



SPFBL Travel Parent Meeting
 Thursday, November 19th, 2015
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Mission Statement
"The Mission of the SPFBL Travel Baseball program is to provide SPF youth ballplayers more intensive skill development and a higher level of competition on an additive basis to the traditional house league program." - SPFBL Travel Handbook

- Extension of the House League program
- Promote development of:
 - Strong character
 - Right attitude
 - Responsibility & citizenship;
- Through:
 - Fair play
 - Good sportsmanship
 - Congenial fellowship
 - Competitive baseball.
- Promote development of:
- Player Development is Primary; Winning is secondary...
- High School prep

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Travel Season

- Travel Tryouts
- Winter Training – Jan/Feb
 - Professional training program
- Spring Travel Season
 - Practices Mar
 - Season starts late-Mar, early-Apr
 - Season ends around Memorial Day
 - 1-2 Games per week (2 would be DH'er)
 - 1-2 Practices per week
 - A & B levels (as age group size & talent pool dictate)
 - Coincident with House League
- Summer Travel Season
 - Continuation of Spring Travel
 - League & Tournament play
 - Independent Managers – 10U & Up

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Goals & Objectives

- Top priorities:
 - Competitiveness
 - Skill & confidence building
 - Player development
 - "Baseball IQ" (Curriculum)
 - Teamwork at a higher skill level
 - Breaking the bad, learning the good
 - Sportsmanship
 - Fun
 - Winning secondary
- Achieved by:
 - Quality instruction
 - Opportunity management
 - Patience and encouragement

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Philosophy

- Opportunity Management
- Spring season – League (7U & up)
 - Player development
 - Equitable playing time (approx.)
 - Several different positions
- Summer season – League/Tournament mix (7U & up)
 - League play
 - Similar to Spring Philosophy
 - Roster-bat if allowed in the league
 - Tournaments
 - Maintain emphasis on player development
 - Competitive
 - Playing Time - Platoon minimum
 - District Tournament follows Babe Ruth/Cal Ripken rules

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Travel Program Commitment

- Travel Commitment is the same, regardless of A, B, etc. **THIS IS THE SAME REGARDLESS OF THE LEVEL.**
- Baseball as a priority – (1) Family emergency, (2) School, then (3) Baseball
- Attendance expectations – August is vacation month for serious ballplayers
- Multi-sport expectations – Spring & Summer is Baseball season
- Baseball mindset – When it's baseball time, focus on baseball
- Managers are committing to teach, Players must commit to LEARN – Playing Travel Baseball means you want to learn and excel, not goof off
- Sportsmanship expectations – no deriding other team, umpires or fellow teammates. Know how to be a good teammate.



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Safety Issues

- It's SPFBL's responsibility to be concerned with legitimate safety issues
- We understand it's a sensitive issue, we take the responsibility seriously and understand that the determination probably won't be taken well
- We continue to pursue offering travel baseball to a wide audience at both A and B levels
- ... HOWEVER travel baseball remains a program intended for the higher skilled players in the house league program

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Behavior – Participants, Parents & Coaches

- Codes of Conduct for:
 - Managers and Coaches –behavior and “curriculum”
 - Parents –behavior, no coaching from the sidelines
 - Players –behavior, focus, listen to coach, etc.
- Items of special note:
 - Civil behavior
 - Positive cheering
 - Curb derogatory language re: participants, coaches, other team, umpires, etc.
 - Ejection = board review & action
 - No coaching from the sidelines
 - Remember: This is a YOUTH baseball program

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Travel Baseball - Organization

- Travel Director, Travel Committee and SPFBL Board of Directors
- Oversees: Tryouts, Manager selection; Coach selection (asst); Player selections
- # of teams, levels, leagues & tournaments, etc. based on turnout & talent pool for the age group
- Focus on transparency, fairness, independent assessment and development opportunities for all players in the program

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Managers & Coaches

- Managers
 - Spring – Independent or Parent managers
 - Summer – Independent managers (10U and up)
- All Travel Age groups under SPFBL purview
- Managers/Coaches selected/confirmed annually
- Managers are the “custodians” of the team for the season – 1-season positions
- Managers and Coaches (asst) must adhere to the guidelines and code of conduct



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Managers & Coaches – Selection

- Application process (new managers)
- Explain - Coaching philosophy; Dealing w/parents; Working with players; Working with coaching staff
- Coaching experience w/references
- Coaching conduct – history of issues?
- Interviews with travel committee/board members
- Parent Managers & Coaches may be required to attend at least one SPFBL-sponsored coaching clinic
- Feedback from parents will be used to evaluate season

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What to Expect From Travel Managers

- Skills & Drills
- Opportunity management
- Focus on player development
- Younger ages – equitable playing time, encourage and instruct pitching!!
- Focus on developing well-rounded ballplayers
- SPRING - Player fee covers a platoon minimum (Disclaimer – equitable playing time assumes full attendance)
- Managers provide feedback to players and parents



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Tryouts

- Saturday, December 5th - 12:00pm – 4:00pm
- Sunday, December 6th - 9:00am – 3:00pm
- Saturday, December 12th – 11:00am – 3:00pm
- Exact tryout times to be communicated
- All tryouts at Inman Sports Club, Edison NJ
- **No travel baseball clothing permitted at tryout (includes SPFBL, Club team, etc.)!!**
- Exceptions: Baseball pants – ok. Personal helmet – ok.



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Tryout Format

- Overseen by Travel Director , travel committee & board
- Process – tryouts, selection process, “Play Ball!”
- SPFBL teams must come first
- Selection Committees
- Scoring Criteria
 - Hitting 40%
 - Fielding 40%
 - Pitching 20%
- Subject to adjustment (by necessity as determined by Travel Director & Travel Committee, or by Age-specific guidelines)



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Tryout Process & Tryout Day

- Must be registered: HOUSE LEAGUE (must be paid) & TRAVEL TRYOUT. **DO NOT JUST SHOW UP!**
- Arrive 15 minutes early to check in
- Run by Travel Director, travel committee and board.
- Parents accompany to the facility, not inside the tryout space.
- Evaluations by a mix of impartial independent and Professional evaluators
- Manager/Coach candidates may or may not be permitted to watch - they don't score, and they don't select
- No references to travel baseball on their clothes, no names on their clothing, no travel hats. They may use their helmets and wear baseball pants.
- Focus kids on the Positive – Just do your best; If you feel like you messed up, bounce back and do the best you can; No matter what the outcome, they are valued SPFBL ballplayers.



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Selection Process

- A mix of impartial independent and Professional evaluators score the ballplayers
- Scores tallied, independent Selection committee makes selections
- # of teams and mix of 'A' / 'B' completely dependent on turnout and talent mix
- There may be cuts
- Example Scenario: 1 'A' Team, 2 'B' teams (split)



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Fees / Costs (approximate)

- Varies - Exact fees/costs will be communicated once teams are selected
 - Playing fee (covers league/tourneys, umpires, balls, equipment, indoor practice time (if appl), independent manager (if appl), etc.
 - Uniform cost
- Based on previous years:
 - Playing fee: \$325 - \$450 w/independent manager, \$225 - \$350 w/Parent manager = per season
 - Uniform fee: Separate - figure on \$85 - \$100 for the full uniform and required equipment (basic)
- The Payment Process:
 - Team selection
 - Invitation only, NOT secured!! Position secured when payment received
 - Payment for uniforms at fitting time
 - All fees due prior to first practice of the season

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Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

- Cooperstown trip - 12U, separate cost structure
- Why 1 tryout for both spring and summer seasons?
- Why is winter training important?
- What's the advantage of independent managers?
- What field improvements are anticipated in the future?
- What do I need to know about District tournament playing time and rule differences?
- How do you handle uniform ordering?
- Who evaluates the players at the tryouts?
- Why an indoor tryout and not outside?
- Why are we now going by age/birthday as opposed to grade?
- What does "grandfathering" mean in my youth ballplayer's situation?

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Q&A

- OPEN Q&A
- Contact information:
 - President – Chris Bates: spfraidersbaseball@aol.com
 - Commissioner – Neil Kaufman: neilkaufman@gmail.com
 - General League Questions: spfbaseballleague@gmail.com
 - Website: www.spfbaseballleague.org
- Dates Reminder
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