

**Norcross Youth Baseball
& Softball Association**

Travel Baseball Handbook

September 2007

This is the Norcross Travel Baseball Handbook. It is intended to provide an overview of the Norcross travel baseball program, including our:

- Overall Philosophy
- Selection guidelines for managers/coaches
- Selection guidelines for players/teams
- Player eligibility
- Sponsorship & fundraising
- Timeline of key events/dates
- Codes of Conduct (Managers/Coaches and Players)

Norcross Youth Baseball & Softball Association

(NYBSA) Travel Baseball Philosophy

NYBSA travel baseball is an extension of the Norcross recreational youth baseball program, which is designed to promote the development of strong character, a right attitude, a sense of responsibility and citizenship in youngsters, using the game of baseball as a vehicle. It is the intent of the NYBSA Travel Baseball program to achieve this goal through fair play, good sportsmanship, congenial fellowship, and a level of competitive baseball that meets the needs of a select group of kids and their families.

NYBSA travel baseball provides a unique opportunity for kids to experience competitive baseball at another level beyond the recreational leagues. However, developing players in terms of baseball knowledge, skill, character, love of the game and sportsmanship remain our top priorities above winning.

Norcross travel baseball welcomes players and families from neighboring communities who desire to play on one of our travel baseball teams. However, it is strictly against the policy of NYBSA Travel Baseball program for any coach, player or parent to recruit players away from neighboring communities/teams.

It is strictly against the policy of NYBSA Travel Baseball program for any person, either as a participant or a spectator, to engage in arguments, to use abusive language, to harass umpires, or to exhibit any behavior not in concert with the general intention of this policy statement. As representatives of the Norcross community, team coaches, players and parents are required to abide by this policy statement as well as additional codes of conduct since we represent our Norcross community across the Greater Gwinnett area during the season.

ALL NYBSA RULES WILL SUPERSEDE GGBL RULES, UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED. ALL TRAVEL TEAMS WILL FOLLOW THE LOCAL NYBSA RULES AS ANY OTHER TEAM PARTICIPATING AT NORCROSS.

Travel Committee:

A travel committee will be selected by the Board of Directors to oversee travel coach and team selection. This committee will consist of the Commissioners of the PeeWee, Minor, Major and Pony Leagues, the Player Agent, Youth Commissioner as well as the President of NYBSA. All decisions will be by majority vote.

Manager/Coach Selection

1. Manager and coach candidates (including managers/coaches currently coaching NYBSA travel teams) will complete a NYBSA Travel Coaches application form unless there is one already on file. Candidates will indicate whether they are interested in a manager or coach position and identify preferences if they want to coach with a specific person
2. In addition, candidates will provide additional information (via addendum to the current application or a separate travel form) in the following areas:

Desire to coach travel baseball, qualifications and definition of success as a travel baseball team.

- a. Coaching philosophy. In terms:
 - i. dealing with/communicating with parents
 - ii. selecting your players (awareness of eligibility rule)
 - iii. working with your players (playing time, discipline, player development, handling pitchers, etc)
 - iv. dealing with your coaching staff
 - v. other
- b. Coaching experience. Provide 3 references that we can contact in regard to your coaching background/experience (at least 1 must be from a coach that you have never coached with)
- c. Coaching conduct. In the last 5 years as a coach, manager, or parent, have you ever been removed or ejected from a youth sports game or activity by the umpires or officials, or have you been suspended from your youth coaching/managing duties by the local or state governing youth sports organizations or athletic association? If so, please explain.

3. Candidates will complete an application submit it to the NYBSA Board.
4. Candidates may be requested to interview with the NYBSA Board, or selected members of the Board. The NYBSA Board reserves the right to contact and obtain input regarding the candidate within the Norcross community, including parents, coaches and/or umpires.
5. The Travel Commissioner will recommend travel coaches/managers for each age group. The following selection committee will approve the recommendations, work with the Travel Commissioner to resolve any concerns and make the final decision:
 - Pee Wee Commissioner
 - Minor Commissioner
 - Major Commissioner
 - Pony Commissioner
 - Youth Commissioner
 - Player Agent
 - Travel Baseball Commissioner
 - President
 - Note: if candidates are members of the selection committee, they will be excused from the decision process. .
6. Travel Managers and Coaches will be required to attend at least one NYBSA sponsored coaching clinic each year.
7. At the end of each season, Coaches and Managers will review feedback on the prior season with the Travel Baseball Commissioner. Parents will be encouraged to provide feedback during the season but at least at the end of the season as well. Parent feedback is intended to for the coach/manager’s benefit.
8. Norcross Travel Teams will represent Norcross Baseball. Teams will wear uniforms containing the Norcross Colors. Each team will also be referred to as the “Norcross Blue Devils”

Criteria

FACTOR	WEIGHT/ IMPORTANCE
1. Baseball knowledge	20%
2. Prior coaching experience	20%
3. Coaching philosophy	20%
4. Communication / organizational skills	20%
5. Integrity/Character	20%

Player/Team Selection

1. Norcross Travel Baseball teams are sponsored by the NYBSA Board each year. Coaches are selected/confirmed annually and shall be viewed as “custodians” of the team for each season.
2. All Norcross travel baseball teams will hold open tryouts prior to the upcoming season. Interested players may be required to attend at least 2 of the tryouts held.
3. The Baseball Travel Commissioner and Player Agent will oversee travel team/player selections.
4. The outgoing NYBSA Board will determine the final number of travel teams that will be sponsored. The number of travel teams will be determined for each age group, each year based on a number of factors, including:
 - player/parent interest
 - number of qualified coaches
 - the ability to field multiple competitive teams
 - competitive balance with the recreational teams/program
5. Norcross Travel baseball has adopted a “core team” expansion philosophy that we believe balances the desire to field competitive teams and develop players with the need to have strong parental participation (as coaches and supporting fans). Player composition on a specific travel team may change from year to year as families/players move, players develop and different managers decide to change rosters, etc. When forming/selecting teams, the Travel Commissioner and Player Agent will work with the managers to determine whether multiple teams can be supported at a specified age group. If so, we will respect the manager and parent’s desire to maintain a “core team” of players or preference to play on a different team. We expect managers to work together in a supportive manner and avoid recruiting players from one team to another.

Player Eligibility

All of the players on each team must be from the NYBSA program.

A NYBSA player is defined as a player who has played the previous fall or spring, in an NYBSA program (travel and rec) **OR** a player who resides within the boundaries of one of the following Gwinnett Public School geographic districts:

Simpson Elementary
Beaver Ridge Elementary
Peachtree Elementary
Berkeley Lake Elementary
Stripling Elementary
Norcross Elementary
Meadow Creek Elementary

Players from other programs who desire to play on an NYBSA travel team must play either a spring or fall season in the NYBSA Rec program before becoming eligible to participate in the NYBSA travel program.

Special Situations

In the event of a special situation, the manager may petition the board to obtain and exemption from the Player Eligibility rule.

Example: An NYBSA player leaves the park and wants to come back. Players and managers have the ability to petition the board to waive the eligibility requirements. The request should be made in writing and clearly define the situation that caused ineligibility along with the reasoning for the waiver.

Sponsorship / Fundraising

Travel baseball requires a substantial financial commitment in terms of uniforms, league sponsorship fees, travel/lodging expenses and tournament and regular season fees. To help travel teams meet these financial commitments while protecting the financial needs of the recreational programs, NYBSA has adopted a series of policies designed to balance both interests. Specifically, the purpose of the fundraising policy is to:

- help ensure compliance with the solicitation laws of Gwinnett County
- establish fair and reasonable guidelines for travel baseball team fundraising
- help ensure that the travel team fund raising efforts do not conflict with the NYBSA sponsorship program and recreational team sponsors and avoid potential confusion with local merchants or businesses that may be solicited by both the NYBSA and individual travel teams.

NYBSA travel teams will adhere to the following fundraising guidelines:

1. All fundraising efforts by any member or team, whether local league or travel shall be governed by Section B.12. of the Gwinnett County Park and Recreation Policies and Procedures which shall apply to the fundraising efforts of both local league teams and travel teams.
2. Commercial activity of any kind by any vendor, agent or representative is strictly prohibited, unless granted prior approval by the NYBSA Board of Directors. However, in order to remain competitive with other parks in the pursuit of hosting tournament play, the Board's approval of commercial activity and the use of vendors will generally be reserved for sanctioned Dixie Youth, ASA, GGBL or other baseball/softball tournaments involving teams from outside the local league. This is intended to minimize the appearance of excessive or conflicting fundraising efforts from our existing sponsors and families.
3. Prior to soliciting any funds to support travel teams or beginning fund raising efforts of any kind, travel teams will submit their fund raising plans to the NYBSA Board. At a minimum, the plans will:
 - describe the nature of fund raising event(s) – location, dates/times and brochure/materials to be distributed, web ads, etc.
 - identify target companies/individuals that they plan to solicit
 - identify plans to hang advertising banners on field dugouts

4. Travel team fund raising efforts (including ad material, brochures, web sites, etc.) must have full disclosure statements that clearly state that they are soliciting funds for a specific travel team, not NYBSA in general. Checks from individual sponsors shall be made out to the individual travel team, not NYBSA.
5. Regardless of any fund raising efforts, travel teams are also required to secure a league sponsor (currently \$200/sponsor).
6. Prior to conducting any fund raising activities at NYBSA sponsored events or on NYBSA park locations, travel teams will require advance approval from the NYBSA Board.
7. The NYBSA Board will have the final authority to resolve any disputes for travel fund raising issues or failure to adhere to the above stated guidelines.

Timeline of key events.

1. Estimate/recommend the number of travel teams for the upcoming spring season (for NYBSA Board approval): **August**
2. Coordinate application/ interview process for managers interested in leading a Spring travel team: **August**
3. Coordinate manager/coach selection process: **August**
4. NYBSA decision on the managers/coaches for the upcoming spring season: **Late August / September**
5. Review Travel team fund raising plans and obtain NYBSA board approval: **November**
6. Spring tryouts: **Mid / Late September**
7. Draft practice schedule for those teams wanting to practice from November through January: **October**
8. Prepare/assign list of available home dates for each GGBL manager for GGBL scheduling meetings that take place in late January (need draft of Rec schedule from Rec commissioners as key input to this): **Mid January**
9. Coordinate getting schedules, fees & rosters:
 - Home schedules to umpires: **First week in February**
 - Home schedules to Concessions: **First week in February**
 - Rosters/fees to NYBSA: **First week in February**
 - Sponsorship dues to NYBSA: **First week in February**
 - Rosters to GGBL for verification: **Early March**
10. Coordinate with Rec League commissioners after Rec registration to finalize field schedules based on final number of Rec teams: **First week in February**

Manager/Coaches code of conduct.

Coaches will:

1. Come prepared to every practice.
2. Continue to learn as much about the game (including outside instruction) to be a more effective coach.
3. Not use profanity, embarrass, or humiliate players.
4. Not use tobacco or alcohol products while around players.
5. Publicly praise player performance whenever possible.
6. Strive to make the season a positive and enjoyable learning experience.
7. Enforce discipline for unsportsmanlike conduct, lack of hustle or disrespect for coaches, teammates or opponents (extra conditioning activities and / or loss of playing time during the next game).
8. Maintain an open line of communication with parents and coaches.
9. Prepare players so they are not put in game situations they are not prepared for.
10. Provide players with proper conditioning and exercise.
11. Teach and enforce proper warm up techniques
12. Prevent overuse injuries to pitchers by monitoring number of pitches thrown and providing pitchers with ample rest.
13. Lead by example, through good sportsmanship at all times.
14. Instruct and coach players in a way that encourages them to embrace the game of baseball.

Player Code of Conduct.

Players will:

1. Come prepared to focus and play hard at every practice and game.
2. Give full attention when the coach is teaching or addressing the team.
3. Be a leader in the dugout, on the field and in the classroom at school.
4. Do their best at all times on the field and in the classroom at school.
5. Make parents, coaches, friends and neighbors proud of the way they conduct themselves while wearing the Norcross uniform.
6. Practice at home to improve their skills.
7. Compete hard, and win or lose, hold their head high and congratulate opponents.
8. Exercise good sportsmanship and composure on the field and in the dugout.
9. Treat all umpires, coaches and players with respect.
10. Cheer teammates when they are having difficulties fielding or batting.
11. Do their best to make the season enjoyable for all of their teammates.

Norcross Youth Travel Baseball Manager Application

Instructions: Complete all sections. If particular sections do not apply to you, list the answer as not applicable. Print legibly or type the response to the question. In order to process this application, it is your responsibility to provide responses that can be read and understood without difficulty. Return the completed application to the Travel Baseball Commissioner in a sealed envelope or via email.

Age Group Requested: _____ (9U, 10U, 11U, 12U, 13U, 14U)

Name: _____
(First) (Middle initial) (Last)

ADDRESS:

Street: _____

City: _____ **State** _____ **Zip** _____

Home Telephone (____) _____ **Work**
(____) _____

Occupation: _____

Current Employer

Name: _____

Supervisor Name & Telephone

Number: _____

Current Employer Address, City, State, Zip _____

If Employed less than 5 years at this location, list prior employer name, telephone number, and address: _____

Have you been certified in any sports related associations?

If so, please describe

In the last 5 years as a coach, manager, or parent, have you ever been removed or ejected from a youth sports game or activity by the umpires or officials? or have you been suspended from your youth coaching/managing duties by the local or state governing youth sports organizations or athletic association? _____ (yes / no)

If so, provide any and all dates of occurrence. List the details of the event(s), athletic association where the event occurred, and sports activity that you managed, coached, or attended as a parent.

Please submit three (3) personal references who have personal knowledge of your character. They must have known you for at least two (2) years, must not be related to you by blood or marriage. At least one (1) must be from a coach you have never coached with.

1) _____
Name, Address, Telephone Number

2) _____
Name, Address, Telephone Number

3) _____
Name, Address, Telephone Number

I submit that the information I have provided is true and accurate. I understand that the information which I have submitted will be evaluated and checked by the NYBSA Travel Baseball Commissioner and/or his/her designee. In addition, I understand that as part of this evaluation process, I may be personally interviewed by the Travel Baseball Commissioner and/or in conjunction with the travel baseball committee.

By submitting this application, I agree to abide by the by-laws and rules set forth by Norcross Youth Baseball & Softball Association and the Gwinnett County Parks and Recreation Department. Furthermore, I understand that if I am granted a baseball travel team, all my coaches must complete a NYBSA coaching application form and be approved by the Travel Baseball Commissioner.

I understand that my application will be denied if I have submitted false information, and, if I am granted a travel baseball team, I understand that any failure to comply with any of the NYBSA rules and by-laws contained within the Travel Baseball Handbook or in-park baseball rules will result in the immediate withdrawal of my privileges as manager of the NYBSA travel baseball team.

Applicants Name (please print) _____

Applicants Signature _____

Date _____