

BHGS Thunder Travel Team Evaluations & Team Selection Process

I wanted to comment on the selection process. I am writing this letter to hopefully clarify what we have in mind as far as the idea and implementation of the Thunder Travel Team Program.

The Thunder Travel Team Program has been created to “replace” what some of us knew as the “All Star Teams”. In the “old” All Star selection process, the head coach & manager of each team in the division voted for who they thought were the best players during the season & a team was formed. That process sounds good in theory, but did not give all the girls a chance to play tournaments after the Spring Season was done. The main idea behind our new program is just that. The tryouts give everyone that wants a chance an opportunity to play in summer tournaments.

All coaches are given the opportunity to apply to coach the team & the board selects the head coach & (part or all of the assistants, Asst. Coach(s), Manager, etc.) or can wait to see who makes the team. The head coach can pick his/her staff (subject to Board approval of that staff).

The main body of the Thunder Travel Team will be named by this selection team. The coach is part of the selection team, along with other coaches, board members & appointees. We want at least one member of this selection team to be someone that did not observe the girls during the season, so they would have to entirely depend on the tryouts for rating purposes. The girl’s play during the spring season will be considered during this process as well.

The girls are given certain instructions & put through a selection of drills to rate throwing, catching, hitting, etc. They are rated on each skill & those ratings are totaled to get their score. The pitchers & catchers will be added first & then the balance of the team. The selection team will meet, discuss & decide on which girl(s) would make the balance of the team. Some of the criteria used would be (but not limited to) 1) girls that caught fly balls with fingers up, 2) girls that would demonstrate a knowledge of softball, 3) girls that could hit “inside / outside” strikes, as well as the “right down the middle ones & showed good judgment on pitches thrown & 4) girls that listened to coaches instructions. After the initial players are named, the coach (and/or his/her staff) can add more players to the team using whatever criteria they decide on. This will give the coach an opportunity to “fill” any holes in the lineup.

As with any audition or tryout, some will be selected & some will not. This can be very disappointing to the girls & their parents, but is unavoidable & a life lesson for the girls. The girls need to learn that they should go after the things they want, give it their best shot & if they do not succeed this time, they need to be able to handle it, except it & be ready for the next opportunity. Our job as parents is to help them with this kind of life skill & remind them that even though they did not make it this time, they made a good effort , did well & will be ready for the next time. The fact that they “gave it a shot” is reason enough for us to be proud of them & for them to be proud in themselves.

The girls that do not make the team could still have an opportunity to play in the summer, if a second team can be formed. **After the first team is formed and if there is enough interest & staff, a second team could be formed as well.** The adult staff, after being approved by the board, could select a second team with or without a tryout. They can use whatever criteria they want to select this team. They will have the evaluation scores & info from the original tryout to assist them in 2nd team selection. They must keep in mind that the summer tournaments are very competitive & if their team might not have a lot of success. We have had second teams, in the past, that have both done very well & some that have not a single victory. The success of the teams though, should not be based on wins & losses, but rather the quality of the experience the girls enjoyed during the process.

I hope this note gives insight into the BHGS Travel Team Program for you. As always, if anyone has any questions or comments about this (or any other aspect of BHGS), I welcome those at any time.

Thank you for your Support!
Joe Forney Vice President, BHGS 2010