

Hopkins Baseball Association

Player Placement & Evaluation Manual (13U–15U)

Official Operational Handbook for Team Evaluations and Player Placement

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1. Introduction & Purpose

This manual outlines the official process used by the Hopkins Baseball Association (HBA) to evaluate and place players on competitive teams for the 13U–15U age groups. The goal is to ensure a fair, consistent, and transparent process that supports player development while maintaining competitive balance across teams.

The Hopkins Baseball Association recognizes that player evaluation at the 13U–15U age levels presents unique challenges. Players in this age range are experiencing rapid physical development, skill acquisition, and maturation at different rates. What a player demonstrates today may be significantly different from what they will be capable of in six months or a year. This reality makes the evaluation process both critically important and inherently complex.

The manual serves multiple purposes:

- To provide coaches, directors, and board members with a clear, repeatable process for evaluations and team placement
- To provide parents with confidence that every player is evaluated under the same standards
- To establish transparency in how decisions are made and what factors are considered
- To document the association's commitment to fair and objective player assessment
- To create accountability through written procedures that are reviewed and improved annually

This document is intended to be a living manual that evolves based on experience, feedback, and best practices in youth baseball development. It represents the association's commitment to treating every player with respect and providing each family with a clear understanding of how placement decisions are made.

2. Guiding Principles

The Hopkins Baseball Association operates according to six core principles that guide all aspects of player evaluation and team placement. These principles are not merely aspirational—they are the foundation upon which every decision is made.

Fairness

Every player is evaluated using the same criteria and opportunities. No player receives preferential treatment or disadvantage based on factors outside their control. This means that every registered player participates in the same tryout format, is observed by the same evaluators, and is assessed using the same scoring rubrics. The committee does not consider factors such as family involvement in the association, financial contributions, or social relationships when making placement decisions.

Fairness also means recognizing that players develop at different rates. The committee takes into account not only current performance but also trajectory and potential. A player who shows consistent improvement and strong work ethic may be viewed differently than a player with similar current skills but declining effort or engagement.

Transparency

Families understand how decisions are made and what factors are considered. The evaluation process is documented and available for review. This manual itself is a key component of transparency—it is published and accessible to all families before tryouts begin. Parents know in advance what their children will be evaluated on, who will make the decisions, and how they can seek clarification if they have questions.

Transparency does not mean that individual player scores or committee deliberations are made public. Confidentiality protects player privacy and allows the committee to have candid discussions. However, the process itself is fully transparent, and any parent can request a review meeting to understand how their child was evaluated and what factors influenced the placement decision.

Player Development

Placement aims to challenge players appropriately for growth. The committee considers not only current skill level but also the environment that will support each player's continued improvement. This principle recognizes that the "right" team for a player is not necessarily the highest-level team they could possibly make, but rather the team where they will receive appropriate coaching, playing time, and developmental opportunities.

Player development is a long-term consideration. The committee thinks about where a player will be in one or two years, not just where they are today. A player who is placed on a team where they can contribute, gain confidence, and receive quality instruction is more likely to reach their potential than a player who is overmatched and sits on the bench.

Objectivity

Evaluations are based on data and observation, not assumptions. Multiple evaluators provide independent assessments to reduce individual bias. The committee uses standardized scoring forms, numerical ratings, and documented observations rather than relying on memory or general impressions.

Objectivity also means that the committee actively works to identify and mitigate bias. This is why the committee includes members with no children in the association or at the specific age level being evaluated. It is why all committee members sign conflict of interest forms. And it is why the President has veto authority and tie-breaking power—to ensure that the focus remains on fair assessment rather than individual preferences.

Integrity

Committee members must remain impartial and respect confidentiality. All participants sign conflict of interest forms and agree to maintain the privacy of evaluation materials. Integrity means that committee members put the interests of the players and the association ahead of personal relationships or preferences.

If a committee member has a conflict of interest related to a specific player—such as a family relationship, coaching relationship, or personal friendship—they must recuse themselves from discussions and decisions regarding that player. The committee takes these obligations seriously because the credibility of the entire evaluation process depends on the integrity of the people making the decisions.

Accountability

All actions follow this written process and are reviewed annually. The association commits to continuous improvement based on feedback from all stakeholders. Accountability means that the committee does not deviate from established procedures, and any changes to the process are documented and approved by the Board.

Accountability also means that the association is willing to examine its own performance. After each evaluation cycle, the committee solicits feedback from evaluators, coaches, and families. This feedback is reviewed, and improvements are implemented for the following year. The manual itself is updated to reflect lessons learned and best practices.

3. Governance & Committee Structure

The **Player Placement Committee (PPC)** oversees all player evaluations and final team decisions. The committee structure is designed to bring diverse perspectives to the decision-making process while maintaining strict conflict-of-interest standards.

Committee Composition

Role	Voting Status	Responsibility
Head Coach for the age group	Voting	Provides technical expertise, understanding of team needs, and insight into player fit within team systems and strategies
Director of Player Development	Voting	Offers long-term player growth perspective, compiles evaluation data, and ensures alignment with developmental philosophy
Board Member with no children in the association	Voting	Ensures impartial governance, organizational alignment, and adherence to association policies
At-Large Member with no children at that age level	Voting	Brings external objectivity, community perspective, and independence from internal association dynamics
President	Tie-breaking vote / Veto power	Ensures fairness and compliance with established procedures, moderates discussions, provides process oversight, breaks tie votes, and has veto authority over committee decisions

Why This Structure?

The five-member committee structure is intentional and designed to prevent any single individual from controlling placement decisions. Each member brings a different perspective:

The Head Coach understands the technical and tactical requirements of competitive baseball at this level. The coach knows what skills are needed for different positions, how players fit into team systems, and what level of competition the team will face. The coach also has insight into team chemistry and how different personalities and skill sets complement each other.

The Director of Player Development takes a longer view. While the head coach is focused on the upcoming season, the Director of Player Development is thinking about where players will be in one, two, or three years. This perspective ensures that placement decisions support long-term growth, not just short-term team success.

The Board Member with no children in the association provides governance oversight and ensures that decisions align with association policies and values. This member has no personal stake in any individual placement decision, which allows them to focus purely on fairness and process integrity.

The At-Large Community Member with no children at the age level brings an outside perspective. This member is not embedded in the day-to-day operations of the association and can offer an independent viewpoint. This role is particularly valuable in identifying potential blind spots or biases that might not be visible to those more closely involved.

The President serves as a process guardian and final authority. The President ensures that the committee follows established procedures, that all voices are heard, and that decisions are made based on the criteria outlined in this manual. The President has the authority to question decisions, exercise veto power if a decision does not align with association values or procedures, and serve as the tie-breaking vote in the event of a stalemate. If the President determines that a tie cannot be resolved through further discussion, the President may also request a full Board vote on the matter.

Committee Member Qualifications

All committee members must have knowledge of baseball and player development appropriate to their role. The Head Coach and Director of Player Development must have coaching experience and demonstrated expertise in player evaluation. The Board Member and At-Large Member must have sufficient baseball knowledge to understand the evaluation criteria and participate meaningfully in discussions, but they are not required to have coaching experience.

All members must sign a **Conflict of Interest and Confidentiality Form** before participating in the evaluation process. This form requires members to disclose any

potential conflicts and to commit to maintaining the confidentiality of all evaluation materials and discussions.

4. Evaluation Philosophy

Player placement is fundamentally about matching players with the environment that will support their growth and development. The Hopkins Baseball Association believes that the evaluation process must balance multiple considerations: current skill level, developmental trajectory, work ethic, attitude, and team fit.

The Challenge of Evaluating Rapidly Developing Players

Players in the 13U–15U age range are experiencing some of the most rapid physical and skill development of their lives. Growth spurts, increases in strength and coordination, and maturation of baseball-specific skills can happen quickly and unpredictably. A player who struggles with velocity in March may add five miles per hour to their fastball by June. A player who is physically smaller in the fall may experience a growth spurt over the winter that changes their entire athletic profile.

This reality makes evaluation both critically important and inherently imperfect. The committee cannot predict the future, but it can observe current performance, assess trajectory, and make informed judgments about where players are likely to be in the near term.

Why the Tryout Evaluation is the Most Important Data Point

Because players at this age are developing so rapidly, the most important data point in the evaluation process is what the committee observes during the tryout itself. The tryout represents the player's current ability level—what they can do right now, under observation, in a structured baseball environment.

Past performance, coach feedback, clinic attendance, and external observations are all valuable supplementary data points. They provide context and help the committee understand a player's history and trajectory. However, these data points are secondary to what the player demonstrates during the tryout.

This philosophy is important for several reasons:

First, it ensures that every player has an equal opportunity to demonstrate their current abilities. A player who had a difficult season last year but has worked hard and improved

significantly can show that improvement during the tryout. The committee will not be locked into outdated assessments.

Second, it recognizes that players develop at different rates and in different environments. A player who excelled in recreational baseball may struggle in competitive travel ball, or vice versa. The tryout provides a standardized environment where all players are assessed under the same conditions.

Third, it prevents the evaluation process from becoming a referendum on clinic attendance, external team participation, or other activities that may not be accessible to all families. The committee wants to evaluate baseball ability, not family resources or scheduling flexibility.

Balancing Measurable Skills and Intangibles

The committee evaluates both measurable skills (hitting, fielding, throwing, speed, pitching) and intangible qualities (attitude, coachability, composure, leadership). Both are important, but they serve different purposes in the evaluation.

Measurable skills provide objective data about what a player can currently do. These skills are scored numerically and can be compared across players. Intangibles provide insight into how a player is likely to develop and how they will contribute to team culture. A player with strong intangibles may have a higher ceiling than their current skills suggest, because they are likely to maximize their potential through hard work and positive attitude.

The committee does not use a rigid formula to weight these factors. Instead, committee members discuss each player holistically, considering both current skills and developmental potential.

5. Evaluation Components

Each player is assessed across several key areas to create a comprehensive profile. The evaluation is designed to capture both current performance and indicators of future potential.

Core Skills

Hitting

Hitting is evaluated based on swing mechanics, contact rate, power, and pitch recognition. Evaluators observe:

- **Swing mechanics**: Stance, load, stride, swing path, follow-through, and balance
- **Contact rate**: Ability to make consistent contact with the ball during batting practice and live at-bats
- **Power**: Bat speed, exit velocity (when measurable), and ability to drive the ball to the outfield
- **Pitch recognition**: Ability to identify pitch types, lay off pitches outside the strike zone, and adjust to different pitch locations
- **Approach**: Patience at the plate, ability to work counts, and situational hitting awareness

Evaluators understand that hitting is one of the most complex skills in baseball and that players at this age are still developing their approaches. The committee looks for sound fundamentals and indicators of future development, not just current statistics.

Fielding

Fielding is evaluated based on hands, footwork, reaction time, and throwing accuracy. Evaluators observe:

- **Hands**: Ability to field the ball cleanly, soft hands, and glove presentation
- **Footwork**: Proper positioning, efficient movement to the ball, and footwork on transfers and throws
- **Reaction time**: First-step quickness, anticipation, and ability to react to batted balls
- **Range**: Lateral movement, ability to cover ground, and positioning awareness
- **Throwing accuracy**: Ability to make accurate throws from the field to bases
- **Arm strength**: Velocity and carry on throws from fielding positions

Fielding evaluations are conducted at multiple positions when possible to assess versatility. Players are observed fielding ground balls, fly balls, and line drives in game-like situations.

Throwing

Throwing is evaluated based on arm strength, accuracy, and release mechanics. Evaluators observe:

- **Arm strength**: Velocity on throws from various positions and distances
- **Accuracy**: Ability to hit targets consistently
- **Release mechanics**: Arm action, release point, and throwing motion efficiency
- **Arm health**: Smoothness of throwing motion and absence of mechanical issues that could indicate injury risk

Throwing is evaluated both in isolation (long toss, positional throws) and in game-like situations (fielding and throwing to bases).

Speed & Agility

Speed and agility are evaluated based on timed runs, base-running instincts, and lateral movement. Evaluators observe:

- **60-yard dash time**: Timed sprint to measure straight-line speed
- **Base-running**: First-step quickness out of the batter's box, rounding bases, and sliding technique
- **Lateral movement**: Ability to change direction quickly, relevant for both fielding and base-running
- **Acceleration**: Ability to reach top speed quickly
- **Base-running instincts**: Reading pitchers, taking leads, and making smart decisions on the bases

Speed and agility are important not only for base-running but also for defensive positioning and range.

Pitching

Pitching is evaluated based on velocity, command, pitch variety, and mound presence. Evaluators observe:

- **Velocity**: Fastball speed measured with radar gun
- **Command**: Ability to locate pitches in the strike zone and hit spots
- **Strike percentage**: Ratio of strikes to total pitches thrown
- **Pitch variety**: Number and quality of different pitch types (fastball, changeup, curveball, etc.)
- **Mound presence**: Composure, confidence, and ability to handle pressure situations
- **Mechanics**: Pitching motion, balance, arm action, and delivery consistency
- **Pitchability**: Ability to sequence pitches, work counts, and adjust to hitters

Pitching evaluations are conducted in bullpen sessions and, when possible, in live at-bat situations. The committee recognizes that pitching development at this age is highly variable and that velocity gains can happen rapidly.

Additional Factors

Positional Flexibility

Positional flexibility is the ability to contribute effectively at multiple positions. Players who can play multiple positions add significant value to team depth and roster flexibility. The committee evaluates:

- **Primary position**: The position where the player is most skilled and comfortable
- **Secondary positions**: Other positions where the player can contribute effectively
- **Willingness to play multiple positions**: Attitude and openness to positional flexibility
- **Learning ability**: How quickly the player can adapt to new positions

Positional flexibility is particularly valuable at the 13U–15U level, where players are still developing their defensive identities and teams need roster depth.

Intangibles

Intangibles are qualities that are difficult to measure numerically but are critical to player development and team success. These include:

- **Coachability**: Willingness to listen, accept feedback, and make adjustments
- **Attitude**: Positive demeanor, resilience in the face of failure, and supportive behavior toward teammates
- **Composure**: Ability to handle pressure, maintain focus, and avoid emotional extremes
- **Work ethic**: Effort during tryouts, hustle on and off the field, and commitment to improvement
- **Team leadership**: Ability to encourage teammates, communicate effectively, and set a positive example
- **Baseball IQ**: Understanding of game situations, strategic thinking, and decision-making

Intangibles are assessed through observation during tryouts and through feedback from previous coaches. The committee looks for players who demonstrate a growth mindset and a team-first attitude.

Past Coach Input

Past coach input provides valuable context about a player's history and development trajectory. Coaches from previous Hopkins Baseball teams are asked to provide feedback on:

- **Attendance and reliability**: Did the player attend practices and games consistently?
- **Effort and engagement**: Did the player work hard and stay engaged throughout the season?
- **Improvement over the season**: Did the player show growth and development?
- **Coachability**: How did the player respond to coaching and feedback?
- **Game performance**: How did the player perform in competitive situations?
- **Team contribution**: How did the player contribute to team culture and success?

Past coach input is one data point among many. It provides historical context but does not override what the player demonstrates during the current tryout.

6. What Coaches Consider in Their Decisions

When the Player Placement Committee convenes to make final roster decisions, the Head Coach and Director of Player Development bring specific expertise and considerations to the discussion. Understanding what coaches consider helps families appreciate the complexity of the placement process.

Technical Skill and Positional Fit

Coaches evaluate whether a player has the technical skills required to compete at a given level. This includes not only individual skills (hitting, fielding, throwing) but also positional fit. Different positions require different skill sets:

- **Catchers** need strong arms, quick release, blocking ability, and leadership skills
- **Middle infielders** need quick hands, good footwork, arm strength, and range
- **Corner infielders** need strong arms, good hands, and often power at the plate
- **Outfielders** need speed, arm strength, and ability to track fly balls
- **Pitchers** need velocity, command, pitch variety, and mental toughness

Coaches consider whether the team has needs at specific positions and whether players can fill those roles effectively. A player who is a strong hitter but lacks a clear defensive

position may be evaluated differently than a player who excels at a premium defensive position like catcher or shortstop.

Competitive Level and Team Balance

Coaches think about the level of competition the team will face and whether players are ready for that level. A player who would dominate at one level might struggle at a higher level, and vice versa. The goal is to place players where they will be challenged but not overwhelmed.

Coaches also consider team balance. A well-balanced team has:

- **Depth at all positions**: Enough players to cover injuries, absences, and positional needs
- **Pitching depth**: Multiple pitchers who can throw strikes and compete
- **Offensive balance**: A mix of contact hitters, power hitters, and speed
- **Leadership**: Players who can set a positive tone and help younger or less experienced players
- **Versatility**: Players who can play multiple positions and adapt to different roles

Team balance is not about making every team identical. It is about ensuring that each team has the resources to compete and develop effectively.

Player Development Trajectory

Coaches consider not only where a player is today but where they are likely to be in the near future. This involves assessing:

- **Physical development**: Is the player experiencing a growth spurt? Are they adding strength and coordination?
- **Skill development**: Is the player improving rapidly, plateauing, or regressing?
- **Work ethic**: Does the player demonstrate the commitment and attitude needed to continue improving?
- **Coachability**: Is the player receptive to instruction and willing to make adjustments?

A player who is currently slightly below the level of their peers but is improving rapidly and demonstrates strong work ethic may be viewed as having a higher ceiling than a player with similar current skills but less developmental momentum.

Team Chemistry and Culture

Coaches consider how players will fit into the team's culture. Baseball is a team sport, and team chemistry matters. Coaches look for players who:

- ****Support their teammates****: Encourage others, celebrate successes, and help teammates through struggles
- ****Communicate effectively****: Talk on the field, provide feedback, and work together
- ****Handle adversity****: Respond positively to failure, learn from mistakes, and maintain composure
- ****Set a positive example****: Demonstrate good sportsmanship, respect for opponents and umpires, and commitment to the game

A player who is talented but disruptive or negative can harm team culture. Conversely, a player who may not be the most skilled but brings energy, positivity, and leadership can elevate the entire team.

Playing Time and Development Opportunities

Coaches think about where each player will get meaningful playing time and development opportunities. A player who would sit on the bench at a higher level may be better served playing regularly at a level where they can contribute and build confidence.

Playing time is not guaranteed at any level, and players must earn their positions through performance and effort. However, the committee tries to place players in situations where they have a realistic opportunity to contribute and develop.

Commitment and Availability

Coaches consider whether players are committed to the team and available for practices and games. At the 13U–15U level, players may have multiple commitments—school sports, other travel teams, family obligations. The committee understands that conflicts arise, but consistent attendance and commitment to the team are important factors.

A player who is frequently unavailable due to other commitments may be viewed differently than a player who prioritizes Hopkins Baseball and is consistently present.

7. External Data Points and Information Gathering

In addition to the tryout evaluation, the Player Placement Committee gathers supplementary information from a variety of external sources. These data points provide context and help the committee develop a more complete picture of each player's abilities and development.

Outreach to Coaches from Other Organizations

The committee makes a proactive effort to speak with coaches from other organizations where Hopkins players may have participated. This includes:

- **Club teams**: Travel baseball organizations, showcase teams, and elite development programs
- **School teams**: Middle school and high school baseball programs
- **Other recreational leagues**: Community leagues or summer programs
- **Camps and clinics**: Baseball camps, position-specific clinics, and skills development programs

The committee reaches out to these coaches to gather information about:

- **Player performance**: How did the player perform in games and practices?
- **Skill development**: Has the player shown improvement in specific areas?
- **Work ethic and attitude**: How does the player approach practice and competition?
- **Coachability**: How does the player respond to coaching and feedback?
- **Team contribution**: How does the player interact with teammates and contribute to team culture?

This outreach is conducted respectfully and with the understanding that external coaches may have limited time and availability. The committee is grateful for any insights these coaches can provide, but does not expect detailed evaluations.

Attendance and Observation at Clinics

When Hopkins Baseball or other organizations host clinics, the committee makes an effort to attend and observe players in action. Clinics provide an opportunity to see players in instructional settings, working on specific skills, and interacting with coaches.

Observations from clinics can provide valuable data points about:

- **Skill development**: What skills is the player working on? How are they progressing?

- **Receptiveness to instruction**: How does the player respond to coaching during the clinic?
- **Effort and engagement**: Is the player fully engaged and working hard?
- **Interaction with peers**: How does the player interact with other participants?

Important clarification: Attendance at Hopkins-sponsored clinics is **not** a requirement for evaluation, and **non-attendance is not a negative factor**. The committee understands that families have different schedules, financial constraints, and commitments. A player who does not attend any Hopkins clinics will not be penalized in the evaluation process.

Clinic observations are simply one more data point—helpful when available, but not essential. The tryout evaluation remains the most important factor.

How External Data Points Are Used

All external data points—coach feedback and clinic observations—are considered supplementary information. They help the committee understand a player's history, trajectory, and context, but they do not override the tryout evaluation.

The committee uses external data points to:

- **Confirm observations**: If the tryout evaluation shows a player struggling with a specific skill, but external feedback indicates the player is typically strong in that area, the committee may give the player the benefit of the doubt
- **Identify trends**: If multiple sources indicate a player is improving rapidly or facing challenges, the committee takes that into account
- **Provide context**: External data points help the committee understand a player's background and development path

However, the tryout evaluation remains the primary basis for placement decisions. This ensures fairness and equal opportunity for all players, regardless of their access to external programs or clinics.

8. Video Recording at Evaluations

The Hopkins Baseball Association recognizes that video is a valuable tool for player evaluation and quality assurance. To support the evaluation process, video will be recorded during tryouts.

Purpose of Video Recording

Video serves several important purposes in the evaluation process:

- **Quality assurance**: The committee can review video if scoring appears inconsistent or if there are questions about a player's evaluation
- **Multiple reviews**: Video allows evaluators to review a player's performance multiple times, ensuring accuracy in assessment
- **Dispute resolution**: If there is disagreement among committee members about a player's abilities, video provides objective evidence
- **Documentation**: Video creates a record of the tryout that can be referenced if questions arise later
- **Training**: Video can be used to train future evaluators and improve the evaluation process

What Will Be Recorded

Video recording during tryouts will capture:

- **Hitting**: Batting practice and live at-bats
- **Fielding**: Ground balls, fly balls, and positional work
- **Throwing**: Long toss, positional throws, and arm strength demonstrations
- **Pitching**: Bullpen sessions and live pitching
- **Base-running**: 60-yard dash times and base-running drills

Video will be recorded in a way that captures all players participating in the tryout, ensuring equal documentation for all participants.

How Video Will Be Used

Video recorded at tryouts is used exclusively by the Player Placement Committee for evaluation purposes. The committee may review video:

- **During data compilation**: If evaluator scores for a particular player appear inconsistent or unusual, the Director of Player Development may review video to verify the assessment
- **During the selection meeting**: If committee members have questions about a player's abilities or if there is disagreement, video can be reviewed to provide additional context
- **For quality control**: Video helps ensure that evaluations are accurate and that no player is disadvantaged by an evaluator's oversight or misassessment

Video is not reviewed for every player—it is used selectively when the committee determines that additional review would be helpful to ensure fairness and accuracy.

Privacy and Confidentiality

Video recorded at tryouts is treated as confidential evaluation material, subject to the same privacy protections as scoring sheets and committee notes. Video is:

- ****Stored securely****: Video files are password-protected and accessible only to committee members
- ****Retained for one year****: Consistent with other evaluation materials, video is retained for one year and then deleted
- ****Not shared publicly****: Video is not posted online, shared with families, or distributed outside the committee

The association respects player privacy and uses video solely for the purpose of ensuring fair and accurate evaluations.

9. Tryout Operations

Tryouts occur each March, close to the start of the competitive season. The structure varies by age group to ensure adequate observation time while respecting the time commitments of players and families.

Scheduling and Communication

The tryout schedule is published in January, giving families ample time to plan. The schedule includes:

- ****Dates and times****: Specific dates and times for each age group's tryouts
- ****Location****: Field locations and any backup plans for inclement weather
- ****What to bring****: Equipment requirements (glove, bat, cleats, etc.)
- ****Registration****: Instructions for registering for tryouts

Families are notified of the tryout schedule via email and through the Hopkins Baseball website.

13U Program

The 13U program conducts **two mandatory tryout days** for every registered player. This structure is designed to provide comprehensive observation and reduce the impact of single-day performance variance.

Day 1: All registered players participate in a structured tryout that includes:

- Warm-up and stretching
- 60-yard dash (timed)
- Fielding evaluation at primary and secondary positions
- Throwing evaluation (arm strength and accuracy)
- Batting practice (live pitching or machine)
- Pitching evaluation (for players who pitch)

Day 2: All registered players return for a second day of evaluation, which includes:

- Additional fielding and hitting evaluations
- Live at-bats or simulated game situations
- Positional drills and game-scenario work
- Additional pitching evaluation (for pitchers)

The two-day format allows evaluators to see players across multiple sessions, in different conditions, and with the opportunity to adjust after the first day. It also reduces the likelihood that a player's placement is determined by a single bad day or a single exceptional performance.

14U and 15U Programs

The 14U and 15U programs conduct a **first day required for all players**, with a **second day optional at the committee's discretion**.

Day 1: All registered players participate in a structured tryout similar to the 13U format, including:

- Warm-up and stretching
- 60-yard dash (timed)
- Fielding evaluation at primary and secondary positions
- Throwing evaluation (arm strength and accuracy)
- Batting practice (live pitching or machine)
- Pitching evaluation (for players who pitch)

Day 2 (Optional): The Player Placement Committee may determine that a second day of evaluation is needed for:

- **Pitchers**: Additional bullpen sessions or live at-bats to evaluate velocity, command, and pitch variety
- **Close evaluations**: Players whose placement is uncertain and would benefit from additional observation
- **Skill verification**: Players who had an unusually strong or weak first day and need a second look

If a second day is scheduled, all affected players must be notified at least **24 hours in advance**. The committee will clearly communicate who is invited to the second day and what the focus of the evaluation will be.

The optional second day structure recognizes that players at the 14U and 15U levels are more experienced and may require less observation time, while still providing flexibility for the committee to gather additional information when needed.

Consistency Measures

To ensure fairness and consistency across tryouts, the following measures are in place:

- **Same evaluators**: The same group of evaluators assesses players across all sessions within an age group
- **Same tryout numbers**: Players maintain their same tryout number both days (if applicable) to ensure evaluators can track individual performance
- **Standardized scoring**: All evaluators use the same scoring forms and criteria
- **Calibration**: Evaluators meet before tryouts to review scoring criteria and ensure alignment
- **Video recording**: All tryouts are recorded on video to allow for review and quality assurance

Tryout Environment

The committee strives to create a positive, supportive tryout environment. Evaluators understand that tryouts can be stressful for players, and they work to:

- **Provide clear instructions**: Players know what is expected at each station
- **Encourage effort**: Evaluators acknowledge hustle and positive attitude
- **Minimize downtime**: Tryouts are organized to keep players active and engaged
- **Maintain professionalism**: Evaluators are respectful, fair, and focused on objective assessment

10. Data Compilation & Scoring

After tryouts are completed, a systematic process ensures data integrity and prepares the committee for informed decision-making.

Scoring Forms and Data Collection

Each evaluator submits completed scoring sheets to the Director of Player Development immediately following each tryout session. Scoring sheets include:

- **Numerical ratings**: Scores for hitting, fielding, throwing, speed, pitching (if applicable), and intangibles
- **Written observations**: Notes on specific strengths, weaknesses, and notable moments
- **Positional assessments**: Evaluator's opinion on the player's primary and secondary positions
- **Overall impression**: Evaluator's holistic assessment of the player's readiness for different competitive levels

Data Compilation

The Director of Player Development compiles all scoring data into a master spreadsheet that includes:

- **Average scores**: Scores from all evaluators are averaged for each skill category
- **Outlier review**: Scores that are significantly higher or lower than the average are flagged for review
- **Timed metrics**: 60-yard dash times, pitching velocities, and other measurable data
- **Written summaries**: Key observations from evaluators are summarized

Quality Review and Video Verification

Before the selection meeting, the Director of Player Development reviews the compiled data for:

- **Discrepancies**: Significant differences between evaluators' scores are investigated (e.g., one evaluator rates a player 8/10 on fielding while another rates them 3/10)

- **Missing data**: Any incomplete scoring sheets or missing evaluations are identified and addressed
- **Data integrity**: The Director ensures that all data is accurately entered and organized

If discrepancies are identified, the Director may:

- **Consult with evaluators** to clarify their assessments
- **Review video footage** to verify observations and resolve inconsistencies
- **Request additional observation** if necessary (though this is rare)

The availability of video from tryouts is particularly valuable in this quality review process. If scoring does not look correct or if there are significant discrepancies between evaluators, the committee can review video to ensure that the evaluation is accurate and fair.

Summary Report

The Director of Player Development prepares a summary report for the Player Placement Committee that includes:

- **Player profiles**: A one-page summary for each player with scores, observations, and key data points
- **Positional breakdowns**: Lists of players by position to help the committee assess depth and needs
- **Comparative rankings**: Players grouped by overall performance level to facilitate discussion
- **External data**: Summaries of coach feedback and clinic observations (when available)
- **Video notes**: Any relevant observations from video review

This summary report is distributed to all committee members in advance of the selection meeting, giving them time to review the data before deliberations begin.

11. Selection Meeting Protocol

The selection meeting is the culmination of the evaluation process. It is where the Player Placement Committee reviews all data, discusses each player, and makes final roster decisions.

Meeting Preparation

The President convenes the Player Placement Committee once all evaluations are finalized and the summary report is complete. The meeting is scheduled with sufficient time for thorough discussion—typically 2-4 hours depending on the number of players being evaluated.

All committee members receive the summary report at least 48 hours before the meeting, allowing them to review the data and come prepared with questions and observations.

Meeting Structure

The meeting follows a structured protocol to ensure fairness and thoroughness:

1. Opening and Process Review

The President opens the meeting by reviewing the committee's responsibilities, the evaluation criteria, and the decision-making process. The President reminds all members of their confidentiality obligations and conflict-of-interest commitments.

2. Data Presentation

The Director of Player Development presents the compiled data and summary report. This includes:

- Overview of the evaluation process and number of players evaluated
- Summary of scoring data and key observations
- Positional breakdowns and team needs
- External data points (coach feedback, clinic observations)
- Any relevant video review notes

3. Individual Player Review

The committee reviews each player individually. For each player, the committee discusses:

- **Tryout performance**: Scores and observations from evaluators
- **Strengths and weaknesses**: What the player does well and where they need development
- **Positional fit**: Where the player can contribute and what positions they can play
- **Developmental trajectory**: Is the player improving, plateauing, or regressing?
- **Intangibles**: Attitude, work ethic, coachability, and team contribution
- **External data**: Relevant feedback from coaches or clinic observations

- ****Video review**** (if applicable): Any additional insights from video review

Each committee member has the opportunity to share their perspective. The Head Coach provides technical and tactical insight. The Director of Player Development provides developmental context. The Board Member and At-Large Member provide independent perspectives. The President facilitates discussion and ensures all voices are heard.

4. Placement Discussion

After reviewing all players, the committee discusses team composition and placement. This includes:

- ****Team needs****: What positions need to be filled? What skills are needed?
- ****Competitive balance****: Are the teams balanced in terms of skill level and depth?
- ****Player fit****: Which players are suited for which teams based on skill level, positional needs, and developmental considerations?

The committee works collaboratively to build rosters that are competitive, balanced, and developmentally appropriate.

5. Voting

Final rosters are approved by majority vote of the voting members (Head Coach, Director of Player Development, Board Member, At-Large Member).

President's Role in Voting:

The President typically does not vote, allowing the four voting members to reach decisions through majority vote. However, the President has several important authorities:

- ****Questioning Decisions****: The President may question any decision and request additional discussion or clarification if a decision appears inconsistent with association values, policies, or the criteria outlined in this manual.
- ****Veto Power****: The President has veto authority over committee decisions. If the President believes a decision is fundamentally unfair, inconsistent with established procedures, or not in the interests of the players or association, the President may veto the decision and require the committee to reconsider.
- ****Tie-Breaking Vote****: In the event of a 2-2 tie among the four voting members, the President serves as the tie-breaking vote to resolve the stalemate.

- ****Request for Board Vote****: If a tie cannot be resolved through discussion and the President determines that a full Board vote is appropriate, the President may escalate the decision to the full Board for resolution.

These authorities ensure that the President can maintain process integrity and fairness while allowing the committee to function independently in most cases.

6. Documentation

The President or a designated note-taker records meeting notes, including:

- Key discussion points for each player
- Rationale for placement decisions
- Any dissenting opinions or concerns raised
- Final roster decisions

These notes are stored confidentially and retained for one year.

Guiding Principles for Decision-Making

Throughout the selection meeting, the committee is guided by the principles outlined in this manual:

- ****Fairness****: Every player is considered based on the same criteria
- ****Transparency****: Decisions are based on documented data and observations
- ****Player Development****: Placement supports long-term growth
- ****Objectivity****: Decisions are based on evidence, not assumptions or preferences
- ****Integrity****: Committee members act in the interests of the players and the association
- ****Accountability****: Decisions follow the established process and are documented

12. Communication & Parent Review

After teams are finalized, the association commits to transparent communication with all families.

Communication Timeline

Within 48 hours of finalization: Rosters are emailed to all families. The email includes:

- The player's team assignment

- Information about the team's coach and schedule
- Next steps for registration and team meetings
- Information about the parent review process

Parent Review Process

Parents who would like to better understand their child's evaluation and placement decision are welcome to request a review meeting with the Player Placement Committee.

How to Request a Review

Parents can request a review by emailing the President at john@formationcg.com. The request should include:

- Player's name and age group
- Preferred dates and times for the meeting
- Brief description of questions or topics the parent would like to discuss

Review Meeting Format

Review meetings are conducted via Zoom and typically last 20-30 minutes. The meeting includes:

- ****Committee members present****: Typically the President, Director of Player Development, and one or two other committee members
- ****Discussion of evaluation****: The committee shares the player's evaluation scores, key observations, and the rationale for the placement decision
- ****Questions and answers****: Parents have the opportunity to ask questions and seek clarification
- ****Developmental feedback****: The committee provides feedback on the player's strengths and areas for development

Important Clarifications

- ****Informational, not appeals****: Review meetings are an opportunity to understand the decision, not to appeal or change the decision. Final roster decisions are not changed through the review process.
- ****Respectful dialogue****: The committee expects that review meetings will be conducted respectfully and professionally. The goal is mutual understanding, not confrontation.
- ****Documentation****: A summary of the review meeting is documented for internal records.

Purpose of the Review Process

The parent review process serves several important purposes:

- **Transparency**: Families gain insight into how decisions are made and what factors were considered
- **Developmental guidance**: Parents receive specific feedback on their child's strengths and areas for improvement
- **Trust-building**: Open communication builds trust between families and the association
- **Accountability**: The committee's willingness to explain decisions demonstrates accountability and confidence in the process

13. Confidentiality & Record Retention

All evaluation materials are treated with strict confidentiality to protect player privacy and maintain the integrity of the process.

What is Confidential

The following materials are confidential:

- Individual player evaluation scores and written observations
- Committee meeting notes and deliberations
- Coach feedback and external data points
- Video recordings from tryouts
- Parent review meeting summaries

Who Has Access

Access to confidential materials is limited to:

- Player Placement Committee members
- The President
- The Director of Player Development

Confidential materials are not shared with other coaches, board members, or families except as necessary for the parent review process (where a family receives information about their own child's evaluation).

Record Retention

All evaluation materials, including video recordings, are retained for **one full year** by the Director of Player Development. Records are stored securely (password-protected digital files or locked physical storage).

After one year, records may be destroyed or archived at the discretion of the Director of Player Development and the Board.

Why Confidentiality Matters

Confidentiality serves several important purposes:

- **Player privacy**: Evaluation scores and observations are personal information that should not be shared publicly
- **Candid discussion**: Committee members need to be able to speak candidly during deliberations without concern that their comments will be shared outside the committee
- **Trust**: Families trust that their child's evaluation will be handled professionally and privately
- **Integrity**: Confidentiality prevents the evaluation process from becoming a public spectacle or source of conflict

14. Annual Review & Continuous Improvement

The Hopkins Baseball Association is committed to continuous improvement of the evaluation process. After each season, the association conducts a comprehensive review to identify strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities for improvement.

Post-Season Feedback Collection

After the season concludes, the association solicits feedback from:

- **Evaluators**: What worked well during tryouts? What could be improved?
- **Coaches**: How did the placement process support team development? Were there any issues or concerns?
- **Families**: Parents are invited to provide feedback on the evaluation and communication process

Feedback is collected through surveys, interviews, and open forums.

Review Process

The Board and Player Development team review all feedback and identify themes, concerns, and suggestions. This review includes:

- **Process evaluation**: Did the evaluation process follow the manual? Were there any deviations or issues?
- **Outcome evaluation**: Did placements support player development and team success?
- **Communication evaluation**: Was communication clear, timely, and helpful?
- **Equity evaluation**: Were all players treated fairly and evaluated consistently?

Implementing Improvements

Based on the review, the association identifies specific improvements to implement for the following year. These may include:

- **Process refinements**: Changes to tryout structure, scoring methods, or committee procedures
- **Communication improvements**: Better information for families, clearer timelines, or enhanced transparency
- **Training**: Additional training for evaluators or committee members
- **Manual updates**: Revisions to this manual to reflect lessons learned and best practices

All updates to this manual require Board approval before implementation.

Commitment to Excellence

The annual review process reflects the association's commitment to excellence and accountability. The evaluation process is not static—it evolves based on experience, feedback, and a genuine desire to serve players and families better each year.

15. Appendices

Appendix A – Coach Evaluation Form

Player Name: _____

Age Group: _____ Coach: _____

Season/Year: _____

Rate 1 (Low) – 5 (High)

Effort	Attitude	Teamwork	Leadership	Game IQ
___	___	___	___	___

Attendance and Reliability:

- Practices attended: _____ out of _____
- Games attended: _____ out of _____
- Punctuality and reliability: _____

Skill Development:

- Areas of significant improvement: _____
- Areas needing continued development: _____

Coachability:

- Responsiveness to feedback: _____
- Willingness to try new positions or roles: _____

Game Performance:

- Consistency in games: _____
- Performance under pressure: _____

Team Contribution:

- Interaction with teammates: _____
- Leadership and encouragement: _____

Additional Comments:

Appendix B – Player Evaluation Form (Tryouts)

Player #: _____ Evaluator: _____ Date: _____

Skill Ratings (1-10 scale)

Hitting	Fielding	Throwing	Speed	Intangibles
___/10	___/10	___/10	___/10	___/10

Measurable Data:

- 60-yard dash time: _____ seconds
- Throwing velocity (if measured): _____ mph

Position-Specific Observations:

- Primary position: _____
- Secondary position(s): _____
- Positional strengths: _____
- Positional areas for development: _____

Hitting Observations:

- Swing mechanics: _____
- Contact rate: _____
- Power: _____
- Pitch recognition: _____

Fielding Observations:

- Hands: _____
- Footwork: _____
- Range: _____
- Arm accuracy: _____

Intangibles:

- Effort and hustle: _____
- Attitude: _____
- Coachability: _____

Overall Impression:

Recommended Level: _____

Appendix C – Pitcher Evaluation Form

Player #: ____ **Evaluator:** _____ **Date:** _____

Measurable Data:

- Fastball velocity: _____ mph
- Total pitches thrown: _____
- Strikes: _____
- Strike percentage: _____ %

Pitch Variety:

- Fastball: Yes / No
- Changeup: Yes / No
- Curveball: Yes / No
- Slider: Yes / No
- Other: _____

Command and Control (1-10 scale):

- Command (hitting spots): ____/10
- Consistency: ____/10
- Ability to throw strikes: ____/10

Mechanics:

- Balance and tempo: _____
- Arm action: _____
- Release point: _____
- Follow-through: _____

Mound Presence:

- Composure: _____
- Confidence: _____

- Competitiveness: _____

Pitchability:

- Ability to sequence pitches: _____
- Ability to adjust to hitters: _____

Overall Impression:

Recommended Role: Starter / Reliever / Developmental

Appendix D – Conflict of Interest Form

**Hopkins Baseball Association

Player Placement Committee

Conflict of Interest and Confidentiality Agreement**

I, _____, certify that:

1. I have no conflict of interest related to any player being evaluated for the [Age Group] _____ team(s).
2. If a conflict of interest arises during the evaluation process (e.g., family relationship, coaching relationship, personal friendship), I will immediately disclose it and recuse myself from discussions and decisions regarding that player.
3. I agree to maintain strict confidentiality regarding all evaluation materials, committee discussions, and placement decisions.
4. I understand that all evaluation scores, written observations, video recordings, committee notes, and deliberations are confidential and may not be shared outside the committee.
5. I will conduct myself with integrity, objectivity, and fairness throughout the evaluation process.
6. I will base my assessments and decisions on the criteria outlined in the Player Placement & Evaluation Manual.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Printed Name: _____

Role on Committee: _____

Appendix E – Parent Review Request Form

**Hopkins Baseball Association

Parent Review Request**

Parent Name: _____

Player Name: _____

Age Group: _____

Team Assignment: _____

Requested Meeting Date/Time (provide 2-3 options):

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Preferred Meeting Format:

- Zoom
- Phone
- In-person (if available)

Questions or Topics for Discussion:

Please submit this form to: john@nexlineglobal.com

Meetings will be scheduled within one week of request.

Appendix F – Annual Calendar Template

Month	Activity	Responsible	Notes
January	Publish tryout schedule and manual	Board / DPD	Communicate dates, locations, and process to all families
February	Finalize tryout logistics	PPC	Confirm evaluators, field reservations, equipment, video recording setup
March	Conduct tryouts	DPD / Coaches / Evaluators	Follow tryout protocols in manual; record video
March	Compile evaluation data	DPD	Prepare summary report for committee; review video as needed
March	Selection meeting	PPC	Review players and finalize rosters
March/April	Notify families of placements	President / DPD	Within 48 hours of finalization
April	Parent review meetings (as requested)	PPC	Schedule and conduct as needed
May–July	Season play	Coaches	Regular season and tournaments
August	Post-season review	DPD / Board	Collect feedback from evaluators, coaches, families
September	Review feedback and identify improvements	Board / DPD	Analyze feedback and propose changes
October–December	Policy revisions and manual updates	Board	Approve updates to manual for next season

Appendix G – Sample Communication Templates

Template 1: Tryout Announcement

Subject: Hopkins Baseball – [Age Group] Tryout Information

Dear Hopkins Baseball Families,

Tryouts for the [Age Group] team(s) will be held on:

Date(s): [Insert dates]

Time: [Insert time]

Location: [Insert location]

What to bring:

- Glove
- Bat (if you have one; bats will be available)
- Cleats and athletic clothing
- Water bottle

What to expect:

- Warm-up and stretching
- 60-yard dash (timed)
- Fielding evaluation
- Throwing evaluation
- Batting practice
- Pitching evaluation (for pitchers)

Video recording: Tryouts will be recorded on video for evaluation purposes. Video is used by the Player Placement Committee to ensure accurate and fair evaluations.

The complete Player Placement & Evaluation Manual is available at [link].

If you have questions, please contact [name] at [email].

We look forward to seeing you at tryouts!

Hopkins Baseball Association

Template 2: Roster Notification

Subject: Hopkins Baseball – [Age Group] Team Placement

Dear [Family Name],

Thank you for participating in this year's evaluations. We are pleased to inform you that [Player Name] has been placed on the **[Team Name/Level]** team.

Next steps:

- Team meeting: [Date and time]
- First practice: [Date and time]
- Registration: [Link or instructions]

Questions about placement?

If you would like to better understand your child's evaluation, you are welcome to request a review meeting with the Player Placement Committee. Please email john@nexlineglobal.com to schedule a meeting.

We are excited for the upcoming season and look forward to seeing [Player Name] on the field!

Hopkins Baseball Association

Template 3: Parent Review Meeting Confirmation

Subject: Hopkins Baseball – Parent Review Meeting Confirmation

Dear [Parent Name],

Thank you for requesting a review meeting to discuss [Player Name]'s evaluation and placement.

Meeting Details:

- ****Date:**** [Date]
- ****Time:**** [Time]
- ****Format:**** Zoom (link will be sent 24 hours before meeting)
- ****Attendees:**** [List committee members who will attend]

Meeting Purpose:

This meeting is an opportunity for you to understand how [Player Name] was evaluated and the factors that influenced the placement decision. We will share evaluation scores, key observations, and developmental feedback.

Please note that this is an informational meeting, not an appeal. Final roster decisions will not be changed through the review process.

If you need to reschedule, please let us know as soon as possible.

We look forward to speaking with you.

Hopkins Baseball Association

Hopkins Baseball Association	john@nexlineglobal.com	Revised October 2025
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