

# FALCON YOUTH BASEBALL ASSOCIATION HANDBOOK

**APPROVED: 03/01/2023**

## Introduction

This handbook has been assembled as an aid for all coaches, players and parents associated with Falcon Youth Baseball Association (FYBA) baseball program. This association was created to give the opportunity to play baseball to the youth of the Wabasha, Kellogg, and surrounding communities. FYBA wants our youth to succeed on and off the field now and in the future. The information provided in this handbook will help answer many of your questions. If you have any further questions please contact any FYBA board member or visit the website at [www.falconyouthbaseball.org](http://www.falconyouthbaseball.org).

## Falcon Youth Baseball Philosophy

The mission, as stated in the bylaws of FYBA, is to provide the youth of Wabasha, Kellogg, and surrounding communities the opportunity to learn and play baseball while promoting life skills of leadership, integrity, and sportsmanship. FYBA will be open to youth of all skill levels from ages 3-14. In cases where participants have un-excused absences or are not actively participating in practices and/or games playing time may be limited.

## Website:

[www.falconyouthbaseball.org](http://www.falconyouthbaseball.org)

## Uniforms and Equipment

- Participants in the 8U (2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> grades), 10U, 12U, and 14U age groups are required to purchase their uniform which consists of:
  - Jersey
  - Hat
  - White pants
  - Red belt
  - Batting Helmet
  - Baseball glove
  - Cleats
- Jerseys and hats can be used from prior year, but will be available for purchase at registration. Helmets, jerseys, and hats must be purchased through FYBA to ensure consistency.
- The uniform will be required for all games and scrimmages as directed by the coaches.
- FYBA will provide equipment including bats and catching equipment, etc.

## Field Locations

- The Wabasha Athletic Field will be the primary site for all practices and home games.
- The city field in Kellogg will be utilized for the 12U group.
- Certain circumstances may require the use of another facility however this will be communicated in advance to the affected teams.

## Teams-Age Groups

Note: Teams within an age group will not be split up by age (for example, split into a team of 9 year olds and a team of 10 year olds).

### **Minor Leagues - Ages 3 (by June of the current year) through kids entering Kindergarten.**

- This level is FREE of charge and strictly focuses on the fundamentals of baseball. Topics covered include:
  - Positions
  - Running the bases
  - Proper throwing technique
  - Other basic fundamentals
- Fun drills and other activities will be scheduled.
- This age group will not participate in games, but will scrimmage during the parent night events.
- No uniform is needed for this level.
- In addition to the parent's night activities, the Minor League players will have approximately six (6) one-hour long practices throughout the season.
- This group is simply meant to introduce these children to the game and have fun learning about baseball.

### **Juniors - Children entering 1<sup>st</sup> grade**

- Children entering 1<sup>st</sup> grade will play traditional "T-Ball" and coach pitch.
- This level will build on fundamentals related to:
  - Proper way to catch a baseball
  - Field a ground ball
  - Catch a fly ball
  - Throw a baseball
  - Run the bases
  - Swing the bat
  - Basic rules of the game
- For first graders, score will not be tracked in games and other contests as this is a learning level.

## Teams-Age Groups (Continued)

### **8U - Children entering 2nd and 3rd grade:**

- Children entering 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> grades will be hitting off a pitching machine.
- Participants are required to purchase a uniform as described on page 1.
- This level will build on fundamentals related to the proper way to:
  - Catch a baseball
  - Field a ground ball
  - Catch a fly ball
  - Throw a baseball
  - Run the bases
  - Swing the bat
- Players will be taught the basic rules of the game. Players will also be taught what it means to be a good teammate and display good sportsmanship for their teammates, coaches, opponents, umpires and fans.
- Second and third grade teams will be part of a travelling team and score will be tracked.

### **10U – Children entering 4th and 5th grades:**

- Participants are required to purchase a uniform as described on page 1.
- Players will be focusing on improving the basics of the game, hand-eye coordination for game play.
- Players will be taught and drilled on proper techniques of catching, fielding, hitting and start pitching.
- Levels of performance will be a step up from 8U. Players will be taught what to do in different situations of the game such as getting the lead runner on a force out.

### **12U – Children entering 6th and 7th grades:**

- The participants are required to purchase a uniform as described on page 1.
- Players will learn the basics of:
  - Lead-off situations
  - Bunting
  - Developing a consistent swing
  - Hitting
  - Pitch selection (knowing the count)
- Defensively, players will learn:
  - Advanced fielding techniques
  - Backing up bases
  - Advanced defensive situations
  - Proper footwork on double plays

## Teams-Age Groups (Continued)

### 14U – Children entering 8th and 9th grades:

- The participants are required to purchase a uniform as described on page 1.
- Players will continue with the advancement of bunting and recognizing different pitches, while developing a consistent swing and pitch selection.
- Pitchers will work from the stretch off of a mound, developing multiple pitches and placement of pitches.
- Defensive players will continue to advance in the finer points of defensive situations (backing up, cutting off, keeping runners close, 1st & 3rd situations and double plays).

## Tournaments/Tournament Teams

- All players will participate in the DJP Tournament on their league team.
- Within each age group, we may join various weekend tournaments throughout the summer.
- Many times the tournaments are for a more competitive form of baseball. For certain tournaments, as determined by the coaches, players may be selected from multiple teams to form a tournament team.

## Playing Time Policy

- Coaches will make every effort to divide playing time equally when possible. This does not mean equal infield and outfield play.
- Every effort will be made for each player to play at least 6 defensive outs and have at least one plate appearance per game.
- Rain-outs and ten run situations are out of the coach's control and could result in "un-equal" time.
- Due to limited number of participants on each team, attendance is required at all games and practices unless discussed previously with your respective coach.
- Unexcused absences may result in loss of playing time. Excessive excused absences will also affect playing time or removal from FYBA roster.
- Effort and attention are expected at practices and games, the coach may limit playing time if your son does not follow this guide.

## Practice Policy

- Players are expected to be at all practices 15 minutes before practice start time.
- Players should arrive ready to play (this means that if practice starts @ 6:00, the kids should arrive @ 5:45, have their clothes, shoes and gloves on and ready to take the field at start time).
- FYBA understands there are certain situations where a player cannot attend practice due to certain reasons (family emergency, vacation etc.); however, the program is a time commitment and attendance is required. Please let your coach know of any unexpected absences as soon as possible and well in advance of any expected absences.

## Un-excused Absences

- An un-excused absence is defined as any absence that the coach has not been notified of in advance.
- After the 2nd instance, a conference will need to be scheduled between the parent/coach/player to discuss continued participation in FYBA.
- Any un-excused absences after this conference may result in dismissal from FYBA.

## Game Day Policy

- Players are expected to be at all games at least 30 minutes prior to game time.
- This time may be earlier, depending on the prerogative of each team's coach. Some teams will have some practice time before games; others may not.
- Travel to and from the game will be the responsibility of the parents. If you cannot attend/drive your child to the game and cannot find a carpool, please contact the coach.

## Player Code of Conduct

- Be in attendance for practices/games. Please notify coaches ahead of time when missing a practice/game. The number of kids on each team is limited to improve playing time. When we limit the number of kids on a team, it is important players attend all games/practices.
- Display a positive attitude about yourself, your team/teammates, and coaches.
- Be a competitor, perform up to your full ability, and contribute to team unity. Compliment, support, and cheer on teammates.
- Be attentive and work hard in practices and games. Make your best efforts at all times.
- Show respect to opposing players, coaches, umpires and spectators.
- Display modesty in victory and graciousness in defeat.
- Place team goals ahead of individual goals.
- Learn and follow the rules of the sport.
- Realize your role on the team as a player/competitor, not a coach.
- Remember that you represent Wabasha, Kellogg, and the surrounding communities; your family; your team; and your coaches as well as yourself. Enhance our reputations and character with your conduct on and off the field.
- Poor sportsmanship will not be tolerated. Throwing a glove, bat, or helmet, may result in loss of playing time.
- Food (except sunflower seeds), is not allowed in the dugouts. During games, players are expected to pay attention and cheer the team. Failure to do so will result in loss of playing time.

## Parent Code of Conduct

- Help your child learn to enjoy sports and develop skills that they are capable of performing. Practice with and help your child so that they will have an opportunity for skill improvement through active participation.
- Be realistic about the strengths and weaknesses of your child so that you may place them in situations where they have the best opportunity to succeed. Do not relive your athletic past through your child.
- Treat each player, coach, official and parent with respect and dignity.
- Accept the decision of the officials without showing inappropriate emotions.
- Understand and respect the difference between parental roles and coaching roles. Uphold the authority of officials and coaches who are working with your child. Assist them when possible and use good judgment if you disagree.
- Keep negative comments to yourself. Please wait to express your concerns to the coach **AFTER** the game or practice. Even then, please make sure to approach the coach in a calm, straightforward, fair and objective manner. Waiting for 24 hours to contact the coach is suggested if you need a cool down period.
- Focus on performance which can be controlled by the athlete and decrease importance of winning or losing an outcome which is frequently outside the athlete's control. Positively reinforce improved skills. It is more about trying hard and playing the game the right way.
- Help your child set realistic goals. Sport's primary value is the opportunity for self-development. The probability of achieving lasting fame and glory is low; but, the experiences develop life-long values and self-esteem.
- Be positive and have fun.
- Parents will be required to commit to working in the concession stand or helping with the field for one 2-hour shift for the DJP tournament per child participating. Everyone will work together to make sure you are able to watch your son play in your shift happens to overlap with a game.
- Parent volunteer support is essential to keep our costs low and maximize the profits of the concession stand.
- Concession volunteers must be at least 16 years of age to work in the concession stand.

## Coaches Code of Conduct

- Coaches have the ultimate responsibility for their conduct and the conduct of the players.
- Accept the decisions of the umpires without showing inappropriate emotions.
- Playing time: coaches must follow the playing time guidelines as noted in this handbook. This requires tracking attendance of players and monitoring and documenting necessary any issues with player or parent conduct.
- Place the emotional and physical well-being of your players ahead of any personal desire to win. Want to win and strive to win, but don't "win at all costs". Seek to achieve excellence.
- Ensure that you are knowledgeable in the rules of the sport that you coach, and teach these rules to your players. Develop the total individual, not just the athlete.
- Treat each player, coach, official and parent with respect and dignity.
- Treat each player as an individual; remember the wide spread of emotional and physical development for the same age group.
- Lead by example, in demonstrating fair play and sportsmanship to all players. Remember that the team is a direct reflection of the coach(es).
- Remember that you represent Wabasha, Kellogg, and the surrounding communities; your family; your team; and your coaches as well as yourself. Enhance our reputations and character with your conduct on and off the field.
- Remember that you are a youth coach and the game is for children, not adults.
- Be positive and have fun.
- Communicate with parents regularly through the website, email and/or phone to schedule, reschedule and cancel games, practices. Communicate with league personnel of team results and schedule changes as necessary.
- Coaches will be handed a bag of equipment at the beginning of the season and are responsible for the inventory throughout the season.
- Assist with parental involvement in the FYBA program.
- Complete concussion training as needed.

## Weather Policy

- FYBA officials will make cancellation decisions as soon as possible the day of the game or practice. If the decision to cancel is made, the website will indicate this and those registered on Sports NGIN will receive a notification. The safety of participants is our number one priority.
- Games may be cancelled at the discretion of the FYBA due to extreme heat or weather conditions.

### Lightning:

- In the event of thunder and lightning, FYBA policy is that all players leave the field of play and go to vehicles. Games will be delayed 30 minutes from the last site or sound of lightning or thunder.
- If you do not feel comfortable letting your child play under the conditions, then let the coach know and they will be excused.

### Extreme Heat:

- During summer baseball, extreme heat situations often arise. It is important for families, players, and coaches, to be aware of these situations. Please bring plenty of water to drink and if possible bring extra water for anyone who forgets. It is also a good idea to have a spray bottle or a bucket with water and rags for players to keep cool.
- If you do not feel comfortable letting your child play under the conditions, then let the coach know and they will be excused.
- Coaches should use multiple pitchers and catchers. Playing time may also need to be modified due to extreme heat.
- It is important to watch for symptoms of heat related issues and take immediate action. Signs and symptoms may include, but not limited to:
  - Nausea
  - Vomiting
  - Weakness
  - Headache
  - Muscle Cramps
  - Dizziness

## Financial Hardship

Although FYBA is attempting to provide the best experience for your children at a reasonable cost, this cost may become prohibitive for some to participate. FYBA will not allow cost to be a barrier to participating. Please contact a member of the board of directors and briefly explain your concern related to the cost to participate and accommodations can be made.

## Conclusion

Falcon Youth Baseball Association strives to create the best possible baseball environment for local youths of all skill levels. If you have any questions or concerns regarding the program, its philosophy or expectations, please contact a member of the board, one of the coaches, visit the website, or send us an email. We hope you enjoy and Play Ball!