



# CAA Baseball Travel Team Selection Handbook



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## **Table of Contents**

- 1) *Philosophy and Goals***
- 2) *Teams and Levels by Age***
- 3) *Team Selection Weighting***
- 4) *Prior Season Coach Evaluations***
- 5) *Tryout Process and Weightings***
- 6) *Coach Selection Process***
- 7) *Team Selection Process***
- 8) *Communication of Team Selection***

## **1) Philosophy and Goals**

- a) The Chanhassen travel baseball philosophy focuses on player development, team competitiveness, player retention, and fun. The decisions around how many teams and which levels they play, as well as how we select the players and coaches for each team, are fundamental to achieving these goals.

## **2) Teams and Levels by Age**

- a) Our goal is to field competitive teams while maximizing the number of players on each team who can successfully compete at a given level. Team roster sizes are generally 10-12 players and our competition levels will be determined by the depth and quality of the age group.
- b) Our general approach is to field teams as follows:
  - i) 9's: Equally balanced teams that play in tournaments and the in-house baseball league.
  - ii) 10's to 11's: Field appropriate level teams with the possibility of multiple teams at a level. When multiple teams exist at any level, they will be snaked in an attempt to create balanced teams. All teams will compete in tournaments and travel league games.
  - iii) 12's to 14's: Field appropriate level teams with the possibility of multiple teams at any level. When multiple teams at a level exist, they will be stack ranked. All teams will compete in tournaments as well as travel league games.
  - iv) 15's: Teams are self-formed (i.e. fall ball) and are required to play at the appropriate league level.

### **3) Team Selection Weighting**

- a) Team selection is based on an equal weighting of an independent tryout evaluation and prior year CAA travel coach evaluation. An independent tryout provides an objective perspective of the players and provides focused feedback in a controlled environment. Coach evaluations provide feedback on in-game performance and skillsets of the players.
- b) This process applies to all ages with the exception of the 9U and 10U teams. Team selection for these age groups is based solely on tryout evaluations/scores.

### **4) Coach Evaluations – Prior Season**

- a) Coaches evaluate each individual player on the following:
  - i) Hitting
  - ii) Pitching
  - iii) Fielding (infield, outfield and catching)
  - iv) Base running
  - v) Intangibles (IQ/sportsmanship/teammate quality/coachability)
- b) CAA requires at least 3 CAA travel coaches to submit player evaluations. These evaluations are used to generate a player ranking based on the average of the coach evaluations. Please note, coaches do not evaluate their own child.
- c) Players that do not have a comparable prior season CAA travel coach evaluation (e.g., new to the association) will be handled on an exception basis by attempting to gather prior season data when available. However, this data will solely be used to help guide the team selection process, not the players rank.

## 5) Tryout Process and Weightings

- a) CAA believes an independent tryout process is an opportunity for our children to demonstrate their abilities, validate their skills, and show progress from the prior season.
- b) Independent evaluators assess each player in all 4 skill areas outlined below. CAA believes all 4 skill areas are important for our players to develop and to ensure team competitiveness at all levels of play.

### i) Hitting – 30% Weight

- (1) Live hitting (with a pitching machine) and front toss drills will be evaluated to assess quality of contact and form.
- (2) The pitching machine will generally be set at the following speeds:

Age	Speed
9s/10s	40-45MPH
11s	45-50MPH
12s	50-55MPH
13s	55-60MPH
14s/15s	60-65MPH

### ii) Pitching – 30% Weight

- (1) Velocity, control, ability to throw off-speed pitches (age dependent) and form will be evaluated. The pitching distance will generally be set at:

Age	Distance
9s/10s/11s	46'
12s	52'
13s	52' to 54'
14s	60'6"

**iii) Fielding – 30% Weight**

(1) All players will be evaluated on infield and outfield. Catching is an optional skill evaluation.

*(a) Infield* – Players will be evaluated on form, arm strength, accuracy and ability to make a clean play.

*(b) Outfield* – Players will be evaluated on form, arm strength, accuracy and ability to make a clean play.

*(c) Catching* (optional) – Players will be evaluated on framing, blocking, arm strength and accuracy of throws.

**iv) Speed – 10% Weight**

(1) Players will be evaluated home to first, second to home or a shuttle run (40 yard dash).

**6) Coach Selection Process (Head & Assistant Coaches)**

- a) Head coaches are selected by the Age Directors and are selected from the pool of locked players (defined later) unless the age director deems no coach from the locked pool as qualified, in which case, they reserve the right to expand the pool of prospective coaches. Head coaches are selected AFTER the pool of locked players has been identified.
- b) All prospective coaches are required to register and will be asked to conduct a background check (valid for 2 years), concussion training (every 3 years) and adult abuse awareness training (every 2 years).
- c) Registered head coach applicants will be interviewed by a board-selected panel and deemed qualified based on a combination of interview feedback and prior year coach evaluations.
- d) The selection of assistant coaches is conducted by the head coach after the teams are selected and posted.

## **(7) Team Selection Process**

- a) Team selection utilizes a multi-step process outlined as follows if they aren't equally balanced teams:
  - i) Locked Players – Based on the blended ranking of tryout scores and prior season coach evaluations (age level dependent), CAA 'locks' in the top 8 players for each level.
  - ii) Pool Players – Based on the blended ranking of tryout scores and prior season coach evaluations (age level dependent), we 'pool' in the next appropriate, typically ranging from 4 to 8 players to fill out the remainder of the team.
- b) The player agent is responsible to work with the head coach to ensure the remaining slots are filled most judiciously from the pool of players established by CAA based on tryout scores, prior season CAA travel coach evaluations (age level dependent) and possibly depth at key positions such as pitching and catching.
- c) Once the top team is formed at the age group, the process outlined above is repeated for all remaining teams at that age level.

## **7) Communication of Team Selection**

- a) Before teams are posted, the head coaches shall NOT communicate with any players, parents, or potential assistant coaches.
- b) Prior to communicating final teams, the player agent will summarize the team selections and review with the appropriate baseball age director to confirm accuracy.
- c) Once the teams are finalized the player agent will post the rosters on the CAA website. Our goal is to ensure accuracy of our team rosters as well as simultaneous communication of the rosters to all players and parents.
- d) Questions should be directed to the applicable player agent for the respective age level.