

Wheaton Park District Youth Softball

Travel Team Guidelines

WPD Softball Program Overview:

The Wheaton Softball Program offers a more competitive environment for more serious players (ages 9U – 18U) the opportunity to participate in full and part time travel softball. The Wheaton program is a community based softball program_which offers players the opportunity to play with other competitive individuals from the Wheaton and surrounding areas.

Players and families are expected to have a more serious commitment to the team they are selected for. Players, parents, and Coaches should discuss all potential conflicts before tryouts or committing a player to a team. All teams will carry a roster of up to thirteen (13) players with schedules as noted below:

Full time travel (Wildcats)-Practices in the Fall and throughout the Spring/Summer. 10-20 games in the Fall; 50-60 games in the Spring/Summer. Games could be friendlies, round robins, leagues, and/or tournaments. See Wildcat information sheet for more information.

Part Time Travel (Bobcats)-Practices in the Spring/Summer; must register and pay our in-house schedule and they will have 10-20 games via tournaments after the in-house league. See Bobcat information sheet for more information.

*The number of games each individual team plays will vary depending upon their success and number of tournaments each team chooses to enter.

Philosophy

“Winning is an attitude not a score.” The philosophy of the travel program, like the in-house program, is to maintain a positive attitude if faced with a loss, build on mistakes, and go forward. We are committed to building confidence for our players that can be carried throughout their life. We feel this can be achieved through teamwork, commitment and a strong work ethic.

Manager Selection

The full and part time travel team manager selection committee will consist of the following Board Officers: Travel Vice-President and two additional members of the WPD softball board. Team manager candidates will be evaluated and selected by the Committee.

Managers and coaches of travel teams will be required to have a background check. This check will be done through the Illinois State Police Bureau of Identification and is mandatory to be a coach in our travel team program.

Preference may be given to managers or coaches from the Wheaton Park District Softball program due to familiarity with the program's rules and regulations and due to known managerial skills and personality traits. Managers will go through the selection process each year.

Player Selection

Team selection will be determined by a tryout process on dates established by the WPD. Tryouts will be conducted by the Travel Team Player Selection Committee for each age group, and the committee will consist of Board of Control Members and Manager, if selected. Additional Board of Control Members may be present to act as evaluators and assist as needed.

Full travel players must try out for each age group they want to be considered for. Part time Softball Travel Players must try-out for the youngest team they are eligible for under National Softball Association (USSSA) Rules.

All players will be assessed on basic softball skills: fielding, throwing, hitting/bunting, and running. Players will also be evaluated on their aptitude for the various skilled positions such as outfield, infield, pitching and catching. A 5 point scoring system will be applied to each evaluated skill for the purpose of generating a total score. This total score shall be used for comparison purposes only.

Teams will be selected based upon the results of this evaluation process along with how the talents of each player best contribute to the overall chemistry and makeup of the team. While the presumption will be that the highest scores and rankings will determine the makeup of the travel team in each age division, such presumption shall be dispensed with if, at the discretion of the Selection Committee, such departure is necessary to field the most competitive and well-rounded team, which includes pitching, catching, middle infielders and hitting.

Regardless of the number of tryout participants, there may be a need to hold supplemental/private tryouts to address the needs of any given team at any age group. Players that participated in the initial tryout do NOT need to attend any Supplemental/Private Tryout.

A supplemental tryout day may be scheduled for those that cannot make the original dates. Please contact WPD if you wish to make this request. This tryout will only be conducted on an "as needed" basis. Notwithstanding anything herein, the number of teams in the travel softball program will be determined at the discretion of the Selection Committee, and shall be based upon the overall talent and qualified managers available, with an emphasis on the availability of qualified pitching and catching to form any additional team at any given level.

The selection committee shall use its best efforts to complete the selection process within one week from the completion of the tryout. Team selections will be posted on the WPD

website: www.wheatonparkdistrict.com/. A list of the players selected to the travel team(s) and coaches' names will also be placed on file with the WPD Recreation Department and the league administrator after the selection process is completed. Unless the Travel VP or Selection Committee approves otherwise, all travel teams will select up to 13 players.

Ideally teams are comprised of Wheaton and District 200 residents, but can have non-residents as follows.

Age Level	Non-residents allowable
10U	3 non residents
11U	3 non residents
12U	3 non residents
13U	3 non residents
14U	4 non residents
16U	No restrictions
18U	No restrictions

*Residents for roster purposes include Wheaton, D200, and non-residents that played in Wheaton previously, however, Non-resident registration rates still apply.

PLAYING RULES

Part Time Tournament Softball Teams: All players will play a minimum of two (2) innings per game and have at least one (1) at bat. Exceptions to this rule will be games cancelled due to weather, darkness, or slaughter rule. Playing a specialty position allowed by a tournament such as Designated Hitter, Extra Hitter, or DEFO (Defensive Player) for a game also satisfies the playing time rule.

Full time Travel: Teams must follow the rules of the tournaments they participate in. There are no playing time rules.

*If these rules are not followed, the team manager may be subject to disciplinary action by the Board of Control.

PLAYER DISCIPLINE

Players may be benched only for disciplinary reasons. Legitimate school conflicts, advance notice of family conflicts, illness or family emergencies are not grounds for disciplinary action.

Disciplinary problems concerning missed practices/games and inappropriate behavior should be discussed with players and parents and if not resolved, the Travel Vice-President or League President should be consulted. Policy has been set that should a child consistently miss practices and games due to an unexcused absence the child may be subject to suspension (s) and/or dismissal from the team.

Alternate Call up Policy

There will be no alternates for either full time travel or part time travel teams. When 10 or less rostered players are available for a game or tournament, a player or players may be called up from the regular in-house program (or from a younger Wildcat travel team if tournament/association rules allow), provided there is no conflict with their regular team play, to raise the roster to 11.

If a player from a full time travel team drops off the roster prior to the in-house draft, he/she may be added to the list of players available for the in-house player draft. If that occurs, a player may be added to the travel team roster with approval from the Travel Vice-President.

Hardship Rule: A hardship exists when a full time travel team has 10 or less players due to unforeseen circumstances. When a full-time travel team has 10 or less players due to hardship, the team may add either an in district or out of district player.

Miscellaneous

All Park District issued travel team equipment must be returned to the park district per the return policy guidelines.

Umpires will be scheduled by the Umpire Coordinator/Scheduler. Field availability will be as scheduled by the respective League Vice-President.

Certificates of Insurance

Park District Risk Management Agency issues an updated certificate of insurance each year. All requested certificates will be forwarded to the manager and tournament contact person. Please allow the Recreation Department five (5) days for certificates to be issued.

Code of Conduct

The Wheaton Park District Youth Baseball/Softball Board of Control has adopted the “Character Counts!” program and all managers, coaches, players, and their parents will be required to sign program acceptance agreements.

Additional Requirements

The Wheaton Youth Softball Policies and Procedures and By-Laws apply to all travel teams, both full and part time travel.

NOTE: In the interest of improving the Travel Program, the Board of Control may update these rules as deemed necessary. Revised November 2023