

What does it mean to be on a National team?

The National program is for those players who want to compete at the highest level and are considering playing in college. We will have 4- 6 hours of practice each week during two-three practices (one week day and one weekend day). Mandatory position practices may be required as well. Practices will focus on skill development and game strategy. We will participate in approximately 8-10 tournaments, with extensive travel out of state. National teams have the primary goal of qualifying for Nationals through participation in National Qualifier tournaments. This will expose them to an even higher level of play. Other high quality tournaments will be pursued to provide preparation for qualifiers and Nationals.

How will playing time be determined?

On National teams, we strive to compete at the highest level with the best teams in the country. At “preparation” tournaments (Regional and Local tournaments), there will be more opportunity for all members to play. There will be a competitive element to practice and play and we will be looking for those who help our team be most successful. All players should be ready to play when the time comes and should be a team player at all times, regardless of their role.

What is the expectation for attendance?

National teams require the highest level of commitment, both from a time standpoint and a financial standpoint. We expect everyone to be at every practice and every tournament; however, we know that sometimes absences are unavoidable. We ask that you stay in communication with us, as much in advance as possible, in the event your child needs to miss a practice or team event. Whenever possible, please be present. Excessive absence can affect play time.

How will the coaches communicate with us?

Most of our communication will be done via email. Please make sure that we have an accurate email address on record and that you check it frequently. In the event that we change or cancel a practice, we will notify you immediately (with as much advance notice as possible). You may also find all information needed on our website.

When will we have detailed tournament schedules?

Tournament schedules are usually available one week to ten days prior to the tournament date. As soon as we have the information, it is posted on our website and we communicate it to you.

What are our responsibilities at tournaments?

We will have to participate in officiating and scorekeeping duties (your children will be trained). We will have assignments at all home tournaments.

These could include helping with set up, tear down or the hospitality room. Please be prepared to help wherever we are assigned.

What should we bring to tournaments?

Your child should always have all pieces of their uniform with them. Some tournaments allow you to bring in seats (depending on their seating situation). Most tournaments will have a concession stand of some sort available, but you may want to pack some snacks for your child and a water bottle. Most facilities do not allow coolers inside the facility. Our team will probably try to coordinate food (sandwiches and such) during all day tournaments. In that case, we will need a parent volunteer to help coordinate that and we will set up an area outside the facility for our team. Most teams do this.

What are the policies when at tournaments?

Arrival: *We will usually ask you to arrive at the tournament site at least one hour in advance of our first match. In some cases, it might be more or less than that, but we will certainly let you know.*

Leaving the site: *Typically, we ask that you do not leave the tournament site until we are completely finished for the day.*

Eating: *We cannot tell you what to or what not to feed your child; however, we would ask that you make sure they get a good, healthy breakfast. Try to avoid sugar, fried foods, caffeine, etc. Make sure they are well hydrated throughout the day and have healthy snacks available between games. Concession stand food is not usually advisable. We will try to arrange a time to eat between our matches.*

Officiating: *When we are the “working” team, the kids can have no cell phones, iPods, etc. No member of the team should leave the tournament site until they are dismissed. All members will stay for the “work” assignments, regardless of whether everyone is working or not. It is a team assignment so we will all stay.*

How does travel work?

There is extensive travel required for our team. Travel expenses (including but not limited to hotel, transportation, parking fees, spectator admission, meals, etc) are NOT included in the fees that you are paying to be on the team. The club sets aside a block of rooms at hotels as a convenience. In most cases, National Qualifier tournaments and other high level tournaments have a Stay and Play Policy in place, so all members are required to stay at that hotel. All hotel information is available at www.ozarkjuniors.com on the Hotel Information page.

The parent handbook provides other important information. Please be sure to read this document. It covers important club policies in more detail.