

## **Middleton Baseball & Softball Commission**

### ***Operational Guidelines for Baseball Programs***

*Amended September 2022*

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

#### **Coach Pitch Program**

##### **Age:**

Grades 1-2, typically ages 6 - 8

##### **Philosophy:**

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

##### **Season:**

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

##### **Team Composition:**

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

## **Little Bucks Program**

### **Age:**

Grades 3-4, typically ages 9 - 10

### **Philosophy:**

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

### **Season:**

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

### **Team Composition:**

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

## **Pepper Program**

### **Age:**

Grades 5-6 typically ages 11 – 12. However, some 13-year-olds may play.

### **Philosophy:**

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

### **Season:**

The season begins the first Tuesday after school is completed. The season runs for 7 weeks. Games are on Tuesday and Thursday's. Game times will be 6 or 8PM. Teams play 11-14 games. Times and diamonds

will be determined by MBSC. The season culminates with an All-Star game for all 12-year-olds, played in early August and is followed by hot dogs and soda for all league players.

**Team Composition:**

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

**Minors Baseball Ages 10U and 9U**

**Age:**

Under 10 and under 9 (with birth date cut offs defined by national rules – April 30th).

**Philosophy:**

The Minors Baseball Program is a developmental and competitive program that plays in the Badgerland Juniors League with teams planned at the 9U level and 10U level. This program requires a major commitment by players, coaches, and parents. Middleton may assemble as many teams in the age group as is deemed fitting for a given season depending on interest. The number of teams will be decided by the League Director with the support and approval of the MBSC Baseball Subcommittee.

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

**Season:**

The season begins in mid-May. Games will be played Monday through Thursday. Middleton home game times will be 6 or 8 PM. Times and diamonds will be determined by MBSC.

The league is completed around the middle of July.

**Team Composition:**

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

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

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

Teams are organized based on the results of the evaluation. League teams will be formed at the individual 9U and 10U levels and placed in the appropriate league divisions.

### **Tournaments:**

Based on player interest, coach availability, and the discretion of the League Director, there may also be an option for some weekend tournaments for some players within the Minors.

Participation in the Minors program does not guarantee a player the opportunity to play in tournaments. Composition of the tournament teams (if any) will be determined by the coaches and League Director. Participation on a tournament team will require a higher level of commitment by the player and family for additional practices, weekend tournaments, and additional fees.

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

### **Majors Baseball Ages 12U and 11U**

#### **Age:**

Will consist of players 12 and under and 11 and under (with birth date cut offs defined by national rules – April 30th) segregated into teams at each age level (12U and 11U).

#### **Philosophy:**

This program is designed to be a competitive program that plays in the Badgerland Juniors League. Diamonds will have 50' pitching mounds with 70' bases. Middleton may assemble as many teams in the age groups as is deemed fitting for a given season. The number of teams that are selected will be decided by the League Director with the approval of the MBSC Baseball Subcommittee.

### **Evaluations:**

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

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

### **Competitive Play Options:**

The makeup of the teams each year will be decided by a combination of registration numbers and level of commitment expressed by the players/families. The decision on the number of teams, composition of the teams, and competitive play options will be decided by the League Director, with approval from the Baseball Subcommittee.

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

- League only team – players on a league only team will play in the Badgerland Juniors League. The season begins in May. Games will be Monday through Thursday evenings. Game times (and dates) are tentative and may change after the league scheduling meeting. Middleton home game times will be 6 or 8PM. Times and diamonds will be determined by MBSC. Typically, players who are also on a travel team outside of the MBSC program will be eligible for the league only team and will not be considered for league and tournament, or tournament only teams.
- League and tournament team – players on a league and tournament team will play in the Badgerland Juniors League. In addition, this team will also play in a limited number of weekend tournaments.
- Tournament only team – if there is sufficient interest, and if approved by the League Director and Baseball Subcommittee, a tournament only team(s) may be formed. These teams would not play in the Badgerland Juniors League but would play weekend tournaments only. Generally, the level of play in the weekend tournaments is more competitive than in the League. Tournament only teams will typically play in approximately 8-10 weekend tournaments.

### **Team Composition:**

Teams will have a maximum of 15 players and are typically comprised of 12-14 players. Teams are organized based on the results of the evaluation, previous experience in the program, and stated level of commitment. Players who score the highest during evaluations will be provided an opportunity to play on the team equal to their stated level of commitment. Players who were not ranked near the top during the evaluation process may be placed on a team with a lower level of commitment than their stated desire.

## **Babe Ruth Prep Program**

### **Age:**

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

### **Philosophy:**

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

### **Season:**

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

### **Post Season:**

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

### **Team Composition:**

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

## **Babe Ruth Program**

### **Age:**

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

### **Philosophy:**

The Babe Ruth 14/15 Program participates in the Dane County League and has both state and national affiliations. Depending on the number of registered players, the League Director will determine the number of teams that will be formed. A number of options are available including Majors and Minors levels at each age group, and a combined 14/15-year-old team. The Majors program requires additional fees and a major commitment by players and parents. The Majors team will participate in the highest league level that Dane County offers, as well as weekend statewide tournaments including the state tournament. The Minors program will require less commitment from players and parents and no additional fees. The Minors team will play in a less competitive Dane County League and will enter in one or two area tournaments. The 14/15 team will require additional fees and a modest commitment level. The team would play in a League that consists of teams from western Dane County and Iowa County and will enter one or two area tournaments including the state tournament if desired.

### **Season:**

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

### **Team Composition:**

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

## **MBSC Summer High School/Legion Baseball Program** *(section revised Sept. 2022)*

### **Program Description**

The Middleton Baseball and Softball Commission (MBSC) Summer High School Baseball Program is a competitive program for players of ages 15-18 that is primarily for players who played on a Middleton High School (MHS) team during the previous spring season. This program will have at least one Senior level tournament team and one Junior level tournament team each year, but may have additional teams if player numbers warrant. The program will offer American Legion baseball travel teams if player numbers and commitment are sufficient. Senior level teams are usually comprised of mostly juniors and sophomores from the previous high school season (ages 16-18). Junior level teams are usually comprised of mostly freshmen from the previous high school season (ages 15-16). Team composition and the total number of teams may vary depending on registration numbers, player performance during the spring MHS season and commitment level of players. Some graduated MHS seniors may be invited to participate on a Senior level tournament team by the league director if more players are needed to fill out the team roster. Senior and Junior level teams will schedule weekday games against other high school age teams in the Madison metro area and other Legion teams in southern Wisconsin. Teams may also play games in selected weekend tournaments. The number and type of weekend tournaments entered will be decided by the league director with input from MBSC baseball coaches. If registered as American Legion teams, the Senior and Junior tournament teams will also participate in the Wisconsin American Legion baseball regional qualifying tournaments at the end of the regular season. The decision to have teams participate as American Legion teams will be made by the league director with input from MBSC baseball coaches. This is a competitive program and requires a major commitment by players in order to participate. It is recommended that players have a major commitment to the MBSC Summer High School/Legion baseball team over other summer baseball options. Players are expected to be at every scheduled weekday or tournament game unless they have communicated to the coaches in a timely and clear manner that they will not be present at a game.

### **Team Composition and Formation**

Players must have residence in the Middleton-Cross Plains Area School District (MCPASD) in order to participate in this program. The MBSC will effort to find a roster spot on a team for all returning MHS players who register for the summer high school/Legion program. Players who did not participate on an MHS spring baseball team may be asked to join an MBSC summer team if the league director and MBSC coaches determine that there is a need for that player on a roster. The league director may invite graduated seniors to participate on a Senior tournament team if there is a positional need for more players on the roster. Teams typically have 14-15 players on a roster, but this may vary depending on registration numbers.

The number of MBSC summer high school teams may vary from year to year, depending on registration numbers and player commitment. Players who played on the varsity team at MHS during the spring season (regardless of school class) and all other juniors who played on a high school team at MHS during the spring season will be automatically eligible to participate on a Senior level team. Sophomores who played on a high school team at MHS during the spring season will be eligible to participate on a Senior level or a Junior level team, with team placement dependent on their performance during the spring MHS season. Freshmen who played on a freshman team at MHS during the spring season will be eligible to play on the Junior level team. Any freshmen who played on the varsity team at MHS during the spring season will be asked to join a Senior level team. Other freshmen may be asked to join a Senior level team if there are roster spots or positional needs to fill on a Senior team. This decision will be made by the league director with input from MBSC baseball coaches. Students that did not play spring baseball at MHS but have a serious desire to play on a MHS baseball team in the future may be invited to play on an MBSC summer team if there is a need to fill out rosters. At the discretion of the league director, evaluations may be used to determine roster spots in those situations where there are more players than

roster spots available.

Registration fees for the MBSC Summer High School/Legion program will be set by the league director based on budget projections for the upcoming season. Estimated expenditures for each team will be provided by the league director at registration. Final determination of teams and rosters will be done by the league director, after MHS baseball teams have been formed for the spring season. The league director will seek input from MBSC baseball coaches about team formation as needed. If a player registers for the summer high school baseball program and does not make a high school team in the spring, their registration fees will be reimbursed if a roster spot is not available on a summer team. The MBSC will attempt to hire non-parent coaches for all of the summer high school baseball teams. Parents who wish to help coach a team may be added to coaching staffs if needed as decided by the league director.

### **Possible Teams:**

#### **Senior Tournament Team (or Senior Legion U-19 Team)**

- Comprised of predominately Junior class players from the spring MHS season who commit to playing a more challenging and competitive schedule. Participation on the Senior tournament team will require a very high level of player commitment.
- Eligible graduated MHS seniors may be asked to participate on this team, only if the league director decides that roster size and team positional composition indicates a need to add any graduated seniors.
- This team would play 1-2 weekday games per week, along with 4-5 weekend tournaments (including the American Legion regional tournament).
- This team will be registered as an American Legion baseball team and will participate in the postseason Wisconsin Senior Legion U-19 tournament if player numbers and commitment level are sufficient. The winner of the regional Legion tournament would qualify for the Wisconsin state U-19 Legion tournament.
- Additional competitive tournament fees paid per player above the base player fee will be determined by the league director based on the expected costs of participating in additional weekend tournaments and the American Legion tournament.
- Returning varsity MHS players will have first priority for participating on the Senior tournament team. Additional roster spots will be filled based on positional needs along with evaluation of talent level during the spring high school season.
- Playing time— Equal playing time will be emphasized for weekday league games, with an emphasis on getting more reps for returning MHS players and those layers who are not playing as much at weekend tournaments. For weekend tournaments and American Legion postseason tournament games, equal playing time is not guaranteed, and will be dependent on game situations and performance. Coaches will effort to get a reasonable amount of playing time for every player on the roster for each tournament.

#### **Senior League Team (or Junior Legion U-17 Team)**

- Comprised of predominately Junior and Sophomore class players from the previous MHS season who choose to play a weekday only schedule or do not make a Legion team roster.
- A senior league team will be formed only if there are enough registered players available to fill out a roster.
- This team would play a weekday game schedule of 2-3 games per week.
- Players registered for the Senior league team would pay only the base player fee.
- Playing time—equal playing time will be emphasized for weekday games.
- This team could play as a Legion U-17 tournament team if player numbers and composition allowed for the formation of an additional tournament team. This decision will be made by the league director with input from MBSC coaches. A Legion U-17 tournament team would be similar

to the Senior Legion U-19 team in terms of game schedule, player fees, playing time expectations, etc. This team would be registered as an American Legion baseball team and would participate in the postseason Wisconsin Junior Legion U-17 regional tournament at the end of the season.

### **Junior Tournament Team (or Junior Legion U-16)**

- Comprised of predominately Freshmen class players from the spring MHS season. Some Sophomore class players from the spring MHS season may also be asked to participate on this team if needed for roster and positional needs.
- This team would play a regular weekday game schedule of 2-3 games per week. All players will pay the base player fee.
- Players who want additional baseball opportunities that is more competitive than the weekday only format can choose to play in an additional 3-4 weekend tournaments and the postseason Wisconsin Junior Legion U-16 regional tournament.
- Players who choose to play the more competitive tournament and American Legion format will pay the base fee and an additional competitive tournament fee which will be determined by the league director based on expected costs of playing in the additional tournaments and the American Legion tournament.
- If roster numbers are too high with this team for the weekday game schedule, players may be rotated to skip availability for some of the weekday games. This will help coaches manage player numbers more efficiently and will also allow families to have some time away from baseball during the summer season.
- This team will be registered as an American Legion baseball team and will participate in the postseason Wisconsin Junior Legion U-16 regional tournament if player numbers and commitment level are sufficient. The winner of the regional Legion tournament would qualify for the Wisconsin state U-16 Legion tournament.
- Playing time. Equal playing time will be emphasized for weekday league games, with an emphasis on getting more reps for those layers who are not playing as much at weekend tournaments. For weekend tournaments and American Legion postseason tournament games, equal playing time is not guaranteed, and will be dependent on game situations and performance. Coaches will effort to get a reasonable amount of playing time for every player on the roster for each tournament.

### **Season**

The season will begin in early to mid-June, immediately after the end of the MHS high school baseball season. Players may not play on an MBSC summer high school baseball team until their spring high school season has finished. The number of games played during the season will vary depending on the team. The Junior team and the Senior league team will typically play 10-12 weekday games over a five-week period. The Senior tournament team will typically play 8-10 weekday games over a five-week period. Junior and Senior travel teams playing a more competitive schedule will also play in 4-5 weekend tournaments during the season, including the postseason Legion regional tournament. The base registration fee for the Summer High School program will be based on playing a weekday game schedule. Additional competitive fees will be charged to Senior and Junior tournament team members who choose to play a more competitive tournament schedule. The additional fee amounts will be determined by the league director based on estimated tournament costs.

### **American Legion Baseball**

The MBSC summer high school baseball Senior and Junior tournament teams will plan to participate in the Wisconsin American Legion baseball regional qualifying tournament at the end of the season. These teams will be registered as American Legion baseball teams with the Wisconsin Legion program. Wisconsin State Legion tournaments are held at the U-16, U-17 and U-19 (Senior) Division levels. The winner of the Legion regional tournament is eligible to play in the Wisconsin State Legion Baseball tournament that is held in late July or early August. In order to register as an American Legion team and participate in this tournament, the team must meet the requirements set forth by Wisconsin American Legion Baseball. The

decision to participate in the state Legion baseball tournament will be made each year by the league director with input from MBSC baseball coaches.

### **Additional Notes**

The MBSC will attempt to hire non-parent coaches for all of the summer high school baseball teams. Parents who wish to help coach a team will be added to coaching staffs as needed per the league director.

Player Liability Notice-- In the event of damage to a hotel room or other lodging accommodation where the team will stay overnight, parents/guardians of those who stayed in that room or living space are financially liable for any and all damages accrued during overnight stays. The parents or guardians of all players registered for overnight tournaments will need to sign a liability waiver agreeing to this language.

### **Home Talent Program**

#### **Age:**

Unlimited, typically have graduated from high school.

#### **Philosophy:**

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

#### **Season:**

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

#### **Team Composition:**

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