

2009 Summer Ball Evaluation and Team Selection Process

Overview

The goal of SYB's summer ball team selection process is to assign players to appropriate summer teams based on their demonstrated baseball skills, knowledge of the game, commitment to summer ball practice and game requirements, and demonstration of general good sportsmanship skills as observed during the spring season. The expected outcome of the process is that our program will field competitive summer ball teams that also represent the program and the Southborough community positively by demonstrating good sportsmanship and team play.

Invitations to play on summer ball teams will be determined based on a combination of spring season coach evaluations and an on field summer ball tryout process. Coach evaluations and tryouts will each carry an equal 50% weighting in the determination of summer ball teams.

On field tryouts will be conducted by knowledgeable evaluators (spring coaches, experienced league officials, and/or independent baseball experts such as Frozen Ropes instructors) who have no vested interest in that age group. For example, tryouts for 9 year olds may be evaluated by major league coaches who do not have children at that age level.

Key Enhancements to 2009 Process

- ✓ Coach evaluation forms are enhanced to include additional criteria (e.g. Catching and Base running)
- ✓ League Coordinators will review coach evaluations for reasonability to ensure that player ratings are appropriate on both a relative and absolute basis. Coordinators may solicit input from spring coaches or other knowledgeable league officials to assess reasonability of spring evaluations.
- ✓ On field tryouts to include additional criteria (e.g. running, throwing, catching, and bunting)

On Field Process

Separate Tryouts will be held for the following age levels. All ages are as of April 30th, 2009.

- 7/8's
- 9's
- 10's
- 11's
- 12's (Sizzler Team Candidates)

Players will register upon arrival at their tryout and be assigned a colored & numbered pinny for evaluator identification

Drill Stations

Running

Players will be timed 2x each for the following running drills:

1. Home to first base
2. Home to Home

The player's best time for each of the 2 running drills will be recorded for evaluation purposes.

Throwing

Players will be evaluated on pure throwing skills by taking 3 throws from age appropriate distance (e.g. mid center field to home plate). Evaluators will be judging general throwing mechanics, arm strength, and accuracy.

Outfield Play

Players will each receive approximately 10 fly balls of varying types which require them to move in, out, left, and right similar to normal baseball situations. Evaluators will be judging each player's ability to track fly balls, position themselves properly to catch ball, fielding the ball, and quickly transferring to a proper throwing position.

Infield Play

Players will each receive approximately 10 ground balls of varying types which require them to react to softly hit balls, harder hit balls, and balls to their left and right. Evaluators will be judging each player's fielding technique, movement, and ability to execute subsequent throw to the proper base.

Hitting / Bunting

Players will each receive approximately 3-5 pitches to bunt and 7-10 pitches to hit. Evaluators will be judging each player's bunting & hitting technique, hitting power, and ability to make consistent solid contact.

Pitching/Catching (Optional)

Players who wish to be evaluated as pitchers will be given the opportunity to throw approximately 10-12 pitches from regulation distance (46'). Evaluators will be judging each pitcher's general pitching mechanics, velocity, and control.

Catching Candidates will catch pitchers and be evaluated on their ability to properly receive pitches, block low pitches, and successfully catch pitches outside of the strike zone.

Team Composition

By Williamsport rules, the 12 year old district team will be chosen by unanimous selection by the 8 major league coaches. As such, 12 year olds who are not selected for the Williamsport team will participate in the tryout process for placement on the 11/12 year old Hopkinton Sizzler team.

For the remaining age levels, the top 12 players based on the results of coach evaluations and tryouts will be invited to play on the “district” team for each age level (8 through 11). Guidelines for team assembly include the requirement to have at least 6 proficient pitchers and 2 proficient catchers on each team.

If any of the top 12 players decline their invitation to play on their age levels district team, then the next highest rated player will be invited to play and so on.

Non District teams (e.g. Sizzler and Lunenburg) will be created from the highest rated players who are not selected for a District Team. Non-District teams will generally have 12-14 players. In the event that two non-district teams are entered into the same tournament (e.g. Lunenburg), then those teams will be evenly balanced to provide an equal chance of competitive success in that tournament. Consideration will also be given to availability of coaches to ensure that each team has a strong compliment of coaches.

Summary

Summer ball play is generally much more competitive than our spring program. As such, a strong commitment to both practices and games is required of both coaches and players. In general, it is expected that player’s will prioritize summer ball over other sports activities to ensure 80% or higher attendance at both practice and games. These attendance expectations may be even higher for District teams which generally carry smaller rosters and are playing at the highest level of available competition for that age group.

Finally, summer ball is all about having fun playing ball, albeit at a much more competitive level than spring ball. For players who are serious about improving their baseball skills, summer ball represents a great opportunity.