



# Deerfield Warriors

## Travel Baseball Handbook

Last revised: 8/2014

## DYBA Mission Statement

The purpose of the Deerfield Youth Baseball and Softball Association shall be to help promote and maintain high moral character as well as good mental and physical health in the young people involved in the baseball and softball programs. This objective will be attained by providing supervised athletic games. The supervisors shall bear in mind at all times that the attainments of exceptional athletic skill or winning of games is secondary to the objective herein.

## Deerfield Travel Baseball Mission Statement

Deerfield Travel Baseball was created by DYBA to provide a higher level of competition for talented and motivated DYBA baseball players who are willing to commit a great deal of time to the improvement of their skills in a team focused environment. Teams will work hard to win games, but winning will never become more important than teamwork and good sportsmanship. Deerfield Travel Baseball will ask players to work toward excellence, not perfection. Baseball is a fun and challenging game that requires players to develop the ability to overcome mistakes and to look forward to their next opportunity. Ultimately, the development of skills and team focused play will be the guideline for our program, which we believe will create better baseball players and better people.

## DYBA Travel Baseball Program Management

1. The DYBA Board of Directors will determine a Director(s) of Travel Baseball for each new board year and announce the Director(s) of Travel Baseball at the September board meeting annually. The Director of Travel Baseball shall be responsible for the general oversight of the Travel Baseball Program and the Deerfield Wood Bat Tournament.
2. The Director(s) of Travel Baseball will present team manager recommendations to the DYBA Board for approval prior to appointing a team manager. Once approved by the DYBA Board, the manager will then be responsible for the operation and oversight of all activities associated with their travel team. Additional coaches may be named to help the manager run the team, and team parents can be used to handle other duties such as scheduling, uniform sizing, etc.
3. The Director of Travel Baseball will present the DYBA Board with a Wood Bat Tournament Director recommendation, prior to naming a Tournament Director. Once approved by the DYBA Board, the Wood Bat Tournament Director will be responsible for creating and overseeing a committee to help organize and run the Deerfield Wood Bat Tournament under the supervision of the Director of Travel Baseball and the DYBA Board of Directors.

All Managers, Coaches, and Tournament Volunteers are subject to DYBA Board Approval and must complete a DYBA conflict of interest form and a volunteer form.

4. The Director of Travel Baseball has the option to assemble a Committee, chaired by the Director of Travel Baseball and composed of a subset of members of DYBA. Such a committee may be formed to review Travel policies, act as a steering committee, or for any other reason deemed necessary

## Deerfield Travel Baseball Program Definition

8 – 10 year old travel teams will be considered “Developmental Teams”. The goals in our developmental program will be to focus on the fundamentals of baseball skills through repetition and skill improvement drills. Players will be developed at more than one position on the field. Minimum playing time will be 3 innings in a complete game (unless playing time is being reduced due to a disciplinary issue). We will roster bat whenever possible. Playing time will not be equal and players will not be moved around as much as in house league, but probably more than in the Feeder program.

11 – 14 year old travel teams will be considered “Feeder Teams”. “Feeder” is a philosophy to train players in a way that best prepares them for playing baseball at the High School level. Being on a feeder travel team by no means guarantees that a player will be selected for any future DYBA travel teams or for a Deerfield High School baseball team. The goals of our feeder teams will be:

1. To provide more complex strategy and situational training to our older players.
2. To provide coaching based on the Deerfield High School philosophy.

The High School philosophy will be emphasized with the Feeder teams. Minimum playing time will be 3 innings in a complete game (unless playing time is being reduced due to a disciplinary issue). We will roster bat whenever possible. Playing time will not be equal and players are more likely to be limited to only a couple positions on the field. Attitude, ability, hard work, and sportsmanship will play a larger role in determining playing time for our feeder teams.

### Guideline Travel Schedule

The following are guidelines regarding the number of games and the schedule components for each age group:

#### Developmental Teams

- 8’s – 2 tournaments and 1 league (approximately 25-30 Games)
- 9’s – 4 tournaments and 1 league (approximately 30-Games)
- 10’s – 4 tournaments and 1 league (approximately 30 – 35 Games)

#### Feeder Teams

- 11’s – 2-4 tournaments and 1-2 leagues (approximately 45-50 Games)
- 12’s – 2-4 tournaments and 1-2 leagues (approximately 45 – 50 Games)
- 13’s – 2-4 tournaments and 1-2 leagues (approximately 45 – 50 Games)
- 14’s – 2-4 tournaments and 1-2 leagues (approximately 45 – 50 Games)

#### Travel Team “Official” Season

The “Official” Spring/Summer Season shall be from April 1st through mid- to late July. During the official season a player may have travel and/or house league events up to 5 – 6 days per week. During the “official” season a player is allowed to miss no more than 4 travel events (team meetings, games, or practices) for discretionary reasons (e.g., reasons other than injury, illness or family emergency) (8U campers may only miss 3 events for discretionary reasons).

Also, no player is allowed to miss travel events on two consecutive days for discretionary reasons, unless approved prior to the season by the Travel Director and the manager. Any player who has more

than the maximum number of discretionary absences may be removed from his team's roster and may be ineligible to try out the following season. Roster and eligibility decisions will be made by the Travel Director in consultation with the manager. The rule allowing a certain number of discretionary absences before a player is in jeopardy of losing his roster spot does not mean that taking discretionary absences is without consequences. Players who use their discretionary absences may be subject to disciplinary action (e.g., reduced playing time) at the discretion of their manager.

DYBA may offer winter team practices and/or workouts funded by travel dues or at the expense of individual families. Any such workouts prior to April 1 are optional.

## Travel Team Manager Selection

The Travel Director(s) is responsible for selecting travel team managers, subject to approval by the DYBA Board of Directors. At all age levels, our goal is to use professional managers who do not have a child on the team they are managing. In the event that DYBA determines the best qualified manager for a team is not a professional manager, DYBA may use a parent manager for that team(s).

Any parent wishing to manage and/or coach a Travel Team must apply in writing and submit a volunteer form. Selections will be made based on many criteria including, but not limited to; baseball knowledge, schedule flexibility, youth sports philosophy, past DYBA experience, past experience in any other youth sports organization, and (if requested) by their ability to communicate their coaching goals and objectives during a personal interview by phone or in person. The travel director(s) may ask for documentation or references that support any claims made by an applicant.

The manager selection process should be completed no later than January 1st for teams that tryout in the fall (9's – 14's) and within 30 Days of announcing the teams that tryout in the winter or spring (8's).

If a team requires additional coaches, the Travel Director(s) will appoint additional parents or hire assistant coaches as necessary. All coaches must be in good standing with DYBA and approved by the Director(s) of Travel Baseball and the DYBA Board.

Managers are expected to act responsibly and set a good example for our young players at all times. Managers must adhere to DYBA policies and procedures (including our lightning policies and our pitching guidelines) to provide a safe and supportive baseball environment for our players.

**All managers and coaches must complete the DYBA volunteer application form and are subject to a background check and DYBA Board approval.**

## Travel Team Base Number of Teams

Typically, DYBA rosters two teams -- one (1) Red Team and one (1) Gray team -- at each age group from 8-14, but DYBA reserves the right to increase or reduce the number of teams for any reason at any age group (see below re Travel Team Selection).

## Travel Tryout Process

1. We are a "tryout based" travel program. All eligible players interested in playing travel baseball will be required to attend the tryouts for the next season if they wish to make a team.

Tryouts will be closed to spectators. Travel teams will be selected primarily based on tryout performance. It is within the discretion of the coach conducting the tryouts and selecting the teams to consider other information, and to schedule makeup tryout sessions to accommodate unique circumstances, including but not limited to: injury, sickness, a family emergency, or a tiebreaker to determine team selection.

2. The Director(s) of Travel Baseball will be responsible for organizing the tryouts, selecting the coaches who will evaluate and rank the players, and updating the participants during the selection process. The Director(s) of Travel Baseball is not involved in team selection or player evaluations during the tryouts. If any additional information is required to determine team selection, the Travel Director(s) will gather and provide that information to the tryout evaluator(s) for their review.

3. Players will be registered and identified during tryouts by a number and/or color code. A non-parent baseball coach(s) (preferably from DHS or another local High School or College) will compile data on all the players at the tryouts and select the teams. Typically two teams are rostered with 12 players on each team (the top 12 on the Red team and the next 12 on the Gray team), but **the number of players on each (or any) team may vary.** Parents: Please understand that a placement decision for a Red and/or Gray team is never perfect. Tryouts are difficult for the players...please don't emphasize or belabor team selection with your player regardless of which team they may be placed on. All rostered players should be congratulated and encouraged. A parent's disappointment regarding team selection is damaging to our program and your own child's spirit. In addition, being overly enthusiastic if your player makes a Red team can send the wrong message as well.

## Travel Team Selection

1. Each participant will be given a fair opportunity to display their fielding, hitting, base running, and throwing talents. All tryout drills, to accomplish this goal, will be determined by the head coach running the tryouts and implemented in an orderly fashion. Additional help may be obtained from non-coaches to complete the tryout drills.

2. DYBA reserves the right to cut down to a manageable number of participants after the first tryout session (if the number of players attending is determined to be excessive by the head coach running the tryouts). If a cut down is going to be used it will be announced at the end of the first tryout session and communicated to the players who do not make the first cut via e-mail or on the website. If listed on the web site, then only the player's number/color code will be used to post cuts on the website.

3. Effective beginning in the 2013 season, there are no "camper spots" on any teams from 9U-14U. The regular season for 9U-14U teams concludes in mid- to late-July (inclusive of the Sunday on which kids typically depart for overnight camp). On the 8U teams, we will allow up to two (2) campers per team. To be considered for a camper spot during the 8U tryouts, you must acknowledge that you are going to attend overnight camp when you register for tryouts. A camper is defined as a player who will be available to their team until mid to late July but may be leaving the team before the end of the season. Because 8U campers are leaving early, only 3 discretionary absences will be allowed during the season (See the "Travel Policies" and/or "Code of Conduct" for details).

4. If team vacancies occur for any reason prior to the start of the season, then the first cut player (from the tryouts) may be added to the Gray team roster and the highest ranked player may be moved from the Gray team to the Red team. This decision will be made by the Travel Director(s) in conjunction with the head coach in charge of the tryouts. If team vacancies occur during the season, no roster

additions will be made unless a team falls below 10 players, and only then if an addition is deemed necessary by the Travel Director(s). If a team falls below 10 players, we will use a call up system that is acceptable to the league we are playing in at the time.

5. If a player withdraws from a travel team after being selected, they will not be allowed to take part in the next set of travel tryouts for the following season and will forfeit their deposit. In effect, they will miss two (2) travel seasons before they can try out for a DYBA travel team again. Per the guidelines in the DYBA By-laws, players can appeal to the DYBA Board of Directors if they want to be considered for early reinstatement due to unusual circumstances that were out of their control

6. In order to tryout, players must submit a deposit to be applied toward travel fees upon selection to a DYBA travel team. The amount of the deposit is to be determined annually by the DYBA Board of Directors. This deposit is nonrefundable for players selected to a travel team. This deposit will be refunded in full to players not selected to a team. The balance of the travel fee is due by March 1 of the travel season. For teams that tryout in the winter/spring, the entire travel fee is due within 30 days or prior to the first travel game (whichever comes first). If the entire travel fee is not paid to DYBA by the deadline, players will not be allowed to attend any travel team event until the fee is paid in full. In addition, DYBA reserves the right to open the roster spot and fill it with the next best player (from the tryouts). If a financial hardship makes it impossible for a family to pay the travel fee or deposit on time, DYBA must be notified prior to the due date (in writing or by e-mail) so that special arrangements can be considered.

## Travel Team Field Usage

In general, our house league has field priority in the spring and travel teams must schedule around the house league field usage in the spring. During the summer, most of our travel games will be scheduled prior to the start of summer house league. It is important to coordinate shared fields with representatives in house league and softball. Common sense should prevail and common courtesy should be used when working to schedule travel games and practices. We have a limited amount of fields and must be flexible and cooperative to make it all work. Travel managers must communicate with house league and/or softball officials to coordinate and schedule field usage for their travel team.

## Travel Umpires

Umpires must be scheduled in advance with as much notice as possible. It is extremely important that umpires are notified if a game is cancelled. Also notify the house league, if a game is cancelled, so they know that the field is open for usage again.

## Travel Team Finances and Fundraising

Travel fees are subject to change from year to year. All travel fees must be sent directly to the DYBA

P.O. Box. Travel fees cover team expenses during the “official” season (4/1 – mid- to late July). These expenses include (but are not limited to) uniforms, league entry fees, tournament entry fees, umpire costs, coach fees and incidentals, insurance, park district fees, and equipment costs. Travel fees will not cover the cost of any activity not pre-approved by the Director of Travel Baseball and/or any activity that takes place outside of the “official” travel season. Any player whose fee isn’t fully paid in a timely manner will not be issued a uniform, and any player whose fee is not fully paid by April 15th will be subject to removal from his team.

12-year-old players who go on the Cooperstown trip will be required to pay for their share of the cost to attend the Cooperstown tournament. Cooperstown costs are not included in the 12’s travel fee and must be paid to DYBA before the team leaves for Cooperstown. If the Cooperstown fee is not paid by the due date, the player will not be allowed to play with the team in Cooperstown. Any fundraising that takes place to help offset the cost of any travel team expenses must be coordinated by the team manager or team parent and be approved by the Travel Director(s), the Fundraising Director(s) and the DYBA Board of Directors.

## A Message to Parents

Parents are asked to be supportive of their players and their coaches. Part of being supportive is trusting that your coaches are making decisions that are best for the team and leaving coaching decisions up to them. Parents are encouraged to practice with children on their own time, using your coaches’ suggestions to work on improving individual skills. Interaction with players during games and practices is discouraged, so that players can give 100 percent of their attention to their coaches and their teammates. Only positive cheers and words of encouragement are appropriate during games from parents, who are required to remain seated in the bleachers away from the dugout. There will be no tolerance of criticism or arguments with umpires. Smoking and/or drinking alcohol is not allowed at a Deerfield Travel Baseball game. Travel baseball games can get very intense, which can be fun and exciting, whether they are wins or losses. We ask that everyone work to make that intensity fun and not unnecessarily tense.

***As with all aspects of the Deerfield Youth Baseball and Softball Association, the DYBA Board of Directors has ultimate authority over the Deerfield Travel Baseball Program.***

## DYBA Travel Team Eligibility Policies and Requirements

1. In order to tryout for DYBA travel baseball, players must be eligible to attend either Deerfield School District 109 or Bannockburn School District 106 or reside in the "option area" of Highland Park as designated by High School District 113 (i.e. west of Route 41).

2. Travel teams are divided by age group. A player may be the age of the team or younger. For travel baseball, the age of the player on April 30th (of the upcoming season) is the youngest age that they are allowed to try out for. (e.g. If a player will be 12 years old on April 30th but will turn 13 on May 1st, they may be considered a 12 year old player and are allowed to try out for the 12 year old team or any team of a higher age group)

3. A player may try out for any travel team he or she is eligible to play on. A player must accept a spot on the first DYBA travel team on which he or she is offered a spot. In the event that a player is not offered a spot on a team that he or she tried out for and is age-eligible to try out for a different age-level team that has not yet had try outs, he or she may also try out for that team. For example, a player who tries out for the 13U team and does not get offered a roster spot may also try out for the 12U team so long as he or she is age-eligible to do so.

4. All travel players must play on DYBA Spring House League teams.

a. No travel player may miss more than 10% of his or her Spring House League team's games.

b. The Directors of House Baseball and Travel Baseball will work together to minimize conflicts between house and travel activities. In the event that conflicts between Spring House League events (including House League tournament games) and the travel schedule occur, however, such conflicts must be resolved according to the following guidelines:

- Regularly scheduled travel game at the same time as a regularly scheduled house game
  - **House game would trump a Travel game**
- Travel game at the same time as a house practice
  - **Travel game would trump a House practice**
- Travel game at the same time as a re-scheduled house game
  - **Travel game would trump a re-scheduled House game**
- Travel practice at the same time as a regularly scheduled house game
  - **House game would trump a Travel practice**
- Travel practice at the same time as a re-scheduled house game
  - **Re-scheduled House game would trump a Travel practice.**
- Travel practice at the same time as a house practice
  - **Travel Practice would trump a House practice**
- Travel practice at the same time as a re-scheduled house practice
  - **Travel practice would trump a re-scheduled House practice**

c. Excused illness does not count toward the total of missed House League events.

d. Any player who violates this rule will be subject to consequences, including but not limited to a reduction in playing time on his travel team, suspension from his travel team and/or ineligibility to play on a DYBA travel team during the current season or the next travel season.

5. No member of any travel team may have more than the maximum number of absences from any travel event (team meetings, games, or practices) during that team's "official" season.

a. The official season for 9U-14U is from April 1st – mid- to late-July (typically the second or third weekend of July) Season dates for the upcoming season will be announced by January 1..

b. Excused illness / injury and attendance at Spring House League events will not count toward the total of discretionary absences.

c. Any player who violates the attendance rule may be dropped from the team roster and will not be eligible to play on a DYBA travel team during the next season. Players can appeal to the DYBA Board of Directors if they want to be considered for early reinstatement due to unusual circumstances.

6. Travel fees will be assessed and paid as follows:

a. For teams that tryout in the fall: In order to try out for a travel team, players must submit a deposit (amount TBD annually by the DYBA Board of Directors). For players who are selected to a travel team, this deposit is nonrefundable and will be applied toward the player's travel fees. The deposit will be refunded in full to any players not offered a roster spot. The remaining balance of the travel fee will be calculated and due to DYBA by March 1 of the upcoming travel season.

b. For teams that tryout in the winter/spring: The entire fee must be submitted as a deposit in order to try out. For players who are selected to a travel team, this fee will constitute payment of travel fees in full. This payment will be refunded in full to any players not offered a roster spot.

## **DYBA Travel Baseball Code of Conduct**

### **I. Philosophy and Objectives of the DYBA Travel Baseball Program.**

The aim of the DYBA Travel Baseball program is to help young baseball players to develop a wholesome attitude toward leadership, to create and maintain loyalties to the travel program and to the

team, to improve physical conditioning and playing skills, and to develop a competitive spirit governed by good sportsmanship.

It is the philosophy of the travel baseball program that: **"IT IS A PRIVILEGE TO BE ABLE TO PARTICIPATE IN COMPETITIVE TRAVEL BASEBALL IN DYBA."**

By definition, a privilege is a "special right," and therefore, since it is special, it follows that special responsibilities are then placed upon those who wish to accept this privilege.

If a young player is serious about accepting the privilege of competing in travel baseball, he must be willing to accept the following responsibilities:

### **II. Dress and Appearance**

1. Hair will be at a length that is deemed appropriate by the coach. No one's hair will hang down below the eyebrows and players general appearance must be acceptable to the manager of the team while players attend any DYBA travel baseball event.

2. Wearing jewelry of any type (rings, watches, necklaces, or earrings) will not be permitted during games and practices. (IHSA Rule)

3. Wear uniforms and practice attire properly. You will be required to be fully dressed from the time you get to the field until the time you leave. This includes shirt, socks, and caps. Wear your uniform in a respectful manner at all times.

4. Everyone will be required to wear long pants and to wear proper baseball attire for all games and practices. Everyone must wear jackets and/or long sleeves when necessary to all games and practices, especially early in the season. Spikes and an athletic supporter and protective cup are required equipment at all times.

### **III. Player Conduct**

### **On the Field**

1. Swearing, name-calling, or razzing other players will not be tolerated. This includes chants or chatter to frustrate the other team. Even if the other team is razzing us, DYBA Travel Teams will not get involved in this type of activity.
2. Control your emotions at all times. We need players that will think and then act, not the other way around. Throwing of helmets, bats, gloves or anything in the dugout will not be tolerated and you will be disciplined if you do it.
3. Treat all officials, opposing coaches and players with respect. If you have nothing positive to say, then don't say anything at all!
4. During games all players on the bench must assist in shagging foul balls, charting pitches, charting hitters, keeping score, and "keeping house." (Keep helmets and bats neatly lined up, balls in the ball bag, and all other equipment in its place).
5. Never throw balls or swing bats unless a coach is supervising the activity.

### **Off the Field**

1. You will be expected to conduct yourself in a First Class manner around the Deerfield community and in any other community you visit for games or practices.
2. Whenever you are representing DYBA Travel Baseball you are expected to behave in a respectful manner. That includes any time that you are wearing DYBA Travel attire throughout the year. People in our community are familiar with our DYBA Travel uniforms, hats, and jackets and you are representing our Baseball program any time you choose to wear your Deerfield Travel Baseball attire.

### **IV. Practice and Game Attendance**

1. Players are expected to be on time for practice, meetings and games. The team cannot achieve their goals and maintain a winning attitude if players are missing or arriving late for games and/or practices. If a player will miss a practice or a game, for any reason, the manager must know about it as soon as possible. If a player fails to notify your manager prior to the travel event, then that miss will be considered an **unexcused** absence and count toward the allowance of 4 discretionary absences.
2. Players are discouraged from being involved with other sports during the "official" travel baseball season. However, if a player is involved with another sport, they are expected to put their Deerfield Travel Baseball obligation ahead of that other sport during the "official" travel season. If a player misses a Deerfield travel baseball game or practice to take part in another (non DYBA) sporting event, they should expect it to have a negative impact on their playing time when they return to their team.
3. Players are given up to 4 discretionary absences (excluding absences for illness or injury) (3 absences for 8U campers) during the season to provide them with some flexibility. Any player that exceeds that amount of absences may be removed from the roster for the balance of the season and may be subject to consequences, including but not limited to a reduction in playing time on his travel team, suspension

or expulsion from his travel team and/or ineligibility to play on a Deerfield travel team during the next season . In the event that a player is suspended or expelled from his travel team and/or deemed ineligible to play on a Deerfield travel team during the next season, players can appeal to the DYBA Board of Directors if they want to be considered for early reinstatement due to unusual circumstances.

4. DYBA is not responsible for providing transportation to or from travel activities. DYBA coaches are not permitted to drive players alone in their cars. Parents are responsible for transporting and/or arranging transportation for their player to and from all travel activities. At least one adult from each player's family must accompany each player to out of town tournaments and pay all related travel expenses for the player and family member(s). Absences from travel activities due to a lack of transportation are considered discretionary absences (see paragraph 3 above) and may lead to consequences including but not limited to a reduction in playing time, suspension or expulsion from a travel team and/or ineligibility to play on a Deerfield travel team during the next season.

5. Any disciplinary consequences imposed on a player for violation of house league rule or policies may affect the player's eligibility to play on a DYBA travel team and vice-versa.