



Dear 4/5U Coach -

Thank you for coaching these kids! We hope that you have a great time, and that the kids on your team learn a lot and most of all, HAVE FUN! You will be able to have a big impact on them, and we are glad that you have volunteered your time. There are lots of people that have been coaching MAA teams for a long time that you can get help from if you need it, so please don't hesitate to ask. Also, feel free to contact your Age Director, Chad Langford (chadandliz@cox.net) or me if you have questions or concerns. In general, the first few weeks after you agree to coach are a little hectic and you may wonder why you agreed to coach. I promise you though, things will slow down and you'll have a great time getting to know these kids.

TO DO LIST:

- _____ Submit your roster to through the Coach's Corner on the MAA website as soon as possible if you haven't already done so.
- _____ Schedule to attend appropriate session for the March 23/ 24 Coach Meeting and Meet Your Coach Meeting at Scheel's.
- _____ Bring a \$250 Equipment Deposit Check (funds will not be deposited - MAA will simply hold the check) to the meeting. Equipment will not be available unless a check is provided.
- _____ Complete the Coach Background Check at www.ncsisage.com (use 33690012)
- _____ Prepare a plan to provide parents at the Meet Your Coach session to include:
Practice Plan, Parent's Meeting, and optional names on jerseys

EQUIPMENT:

At the Coaches Meeting, you will receive an equipment bag that includes 4 batting helmets, a catcher's mask, chest protector and shin guards. You'll need to have a deposit check of \$250 that we will return after the season is over and you return the equipment. You will need to bring this check to the mandatory Coaches Meeting in March. Many kids like to get their own helmet, they just need to know that they will most likely need to share it with the other kids if they bring it to their games.

BACKGROUND CHECK:

To ensure the safety of our players, we ask that you complete an online background check. To do this, go to www.millardathletics.com, select the Coach's Corner on the far right side, and click on "MAA Coaches Background Screening". Enter the Self Registration Number: 33690012. Please do this as soon as possible, and it must be done prior to your first game.

MANDATORY COACHES MEETING – March 24 at Scheel's 8:00 AM:

Your attendance at this meeting is crucial and mandatory. Much will be discussed, and you will receive your equipment bag, hats and jerseys, and lots of information that you will need. If you absolutely cannot attend, please have someone from your team (assistant coach, spouse, another parent) attend.

MANDATORY MEET THE COACH EVENT – March 24 at Scheel’s 10:00 – 11:30 AM:

This event is a great time to meet your players and parents. You’ll be able to distribute the hats, and if you choose not to put names on the back, their jerseys. At the event, you’ll want to know what color pants, belt, and socks (if you choose) that you would like players to wear so that they can plan on purchasing them before the first game.

ROSTER:

You will receive your official roster at the Coaches’ Meeting if not before. You are encouraged to contact the parents of your players to introduce yourself, and this is a great time to solicit help for practices and games. You’ll want to have an idea of when you’d like to schedule practices (we recommend 1 per week for 4-7U, but that is up to you). We also recommend that you schedule a parents meeting before you start practices, and you can have your parent’s meeting right before your first practice if you like. At that parent meeting you can let them know what you need from them (help at practices and games, someone to be a team mom – more info on that later, have players on time to practices and games, etc) and go over the questions that they have. You’ll also want to go over the Spectator Code of Conduct and convey your expectations and coaching style.

PRACTICES:

We recommend that you have a set practice time and place (you’ll need to find practice space on your own), and let your parents know as far in advance as you can. Try and schedule a practice as soon as possible (even the week of the coaches meeting if you can!) Enlist the parent’s help, as 4 and 5 year olds are kind of like herding cats and it can be a challenge to keep their attention.

If you don’t already have one, I recommend picking up a set of bases and a tee. You might also want to use wiffle balls or tennis balls when practicing fly balls.

We also recommend that you have a practice plan, possibly with stations for 3-4 kids each and rotate. This keeps the kids from standing around a lot, and as engaged as possible. Also, pitch from a kneeling position, otherwise it looks like Randy Johnson is pitching to them and it’s pretty intimidating! I have a sample practice plan and a number of resources on drills and station ideas, so if you would like a copy, just let me know.

We will have a coaching clinic that is free to you, and will be very helpful, so please plan on attending. If you would like more help during the season, please contact your Age Director or the office and we can recommend coaches to contact for help. The Hilltopper Clinic has two upcoming free clinics, March 19 and March 26 from 6-8:30 at UBA. There is more information on our website in the Coach’s Corner.

GAMES:

The game schedule will be available in early April on the MAA website (www.millardathletics.com). All games will be played on field 6 (the little one in the middle) at the Anderson Baseball complex. The games will begin the weekend of April 16.

The MAA website is very up to date on weather and any game postponements. Please check the website if you have questions about whether your game will be played or not. You can also sign up on the www.millardathletics.com website to receive text messages when the MAA fields are rained out. Because of field space, it is likely that some rainouts will be rescheduled once school is out for the summer, but it’s likely that we won’t be able to reschedule them all. There will be no

games scheduled over Memorial Day weekend, and we will have the last game completed by July 2.

RULES:

Here are the abbreviated rules for the 4-5 Year old league. The games are usually 45-60 minutes long, or about 2 innings. Their attention span doesn't last much longer than that! Each player gets 6 chances to hit a pitch from you, (or another adult that you designate), and if they don't get a hit, then they hit off the tee. Each hit is a single with the exception of the last batter. Each team bats all the way through with last batter clearing the bases. Each player plays defense every inning, usually we add a few positions in the infield and outfield. No outs are enforced, but they are encouraged! No score is kept.

A full rule book is available online at the MAA website.

UNIFORM:

It is up to you to determine what color baseball pants, belt, and socks (if you like) you would like your team to wear. You'll receive a hats and jerseys with your team name at either the Coaches Meeting or the Meet the Coach Event. You can hand out the hats at the Meet the Coach event, but if you would like to have names put on the back of their shirts, you won't want to hand out shirts until that is done. You can get the names put on through Lawlor's and you can collect money from each player for this if you like.

PICTURES:

You will be given packets for photos with your scheduled time on them at the coaches meeting. You don't need to gather as a team before you get in line for your photo, as there is no team photo taken. You will be on the composite (as well as your assistants if you choose), so you'll need to wear either the coaches shirt that you'll receive today, or a shirt that will coordinate with your team. You'll also want your team hat, and you'll want to make sure that your team brings their gloves for their picture. People don't have to get their pictures taken at the scheduled time, but it is helpful to Modern Images if they are as close as possible to the scheduled time.

OTHER TIPS:

- Get a "Team Mom" that can manage non-practice items, like:
 - Picture distribution
 - Snack schedule
 - Season end party/prizes (if you choose)
 - Names on jerseys
 - Website management (you'll hear more about this at the Coaches Meeting)

- Get two nametags per player for each practice for a while (front and back of shirt) to make it easier on you and those helping you!

- There isn't a year-end tournament, so if you decide to provide kids with a trophy or something like that, you are welcome to get donations from parents to pay for those if you like. We have some recommended trophy places if you are looking for ideas.

- Find someone that can manage your dugout during games, as well as several parents that can coach 1st and 3rd bases. Generally someone that is good at "herding cats" and isn't afraid to restore order is a good choice for the dugout.

- Communicate with your player's parents regularly (probably once a week or so), and use them in the practices and games as much as you can.
- If you need help, ask for it! MAA has a great group of seasoned coaches that are happy to help with a practice. Let me know if you need guidance or assistance and I'm glad to help.
- **MAKE SURE THAT YOU AND THE KIDS HAVE FUN!!** This experience should be one that these kids remember as adults as being great, and you can make a huge impact on them.

Thank you again for coaching for MAA, I appreciate and thank you for your service! Please don't hesitate to contact me, and you will be seeing and hearing from me throughout the season.

Sincerely,

Jeff LeDent
General Manager
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