



Summer Travel Policies & Procedures

Revised March, 2020

MISSION

Plymouth Wayzata Youth Softball Association (PWYSA) promotes the game of fastpitch softball as a means to teach girls the value of teamwork and sportsmanship, to enhance self-esteem and to develop softball skills - all in a positive environment.

PHILOSOPHY

For those girls interested in a more competitive level of play, a travel league is offered. The Travel League is more time consuming and competitive. Our travel teams have been very successful against the best young athletes in the state as well as at national tournaments. Each participant is expected to attend all practices, league games and weekend tournaments during the summer season. Emphasis is on skill development, and teamwork in a positive environment.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

PWYSA is governed by a Board of Directors. Board meetings are held monthly at public venues and are open to the membership and public to join, listen, and participate. Please see our website for more information on current board members and for any open positions.

AGE DIVISIONS

Teams are formed according to age guidelines set by the American Softball Association (ASA):

8 and under
10 and under
12 and under
14 and under
16 and under
18 and under

PROGRAM GOALS

The following are the program goals for PWYSA travel softball:

- Provide a high-quality experience for players and coaches at all levels.
- Strive to create a positive self-esteem for every player.
- Strive to create an environment that is both fun and developmental for the players, families, coaches and community.
- Provide a program that works with and is admired by other fastpitch programs.
- Seek to maximize the potential of every player in the program.
- Develop players and teams that are able to compete at a national level.
- Seek to foster player participation for the full length of a player's youth sports career.

- Foster the importance of teamwork and success as part of a team.
- Increase the number of girls participating in competitive sports.

ELIGIBILITY*

Players are eligible to participate subject to the following criteria:

- Resident of boundaries of school district 284- regardless of school attended or are currently attending school within school district 284 boundaries or are a resident of the city of Plymouth.
- Non-residents may be allowed to play in the travel program if the board determines that:
 - A) additional players are needed at an age group
 - or
 - B) to provide a team with needed pitching and catching
 - or
 - C) to grandfather players who have played with PWYSA in previous year(s)
- Must have paid all applicable fees- past and present.
- Must have filled out all required forms, including any signed waivers and commitment forms required.
- Must meet age guidelines. This is determined by ASA rules. Current rules are based on the age as of December 31st of the current calendar year (summer season) and for the fall season, it is the age as of the following December 31st (i.e. age for next summer season),

*See also the Team Selection criteria.

PLAYING UP

All players requesting to “play up” must still register and try out at their current age level (the youngest age group they qualify for). To be considered for “playing up” to a higher age level, all of the following must apply:

1. Player must be in the final year of their age group or grade level to be considered.
2. There must be available capacity on the team(s) for which the payer would be playing up to join
3. The PWYSA travel director must be notified of the request to play up prior to try-outs.
4. If the player’s position is anything other than a pitcher, the player must try out for both age levels and meet all three of the following requirements.
 - a. Must finish ranked in the top 5 in evaluation points/ranking of the higher age level tryout final totals.
 - b. Must finish in the top 4 in evaluation points/ranking of their normal age level tryout final totals.
 - c. If trying out for a catcher position, player must finish ranked in the top 2 catchers at higher age level.
5. If the player’s position is pitcher, the player must meet the requirements in #1 above, tryout for both age levels and meet the following two requirements:
 - a. Player must finish ranked in the top two pitchers at the higher age level.
 - b. Player must agree that if selected, she may, depending on ability (at the coaches’ discretion) have limited playing time at the other defensive positions.
6. Exceptions to the above can be made on a case by case basis by the Board and the Team Selection Committee. Requests must be approved by majority vote of the PWYSA board members.

REGISTRATION

Registration for summer travel softball opens in January and is done online through the PWYSA website. A registration deadline will be posted and it may be different each year. Late registration is not typically

allowed, however, if numbers permit, players may be allowed to register after the deadline with Board approval.

FEES AND EXPENSES*

Travel softball registration fees cover the following expenses:

- General administration fees
- Team insurance
- Equipment expenses
- Playing fees (umpire fees, tournament fees, chalk, game balls, field maintenance, Parks and Recreation field use fee)
- League fee

Additional expenses may include:

- Team uniform
- Glove, cleats, sliding or compression shorts
- Extra tournament expenses
- Travel expenses to and from games
- Possible overnight expenses for out of town tournaments

*Scholarships are available.

REFUNDS

Full, partial or pro-rated refunds will be given under certain conditions. The amount of refund granted will be at the discretions of the PWYSA board. A full refund will be granted to a player who does not make a travel. Once teams are determined, and practices have begun, no refunds will be made. Submit any requests to the PWYSA Treasurer listed on the website.

SEASON

The summer travel season is for players who desire a competitive softball experience. Teams participate in a travel league and play in a number of tournaments on the weekends (see Tournament section).

Practices start in March and league games usually begin in early May and continue through the end of June. League games are played 1-3 weeknights per week double-header style. However, 10U league games may be played only one night a week, usually Tuesdays. This allows for more practice time with this age group to allow adequate time for skill development. Games typically begin about 6:15 pm. Games will be played at various sites throughout the metro area usually focused in the Western suburbs. See tournament section for more information on weekend tournaments

Post-season play includes a State Qualifying Tournament. Based on the team's record for the season, a team may qualify for an A, B, or C level State Tournament in mid-July. Based on the results at the State Tournament, a team could potentially extend their season into mid-August by qualifying for a National Tournament. PWYSA has no control over the seeding or dates scheduled for State Qualifier, State, Regional or National Tournaments.

PLAYING TIME

In the travel league, there is no requirement that equal playing time will occur. Over the course of the season, coaches will ensure that each player gets an ample amount of playing time, but not necessarily at

the player's or parent's desired position. As the season progresses particularly at 12U "Gold" (Top) and above, players will be positioned so that the team is competitive.

At the younger the age groups, more individual player development and equal playing time is stressed. The older the age group, and higher level of play, the more team development and placing the most competitive team on the field is stressed.

Playing time is at the discretion of the head coach with consideration to developing depth of talent at every position.

Other things that could impact playing time include but is not limited to:

- Unexcused absences at practices, games, tournaments and team meetings.
- Effort of the player in practices and game situations.
- Commitment of the player to improve her skills.
- Skill level of the players on the team.
- Disciplinary action is being taken.
- The player has been suspended.
- The player is injured or sick.
- Shortened games due to time limit or inclement weather.

PLAYER DEVELOPMENT

Player development shall be encouraged at every age group. Players should be given opportunities to play at positions where they will be successful and will build self-confidence. As a result, every player needs to receive numerous opportunities during games to learn to perform in all game situations. However, not all players have the attributes or training required to play certain positions (for example, pitcher or catcher). Travel coaches will continue to develop the skills of every player on the team.

The younger the age group, the more that playing time should be arranged to enhance the development of skills for every player at more than one position.

Team development shall consist of positive reinforcement, teaching teamwork and the concepts of working together towards a common goal.

SCHOLARSHIPS

Each year PWYSA designates funds in hopes that every girl who wants to play softball will be able to play regardless of her family's financial situation. Applicants for a partial or full scholarship may contact the registration coordinator listed on the PWYSA website for further information. Each application will be reviewed by the Scholarship Committee.

FUNDRAISING

Fees charged for each season's program are expected to cover normal expenses of the program so that proceeds raised from fundraising may go into the general fund to be put to use at the discretion of the Board. However, PWYSA also relies on private fundraising to meet its financial objectives. In order to be strategic and ensure that fundraising efforts are executed in a manner consistent with PWYSA's vision, the PWYSA Board has established these guidelines:

- **ORGANIZATION FUNDRAISING**
The PWYSA Board of Directors and the Fundraising Coordinator will develop one or two fundraising events during the year. These events will be developed with all PWYSA players and families in mind. All funds raised will support the greatest needs of the organization. Typical projects funded in the

past from fundraising dollars include field improvements, equipment purchases, coaches training, donation to scholarship fund, player development and clinics.

- **INDIVIDUAL TEAM FUNDRAISING**

During the season and when teams are fully formed, individual teams may pursue fundraising activities for their team in an effort to support team equipment, tournaments or travel. To avoid duplication, and to ensure fundraising strategies are consistent with the PWYSA vision, teams are required to inform the Board in writing prior to committing to the activity. Funds raised through individual team fundraising will be available only to that team.

- **SCHOLARSHIP AWARD FUNDRAISING**

PWYSA awards a scholarship annually to a Wayzata High School junior or senior on Youth Day. Funds will be solicited each year for the Janette Pospesel Memorial Scholarship. In addition to a presence on the website, parents will be asked to donate at the Parent Meeting and the tournament will have a fundraising component specifically geared toward the scholarship. A portion of the proceeds from the Wayzata Warmup Tournament support the scholarship as well as potential corporate sponsors.

PRACTICES

Practice begins in March with a goal of practicing and developing skills and reinforcing fundamentals before the first game. Pitchers and catchers will be expected to put in more time. After league play begins, a typical week will consist of one or two practices with at least one weeknight taken off. Exception: teams with a significant number of players on high school teams will not usually practice much prior to their first game.

TOURNAMENT FUNDING

The fees collected by PWYSA usually include a State Tournament and any related State Qualifier. In addition, for the summer season, each team is allocated a certain amount for tournament fees on additional weekends. Generally the allotment will cover 3 tournaments in addition to the State Qualifier and State Tournaments. Additional tournaments may be played at the players' expense. Tournament play must be agreed upon by coaches and parents.

Tournaments played outside the metro area may require an overnight stay at the player's expense. Any team that qualifies for a National Tournament and elects to participate will incur additional expenses, including travel for up to a week depending on location. Teams usually do their own fundraising to offset the costs of a National Tournament. However, the board may elect to assist with National fees from general fundraising efforts.

NATIONAL TOURNAMENT FEES

Each year the PYWSA Board will designate up to \$2,000 to be allocated to assist teams that qualify for one National Tournament per year. Qualification will be earned through a tournament based on a team's performance. The intention of the PWYSA Board will be to help cover the cost of the tournament fees for the teams that qualify. Teams will be required to cover all travel fees, gate fees, and trading pins, etc. associated with the National Tournament. The \$2,000 will be divided equally among the teams that qualify.

TEAM DETERMINATION

As numbers permit, there shall be one or more teams at each age group.

The board will determine the make-up of the teams depending on the talent level involved. See team section and player evaluation policies.

8U – These teams will be equally balanced. Teams will be formed based on identifying quality coaches and equally dividing the remaining girls among the number of teams that are formed.

10U - the decision on level of play “A”, “B” as well as the level the team will be registered with the league “A” or “B” will be evaluated each year by the Travel Director and Team Selection Committee. This decision can be related to number of players, general talent and/or pitchers and catchers.

12U and up - Assuming there are enough players to form at least two teams, there will be an “A” team followed by a “B” team. Additional travel teams beyond the first two teams will be formed if there are sufficient players, pitching, catching and coaching. If there are sufficient players and coaching these teams will start practices at the same time and will attend the initial parent player meeting. However, if the board has to make efforts to find players, coaches or cooperate with other communities these teams may not start or be formed by the first parent/player team meeting.

Selection of players for all teams will be determined by the criteria established under the team selection and try-out sections.

From year to year “A” and/or “B” level teams may travel to out of town tournaments that require additional overnight expenses. When this occurs, teams can use Individual Team Fundraising to offset these additional costs. Information on Individual Team Fundraising can be found under the Fundraising portion of the Summer Travel Policy.

TEAM SELECTION

Teams are selected based on the following:

- Selection from eligible players based on try-outs (see try-out criteria)
- Players desiring to “play up” if the guidelines are met
- Players from outside the eligibility area if needed to field a team (see eligibility)
- Coaches available

The Team Selection Committee will review the tryout scores and all other information available and select the teams. The Team Selection Committee will consist of the Travel Director and two other board members chosen at the discretion of the Travel Director. Additional members will be added to the committee if two or more of the committee members daughters are trying out at the same age level.

TRAVEL SOFTBALL TRYOUTS

General

This policy establishes guidelines for conducting tryouts within PWYSA travel softball. Tryouts may be needed to select members of a single team at an age group or to select an “A” team and/or “B” team when multiple teams are offered at an age group or in the case of 8U to evaluate players to aid in the distribution of talent among teams.

Eligibility

Players are eligible to participate in PWYSA travel softball team tryouts provided they meet the eligibility guidelines of the program. (See eligibility)

Participation

Tryout sessions will be scheduled based on facility and evaluator availability. Players must participate in all scheduled tryout sessions, unless an excused absence is granted by the Board. An excused absence from any of the scheduled sessions must be granted prior to the start of that session. Excused absences will include illness or injury, school functions, family vacations and games for in-season sports. Attendance will be taken at the beginning of the tryout session. Players who are absent from all tryouts without being excused will not be eligible for "A" (Top) teams.

Makeup Tryouts

Players who miss the scheduled tryout session due to an excused absence, may be granted an alternate tryout session (if available) or will be placed on a team based on other available information from prior play and at the discretion of the Board and/or Tryout and Competition Committee.

Player Evaluation

Players will be evaluated on the skills of catching, fielding, throwing, hitting and bunting. A separate evaluation will be used for players interested in pitching and catching. Specific tryout criteria are developed and then posted on the PWYSA website a minimum of two weeks prior to tryouts.

Tryout and Team Selection Committees

The tryout will be conducted by members of an independent third party who are known by PWYSA to possess the knowledge necessary to evaluate a player's skills. Only members from this group will be allowed to record evaluation scores. PWYSA members may be asked by the travel director to help facilitate the tryout. Facilitation may include hitting and catching balls during evaluation drills and acting as catcher as needed by the evaluators. No PWYSA member is allowed to help facilitate the tryout at the age in which their daughter is being evaluated. Only girls participating in the tryout, the evaluators, and those asked to help facilitate the tryout are allowed to be present during the tryout.

Opening Travel Tryout

If, after PWYSA travel registration has closed, the number of players registered for a specific age level does not represent the number of players required to fill a complete roster(s) for a team, PWYSA will open tryouts to allow players from other nearby cities/communities who may not have access to playing travel. The open tryout is intended to maximize the number of eligible and qualified PWYSA players who wish to play travel softball by facilitating our ability to field a complete team(s).

In the event that players from other nearby cities/communities participate in PWYSA's travel softball tryouts, preference will be given to all PWYSA players such that all players meeting base level criteria for inclusion to play travel softball at the relevant age level will be selected for placement on a team before consideration for non-PWYSA players will be given.

Players from other nearby cities/communities who meet the base level criteria for inclusion to play travel softball and will be allowed to play with PWYSA based on the need to fill a complete roster will be placed on the appropriate team by the PWYSA Team Selection committee based on their PWYSA tryout performance results.

Travel Softball Team Rosters

PWYSA softball team rosters will be set based on the discretion of the Team Selection Committee and will range between 11-13 players. As potential absences for any number of reasons will occur through the course of the season, having 11 players will allow teams to tolerate some level of absence and still field a

competitive team. Additionally, having more than 13 players per team will materially diminish the association's ability to properly support each player's development based on the limited amount of playing time available in games relative to the number of fielding positions.

Tryout Philosophy

The team selection process attempts to determine overall softball skill and ability by evaluating players based on their current skills demonstrated in an impartial tryout process and, when applicable, previous coach's player evaluation. The Team Selection Committee will have the final decision on team placement.

PWYSA will hold a separate Pitching and Catching Try-out. All pitchers and catchers must still go through the general evaluation.

With regard to the "A" team:

- All but the final three evaluation scores are locked on the team. On a team of 12, the top 9 scores are locked. On a team of 11, the top 8 scores are locked.
- The top two pitchers and catchers assigned to "A" team
 - A player who tries out for pitching or catching can also try out as a position player. If a player does not make the "A" team as a pitcher or catcher, but does qualify as a position player, the player may elect where they would like to play. If they choose to play on the "A" team they will likely see significantly less pitching or catching time.
- The final three players will be placed based on tryout scores, prior year's coach's player evaluation and discussions with the head coach of that team, where appropriate, at the discretion of the Travel Director.

With regard to the "B" team if there is a "C" team:

- All but the final three evaluation scores are locked on the team. On a team of 12, the top 9 scores are locked. On a team of 11, the top 8 scores are locked.
- The 3rd and 4th highest scoring pitchers and catchers assigned to "B" team
 - A player who tries out for pitching or catching can also try out as a position player. If a player does not make the "B" team as a pitcher or catcher, but does qualify as a position player, the player may elect where they would like to play. If they choose to play on the "B" team they will likely see significantly less pitching or catching time.
- The final three players will be placed based on tryout scores, prior year's coach's player evaluation and discussions with the head coach of that team, where appropriate, at the discretion of the Travel Director.

At tryout check-in, each player interested in pitching or catching for the upcoming season will be required to complete a form indicating their placement preference. Each pitcher or catcher will need to choose one of the following, sign the form, have their parents sign the form and turn it in prior to the start of tryouts.

The two choices are:

- a. If I do not rank in the top two pitchers or catchers (based upon pitching or catching evaluation score), but I otherwise qualify for the upper team, I would prefer to be placed on the upper team, even though I may receive little to no pitching or catching.
- b. If I do not rank in the top two pitchers or catchers (based upon pitching or catching evaluation score), but I otherwise qualify for the upper team, I would prefer to be placed on the lower team and receive more pitching or catching time.

COACH SELECTION PROCESS

Application

There is a place on the website registration form to indicate a willingness to serve as a coach for the upcoming season. Anyone who has not coached previously through PWYSA and is interested in coaching a travel team is encouraged to contact the Travel Director to share their background to ensure full consideration. In addition, potential coaches will have to complete the Coach Application Form which is located on the PWYSA website.

Each candidate will be evaluated by the Travel Director and PWYSA Board and decisions will be made based on commitment to coaching, experience and knowledge of the game as well as coaching philosophy. Candidates will be required to submit to a background check and may be asked to complete additional coaching certification and/or clinics.

The Travel director and coaches' selection committee will have the responsibility of selecting coaches giving preference to past experience coaching with PWYSA, knowledge of the game, coaches' survey results, coaching philosophy and style and active participation in coaching clinics.

Travel Team Coaching Stipends

Each year the PWYSA Board will review and determine the amount to pay non-parent coaches to coach traveling softball teams. Payments will be comparable to the surrounding communities, or athletic organizations within Plymouth/Wayzata.

Parents serving in the role as a head or assistant coach will not be paid. Parent coaches will be provided a coaching polo shirt and hat as the standard apparel for coaches to wear for games. Coaches may choose to receive a performance t-shirt or jacket if they already have the coaching polo shirt from previous seasons.

A maximum of four coaches will be the standard number of coaches assigned per team. These coaches will be offered the coaching apparel along with credit for their yearly season volunteer hours. Coaches are expected to commit to attending most, if not all, practices, games, and tournaments.