

## **What do I need to know for the Warren Wave softball tryouts?**

Softball tryouts require a player to have confidence and a calm demeanor. When you are trying out for a travel, high school, or college team, you will be putting your skills on display, and coaches will be evaluating them. While this can be stressful, it can also be an outstanding opportunity to demonstrate your development and find out where you stand compared to your peers. Requirements change as your age grows. At the beginning of 10U we look for simple things like the ability to throw and catch the ball. Pitchers at 10U simply need to be able to throw strikes and catchers need to be able to catch. As the age levels increase the ability and expectations of the players will increase.

### **What to expect when trying out for a Competitive Softball Team**

If your first softball tryout is approaching, remember two things: Have fun and hustle. Softball is a game, and while your potential coaches want to see that you are serious about the sport, you should also keep in mind that this is something you do because you enjoy it. Demonstrating a positive attitude and good energy can help make up for a few miscues as the plate or in the field. Players with a poor attitude are often cut, even if they are athletically gifted.

### **Versatility**

Coaches are looking for players with versatility. If you can play more than one position, they will look at you favorably when they make final evaluations of who should be on the team. For example, if you can play shortstop, first base and center field, a coach will feel good about adding you to the roster. A catcher who can catch fly balls and comfortably play the outfield when she is not behind the plate is valuable. And coaches want pitchers who can start or come in and relieve in tight situations.

### **Hitting**

You will probably take eight to 10 swings, either against live pitching or a pitching machine. Treat each pitch as if it's a game situation. Your coaches want to see your mechanics as well as bat speed and control. You may be asked to pull the ball or hit to the opposite field. You may also be asked to lay down a bunt. Relax and try to hit line drives by keeping your hands slightly above the ball so your bat strikes the ball at an angle. This will avoid hitting under the ball, resulting in pop flies. You may be asked to run to first after your last swing, so be sure to run hard.

### **Hitting to All Fields**

When you can show the ability to hit to all fields, you will impress coaches. Demonstrate that you can hit the outside pitch to the opposite field and pull the inside pitch. This shows that you do not have any predetermined ideas of what you are going to do at the plate and that you are comfortable going with the pitch.

### **Fielding Fundamentals**

Coaches want players who know how to get directly in front of ground balls and not field them from the side. They want you to throw the ball with a straight overhand motion and not sidearm the ball over to first base. Go back decisively on fly balls to the deep part of the outfield. Charge one-hoppers to the outfield, pick the ball up cleanly, and throw it in quickly. If you make an error, you can still make the team if your fundamentals are strong, and your approach is consistent.

## **Fielding**

If you are trying out for second base or shortstop, coaches will want to see that you have a good range, so stay on your toes and be ready to hustle after any ground ball hit anywhere close to your area of the field. Third basemen do not need to show off an amazing range, but they do need to demonstrate an ability to scoop up ground balls and make the long throws to first. First basemen will be evaluated on their ability to handle the varied throws made their way by the other infielders. The other issue, no matter what position you are trying out for, is to stay with any ball hit to you and finish the play. If you are supposed to get 10 ground balls in a row and one of them deflects off your glove, do not just let it go. Instead, chase after it and throw it to first or wherever the coach wants you to throw.

## **Throwing**

A coach can tell a lot about a girls' softball skills and potential just by watching her throw. And often, throwing and catching will be among the first drills you will do at tryout. Even if it seems like a warm-up, treat each throw and catch like you are in the middle of the game and not like you're just playing catch with a friend. Make an aggressive catch and give a little hop and step with each throw. This may be the first impression your coaches get of you, so make it a good one.

## **Pitching and Catching**

Pitching and catching are a vital part of putting a team together through tryouts. Pitchers must show the ability to throw a variety of pitches and control those pitches around the strike zone. Catchers must set a consistent target for the pitcher, catch and block balls in the dirt, have a strong arm and take charge in the infield when it's necessary to move fielders so they are positioned correctly or communicate to the team. The catcher is a leader on the field.

A pitcher who has command of her pitches and poise on the mound has a strong chance of making a team through tryouts. Pitchers need to show they can move the ball in and around the strike zone and throw a variety of pitches. A good fastball is essential. If you also have other pitches too, coaches at tryouts will see your potential to be a dynamic pitcher who takes command when you get in the pitching circle.

## **Conditioning**

In addition to evaluating your softball skills, potential coaches want to see what kind of athlete you are - and how fit -- for the upcoming season. If you have time, perform some stretching, running and strength training before your tryout. Do what you can to get in good shape and demonstrate your commitment to the sport. You may be asked to perform agility drills, practicing similar drills before your actual tryout can ensure prowess and inspire confidence in your abilities as an athlete.