

# **Wheaton Park District Youth Softball**

## **Travel Team Guidelines**

### **WPD Softball Program Overview:**

The Wheaton Wildcats Softball Program offers competitive and serious players (ages 10U – 18U) the opportunity to participate in full time travel softball. The Wheaton Wildcat program is a community-based softball program which offers players the opportunity to play with other competitive individuals from the Wheaton Schools & Park District area.

There are **NO RESTRICTIONS** for players regarding other sports other than having a serious commitment to the team should you be selected. 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 twelve (12) players and will participate in one of two area travel leagues. Teams may have up to a maximum of three (3) players from outside the Park District boundaries to ensure a full and competitive roster. The number of games each individual team plays will vary depending upon their success and number of tournaments each team chooses to enter.

**“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. To focus on losses is detrimental to mental growth of the children.

After team selection, the manager will hold a mandatory team meeting with parents to discuss costs of the program.

Managers will discuss team goals and project additional costs for tournaments and travel expenses (hotel and food).

The Wheaton Park District will provide and equipment for both pure and in-house travel teams. Schedule must be published well in advance and changes require sufficient notice to player and parents so as not to conflict with personal holidays.

### **WPD Registration and Fees:**

**Registration for tryouts for the Wheaton Wildcats Travel Softball Baseball program are open to all residents and non-residents who love the game of softball and are willing to be committed to a team if selected.**

Players making pure travel teams will be required to complete the registration form and waiver and to pay all required fees prior to practicing. The Wheaton Park District will provide registration information to all parent/guardians following team selection. Coaches will be informed of registration progress.

In-house travel registration fee payment information will be sent to parent/guardian following team selection.

Pure travel teams have approximately 50-60 practices and games and in-house travel teams have approximately 20-30. Games will vary due to manager commitments, weather, and tournament availability. The Park District will contribute an amount to be determined annually for tournament play for each in-house travel team. Pure travel teams receive an entry into the program's Red, White and Blue Tournament.

The number of home games for pure travel will not exceed 15 games per team. In-house travel will receive 10 home games per team.

### **FUNDRAISING**

*In accordance with amended Article VJ of the WPD Bylaws entitled "Financial Policy" all travel baseball teams shall be allowed to independently raise funds through sponsorships and/or other fundraising efforts and activities to finance and otherwise offset the costs and expenses associated with their respective travel teams. Every effort should be made by these travel teams to NOT solicit or otherwise fundraise from existing and/or long-standing Wheaton Park District in-house baseball and softball sponsors. A permitted exception will be if a sponsor's child moves from an in-house to a travel program. Amended and Approved by the WPDYBS Board on December 14, 2006.*

Team managers are responsible for keeping proper records of all team funds and expenses!

### **MANAGER SELECTION**

The pure and in-house travel team manager selection committee will consist of the following Board Officers: Commissioner, Travel Vice-President, respective League President, and respective League Vice-President (for the respective age group, League Administrator). In-house travel 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.

All travel team manager selections are submitted to the Board of Control for final approval.

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 Softball Board of Control. 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. All members of the Selection Committee, except the Manager, will appoint a substitute to the Committee if the Committee is selecting a team for which their child is trying out.

Pure travel players must try out for each age group they want to be considered for. In-house Softball Travel Players must try out for the youngest team they are eligible for under USSSA Rules.

Players wishing to be considered for a travel team but who are unable to attend any of the tryout dates must notify the respective Travel Vice-President in advance. The Travel Vice-President will submit that child's name for consideration to the selection committee, taking into consideration any factors known to the Travel Vice-President to be pertinent to the situation, including the player's abilities and prior participation at the travel level, if applicable.

The Selection Committee will have an appropriate level of softball knowledge and experience. 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 of the team. Coaches' evaluations from the previous season will also be used in the selection process. 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, the Selection Committee, at its sole discretion, may hold supplemental tryouts with proper notice to address the needs of any given team at any age group. These Supplemental Tryouts must be posted on the WPD website. If time permits and the Selection Committee deem it necessary, the WPD may send an email notification to those age eligible registrants who had previously registered for a WPD softball program. Players that participated in the initial tryout do NOT need to attend any Supplemental Tryout. Every effort shall be made to have the same Selection Committee members for both the initial and Supplemental tryout.

A supplemental tryout day can 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.

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.wheatonparks.com](http://www.wheatonparks.com). A list of the players selected to the travel team(s) and coaches' names will also be placed on file with the WPD Athletic 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 12 players.

### **PLAYING RULES**

**Playing Time for In-House 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.

**Playing Time for Softball Pure Travel:** Teams must follow the rules of the tournaments they participate in. There are no playing time rules for practice games.

**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 (un-sportsmanlike conduct). Legitimate school conflicts, advance notice of family conflicts, illness or family emergencies are not grounds for disciplinary action.

Disciplinary problems concerning missed practices/games 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 miss any combination of three (3) practices or games due to an unexcused absence the child may be subject to a two (2) game suspension. Any more than three (3) unexcused absences may result in dismissal from the team.

Disciplinary problems concerning inappropriate behavior by a player or a player's family member should be discussed with the player and the parents and if not resolved, the Travel Vice-President or League President should be consulted. If the behavior persists, in spite of attempts to resolve the problem or behavior, the Board of Control has the authority to remove the player from the team. Inappropriate behavior is defined to be any behavior that does not conform to the Wheaton Park District Sport League Ethics Code or the Character Counts program.

## **ALTERNATE CALL UP POLICY**

There will be no alternates for either pure travel or in-house 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 another WPD travel teams provided there is no conflict with their regular team play to raise the roster to 11.

A call-up player may not play more innings than a rostered player and must bat at the bottom of the order.

If a player from a pure travel team drops off of that 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 pure travel team roster with approval from the Travel Vice-President.

**Hardship Rule:** A hardship exists when a pure travel team has 10 or less players due to unforeseen circumstances that can include a voluntary or involuntary (player discipline, family relocation, season-ending injury, etc.) drop from the roster. When a pure travel team has 10 or less players due to hardship, the team may add either an in district or out of district resident.

Once the in-house draft is concluded pure travel teams may not select a player chosen for an in-house team.

Players wishing to drop after the in-house draft may be eligible to get on a waiting list for the next available in-house team.

## **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 Contractor.

Field availability will be as scheduled by the respective League Vice-President.

## **TOURNAMENT ENTRY FEES**

Some tournament entry fees are handled by the WPD Athletic Department. For auditing purposes, the WPD policy requires that all purchases, fees, and services are to be made by WPD personnel. Manager will be issued WPD Travel Check Request forms which must be turned in when requesting tournament entry fees.

The WPD Business Office has the capability of issuing checks on a weekly basis. To request a check, we need paperwork. Information sheets are acceptable, and necessary for us to process the check. Team name and age group, coach's address, and phone number must be submitted with tournament information (see Check Request Form.)

If you have any questions, please call 630-668-3371. Please understand that this is park district policy and needs to be followed.

### **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 Athletic 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 pure and in-house.

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

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