

Bethel Park Baseball - Travel Baseball Overview and Guidelines

Bethel Park Baseball (BPB) will coordinate a youth Travel Baseball program for players who have advanced skills and abilities to provide them with the opportunity to participate in a competitive environment.

Overview:

The Travel program's goal is to be able to provide a spot to every kid possible. In that goal, we must put together competitive teams. We will have one top level team (Orange) for each age group from ages 7 – 14. Second tier team (Black) and in certain circumstances, we try to have another additional team if players and volunteers can be confirmed.

Eligibility:

In order to be selected to an "A" or "B" level team, the player must have participated in the BPB in-house program AND played in a minimum of **50% of regular season in-house games scheduled**. If a player meets this criterion at the time the travel team is selected and subsequently fails to meet the eligibility criteria by the end of the in-house regular season (playoff games excluded), that player may be removed from the team. In addition, a player not currently meeting the minimum eligibility rule that could achieve the minimum eligibility rule prior to the end of the in-house season should be considered for selection. The decision to remove and/or add another player will be addressed at that time by the BPB Board of Directors. Extraordinary circumstances (i.e., injuries, family emergencies, etc.) will be reviewed by the BPB Board of Directors, which can make an exception to the eligibility criteria stated above.

Should a player verbally accept an invitation to join a BPB travel team and then leave said team for reasons that do not include injury/illness/personal family circumstances said player will not be eligible to play on a travel for the remainder of that season, plus the following season.

A player selected to a travel team must be committed to play in tournament games during travel baseball season, which typically runs from the last weekend in June through the end of July. The BPB Board of Directors does recognize that this same period may also be the only time available for family vacations. Players may miss up to one tournament for family vacations. It is highly recommended that players are also available for a minimum of two weeks prior to the first tournament to allow for team practices.

Age cutoff - April 30th is the age cut-off for each age. However, players that are in the grade above, but have a late birthday (after 4/30), do have the opportunity to try out their corresponding grade.

Any player that would like to try out for an older age group must attend the first tryout in their current age group and be recommended to try out for an older age group by receiving approval from the travel committee and assessor.

Additionally, the player will have to finish with the highest score in their current age group, as well as finish in the top 3 of the older age group to be considered for moving up.

Travel Team Tenure:

The travel team(s) for all ages 7u to 14u will be selected each fall (August) and remain the travel team for each respective age group until the team is re-evaluated and selected the following year.

The teams picked in August will remain together until the following August tryout for the next year. The tryout process will remain the same as for the younger age groups, each player must make one tryout. If a player attends both tryout dates the higher of the two scores will be used.

Player Evaluations:

Any player that has expressed interest in playing travel baseball will be evaluated to determine the player's ability. Travel tryouts will be scheduled, and advanced notification will be given to all rec. participants and players. **Participation in at least one of the tryouts is mandatory for consideration on a travel team.**

Player and Manager Selection Timing & Roster Size:

Players and managers will be picked within 10 days of the second tryout. Rosters for all ages will have a minimum of 10 players.

Parent Responsibilities:

Recognizing that the tournaments are a source of revenue for the BPB, it is imperative that the parents of each travel team assist in the administration of the tournaments for their respective age group. Typically, this requires dedication of

several hours of time during the tournament, working in the concession stand, announcing games, field maintenance, scorekeeping, etc.

Code of Conduct:

Each travel team player and parent will be asked to sign a Code of Conduct to ensure that we are representing Bethel Park in a positive manner. If any player or parent violates the Code of Conduct, the committee used to select the travel team will determine what level of discipline, if any, is applied.

Coaching Responsibilities:

When coaching youth sports, it is vital that the head coach and all assistant coaches are on the same page with the Travel Program expectations. As coaches, we are here to develop the team and players with positive coaching instruction. Winning at all costs is NOT the priority. Developing our young participants into well-rounded, positive players is our #1 priority. Keeping the players coming back to the program is of the utmost importance. All coaches must consider the health and well-being of the player over winning.

During the travel season, we ask that all coaches follow the MLB Pitch Smart outline in the following link - <https://www.mlb.com/pitch-smart>

Travel Uniforms:

Starting after the 2022 fall tryout process, in preparation for the 2023 travel season, each player will receive uniforms that will last 3 years. (1) black uniform top, (1) orange uniform top. Pants are selected by the team/coach.

Additional notes regarding the Travel Season and Expectations for all age groups:

7u – 8u: These are the newest players to the Travel Program. It is important to note that we must build the team before traveling to out-of-town tournaments. A typical Summer Travel Season includes spring practices and weekend games as well as (4) Summer Travel Tournaments. Fundraising for the younger age groups may not be available as the cost will be minimum for the competitive season. Estimated cost per player is \$200 to \$250. Donations are welcome.

9u – 10u: These are still the younger ages where it is more important to establish techniques and play together as a team than traveling out-of-town for overnight tournaments. The typical Summer Travel Season includes spring practices and weekend games with (4-6) Summer Travel Tournaments. Fundraising for the younger age groups may not be available as the cost will be minimum for the competitive season. Estimated cost per player is \$200 to \$250. Donations are welcome.

11u – 12u: As the players grow and continue to establish the important techniques, traveling out of town for overnight tournaments becomes available and sometimes the only option for competitive play. The typical Summer Travel Season includes spring practices and weekend games with (4-6) Summer Travel Tournaments. Fundraising for these age groups is available as the cost for tournaments is more expensive for the competitive season. Estimated cost per player is \$300 to \$400 (Not including Travel/Hotel Cost). Donations are welcome.

13u – 14u: As the players have been in the program or have years of competitive travel experience, traveling out of town for overnight tournaments becomes options for competitive play. The typical Summer Travel Season includes spring practices and weekend games with (4-6) Summer Travel Tournaments. Fundraising for these age groups is available as the cost for tournaments is more expensive for the competitive season. Estimated cost per player is \$300 to \$500(Not including Travel/Hotel Cost). Donations are welcome.

When fundraising, the travel teams will need to work through the BPB Travel Committee as we do not want to have an overlap of fundraising from the BPB's current sponsors and other travel teams. Hosting a Travel Tournament will allow the ability to fundraise for a year-end gift for the players. Hosting is an option for all travel teams.

Travel Tryout Evaluation Process:

The tryouts will be held at D-Bat in Bethel Park and will have independent evaluators. There will be a sign-in table at the entrance of the building for everyone to sign-in and receive a tryout number. This number/running will stay with them or both tryouts.

Each player will be graded on their baseball skills including but not limited to agility, fluidity, and awareness. Each tryout will last up to one hour.

Each section is described below:

Batting – front toss, 15'/20' measuring exit velocity, contact, and swing (USA BATS ONLY)

Athleticism – broad jump, 10-yard dash, reaction time

Fielding – machine ground balls evaluating fielding, throwing, accuracy, form, and mechanics (6 Fs of fielding)

Pitching – evaluating accuracy & mechanics, measuring velocity (not mandatory to pitch)

Catching – evaluating mechanics (not mandatory to catch)

Additional items to note regarding tryouts:

*****No Travel Uniforms or hats*****

*****USA BATS ONLY (or BBCOR for Pony age players)*****

*****Parents will only be allowed inside the workout facility for ages 7u and 8u.*****

*****All other age group parents must wait in their car or parking lot/lobby.****