

Marlton Travel Baseball Guidelines

A) Mission & Vision: To provide players residing in Marlton who have been objectively identified to possess advanced playing skills and a genuine passion for the game of baseball an opportunity to play baseball at a more competitive level than what can be provided by the in-town recreational baseball program.

B) Goals & Objectives:

- To facilitate the development of a lifelong love for the game of baseball within each player
- To facilitate the development of strong moral character, personal attributes, and social skills through the life lessons taught by the game of baseball that will benefit the player throughout his or her lifetime. These include, but are not limited to:
 - The ability to handle adversity
 - The ability to show humility when victorious
 - The development of a strong work ethic
 - The development of a strong sense of teamwork
 - The development of a sense of fair play
 - The development of a competitive spirit
 - The demonstration of respect for all individuals, including coaches, teammates, opponents, and umpires
- To teach the proper fundamentals of the game of baseball
- To maximize the development and enhancement of each player's skill set in order to adequately prepare the player for the next level of baseball.
- To encourage players to participate in other athletic activities outside of baseball during the baseball offseason in order to promote overall athleticism.

C) Manager/Coach Eligibility and Selection:

- The selection of all travel team managers (head coaches) will be made by a Marlton Travel Baseball Committee comprised of the following individuals:
 - Travel Baseball Coordinator(s)
 - MRC Baseball Commissioner
 - Selection Committee members appointed by the Travel Baseball Coordinator and MRC Baseball Commissioner
- All managerial candidates must submit an e-mail indicating their intention for applying for the position by **September 1st** of the current tournament season year to the following e-mail address: **tournament@marltonbaseball.org**
 - The e-mail must include:
 - the age group which they are requesting to manage
 - a summary of the candidate's playing and coaching background
 - any other information they would like the Selection Committee to consider.
- The Selection Committee may request that a managerial candidate partake in an interviewing process conducted by the Selection Committee. However, the Selection Committee may, in its sole discretion, choose not to interview a managerial candidate after reviewing his or her qualifications.

- The Selection Committee will consider, among other things, the following criteria in selecting travel team managers:
 - Prior playing and coaching history both within and outside of the MRC.
 - A willingness to commit time and planning to the Marlton Travel Baseball Program beyond the summer tournament season and to assisting with the development of the rec baseball program through clinics and assisting.
 - The manager must be willing to organize and conduct fall baseball activities and winter workouts for their team and/or age group. However, the Selection Committee will not adversely consider the inability to head coach if the prospective manager also coaches another MRC fall or winter sport.
 - A willingness to collaborate with other travel team managers and coaches. It is expected that each travel team manager will be willing to work together with other managers in assembling tournament documents and sharing knowledge about past experiences regarding specific tournaments.
 - The manager must be willing to partner with other travel team managers in his or her age group to organize and conduct tryouts, select players to assemble teams, and design practice regimens.
 - For District Team Tournament managers and coaches, the successful completion of the Babe Ruth League Coaching Education Program.
 - Prior Tournament Team coaching experience and results including, but not limited to:
 - General demeanor including past behavior as an MRC coach
 - General baseball background and experience.
 - Any other criteria the Selection Committee deems appropriate to further the goals and objectives of MRC Tournament Baseball.
 - The Selection Committee has the authority and discretion to consider other factors and criteria with the overriding objective of selecting the best possible coaching candidates so as to strive to meet the goals and objectives of the Program.

D) Roles, Responsibilities, and Expectations of Managers and Coaches:

- For the purpose of this section, “COACHES” will be defined as managers (head coaches), assistant coaches, scorekeepers, bullpen catchers, or any other person on the field with the players during practices, games, try-outs, ratings sessions, etc.
- ALL coaches must be approved by the Marlton Recreation Council (MRC). At the beginning of **EACH** season, the baseball commissioner will submit all coaching candidates to the MRC Executive Board for approval.
- Coaches may be added to teams after teams have been formed as long as the Travel Coordinator determines there is a need for additional coaches and the coaches have been approved by the MRC Executive Board (see above).
- Parents and other Volunteers are eligible to help out with Field Maintenance, Scoreboard Operation, In-Game PA Announcing, etc. but **CANNOT** be present on the field with players during games, practices, try-outs, ratings sessions and/or warmups without being approved by the MRC Executive Board (see above).
- Following both the selection of each district tournament team manager and the selection of the players to the district teams, each manager shall submit to the Selection

Committee the names of those individuals that he wants to be selected as his assistant coaches.

- The appointment of those coaches will be subject to the advice and consent of the Selection Committee which will also consider the criteria set forth above in the managerial selection process.
- Following the selection of the district tournament team for each age group, the Selection Committee will then name the managers of the remaining non-District level Tournament teams utilizing the same criteria set forth above.
 - Those managers will submit the names of their prospective coaches following the same procedures set forth above.
- All person selected to manage or coach a tournament team will be required to execute a Background Check Release Authorization Form which authorizes the MRC to conduct a background investigation so as to comply with the MRC's policy regarding excluding participation of persons as coaches of teams in the Program those persons convicted of crimes of violence, crimes against children, drug related crimes and sexually related crime. The failure of any manager or coach to execute either the Background Check Release Authorization Form, shall in and of itself form the basis to disqualify that person for a Tournament Team manager and/or coaching position.
- Tournament Team managers/head coaches are responsible for:
 - maintaining their teams' finances in accordance with MRC's policies and procedures
 - scheduling their teams' participation in tournaments
 - making all required filings and submissions as required by Cal Ripken, Babe Ruth, American Legion, or other organization's rules.
- All managers and coaches are required to:
 - adhere to the code of conduct policy outlined below.
 - adhere to the [American Sports Medicine Institute \(ASMI\) Position Statement for Adolescent Baseball Pitchers](#) and the ["Pitch Smart" Guidelines](#) outlined below.
 - **partake in coaching clinics, travel meetings, and player ratings. Attendance and participation in a minimum of 75% of the events is required to maintain coaching eligibility.** In addition, attendance at other baseball-related activities developed, scheduled, and implemented by the Travel Coordinator and Commissioner of Baseball such as the Hall of Fame Night and MLB Home Run Derby is mandatory.
 - 8/9/10u Tournament/White team head coaches and assistants are required to serve as assistants within the Rec baseball program.
 - Be willing to serve as a mentor for incoming 8U travel managers. Each 8U travel manager will be assigned a mentor shortly after their selection to serve in this role.
- The Travel Baseball Coordinator will assist and work with each manager to assure that each of these obligations are met.
- Managers and coaches are eligible to manage or coach on only one MRC travel baseball team in any one year.
- The selection of a manager and coach is only for a single tournament baseball season. In other words, being selected to manage or coach a Tournament Team does not in any

way guarantee that person that they will be a manager or coach of a tournament team the following year.

- Any outside trainers who participate in any official Marlton Baseball activities must be vetted and approved as per the MRC policy.

E) Player Selection Process: An objective selection process will occur annually during a tryout for each age group:

- The tryout for each age group will be overseen and conducted by the Orange and White Head Coaches in collaboration with the Travel Baseball Coordinator and the assistant coaches for that particular age group.
- Each age specific tryout will ensure that there are a sufficient number of objective raters who will evaluate each player on the following skills:
 - Infield play including the ability to properly field ground balls
 - Outfield play including the ability to properly track and catch fly balls
 - Arm strength and accuracy from both infield and outfield positions
 - Hitting including proper mechanics, ability to make contact, and power
- A minimum of four raters who do **not** have a child playing at that particular age level will provide objective and meaningful evaluation during each tryout.
- Each station will be staffed by qualified coaches and/or trainers who will make every effort to show consistency and avoid favoritism in the form of encouragement and/or the provision of varying levels of difficulty in the performance of a particular skill.
- Following the completion of the tryout, the Travel Coordinator will meet with the respective head coaches from each age group to review the performance of the age group and objectively select players whose skill set is appropriate for a particular level of play.
- A more sophisticated and multi-tiered player selection process is also available for the 8U level to ensure greater exposure and opportunity to demonstrate their skill for players who are first entering into the Marlton Travel Baseball Program.

F) Financial Commitment Obligations:

- Participation in travel baseball requires an additional financial obligation above and beyond the Marlton Baseball registration fee. Each Tournament team is self-funding. There are required financial obligations to cover various costs including tournament entry fees, umpire fees, equipment, and field maintenance. The expected additional financial obligation is **in excess of \$500 per child** and can be considerably more depending upon the number and types of tournaments your child's team participates in during the season. Uniform and winter training fees are additional costs that are not typically accounted for in this initial estimation. Failure to pay financial obligations in a PAST tournament season makes the player ineligible to participate in the CURRENT tournament season.
- **Fundraising:** all Marlton Travel Baseball team-related fundraising must be approved by the Marlton Baseball Executive Board as per MRC policy.
- **Refund Policy:**
 - Tournament team fees/costs paid are deposited into an MRC escrow account maintained by each team manager and the MRC. A refund of those fees and costs may be obtained only if (1) the player withdraws from the tournament team 7 days prior to the first tournament game; and (2) the fees/costs are replaced in the

team escrow account by the addition of another player to the tournament teams roster reflected by payment by the new player of those fees/costs into the escrow account. No refund of uniform costs will be made after a uniform order is placed.

- Any monies donated and/or fundraised either individually or through a team event on behalf of Marlton Baseball and or a specific travel team will NOT be refunded if a player withdraws from a team.
- Cooperstown requirements: It is an MRC Baseball policy to support and send at least one travel baseball team to Cooperstown Dreams Park on an annual basis. These teams will be comprised of 12u players as per our charter and must be approved by the Travel Baseball Committee.
- Rec Baseball requirements: All tournament/White team players are required to participate in the Marlton Baseball Rec program. Our 2023 11/12u teams are grandfathered and will not be required to participate in the rec program.

G) Winter Training:

- The coaching staff for each team will be responsible for providing a winter training program that focuses on player development at an affordable cost to the parents.
- The coaching staffs are encouraged to share practice plans and drills with the program in order to maximize the experience for all players in all age groups. The dissemination of this knowledge can occur through regular meetings, written resources, or video vaults.
- Participation in winter training activities will be optional, but highly encouraged.
- Participation in primary winter sports will take priority over winter training sessions.

H) Spring & Summer Season:

- Teams are encouraged to begin optional outdoor practices starting the second week of March.
- There must be a minimum of four weeks of practice (8 practices) prior to the first competitive game.
- Following the proper on-ramping and practice scheduled as stated above, teams are allowed to partake in single games during the week and one double-header on weekends. However, teams are not allowed to enter a tournament until the **third weekend in April**.
- The official tournament season will begin **May 1st and continue until August 1st**. The only exceptions that will be made for the August 1st cutoff are for district teams that advance in the Cal Ripken trail and the 12U teams that will be participating in Cooperstown. During this time, it is expected that travel baseball will be the **top athletic priority** for all players and coaches who have accepted a position on the team. Playing concurrently on other teams (i.e travel/club teams outside of Marlton Baseball's purview) during this time is prohibited unless special approval is obtained in advance from the Marlton Travel Baseball Committee. Players and coaches who fail to make Marlton Travel Baseball their top baseball priority may face punitive action, including suspension or dismissal from the program, as deemed appropriate by the Marlton Travel Baseball Committee.
- Participation in the Program is a significant time commitment by all participating players, coaches, and parents. We ask that all those who participate in the Program agree to commit to put forth their best efforts towards attending all team practices, scrimmages, and games for the good of their tournament team and the Program. The failure to make and honor the required commitment as described in paragraph 3 above, is a basis to: (1)

not select a player for a tournament team; (2) to remove a player from a tournament team; and (3) not select a player for a tournament team in the future.

- It is not uncommon to have 6 to 7 baseball events per week during the height of the Tournament Season. Some of the tournaments may require traveling up to several hours and perhaps even an overnight stay.
- Based on the goals and objectives of the program and the significant time commitment outlined above, managers and coaches are expected to make a best effort to provide sufficient playing time for all players during the course of any non-Cal Ripken Tournament Trail affiliated tournaments and league-affiliated or independent non-tournament games or scrimmages as defined below:
 - Teams are expected to insert all players into the lineup at the start of each game in order to allow them to bat throughout the game unless otherwise specified in the rules of a particular tournament.
 - Players should play a minimum of three innings in the field during each game unless:
 - the game is prematurely truncated due to inclement weather.
 - the game is prematurely truncated due to the enactment of tournament or league-enforced mercy rule.
 - the player is facing punitive action from Marlton Baseball and/or the MRC.
 - the player is injured and unable to participate in competitive activities.
 - a decision is made that playing time should be limited for a particular player based on the manager's (head coach's) discretion.
- Playing time during the Cal Ripken Tournament Trail is at the discretion of the coaching staff.
- The maximum number of games that a team can play in calendar year is **40**. Exceptions will be made for teams who successfully advance to the Cal Ripken Mid-Atlantic Regionals and/or World Series or the 12U teams participating in the Cooperstown experience.
- Teams may participate in a maximum of 3 consecutive weekend tournaments. If teams have played in a tournament in 3 consecutive weeks they must have a scheduled weekend off that following (fourth) week before continuing their tournament schedule.
- All travel teams will adhere to the [American Sports Medicine Institute \(ASMI\) Position Statement for Adolescent Baseball Pitchers](#) and the ["Pitch Smart" Guidelines](#) jointly developed by USA Baseball and Major League Baseball in order to monitor pitching volume, establish workload limits, and avoid overuse in an effort to minimize arm injuries. Although not infallible, research supports the utilization of pitch counts as an accurate and effective means of monitoring for arm fatigue. Age-appropriate pitch count recommendations are as follows:

Age Group	Daily /Game Maximum # of Pitches	0 Days Rest	1 Day Rest	2 Days Rest	3 Days Rest	4 Days Rest
7-8	50	1-20	21-35	36-50	N/A	N/A
9-10	75	1-20	21-35	36-50	51-65	66+
11-12	85	1-20	21-35	36-50	51-65	66+

Age Group	Maximum # of Pitches per Week	Maximum # of Pitches per Season
7-8	N/A	N/A
9-10	75	1000
11-12	100	1000

- All travel teams must adhere to these rules for pitch counts and the prescribed subsequent necessary days rest when not participating in tournaments that enact their own established pitching rules (Cal Ripken Tournament Trail, Perfect Game events, etc.)
- Additional recommendations to help mitigate arm injuries sustained by pitchers include:
 - Monitor for signs of fatigue (decreased velocity, loss of command, altered pitching mechanics) and respond appropriately by removing that pitcher from the game and limiting all throwing activities for the remainder of the day.
 - No competitive pitching for at least 4 months per year.
 - The maximum number of innings in any calendar year must not exceed 100 when taking into account all baseball-related activities.
 - Avoid pitching on multiple teams with overlapping seasons. This situation only applies to players who also participate in Marlton Rec Baseball or middle school baseball, as concurrent participation with an outside travel/club baseball team is prohibited unless otherwise approved by the Marlton Travel Baseball Committee as stated above. If this situation occurs it is the responsibility of the player's parent(s)/caregiver(s) to accurately inform the Marlton Travel Baseball manager/head coach of the player's previous pitch count to avoid unnecessary overuse.
 - Develop appropriate pitching movements and mechanics.
 - Being extra vigilant and cautious when a player is both a pitcher and a catcher. Whenever possible, a pitcher should first catch and then pitch. Avoid allowing a player to catch following a pitching outing. It is strongly recommended that a player not catch in a game later on the same day if the player pitches more than one inning.
 - Cessation of all pitching must occur if a player develops pain in the elbow or shoulder until the player can undergo appropriate medical evaluation and/or the pain resolves after appropriate rest, recovery, and treatment.

I) Fall Season:

- September 1st is the official start date of the fall baseball season.
- The fall season is optional and should emphasize player development over competitive play. This includes, but is not limited to:
 - Increasing arm strength through long-tossing
 - Improving hitting and pitching mechanics
 - Learning a new position
 - Easing the transition to the 50/70 field at the age of 11 by working on leads, steals, and pick offs.
 - Team competitions to improve team camaraderie.

J) Code of Conduct Policy: Please see attached.