

TRAVEL BALL

INFORMATION AND LETTER OF INTENT - CAL RIPKEN



INTRODUCTION

Thank you for your interest in having your child tryout for Bismarck Youth Baseball's (BYB) 2026 travel ball program. BYB is a non-profit organization that sponsors youth league baseball and travelling teams for Cal Ripken baseball in the 9-, 10-, 11-, and 12-year-old age groups and, new in 2026, Little League baseball for 12 and under. Bismarck Youth Baseball is committed to growing the game of baseball, and this off-season BYB evaluated ways to provide additional opportunities in our travel program. BYB intends to form two to three teams for each age division: Americans AAA and Americans AA. If there is enough participation, BYB will form an additional AA team. Depending on roster sizes and player safety, BYB will make its best effort to place kids who are interested in the travel program.

AGE BREAKDOWN

Cal Ripken

9YO | May 1, 2016 - April 30, 2017
10YO | May 1, 2015 - April 30, 2016
11YO | May 1, 2014 - April 30, 2015
12 YO | May 1, 2013 - April 30, 2014

Little League

11 & 12YO | September 1st, 2013 - August 31, 2015

NEW FOR 2026 - Online Travel Form

For 2026, BYB will be sending out an online travel registration form prior to tryouts rather than a hard copy form as we have done in the past. Please still select "interested in travel baseball" during registration.

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TRYOUT INFO

To be considered for a roster, your child is required to attend each session to get a valid evaluation. Depending on interest levels, age groups may have staggered starts but will remain within the times listed below. (i.e. The 12YO session is from 10:30 am - 12:30 pm, one group will start at 10:30 am and the other group will start at 11:30 am)

9YO Players

Session 1 | Saturday, January 24 | 3:00 - 5:00 pm | Sanford Sports - Bismarck
Session 2 | Saturday, January 31 | 3:00 - 5:00 pm | Sanford Sports - Bismarck

10YO Players

Session 1 | Saturday, January 24 | 5:00 - 7:00 pm | Sanford Sports - Bismarck
Session 2 | Saturday, January 31 | 5:00 - 7:00 pm | Sanford Sports - Bismarck

11YO Players

Session 1 | Saturday, January 24 | 1:00 - 3:00 pm | Sanford Sports - Bismarck
Session 2 | Saturday, January 31 | 1:00 - 3:00 pm | Sanford Sports - Bismarck

12YO Players

Session 1 | Saturday, January 24 | 10:30 am - 12:30 pm | Sanford Sports - Bismarck
Session 2 | Saturday, January 31 | 10:30 am - 12:30 pm | Sanford Sports - Bismarck

Locations:

Sanford Sports - Bismarck, 3451 N 14th St. Ste. C

Players should arrive for tryouts no less than 15 minutes before their scheduled start time to get checked in.

Baseball attire should be worn for tryouts (wear tennis shoes – no cleats) and players should each bring their own glove. Players are not allowed to wear any BYB travelling jerseys from previous years, or any clothing with their name on it. Hats and helmets with the BYB logo are permitted, as long as their name is not on it.

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There is a \$20 per player travel tryout fee that must be paid at the first travel tryout session, to cover the facility rental.

Note: UPDATE for Travel Tryout – Session 2 -- All players will be invited to attend the second tryout session. *It is the parent's responsibility to spend time getting players in basic shape (i.e. arm strength, aerobic conditioning, etc.) prior to tryouts.*

CAL RIPKEN TRAVEL OPEN GYM DATES AND TIMES - JANUARY 3, 10, & 17

BYB will be hosting pre-travel tryout workouts on January 3, 10, 17. This will be a chance for players to get a feel for the tryout process and get additional reps prior to travel tryouts. This is optional, and players are not required to attend to be placed on a travel team.

All open gym sessions will take place at Sanford Sports - Bismarck. These sessions are intended for those interested in trying out for one of our Cal Ripken travel and Little League teams. BYB staff and board members will be available to answer any questions related to the travel program.

For 2026, pre-registration will be required for all open gyms and there will be a minimal fee of \$10 per session. More information and details regarding open gym registration will be shared in December.

Location: Sanford Sports - Bismarck, 3451 N 14th St. Ste. C

Time breakdown per groups for each week are listed in the *2026 Cal Ripken Season Information Letter*, which can be found on our website.

Expanded Opportunities and Competition for BYB Baseball Players

Bismarck Youth Baseball is committed to growing the game of baseball, and this off-season BYB evaluated ways to provide additional opportunities in our travel program. For the 2026 season, BYB is expanding the opportunities for all age groups, 9YO-12YO.

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Stars and Stripes League

The Stars and Stripes League will serve as a spring league for our 9-12YO travel teams. Divided into two divisions (9/10U & 11/12U), teams will be comprised of a mix of players from travel teams within those age groups.

As our travel teams are formed in early February, we often are not able to find high quality travel games before the first tournament in early May. BYB Staff identified the Stars and Stripes as a solution.

The league will feature 8 games, a mix of doubleheaders and single games, and a 4 game playoff to finish the spring season.

Development Sessions

In addition to individual team practices and the Stars and Stripes League games, BYB will run development sessions for our 9-12YO travel teams. Rotating weekly between 9 & 10YO and 11 & 12YO, these sessions will consist of infield, outfield, pitching, hitting and also work on systems such as cuts & relays, baserunning, and more.

More information on the Stars and Stripes League and the development sessions will be shared in the near future.

Team Formation

- BYB intends to form three teams for each age division: Americans AAA and two Americans AA for 9-11YO.
 - Depending on roster sizes and player safety, BYB will make its best effort to place all kids who are interested in the travel program.
 - In the case we are only able to form two teams, the intent would be to split into Americans AAA and Americans AA
 - For the 9YO division, the intent would be to form two equal teams

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- The Americans AAA teams will consist of the top 12 players from each age group and typically have more tournaments on the weekend. The Americans AAA will play in the North Dakota Cal Ripken state tournament.
 - The 9YO teams will play in the state tournament.
 - The 10YO team will play in the AAA state tournament. 2024 was the first year they had a AAA and AA division, which they plan to continue in 2025. The 10YO AAA team does not have to participate in a West Region Travel League to qualify for the AAA state tournament.
 - The 11YO and 12YO teams will be the designated team for Bismarck to qualify for the AAA state tournament.
- The Americans AA will have a competitive schedule and will have access to local tournaments, either hosted by BYB or nearby Cal Ripken programs.
 - The Americans AA will be able to play in a North Dakota Cal Ripken state tournament in the AA division.
- In addition to participating in weekend tournaments, travel teams will have the opportunity to play against local and regional Cal Ripken travel teams.
- Again this year, the 11YO and 12YO AAA teams will be participating in the West Region Travel League.
- **New in 2026**, 11 and 12YO players will have the opportunity to tryout for a tournament team, Bismarck Americans White.
 - A tryout form will be sent out to those indicating that they are interested in travel baseball
 - 11 and 12YO players will have the opportunity to rank their preference of level of play - AAA, AA, and Little League
 - Players preferences will be taken into consideration with the travel committee during team formation

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- The tournament team that is selected will be eligible for the Little League All-Star team after the May 15 deadline. In the event the team is selected as the Little League All-Star team, an informational email will come out to the team with information regarding the Little League tournament trail
- Please note that Little League does use a different age chart compared to Cal Ripken
 - If you're interested in trying out for Little League, please use the following resources
 - [League Age Determination - Little League](#)
 - littleleague.org/downloads/2026-baseball-age-chart/

Tryout Process Overview

Session 1

Hitting	Mechanics, Ball Contact, and Quality of Contact. Pitches will be delivered by BYB pitching machines.
Infield	Mechanics (footwork, body positioning, and throwing), Positional Knowledge and Defensive Movements (i.e. where to stand along with moving right, left, charging the ball, etc.), Fielding the Ball, Quality of Throw, and Arm Strength.
Outfield	Mechanics (footwork, body positioning, and throwing), Defensive Movements (i.e. moving up, back, right, left), Catching the Ball, Quality of Throw, and Arm Strength.
Pitching	Mechanics, Ability to Consistently Pitch Strikes, and Arm Strength.

This tryout session will be judged by independent (i.e. none of their own children will be players in the tryout group), experienced, and knowledgeable adult volunteers and/or college baseball players. BYB will attempt to get up to 2 judges per station, depending on availability of volunteers. Each player will be assigned a number for scoring, and the tryout process will ensure that no scoring mix-up occurs.

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Session 2

Warmup	Ability to follow direction and warmup as instructed.
Hitting	Each player will get 8-12 cuts. Players will also have their exit velocity measured.
Throwing	Each player will participate in a throwing drill to measure throwing velocity and overall arm strength.
Infield/Outfield	Each player will participate in various infield and outfield drills designed to evaluate the player for both fundamentals and execution. Catchers will have an opportunity to be evaluated

This tryout session will be evaluated by the BYB Travel Committee.

At the conclusion of the tryout process, results will be reviewed by the BYB Travel Committee. Based on these results, the travel team(s) will be selected, and team rosters will be posted to the BYB website.

Note: Travel players will not be placed on a league team.

Travel Ball Fees

If your child is selected to be on a travel team, there will be an additional travel ball fee to help offset tournament fees, uniforms, equipment costs, umpire costs, and volunteering fee. If teams decide to play more games that require additional funds to pay for umpires the team must get permission from BYB and at the end of the season each family will be invoiced for the additional balance.

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Travel Ball Costs

Little League/Tournament Team	\$175 base + \$300 travel fee = \$475 total
10-12YOs Cal Ripken	\$175 base + \$225 travel fee = \$400 total
9YOs	\$175 base + \$175 travel fee = \$350 total

Volunteer Fee

Each player's family will be required to volunteer at BYB hosted travel tournament(s). If volunteer standards are not met, BYB will send an invoice for \$100/player to be paid at the end of the season.

Raffle Tickets

Bismarck Youth Baseball is a 501-c(3) non-profit and strives to keep player costs low for parents. BYB relies upon grants, sponsorships, advertising, and player fees to fund its operations. Since these funding sources do not cover the total costs of operation, BYB will be requiring Cal Ripken travel players and parents to sell 10 raffle tickets to help make sure our program has adequate program funding for the kids. Once teams are formed, a deposit for the full value will be required once the tickets are picked up. BYB will not cash deposits until after the turn in deadline (June 30, 2025) and will only cash if terms are not met. More information will be provided during ticket distribution.

BYB understands that selling raffle tickets can be difficult for some families, but BYB must continue with a raffle until different, but reliable, funding sources are procured. Thank you in advance for helping sell raffle tickets and helping BYB support our kids and baseball in Bismarck!

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Below are some impacts Cal Ripken players and families can see the support BYB receives from its raffle.

- Catchers gear sets for each Cal Ripken travel team.
- Batting tees for each travel team to use for practice or before games.
- Additional umpire and tournament fees covered by BYB.
- BYB travel teams will have reserved indoor practice times at BYB's joint indoor space with Sanford Sports to allow players to train during the winter months.

BYB Contributes

- Average of \$2,000 - \$2,500 in tournament entry fees per team
 - BYB also covers the entry fees for a BYB-hosted tournament(s) and each Cal Ripken state baseball tournament.
 - Families are required to cover any gate fees.
- Uniform set for players and coaches which includes: Hat, Custom Jerseys, Practice Shirt, Socks and Belt.
 - BYB will provide 2 custom jerseys.
- Umpire Fees
- Necessary team equipment

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Rules and Expectations

1. Attendance at all designated tryouts is mandatory to be considered for a travelling team. We understand that there can be various conflicts and have done our best to schedule tryout dates that encourage attendance and participation.

2. In order to prevent a hardship for traveling teams, it is a requirement that each player must follow:

- a. Not miss more than one travelling tournament per year and must attend all of the post-season tournaments, including State (may also include Regionals and/or World Series);
- b. Not miss more than 10% of the travelling team practices and;
- c. Not miss more than 15% of their regular season, BYB travel league games.

Failure to comply with the above standards may result in the player's head coach requesting the BYB travel committee for their removal. While BYB understands that conflicts may occasionally arise. However, the above participation requirements are important for the experience of the team. Travel teams typically participate in 4-8 tournaments per year, as determined by BYB and teams may decide to enter additional tournaments is agreed to by the parents (typically for AAA teams). In addition, there will be practices, end of year advancing tournaments: state, regional (if qualify), and world series (if qualify), and some scrimmages as arranged by the BYB. If a player or parent has any hesitation as to fulfilling the above commitments, then the player should not try out for Travel Ball.

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3. Parents of travel players must be willing volunteers to help run any Cal Ripken Baseball Tournament hosted by BYB (invitational, qualifier, State, Regional, or World Series). If volunteer standards are not made, the \$100 fee will be invoiced at the conclusion of the season.

4. Each player that is selected to be on a travel team will receive a uniform. This uniform is to only be worn for game purposes. Each travel team may also choose to purchase other BYB-approved apparel as well. The cost for additional apparel is the responsibility of the parents.

5. In travel baseball, playtime is not equal. In addition, players are not guaranteed to have an equal rotation of infield or outfield positions or certain placement within the batting order. BYB relies upon its coaches to determine what is in the best interest of the team. That said, BYB has adopted a minimum play-time policy for travel ball (which exceeds Cal Ripken requirements), which includes the following:

- BYB Weekday Travel Games - In an effort to continue to develop each player in the BYB program, the travel committee will schedule weekday games against BYB travel teams and other Cal Ripken teams. Coaches are expected to foster an environment of development. In these games, teams are expected to bat all players and put players in new positions to encourage all-around player development.
- Travel Games– Each player shall play a minimum of one game during a double header. This applies towards the West Region Travel League for the 11YO and 12YO AAA teams.
- Invitational Tournaments – Each player shall play a minimum of six defensive outs and one at-bat per game. Understanding that games may be shortened for reasons outside of the coach's control (i.e. weather, 10-run rule, etc.), there may be occasions when this minimum play-time standard is not achieved.

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- Advancing Tournaments (i.e. State, Regionals, World Series) – Each player shall make no less than one appearance per game. An appearance includes the following: a pinch hitter for the completion of one full at-bat, a pinch runner, a pitching change to face the minimum of one batter, a defensive substitution for the minimum of one defensive out, etc.

Play-time discussions will not be held outside of determining whether the coach has met BYB's minimum play-time standards.

Bismarck Youth Baseball Dual Roster Policy

1. General Principle:

Dual rostering of players is prohibited within BYB, unless approved by BYB. Players are expected to commit fully to a single team during a given season to ensure fairness, team cohesion, and consistent participation.

2. Purpose:

The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines regarding dual rostering of players within BYB. Once you are placed on a BYB team you are considered rostered and are not permitted to play on or be rostered on a second team that is not affiliated with BYB during the duration of the season.

3. Exceptional Circumstances:

In exceptional cases, a player may be granted permission to be dual rostered if it is deemed to be in the best interest of the player's development and the overall functioning of BYB. Such exceptions will be considered and approved by BYB's Board of Directors or designee.

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4. Granting of Exception:

Players seeking dual roster status must submit a formal request to BYB, outlining the reasons for the request. The request must be submitted in advance of the season in question.

5. Consideration and Approval:

The decision to grant dual roster status will be thoroughly evaluated by BYB's Board of Directors or designee. Factors to be considered include the player's skill level, commitment, schedule compatibility, and the impact on both teams. The decision will be made on a case-by-case basis.

6. Notification:

The player, along with the coaches and managers of both teams, will be notified of the decision regarding dual roster status. If approved, specific terms and conditions will be outlined, including expectations for attendance, playing time, and communication.

7. Monitoring:

Players with dual roster status will be closely monitored throughout the season to ensure compliance with the terms and conditions set forth by BYB. Failure to meet these expectations may result in the revocation of dual roster status.

8. Revocation of Dual Roster Status:

BYB reserves the right to revoke dual roster status if it is determined that the arrangement is not serving the best interests of the player, the teams, or the league as a whole. This decision will be made by BYB's Board of Directors or designee and communicated to all relevant parties.

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9. Amendments:

This policy may be amended or updated at the discretion of BYB's Board of Directors. Any changes will be posted on BYB's website.

By adhering to this policy, Bismarck Youth Baseball aims to ensure a positive and equitable experience for all players while maintaining the integrity of the league and promoting player development.

Bismarck Youth Baseball Program Continuity Policy

Effective February 1, 2026, any player eligible to participate in Bismarck Youth Baseball's (BYB) program who chooses to play in a different program will not be eligible for BYB's travel program for one season upon returning. This policy does not apply to BYB's league programs, where players are welcome to join at any time, or to seasons in which BYB does not offer a travel baseball opportunity. To be exempt from this policy, a player must receive a waiver from BYB to participate in another program. A player is deemed eligible if they reside within BYB's geographical boundaries.

Please view BYB's website for more information, including FAQ's regarding the policy.