

READINGTON TEWKSBURY JUNIOR BASEBALL LEAGUE

2015
(Addition of Tewksbury)

BY-LAWS

*updated and adopted 9/2019 Travel Changes

ARTICLE XVI – Travel Program

Section 1: Program Overview

RTJBL Travel Program is designed to field the most competitive baseball teams to represent the Readington Tewksbury league. The program will provide players the opportunity to play in a highly competitive environment while emphasizing sportsmanship, skills development, and an enthusiasm for the game. Winning is an important part of the environment, which primarily involves tournament or league play, but the greater goal remains the creation of a fun atmosphere in which players can learn the benefits of physical fitness, teamwork, confidence, sportsmanship, and other positive values they can develop and carry through life.

The Travel program will be overseen by the VP of Tournament baseball and training. Managers will consult with him/her in regards to decisions on team selection, rostering and other decisions beyond the day to day running of the team.

Teams will be formed in the 8U thru 15U, and 16-18u and will be made up of a minimum of 10 and a maximum of 15 players. Teams identified as the 'First Team' are required to play in the Babe Ruth/Cal Ripken district tournament as well as the RTJBL Memorial and Summer Tournament if being held. If enough players attended tryouts to form a second team, they have the option to play in those events. Any manager who feels that their team cannot compete in districts, and in doing so will put their teams into a negative situation, can petition the board. A board vote with a request for exemption from this requirement, citing extenuating circumstances, must be brought to the Executive Board for review and approval by a majority vote.

-Teams will be organized in a 'First Team' and 'Second Team' format in each age group only if there are enough players to form two teams during the tryout session. There is no guarantee that all players who tryout will be selected to play on a team. If less than (11) players tryout the 'First Team' manager may recruit other eligible players. This only applies to the 'First Team' See Team Selection Below for more information on first and second team.

-The 'First Team' 12u team will be required to attend Cooperstown Dreams Park (CDP) as part of their summer season. This team will need to roster a minimum of 11 players after tryouts. Attending CDP is mandatory for all players on this team so that the league can maintain their CDP certificate so that each subsequent year RTJBL 12u teams can attend. One team wanting to opt out would mean the league would lose their certificate and have to go on a waiting list for subsequent years. If there are less than 11 players that attend tryouts, the team manager may look within the RTJBL recreation program for a candidate to fill the spot as either a full time player for the season or a player that will only attend CDP. If the player is only attending CDP they will be allowed to play with the team in one tournament or up to 4 games of league play (if the team is not playing tournaments) leading up to CDP.

-Travel teams can roster substitutes at the beginning of the travel season with the approval of the VP of Tournament and Training. These substitutes must be age eligible and can only be called upon when a team cannot be fielded (less than 9 players) due to regular player absences. Substitutes must follow the same player requirements outlined below.

Note: Coaches, parents, and players should expect player movement between the Travel teams in an age group as strength, skill, and players develop over the years. Playing on a team one year is not a guarantee players will make the same team in subsequent years.

Section 2: Player Requirements

The following requirements must be met to be eligible to play on a summer Travel team supported by RTJBL:

-All Players and family must abide by the Travel Code of Conduct and any additional team rules set by the travel manager. See Travel Player/ Parent Code of Conduct on the league site.

- Only players who participated in travel tryouts are eligible for the upcoming spring and/or summer travel season, this includes first, second and any subsequent teams that are formed. If players cannot attend the tryout due to a family commitment the VP of Tournament baseball can try and reschedule an evaluation for that player.

-The Team must be made up entirely of children who signed up and played in the current RTJBL Regular Rec Season. Players and families should consider the commitment required before trying out for a travel team. Some teams may begin practicing as early as February and play through the end of July.

-Players should consider RTJBL Rec and Travel teams their number one commitment throughout the baseball season starting in April.

-A player must play during at least 65% of their Recreation season games to be eligible for the Travel Team. This includes all games scheduled for that team once the season starts, including inter-town, makeups and playoffs. A request for exemption from this requirement citing extenuating circumstances must be brought to the Executive Board for review and approval by a unanimous vote.

-Players can only play with their age group or play with the age group 1-year-older (e.g. 10-year-old can only play on the 10-year-old or 11-year-old team). RTJBL recommends that all travel players play in their Babe Ruth/Cal Ripken age group (which can mean playing down a grade). Age cutoff is May 1st.

-Players will be permitted to tryout for both the travel team for their age group and, at the player's option, the travel team for the age group 1-year older. If the player does not make the travel team for the age group 1-year older, the player can still be considered for selection to the travel team of the player's age group eligibility so long as the player has attended the tryout for that team.

- Player's family must agree to take work slots at the Readington Summer Tournament if being held. A player whose family does not cover their required work slots during the Travel Season shall be suspended and ineligible to play any Travel games until the matter is reviewed by the Executive Board. The Executive Board will determine a course of action with no less than a one game suspension for the player unless unanimously otherwise agreed by the Executive Board.

Section 3: Manager Requirements/ Responsibilities

- 1) Potential Travel Managers should have a knowledge of teaching baseball skills through playing or previous coaching experience.
- 2) Travel Managers should be a Recreation Season Manager or official Assistant Coach and previously interviewed by the Executive Board at some point in their relationship with RTJBL to be eligible for a Travel Team. If a Travel Team Managerial candidate is not managing a Rec Team in the current season, the candidate must be interviewed by the Executive Board prior to being awarded a RTJBL Travel Team.
- 3) Managers must submit an application each year for review by the Executive Board and if necessary interviewed by the VP of Travel baseball. The manager will be evaluated each year by the Executive Board who will recommend whether the Manager should continue another year as Travel manager.
- 4) The Manager must have attended the Rutgers Safety Class (or have equivalent training) and will be background checked when they register for the Rec season as a coach or manager.
- 5) Travel Managers should be
 - committed to their team as number one commitment once the baseball season begins in April
 - prepared to begin winter practices no later than February, using indoor facilities where possible; consideration should be given to children that play winter sports
 - practicing and preparing to play in the spring season in scrimmages, limited tournaments or a spring league. (Use the available time -between Rec games to have Travel practices.)
- 6) Travel Managers will enter their team in appropriate leagues and tournaments based on their skill level. Challenge the team by playing tougher opponents while remaining competitive. Entering easier leagues or tournaments that the team is obviously over matching opponents is not good for the team or the opponents.
- 7) Travel Team Managers must agree and abide by the RTJBL rule that all Recreation games have priority over Travel games. Travel Manager should coordinate pitching with Rec Managers for any Travel games that overlap with Rec games. Players should not be held out of pitching in Rec games to be saved for Travel games. For Spring travel games Travel Managers should use who is available or who is not pitching the next day for Rec, etc.
- 8) Work assignments for the RTJBL tournament, if applicable, will be made available upon completion of final planning. Managers are responsible for ensuring coverage for all assigned work slots.
- 9) The Manager will follow the league travel player/ parent Code of Conduct unless the Manager consults and receives approval from the VP of Tournament Baseball and the Executive Board.
- 10) The Manager will consult with the VP of Tournament baseball on the selection of a coaching staff once the tryout is completed. When selecting coaches, the Manager should consider: coaching experience, baseball knowledge, contributions to the league. Eligible Travel coaches must have managed or assisted during the Recreation season and been on the Recreation rosters. If a coach did not manage or assist at the league level, an interview with the VP of Travel is required. The Manager should have no more than 3 official assistant coaches including a scorekeeper. The Manager can seek the help of parents during practices or to fill in at games as long as that parent has gone through the league background check and is Rutgers Certified.
- 11) In order to continue to advance the players knowledge of the game, and to better compete with outside team options, coaches, families and the VP of Tournament baseball can also consider if necessary hiring a manager and/or coaches to run the team.
- 12) Managers should have a person other than a coach handle the team's finances. This will allow for full disclosure of all costs associated with the team.

13) It is also very helpful to have a separate team administrator.

Section 4: Manager Selection Process

Manager and any interested assistant coaches must apply online using the travel coach application found on the league website. The league will send an email to league members sometime after September when the application process is open. Applicants need to do this each year regardless of past years positions held.

The Executive Board will review the applications in a timely manner. A decision might not be made until after tryouts to confirm that a prospective manager's child would make the team based on their evaluation. All applicants should attend tryouts, this will allow prospective managers to observe players to help them using evaluation data and what they saw to choose the team.

Section 5: Team Selection Process

-Only players who participated in Travel tryouts are eligible for the upcoming spring and/or summer travel season. This includes first, second and any subsequent teams that are formed. Parents/players are NOT allowed to choose which team they wish to play for in the RTJBL Travel league.

-Tryouts will be scheduled by the league when possible in late fall and no later than the end of December for ages 8u-12u. Each age group will have a scheduled time slot. Players, unless eligible to tryout for other age groups, must attend the slot for the age group. The league should try to coordinate days that do not interfere with other youth activities, i.e. avoid scheduling 10u tryouts at the same time that age also plays flag football or soccer.

-8u tryouts: if not enough players are interested in tryouts in the fall, the selected Manager will be allowed to recruit more players to complete the team.. If necessary the VP of Tournament baseball can suggest that a tryout be held in the late winter or spring.

-13u, 14u, 15u, and 16-18u are exempt from mandatory tryouts. The league should email appropriately aged players once the Babe Ruth season has begun to gauge the interest in playing Travel or add an interest check box to the league Recreation registration page. At the same time, the league will solicit managers and coaches the same way as in the fall with the other ages.

-In the 13-18u age groups if there are more players than needed to fill out the team, than a tryout will be held with the same guidelines as other age groups. If there are not enough players in an age bracket, and in the best interest of having a player play, the league will allow them to play up one or two age levels if that team is in need of players. The two age level play up is only allowed in the Babe Ruth age group, based on skill and if the Executive Board approves through a majority vote that there is no safety or other concerns.

The one exception to the BR Travel rules will be if there is a large enough group of the former RTJBL 12u first Travel team players and coaches who would like to hold winter workouts as a team. That team would be allowed to keep their team intact from 12u. The league will make an effort to hold a tryout prior to the winter for that age if necessary to fill out that team's roster as needed. If there is additional interest in a 2nd 13u team that can be formed as mentioned above once the BR season begins.

The league will have a player application online; each player is required to complete the application and Code of Conduct in order to tryout. The league will try to accommodate non-registered children at the tryout but this is not guaranteed. If necessary to cover costs for independent evaluators the league may charge a fee to tryout.

Tryouts should consist of the following:

- -Player evaluation in the areas of hitting, fielding (infield and outfield), and pitching at a minimum. Other criteria can be considered, catching, running, etc. A 5-point scale should be used for each skill.
- - Independent evaluators if possible from outside baseball organizations (Diamond Nation, FBA, Zoned, etc.). Otherwise evaluators can be drawn from current and prior managers and coaches of other Travel or Rec teams. The league can also draw from the same group of other coaches to help run tryouts, hitting grounders, throwing BP, etc. In no event should an evaluator be the parent of a child in the age group being evaluated. Conflict of interest should be avoided with the best interest of the player in mind. VP of Tournament baseball is responsible for appointing evaluators and helpers.

-Team selection begins with the oldest teams first and follows in reverse chronological age to the youngest team..

-If a player attends a tryout for two age groups, the manager of the older team will consider that player first. If the player does not get selected for the older team the player would then be available for the Manager of the team in their age group. If the player is offered an opportunity to play on the older team and declines, that player would not be eligible for any other team in the travel program for the upcoming season. If the player attends both tryouts and decides after tryouts that they do not want to be considered for one of the two teams, the family needs to notify the VP of Tournament baseball of this decision within 3 days after the tryouts take place.

-Manager of the 'First Team' will be given the tryout results first to select players to roster for their team. The Manager should consider all the following when selecting players; tryout information including numbers from evaluators and what the manager witnessed at tryouts, Recreation rankings, past performance in Rec and Travel.

-Managers will consult with the VP of Tournament baseball on choosing which players are qualified for Travel baseball and will make the overall team as competitive as reasonably possible. This does not assume that the Manager selects the best individual players, rather, the best players to field the overall team. Once the Manager selects the roster the Manager must get it roster approved by the VP of Tournament baseball.

-Managers will notify parents via invitation to join the First Team. This can be done via phone or email. If done via email, the Manager shall use BCC (blind copy) so that privacy is afforded. The VP of Tournament baseball should be copied on all emails.

-Managers should also go over commitment requirements & plans for the upcoming season. Players and parents will then have the option to either Accept or Decline a spot on the roster. Responses should be done within 5 days. All decisions are final at the time of acceptance. If a player declines, they will not be eligible for that team or any other team in the Travel Program for the upcoming travel season.

-After the roster of the First Team is finalized, which may include inviting other players if a player declines initially, the formation of the Second Team will be allowed only if there is another 10 or more players that attended tryouts to support a second team. As described in Section 1 program overview this is the minimum roster for travel teams. The same format for invitation and acceptance of players applies as above. Roster must be approved by the VP of Tournament baseball.

-Final Rosters should be forwarded to the VP of Tournament baseball and VP of Administration.

-Each Manager of the approved teams will receive a copy of the RTJBL Insurance Certificate upon successful review of the above items.