

Middleton Baseball & Softball Commission

Operational guidelines for baseball programs

Amended December 30, 2016

Following are the general characteristics of each baseball program in which the Middleton Baseball & Softball Commission participates and the general operational guidelines for each program as administered by the program director and the head coaches selected by the Commission. The baseball program is open to all boys and girls of the Middleton-Cross Plains School District. Typically boys participate in the baseball program and girls in the softball program.

Coach Pitch Program

Age:

Grades 2-3, typically ages 6 - 8

Philosophy:

This program is instructional in nature and is organized to teach the basics of the game. The Coach Pitch Program has no state or national affiliation. The program starts with two weekend sessions while school is still in session of general instruction on hitting, fielding, and throwing before actual game situations are implemented. These sessions are focused on the basics of how coaches can run practices and teach skills. The coaches do the pitching in this league. The league does not keep win/loss records.

Season:

The season begins the first Tuesday after school is completed. The season runs for 7 weeks. Games are on Tuesday and Thursday evenings. The first two or three weeks may contain a league-wide practice on one of the nights. Game times will be 6 or 8PM. Times and diamonds will be determined by MBSC. Games have a 1-½ hour time limit. Teams play 14 games. The season culminates with an All-Star game for all the 8-year olds, played in early August and is followed by hot dogs and soda for all players in the program.

Team Composition:

The league director without consideration to talent level organizes teams. Consideration is given to keeping players from the same neighborhood or school together. There are typically 7 or 8 teams in the league.

Little Bucks Program

Age:

Grades 4-5, typically ages 9 - 10

Philosophy:

This program is recreational in nature. The purpose and spirit of the Little Bucks program is to teach and play baseball, not necessarily winning. The league does not keep win/loss records. The Little Bucks program has no state or national affiliation. In the Little Bucks program the players begin to pitch to the batters. All 9 & 10 year olds who are interested in playing baseball will sign up for the Little Bucks programs. Those seeking a more competitive program can choose to be evaluated then considered for a roster spot on a Minors team. Those who are selected will play in the Minors program, all others will be placed on a Little Bucks team.

Season:

The season begins the first Monday after school is completed. The season runs for 7 weeks. Games are on Monday and Wednesday. Game times will be 6 or 8PM. Times and diamonds will be determined by MBSC. Teams play 11-14 games. The season culminates with an All-Star game for all 10-year olds, played in early August and is followed by hot dogs and soda for all players in the program.

Team Composition:

The league director without consideration to talent level organizes teams. Consideration is given to balancing teams by evenly mixing both 9's and 10's on each team. There are typically 4 - 6 teams each season. Most commonly teams are coached by volunteer parents. Team hats and t-shirts are provided, along with baseballs, catching gear, and batting helmets. Umpires will be provided.

Pepper Program

Age:

Grades 6-7, typically ages 11 – 12. However, some 13 year olds may play.

Philosophy:

The Pepper League is a recreational program. The purpose and spirit of the Pepper League is to teach and play baseball, not necessarily winning. The league does not keep win/loss records. The Pepper league has no state or national affiliation. All 11 & 12 year olds who are interested in playing baseball will sign up for the Pepper program. Those who wish a more competitive program can choose for an evaluation to play on an age appropriate competitive team. Those who are selected will play games in and around Dane County, which includes tournaments on many weekends. All others will be placed on a Pepper League team.

Season:

The season begins the first Tuesday after school is completed. The season runs for 7 weeks. Games are on Tuesday and Thursday's. Game times will be 6 or 8PM. Teams play 11-14 games. Times and diamonds will be determined by MBSC. The season culminates with an All-Star game for all 12-year olds, played in early August and is followed by hot dogs and soda for all league players.

Team Composition:

The league director, without consideration to talent levels organizes teams.

Minors Baseball Ages 10 and under

Age: Under 10 (with birth date cut offs defined by national rules – April 30th)

Philosophy: The Minors Baseball Program is a developmental and competitive program that plays in a Dane County league and has both state and national affiliations. This program requires a major commitment by players, coaches and parents. Middleton may assemble as many teams in the age group as is deemed fitting for a given season depending on interest. The number of teams will be decided by the League Director with the support and approval of the MBSC Baseball Subcommittee.

All 9 & 10 year olds who are interested in playing baseball will sign up for the Little Bucks programs. Those who wish a more competitive program can chose for an evaluation to play on a Cal Ripken (minors) team. Those players who are selected will play Cal Ripken (minors); all others will be placed on a Little Bucks team.

Season: The season begins in mid-May. Games are typically on Tuesday and Friday evenings beginning at 6 PM. Game times are tentative and may change after the league scheduling meeting. Middleton home game times will be 6 or 8PM. Times and diamonds will be determined by MBSC.

The Dane County league is completed around the 2nd weekend in July. There is a State Tournament for 10 (and under) year olds and for 9 (and under) year olds that takes place after the season. MBSC participation in these tournaments will be determined based upon player interest, coach availability, and the League Director.

Team Composition: All players 10 and under who sign up for the Little Bucks program are eligible to tryout sign up for the Cal Ripken (minors) program. Players are selected through an evaluation which may combine a series of workouts as well as any previous experience that a player has had in the MBSC Baseball program. All teams will be selected in a draft supervised by the League Director and held by the coaches selected to participate in the program. It is the intention of the MBSC to form as many teams as possible while maintaining the competitive level in the league. Players who are not selected to play in the Cal Ripken (minors) program will be automatically placed into the Little Bucks program.

Evaluations for the Cal Ripken program are held in March in order to meet state and national deadlines for submitting rosters. All interested players are encouraged to attend the evaluations to maximize their opportunity to make a team.

Teams will have a maximum of 15 players and are typically comprised of 12-14 players. The number of teams and the number of players per team will be decided on by the League Director with the support and approval of the MBSC Baseball Subcommittee. The number of teams in the Cal Ripken (minors) program will be determined each year by both the number of interested participants as well as the number of qualified coaches interested in participating in the program.

Teams are organized based on the results of the evaluation. League teams consist of both 9 and 10 year olds on each team. Each team is projected to have the same number of participants. This approach promotes the development of all players better than if one team was stacked for a “win it all” approach.

Tournaments: Based on player interest, coach availability, and the discretion of the League Director, there may also be an option for some weekend tournaments for some players within the Minors. Participation in the Minors program does not guarantee a player the opportunity to play in tournaments. Composition of the tournament teams (if any) will be determined by the coaches and League Director. Participation on a tournament team will require a higher level of commitment by the player and family for additional practices, weekend tournaments, and additional fees.

Unlike the Majors Program, the Minors Program will not have a Tournament Only team. Any tournament teams formed from within the Minors Program would be in addition to the league play.

Majors Baseball Ages 11 and 12

Age: Will consist of only 11 and 12 year olds (with birth date cut offs defined by national rules – April 30th). While it is certainly possible that other communities may allow younger kids to play in the majors, the MBSC has decided to allow only 11 and 12 year olds to participate in the major’s baseball program.

Philosophy: The Majors Baseball Program is designed to be a competitive program that plays in the Dane County league and has both state and national affiliations. The national program has leagues played on different diamond layouts. Diamonds may have 46’ and 50’ pitching mounds with 60’ or 70’ bases, respectively. The Dane County league, and most tournaments, use the 50’/70’ distances. Middleton may assemble as many teams in the age group as is deemed fitting for a given season. The number of teams that are selected will be decided by the League Director with the approval of the MBSC Baseball Subcommittee.

Evaluations: All 11 & 12 year olds who are interested in playing baseball will sign up for the Pepper program. Those who wish a more competitive experience can participate in an evaluation to play on a major’s baseball team. Evaluations for competitive play in the Major baseball program will be held in March to allow for the selection of teams. Players for the Major baseball program are selected through an evaluation which combine a workout as well as any previous experience that a player has had in the MBSC Baseball program. During this evaluation process players and families will be asked about their level of commitment to baseball for the upcoming season.

It is our intent to find a place and a team for all kids in the baseball program. Those that are not chosen to play competitive baseball will be placed in the Pepper Program.

Competitive Play Options: Majors baseball teams may be formed consisting of all 11 year olds or all 12 year olds. There can also be teams formed that consist of both 11 and 12 year olds. The makeup of the teams each year will be decided by a combination of registration numbers and level of commitment expressed by the players/families. The decision on the number of teams, composition of the teams, and competitive play options will be decided by the League Director, with approval from the Baseball Subcommittee.

Depending on the circumstances each year, options for competitive Majors baseball may include some or all of the following:

- League only team – players on a league only team will play in the Dane County league. The season begins in May. Games in previous years have been on Monday and Friday evenings either at 6 or 8 PM. Game times (and dates) are tentative and may change after the league scheduling meeting. Middleton home game times will be 6 or 8PM. Times and diamonds will be determined by MBSC. Typically, players who are also on a travel team outside of the MBSC program will be eligible for the league only team and will not be considered for league and tournament, or tournament only teams.
- League and tournament team – players on a league and tournament team will play in the Dane County league, or similar, as described for the league only team. In addition, this team will also play in a limited number of weekend tournaments (typically 3). This team may choose to participate in the Cal Ripken State Tournament.
- Tournament only team – if there is sufficient interest, and if approved by the League Director and Baseball Subcommittee, a tournament only team(s) may be formed. These teams would not play in the Dane County league but would play weekend tournaments only. Generally, the level of play in the weekend tournaments is more competitive than in the League. Tournament only teams will typically play in approximately 8 weekend tournaments.

Team Composition:

Teams will have a maximum of 15 players and are typically comprised of 12-14 players. Cal Ripken Dane County rules provide that no more than 8 players per team can be 12-year old players. Should teams choose to play in the Cal Ripken program the makeup of league teams will adhere to these guidelines. If teams are formed outside of the Cal Ripken league then the mix of 11 and 12 year olds is unrestricted. In this situation, teams may be comprised of all 11s or all 12s, or a combination of 11s and 12s. Teams are organized based on the results of the evaluation, previous experience in the program, and stated level of commitment. Players who score the highest during evaluations will be provided an opportunity to play on the team equal to their stated level of commitment. Players who were not ranked near the top during the evaluation process may be placed on a team with a lower level of commitment than their stated desire.

Babe Ruth Prep Program

Age:

13 with birth date cut off defined by national rule (currently April 30)

Philosophy:

The Babe Ruth Prep Program participates in the Dane County League and has both state and national affiliations. The Majors program requires additional fees and a major commitment by players and parents. The Majors team will participate in the highest league level that Dane County offers, as well as weekend state wide tournaments including the state tournament. The Minors program will require less commitment from players and parents and no additional fees. The Minors team will play in a less competitive Dane County League and will enter in one area tournament and the state tournament if desired.

Season:

The season begins in late May. Games are Tuesday evening's beginning at 6 PM in most cases and Saturday Morning's beginning at 10 AM. Middleton Home games are played on Friday evenings instead of Saturday mornings. Teams will practice 2 to 4 times per week prior to the season starting and then usually once or twice during the season. Two league games are played during the week. The Majors team will participate in weekend tournaments as the league schedule permits.

Post Season:

The Dane County League is completed the 2nd week in July. League teams have an open invitation to the State Tournament which is usually the 3rd week in July. State Tournament winners advance to the Ohio Valley regional tournaments held in late July and early August. Regional Champions advance to National Championships held in late August.

Team Composition:

Players are selected for the Majors team through an evaluation process. Player placement on Major and Minor teams will be based on evaluation performance and commitment level. Participating in the evaluations does not guarantee that a player will be placed on the Majors Team. If it is determined by the evaluators and the league director, that the player will be more successful on the Minors team, the player will be assigned to that team. Players that prefer to play on a Minors team will be placed on that team as long as the numbers of participants determine that a Minors team will be formed. The evaluations are held in early March in order to meet state and national deadlines for submitting rosters. Teams will have a minimum of 12 players and a maximum of 15 players on their roster. Teams are allowed to add players to complete a maximum roster of 15 for the post season. The added players may be from other Middleton teams or League teams.

Babe Ruth Program

Age:

14 & 15 with birth date cut off defined by national rule (currently April 30)

Philosophy:

The Babe Ruth 14/15 Program participates in the Dane County League and has both state and national affiliations. Depending on the number of registered players, the League Director will determine the number of teams that will be formed. A number of options are available including Majors and Minors levels at each age group, and a combined 14/15 year old team. The Majors program requires additional fees and a major commitment by players and parents. The Majors team will participate in the highest league level that Dane County offers, as well as weekend state wide tournaments including the state tournament. The Minors program will require less

commitment from players and parents and no additional fees. The Minors team will play in a less competitive Dane County League and will enter in one or two area tournament. The 14/15 team will require additional fees and a modest commitment level. The team would play in a League that consists of teams from western Dane County and Iowa County and will enter one or two area tournaments including the state tournament if desired.

Season:

The season begins in late May. Games are Monday and Thursday evenings beginning at 6 PM in most cases. Teams will practice 2 to 4 times per week prior to the season starting and then usually once or twice during the season. Two league games are played during the week. These teams will participate in weekend tournaments as the league schedule permits. The Dane County League is completed the 2nd week in July. All Dane County teams have an open invitation to advance to the State Tournament which is usually the 3rd week in July. State Tournament winners advance to the Ohio Valley regional tournaments held in late July and early August. Regional Champions advance to National Championships held in late August.

Team Composition:

Players are selected for the Majors team through an evaluation process. Player placement on Major and Minor teams will be based on evaluation performance and commitment level. Participating in the evaluations does not guarantee that a player will be placed on the Majors Team. If it is determined by the evaluators and the league director, that the player will be more successful on the Minors team, the player will be assigned to that team. Players that prefer to play on a Minors team will be placed on that team as long as the number of participants determines that a Minors team will be formed. The evaluations are held in early March in order to meet state and national deadlines for submitting rosters. Teams will have a minimum of 12 players and a maximum of 15 players on their roster. Teams are allowed to add players to complete a maximum roster of 15 for the post season. The added players may be from other Middleton teams or League teams.

Capital Lakes Program

Age:

15-18

Program Description

The MBSC Capital Lakes Baseball Program is a competitive program for players of ages 15-18 that is primarily for players who played on a Middleton High School team during the previous spring season. This program will have teams that will play in the Capital Lakes Summer Baseball League, either in the Senior Division or the Junior Division. Senior division teams are usually comprised of mostly juniors and sophomores from the previous high school season (ages 16-18). Junior division teams normally are comprised of mostly freshmen from the previous high school season (ages 15-16). Team composition, league division level and number of teams may vary depending on registration numbers and commitment of players and coaches. Teams in this league may also choose to play additional games in selected weekend tournaments. Graduated seniors normally do not play in this program, but may be invited to participate if needed depending on the size and composition of the team rosters. **This is a competitive program and requires a major commitment by players in order to participate. It is recommended that players have a major commitment to the MBSC Senior Capital Lakes baseball team over other summer baseball options.**

Team Composition

Teams typically have 13-15 players on a roster, but this may vary depending on registration numbers. All players who played on a Middleton High School baseball team during the previous spring season are eligible to participate in this league. Players who did not participate on an MHS spring baseball team may be asked to join a Capital Lakes team if the team coaches and the league director determine that there is a roster spot for that player. Graduated seniors are normally not eligible to participate in this program, but the league director may invite a graduated senior to participate if there is a roster need and the team coaches are in agreement of this addition to the roster. Playing time for returning high school players will be emphasized over playing time for any graduated seniors that are invited to play on a team.

The number of teams in the Senior or Junior Division may vary from year to year, depending on registration numbers and the commitment of players and coaches. Players who played on the varsity team at MHS during the spring season (regardless of class) and all other juniors who played on a high school team at MHS during the spring season will be automatically eligible to participate on a Senior Division team. Sophomores and Freshmen who played on a high school team during the spring season will be eligible to participate on a Senior or Junior Division team. Students that did not play spring baseball at MHS but have a serious desire to play on a MHS baseball team in the future may be invited to play on a Senior or Junior Division team if there is a need to fill out rosters or if specific position players are needed. Evaluations may be necessary to determine which of these players are chosen to play on a league team. Players on a MBSC league team will be allowed to play on another MBSC league team as needed to help with player shortages during the league season or for weekend tournaments.

Season

The season will begin in early to mid-June, immediately after the end of the high school baseball season. Players may not play on a Capital Lakes baseball team until their high school season is completed. Teams typically play 14-16 league games over a five to six week period. Games may be played on any day of the week, but most Capital Lakes league games will likely be played during the week. Teams may also choose to play in a number of weekend tournaments during the season. The number of tournaments entered will depend on coaching preference along with player commitment and availability. The registration fee for the Capital Lakes program will be based on playing a league schedule along with 2-3 weekend tournaments. If a team desires to play a more aggressive schedule with additional weekend tournaments, then an additional player fee will be charged for these additional games.

The Capital Lakes League has not held an end of season tournament in recent years. MBSC league teams can choose to play in a league tournament if it would be held in any given year. Capital Lakes team do have the option of participating in an age appropriate Wisconsin State Legion baseball qualifying tournament at the end of the season. State Legion tournaments are held at the U-16, U-17 and Senior Division levels. The winner of a Legion qualifying tournament is eligible to play in the Wisconsin State Legion Baseball tournament that is held in early August. In order to register as an American Legion team and participate in this tournament, the team must meet the requirements set forth by Wisconsin Legion Baseball, which includes playing at least ten American Legion teams during the season. It is probably more realistic for MBSC teams to participate in the U-16 or U-17 divisions, due to less rule restrictions and more favorable competition at these ages.

Home Talent Program

Age:

Unlimited, typically have graduated from high school.

Philosophy:

Home Talent baseball is a competitive amateur baseball league. The home talent league is the largest amateur baseball league in the US and the league is comprised of teams from the southern third of Wisconsin. This program requires a serious desire to continue playing and developing as a competitive baseball player.

Season

There are two leagues: Day league and Night league. The Day league games are played at 1 PM on Sundays. The season starts in early May and lasts until the league champion is determined in September. The Day league is divided into four sections: Each section determines their section winner that advances to a 4-team round robin tournament to determine the champion. The Night league games are usually played at 7:30 PM or earlier if the field is without lights. There are four sections. There is a playoff to determine the Night league champion.

Team Composition:

The team is generally comprised of the players who played on the varsity team at Middleton High School or now live in the Middleton area. The number of players varies on a year by year basis, but the roster limit is 25 players.