possible, for the players and families to get social time together and grow in their relationships outside the field. Hillcats as an organization may also schedule a special event.



## Field Usage

The Hillcats are entitled to utilize LYA managed fields. A coach may also utilize other facilities that they pay for out of the team budget. Field scheduling is coordinated with the other Hillcats Teams and LYA recreational baseball. The recreational league has first priority during the Spring & Fall seasons, but sufficient time will be given to the Hillcats to perform team activities.

## The Season

The Hillcats Season runs from July 1 through June 30 of the following year. The following is the description and cadence of a 'typical' season. Each team will vary slightly.

### **Summer (July-August):**

The summer begins with Tryouts and Team Selections. Then practices will be held anywhere from 2-4 times per week. There may be scrimmages as well. Game & Tournament Play are rare.

### **Fall (September-October):**

The Fall season will consist of games, scrimmages, and tournaments. There will also be 2-3 practices per week.

### **Late-Fall (November-December):**

The Hillcats believe that is important for youth players to have some time away from organized baseball. Typically, no planned team baseball activities occur in these months. We do, however, encourage team social activities during this time to build off-the-field team and family relationships.

### **Winter (January-March):**

The coach will plan winter workouts to ramp back up into baseball shape for the Spring Season. These winter workouts can be anywhere from 1-3 times per week.

### **Spring (late March-June):**

The Spring season will consist of games, scrimmages, and tournaments. There may be 1-2 practices per week. The Spring season will be coordinated around the





recreational baseball season to allow the kids to play recreational league in addition to Hillcats.

## Media & Technology

### Team Management Site:

LYA will maintain a Team Management site and make it available to the Hillcats to utilize for managing team activities, roster, communication, etc.

### Scorekeeping application:

All teams are requested to do their scorekeeping in a mobile application (for example, GameChanger) and provide a link for following to the families of the players.

### Social Media:

Hillcats social media will be run by LYA's social media coordinator. Any request to utilize Hillcats social media must be submitted directly to them via the commissioner.

## Definitions

Full Season:	July 1 – June 30 the following year
League Age:	Age the player will be on April 30 <sup>th</sup> of the season

## Exclusions

This Manual is the current best attempt to capture everything involved with the Junior Hillcats Program. There are scenarios and situations that are bound to happen through the course of a season that are not covered in the manual. When those situations occur the Commissioner, in consultation with the President of Baseball and Board of Directors will issue guidance or directives. If appropriate, the Manual will be updated to reflect the direction given.