

## TRAVEL SOFTBALL-SUMMER SEASON



PWYSA – Policies and Procedures  
Updated January 2010

### INTRODUCTION

#### ABOUT THIS DOCUMENT

This document outlines policies and procedures used by PWYSA for Summer Travel level fastpitch softball. PWYSA reserves the right to deviate from the policies and procedures in this document if the PWYSA Board of Directors (Board) determines it is in the best interest of the program to do so. These policies are subject to annual review and may be changed if the Board deems appropriate. The PWYSA supported elite program “MN Vortex” operates under separate policies and guidelines.

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### GENERAL INFORMATION

#### MISSION

Plymouth Wayzata Youth Softball Association (PWYSA) promotes the game of fastpitch softball as a means to teach girls the value of teamwork and sportsmanship, to enhance self-esteem and to develop softball skills - all in a positive environment.

#### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

A Board of Directors governs PWYSA. There are open positions that can be filled throughout the year and are done so at any monthly Board meeting. Any interested parties are encouraged to contact the Association. Board positions and descriptions can be found on the website at [www.pwysa.com](http://www.pwysa.com).

## REFUNDS

Full, partial or pro-rated refunds will be given under certain conditions. The amount of refund granted will be at the discretions of the PWYSA board. A full refund will be granted to a player who does not make a travel team but not necessarily in cases where they do not make the team of their desire. Once teams are determined, and practices have begun, no refunds will be made. Submit any requests to the PWYSA Treasurer listed on the website.

## PARENT MEETINGS AND SURVEYS

Annual informational meetings will be held for all players and parents prior to the start of each season. Usually in March (travel) and April (recreational). As deemed appropriate, the Board will distribute surveys and hold additional meetings intended to gather feedback and to listen to concerns.

## SCHOLARSHIP

Each year PWYSA designates funds in hopes that every girl who wants to play softball will be able to play regardless of her family's financial status. Applicants for a partial or full scholarship may contact the registration coordinator listed on the PWYSA website for further information. The Scholarship Committee will review each application.

## FUNDRAISING

Fundraising may be used to help raise additional funds that benefit either the recreational program or travel program, both or individual teams once the season has started. Please see the specific fundraising guidelines on the website at [www.pwysa.com](http://www.pwysa.com)

## PHILOSOPHY

For those girls interested in a more competitive level of play, a travel league is offered. The Travel League is more time consuming and competitive. Our Travel teams have been very successful against the best young athletes in the state as well as at national tournaments. Each participant is expected to attend all practices, league games and weekend tournaments during the summer season. Emphasis is on skill development, and teamwork in a positive environment.

## AGE DIVISIONS

Teams are formed according to age guidelines set by the American Softball Association (ASA).

10 and under  
12 and under  
14 and under  
16 and under  
18 and under

## PROGRAM GOALS

The following are the program goals for PWYSA travel softball:

- Provide a high quality experience for players and coaches at all levels.
- Strive to create a positive self-esteem for every player.
- Strive to create an environment that is both fun and developmental for the players, families, coaches and community.
- Provide a program that works with and is admired other fastpitch programs.
- Seek to maximize the potential of every player in the program.
- Develop players and teams that are able to compete at a national level.
- Seek to foster player participation for the full length of a player's youth sports career.
- Foster the importance of teamwork and success as part of a team.
- Increase the number of girls participating in competitive sports.

## ELIGIBILITY

Players are eligible to participate subject to the following criteria:

- Resident of boundaries of school district 284- regardless of school attended or are currently attending school within school district 284 boundaries or are a resident of the city of Plymouth.
- Non-residents may be allowed to play in the travel program if the board determines that:
  - A) additional players are needed at an age group  
or
  - B) to provide a team with needed pitching and catching  
or
  - C) to grandfather players who have played with PWYSA in previous year(s)
- Must have paid all applicable fees- past and present.
- Must have filled out all required forms, including any signed waivers and commitment forms required.

- Must meet age guidelines. This is determined by ASA rules. Current rules are based on the age as of December 31<sup>st</sup> of the current calendar year (summer season) and for the fall season, it is the age as of the following December 31<sup>st</sup> (ie. age for next summer season),

Also see the Team Selection criteria under the Summer Season and Fall Season information.

## PLAYING UP

All players requesting to “play up” must still register and try out at their current age level (the youngest age group they qualify for).

To be considered for “playing up” to a higher age level, all of the following must apply:

1. Player must be in the final year of their age group or grade level to be considered.
2. The PWYSA travel director must be notified of the request to play up prior to try-outs.
3. If the player’s position is anything other than a pitcher, the player must tryout for both age levels and meet all three of the following requirements.
  - a. Must finish ranked in the top 5 in evaluation points/ranking of the higher age level tryout final totals.
  - b. Must finish in the top 4 in evaluation points/ranking of their normal age level tryout final totals.
  - c. If trying out for a catcher position, player must finish ranked in the top 2 catchers at higher age level.
4. If the player’s position is pitcher, the player must meet the requirements in #1 above, tryout for both age levels and meet the following two requirements:
  - a. Player must finish ranked in the top two pitchers at the higher age level.
  - b. Player must agree that if selected, she may, depending on ability (at the coaches’ discretion) have limited playing time at the other defensive positions.
5. Exceptions to the above can be made on a case by case basis by the Board and the Competition Committee. Requests must be approved by majority vote of the PWYSA board members.

## PLAYING TIME

In the travel league, there is no requirement that equal playing time will occur. Over the course of the season, coaches will ensure that each player gets an ample amount of playing time, but not necessarily at the player's or parent's desired position. As the season progresses particularly at 12U "Gold" (Top) and above, players will be positioned so that the team is competitive.

At the younger the age groups, more individual player development and equal playing time is stressed. The older the age group, and higher level of play, the more team development and placing the most competitive team on the field is stressed.

Playing time is at the discretion of the head coach with consideration to developing depth of talent at every position.

Other things that could impact playing time include but is not limited to:

- Unexcused absences at practices, games, tournaments and team meetings.
- Effort of the player in practices and game situations.
- Commitment of the player to improve her skills.
- Skill level of the players on the team.
- Disciplinary action is being taken.
- The player has been suspended.
- The player is injured or sick.
- Shortened games due to time limit or inclement weather.

## PLAYER DEVELOPMENT

Player development shall be encouraged at every age group. Players should be given opportunities to play at positions where they will be successful and will build self-confidence. As a result, every player needs to receive numerous opportunities during games to learn to perform in all game situations. However, not all players have the attributes or training required to play certain positions (for example, pitcher or catcher). Travel coaches will continue to develop the skills of every player on the team.

The younger the age group, the more that playing time should be arranged to enhance the development of skills for every player at more than one position.

Team development shall consist of positive reinforcement, teaching teamwork and the concepts of working together towards a common goal.

## FUNDRAISING

Fees charged for each season's program are expected to cover normal expenses of the program so that proceeds raised from fundraising may go into the general fund to be put to use at the discretion of the Board. However, PWYSA also relies on private fund raising to meet its financial objectives. In order to be strategic and ensure that fund raising efforts are executed in a manner consistent with the PWYSA vision, the PWYSA Board is establishing these guidelines:

### **Scholarship Fundraising**

- Funds will be solicited each year for the Janette Pospesl Memorial Scholarship. In addition to a presence on the website, parents will be asked to donate at the Parent Meeting and the tournament will have a fund raising component specifically geared toward the scholarship.
- Corporate sponsors may also be solicited to support the scholarship.

### **Organization Fundraising**

The PWYSA Board of Directors and the Fundraising coordinator will develop one or two fundraising events during the year. These events will be developed with all PWYSA players and families in mind. All funds raised will support the greatest needs of the organization. Typical projects funded in the past from fundraising dollars include field improvements, equipment purchases, coaches training, donation to scholarship fund, player development and clinics.

### **Individual Team Fundraising**

- During the season and when teams are fully formed, individual teams can pursue fundraising activities for their team that might support team equipment, tournaments or travel. In order to avoid duplication, and to ensure fund raising strategies are consistent with the PWYSA vision, teams are asked to inform the Board at a monthly board meeting prior to committing to the activity. Funds raised through individual team fund raising will be available only to that team.

## REGISTRATION

Registration for summer travel softball opens in January and is done online through the PWYSA website. A registration deadline will be posted and it may be different each year. Late registration is not typically allowed, however, if numbers permit, players may be allowed to register after the deadline with Board approval.

## SEASON

The summer travel season is for those individuals who desire a competitive softball experience. Teams participate in a travel league and play in a number of tournaments on the weekends (see Tournament section).

Practices usually start in March and league games usually begin in early May and continue through the end of June or early July. League games are played on 1-3 week nights per week- double-header style. However, 10U league games may be played only one night a week- usually Mondays. This allows for more practice time with this age group to allow adequate time for skill development. Games typically begin about 6:15 pm. Games will be played at various sites throughout the metro area usually focused in the Western suburbs.

### EXCEPTIONS:

14U/16U/18U: if the team has a significant number of players on the high school team, early season games may be rescheduled and league games and practices may be postponed until the school season is over.

Post-season play includes a State Qualifying Tournament. Based on the results, a team may qualify for an A, B, or C level State Tournament in mid-July. Based on the results at the State Tournament, a team could potentially extend their season into mid-August by qualifying for a National Tournament. PWYSA has no control over the seeding or dates scheduled for State Qualifier, State, Regional or National Tournaments.

## PRACTICES

Practice begins in March with a goal of practicing and developing skills and reinforcing fundamentals before the first game. Pitchers and catchers will be expected to put in more time. Exception: teams with a significant number of players on high school teams will not usually practice much prior to their first game. After league play begins, a typical week will consist of one or two practices with at least one week night taken off.

## FEES AND EXPENSES

Travel softball registration fees cover the following expenses:

- General administration fees
- Team insurance
- Equipment expenses
- Playing fees (umpire fees, tournament fees, chalk, game balls, field maintenance, Parks and Recreation field use fee)
- League fee

Additional expenses may include:

- Team uniform
- Glove, cleats, sliding, compression shorts
- Extra tournament expenses
- Travel expenses to and from games
- Possible overnight expenses for out of town tournaments

Scholarships are available.

## TOURNAMENT FUNDING

The fees collected by PWYSA usually include a State Tournament and any related State Qualifier. In addition, for the summer season, each team is allocated a certain amount for tournament fees on additional weekends. Generally the fees will cover 3 tournaments in addition to the State Qualifier and State Tournaments. Additional tournaments may be played at the players' expense- tournament play must be agreed upon by coaches and parents.

Tournaments played outside the metro area may require an overnight stay at the player's expense. Any team that qualifies for a National Tournament and elects to participate will incur additional expenses, including travel for up to a week depending on location. Teams usually do their own fundraising to offset the costs of a National Tournament. However, the board may elect to assist with National fees from general fundraising efforts.

## TEAM DETERMINATION

As numbers permit, there shall be one or more teams at each age group. The board will determine the make-up of the teams depending on the talent level involved. Generally the following will be the case.

10U - the decision on level of play “Gold” (Top), “Silver” (2<sup>nd</sup>) as well as the level the team will be registered with the league “A” or “B” will be evaluated each year by the board. This decision can be related to numbers, general talent and/or pitchers and catchers. Player distribution at 10U will be at the discretion of the board.

12U and up - Assuming there is enough players to form at least 2 teams, there will be a “Gold” (Top) team followed by a “Silver” (2<sup>nd</sup>) team. Additional travel teams beyond the first 2 teams will be formed if there is sufficient numbers, pitching, catching and coaching. If there is sufficient players and coaching these teams will start practices at the same time and will attend the initial parent player meeting. However, if the board has to make efforts to find players, coaches or cooperate with other communities these teams may not start or be formed by the first parent/player team meeting.

Selection of players for the “Gold” (Top) team will be determined by the criteria established under the team selection and try-out sections.

While not restricted to the “Gold” (Top) teams, the “Gold” (Top) teams are more likely to play a heavier schedule of tournaments, play tougher competition, practice more often and attend out of town tournaments. This may require a higher commitment of time and cost. Players can elect to play on the “Silver” (2<sup>nd</sup>) team if they prefer not to have the higher commitment level.

## TEAM SELECTION

Teams are selected based on the following:

- Selection from eligible players based on try-outs (see try-out criteria)
- Players desiring to “play up” if the guidelines are met
- Players from outside the eligibility area if needed to field a team (see eligibility)
- Coaches available

A competition committee will review the tryout and all other information available and select the teams. This committee may include potential coaches at that age level but will always include at least one board member and the travel director (without daughters at that age group) to ensure a fair process.

## **TRAVEL SOFTBALL TRYOUTS**

### **GENERAL**

This policy establishes guidelines for conducting tryouts within PWYSA travel softball. Tryouts may be needed to select members of a single team at an age group or to select a “Gold” (Top) team and/or “Silver” (2<sup>nd</sup>) team when multiple teams are offered at an age group or in the case of 10U to evaluate players to aid in the distribution of talent among teams.

### **ELIGIBILITY**

Players are eligible to participate in PWYSA travel softball team tryouts provided they meet the eligibility guidelines of the program. (See eligibility)

### **PARTICIPATION**

Tryout sessions will be scheduled based on facility and evaluator availability. Players must participate in all scheduled tryout sessions, unless an excused absence is granted by the Board. An excused absence from any of the scheduled sessions must be granted prior to the start of that session. Excused absences will include illness or injury, school functions, family vacations and games for in-season sports. Attendance will be taken at the beginning of the tryout session. Players who are absent from all tryouts without being excused will not be eligible for “Gold” (Top) teams.

### **MAKEUP TRYOUTS**

Players who miss the scheduled tryout session due to an excused absence, may be granted an alternate tryout session (if available) or will be placed on a team based on other available information from prior play and at the discretion of the Board and/or Tryout and Competition Committee.

### **PLAYER EVALUATION**

Players will be evaluated on the skills of pitching, catching, fielding, throwing, hitting and bunting. In addition, game situations may be created and players will be evaluated on their game sense. Specific tryout criteria is developed and then posted on the PWYSA website a minimum of two weeks prior to tryouts.

## TRYOUT AND TEAM SELECTION COMMITTEES

The Tryout and Team Selection Committees will be comprised of individuals who are known by PWYSA to possess the knowledge necessary to evaluate a player's skill at a particular level. Committee members will not be related to any of the tryout participants involved in their assigned age level. The tryouts will be facilitated by members of PWYSA. The evaluation scores and prior playing history will be the basis used by the Team Selection Committee to select players for a travel team.

## TRYOUT PHILOSOPHY

The team selection process attempts to find a balance between: Evaluating players based on their current skills demonstrated in an impartial tryout process and evaluation players on the skills and game sense shown in prior playing history. The Competition Committee will have the final decision on team placement.

PWYSA will hold Pitching and Catching Try-outs ahead of the general try-outs. All pitchers and catchers must still go through the general evaluation.

With regard to the "Gold" (Top) team:

- The top 5 evaluation scores are locked on the team
- The top two pitchers and catchers assigned to "Gold" (Top) team
  - A player who tries out for pitching or catching can also try out as a position player. If a player does not make the "Gold" (Top) team as a pitcher or catcher, but does qualify as a position player, the player may elect where they would like to play. If they choose to play on the "Gold" (Top) team they will likely see significantly less pitching or catching time.
- The remaining players outside of the top 5 and the pitchers and catchers will be placed based on tryout scores, prior year performance, team needs by position and prior year coach's observations.