

WMLL SOFTBALL TOURNAMENT TEAM POLICY 2.14.21

In addition to regular season and WMLL league tournament games played at WMLL, WMLL forms a number of WMLL baseball and softball tournament teams, sometimes called all-star teams, at different age levels as an extra opportunity for spring/summer season players and coaches. Players and parents should recognize that tournament team play is more competitive than regular season play. In constructing line-ups and batting orders and making substitutions coaches will place a high priority on winning. There is no minimum expectation of playing time for players, beyond minimums established by tournaments in which the teams compete. It is recommended that the head coach of each tournament team discuss with each player and his/her parent the player's role on the team.

TEAMS

Each season the Board of Directors determines the number and age levels of tournament teams, sometimes called all-star teams, that will be formed.

- **U10/Minor & U12/Major Teams:** Generally, there will be one U10/Minor team & one U12/Major team.
 - **U14/Junior & U16/Senior:** Subject to sufficient numbers of interested players and coaches WMLL may form one U14/Junior team and/or one U16/Senior team.
 - *Note: To the extent possible, the U14/Junior & U16/Senior teams will adhere to the WMLL Softball Tournament Team Policy. It is recognized, however, that the circumstances of coach selection and roster formation require flexibility. League Coordinators will be closely involved with U14/Junior & U16/Senior team coach selection and roster formation and have the authority to take actions necessary to ensure the teams are formed in a fair and timely manner.*
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TOURNAMENTS

Each season the Board of Directors determines the number of tournaments each team will enter under official WMLL sponsorship – typically two or three per team. The earliest tournaments typically are in mid-June and the latest tournaments are typically in the end of July. The tournament schedule will be posted to the WMLL website as soon as it becomes available.

ROSTER SIZE

The roster size of each tournament team is determined the head coach and League Coordinator with the approval of the VP-Softball. Tournament teams may not have more than 15 players & it is recommended that they take at least 11 players to each tournament.

No alternate will be designated for any tournament team.

PLAYER ELIGIBILITY

To be eligible as a tournament team player, a player must meet the following requirements.

- 1) **Age:** WMLL tournament teams have the following age requirements (Little League age is a player's age as of December 31 of the year prior to the current season of play):
 - **U10/Minor:** All players that are Little League age 8, 9 and 10 are eligible, regardless of the WMLL league in which they play.
 - **U12/Major:** All players that are Little League age 11 and 12 are eligible, regardless of the WMLL league in which they play. *While Major League players who are Little League age 10 are eligible for the U12 team, they are encouraged to play on the U10 team.*
 - **U14/Junior:** All players that are Little League age 13 and 14 are eligible, regardless of the WMLL league in which they play. *Junior League players who are Little League age 12 are eligible for the U14 tournament team but are encouraged to play on the U12 tournament team.*
 - **U16/Senior:** WMLL Senior League players of any age are eligible.

- 2) **Regular Season Participation:** Eligible players must have participated in 60% of their WMLL regular season team's games as of the tournament tryout date. There are only two exceptions to the 60% rule, for participation on high school teams and for physician documented injury or illness.
- 3) **Participation Fee:** Players selected to a tournament team are required to pay a participation fee (see details below). If a player needs financial assistance to participate, she should make a request to the Board through the tournament team head coach.
- 4) **Residency:** There is no residency requirement for the softball tournament teams.

PLAYER SELECTION = Open Tryouts + Roster Nomination + Roster Approval

Information on the tournament team schedule, selection process, tryout date and time and sign-up procedure will be publicized at least four weeks in advance of the principal tryout date.

The families of players participating in the tryout maybe asked to specify in advance if their child will be unable to participate in tournament team practices and all tournament games. Coaches may choose to select players even if they are not available for all tournament team activities.

OPEN TRYOUTS

Tryouts are mandatory and are open to all eligible players - players do NOT need to be invited.

- If a player cannot attend the principal tryout due to a “reasonable” conflict, a supplemental tryout can be scheduled by the League Coordinator. Supplemental tryouts must be scheduled prior to the principle tryout, although the supplemental tryout itself may take place either prior to or after the principle tryout. The supplemental tryout must be attended by the tournament team coach and League Coordinator.

ROSTER NOMINATION

The child(ren) of the head coach and the one official assistant coach are automatically placed on the tournament team. These players should participate in the tryout for consistency of experience.

After the tryout, each tournament team head coach will evaluate the following information and nominate a tournament team roster to the League Coordinator.

- 1) player evaluations by the tournament team head coach based on regular season games,
- 2) player evaluations by regular season coaches,
- 3) player performance at an open tryout that is mandatory for anyone that wants to play on a tournament team.
- 4) player availability to attend tournament team practices and tournament games.
- 5) voting by players and coaches in the appropriate league(s) may also be used when deemed beneficial by the Softball Operations Committee.

Players may play on only one WMLL tournament team each season. If a tournament team player is unable to participate, the head coach may select a replacement player. Whenever possible, the replacement should be a player who participated in the tryout.

ROSTER APPROVAL

The League Coordinator will review the nominated roster with the VP-Softball. If they approve, the roster will be considered final. If there are questions about the nominated roster, the head coach is required to meet with the League Coordinator and Board President to explain and justify their selections. This group will finalize the roster.

ROSTER ANNOUNCEMENT

All players that participated in the tryout will be notified of the final team roster by the head coach within one week of it being approved.

TOURNAMENT TEAM FEES

Tournament team play includes various expenses not covered by the regular season player registration fee, including tournament fees (for up to three tournaments), uniforms (caps, jerseys and socks), and supplemental insurance.

- **WMLL Support:** WMLL supports tournament teams by paying a portion of these costs, the amount of which is determined annually by the Board (30% in recent years).
 - **Player Participation Fee:** Players selected to a tournament team are required to pay a participation fee to cover the remaining costs (70% in recent years). If a player needs financial assistance to participate, she should make a request to the Board through the tournament team head coach.
 - **Add-Ons:** Some tournament teams may elect to offer additional apparel items or experiences. WMLL will NOT provide any funding for these opportunities, which must be optional for players.
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COACH ELIGIBILITY & APPLICATION

Each tournament team will have a head coach and one officially appointed assistant coach. Additional assistant coaches are optional.

Eligibility: To be eligible for selection, an individual must be a current WMLL coach. All current coaches are eligible to apply but coaches in the age appropriate WMLL league will be given priority. All tournament team coaches must also have a volunteer application and completed background check on file.

Head Coach Application: Interested coaches must submit an application to the Board by the designated application deadline in order to be considered.

- *Applicants must include answers to the following questions as part of their application:*

- 1) *Why do you want to be a tournament team ?*
 - 2) *What criteria would you use in selecting a tournament team?*
 - 3) *What is your softball coaching and playing experience and how will that experience benefit the tournament team?*
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COACH SELECTION

Head Coach Selection: The WMLL Board will select the head coach for each tournament team by the designated selection deadline.

- 1) All coach applicants will be notified of their status by the Board President within one week of the selection deadline.

Assistant Coach Selection: Prior to the tryout, the head coach must nominate one official assistant coach to the League Coordinator for approval by the League Coordinator and Board President. The official assistant coach must be a current WMLL coach &, if they are the parent of a player, the League Coordinator and Board President must agree that the assistant coach nominee's child is of tournament team caliber. The head coach may also select additional assistants after the tournament team roster has been approved.

COACH MEETING

Prior to the tryouts, all Tournament Team head coaches must meet with the VP-Softball and/or Board President to:

- 1) review WMLL tournament team policies and procedures & obtain coach commitment to strictly adhere to these policies and procedures,
- 2) review the tournament schedule,
- 3) if not already established, set a tryout date & format (open or limited).

Note: Any approved assistant coaches are encouraged to attend this meeting.