

Hudson Youth Baseball Travel Team League Policy

Hudson Youth Baseball has a long tradition of fielding summer travel teams to compete in area tournaments throughout New Hampshire and Massachusetts after the spring recreation season has concluded.

Goal: To provide additional opportunities for selected HYB players beyond the traditional recreation season. Travel baseball allows players to experience a higher caliber of competition and to participate in additional practices and games during the late spring and summer months.

Travel baseball is more demanding than the rec season; teams practice and play more often, and competition is greater. That said, baseball is baseball and the goal of HYB and its travel coaches is to provide a fun, rewarding experience for every player. HYB travel teams will value sportsmanship, working on skills, and developing into better players. While it may be more result-driven in terms of wins/losses, player development is a major focus.

Expectations: As a member of one of the Hudson travel teams, players and family members represent the league and the town at games and practices. When you wear your Hudson travel jersey and hat, you are part of the “face” of the league and the Town of Hudson. In other words, Hudson travel teams are expected to represent with pride, sportsmanship, class and good behavior.

Team Selection Process: HYB typically fields teams in the following divisions: 8u, 9u, 10u, 11u, and 12u. State and local tournaments use these designations to ensure that no player over that age competes in a younger division.

- Parents interested in coaching a travel team should submit a coach application to the HYB Board. Coach interviews led by an HYB Board Sub-Committee will be conducted. Head coaches will then be offered spots to coach a team. Each year head coaches are required to re-apply for these positions.
- Players interested in playing for a travel team will attend tryouts. Tryout dates for 8u-11u are held early in the spring. Tryouts for the 12u team are held in the fall as this team utilizes optional winter workouts to prepare for the upcoming travel season.
- Players are required to tryout every year. There are no guaranteed spots for players who made the team the prior year.
- Head coaches are strongly encouraged to contact every player who attends a tryout, whether they are offered a roster spot or not.

Age Levels: As noted in the section above, HYB offers five age levels the opportunity to try out for travel teams. This corresponds to the same age levels offered by other towns throughout New Hampshire and the Northeast. HYB reserves the right to reduce the number of teams offered on any given year for various reasons, including lack of interest/low numbers of players at tryouts.

Which age level should my child try out for?

While the team is identified with a “u” after the age level to mirror state and district consistency, your player should try out for the team that matches his/her age. Travel teams are required to adhere to the same Cal Ripken age requirements as in the spring recreation season. A player’s league age is determined by the player’s birthdate as of May 1st. For example, a player turns 9 years old prior to May 1st of this season, he/she would try out for the 9u travel team.

The one exception is at our youngest age level, 8u. It would be appropriate for younger players to try out. Depending on the number of 8 year olds trying out, there may be opportunities for those under 8 years old to participate.

My child seems to be better than many of his peers. Should he/she try out for the older travel team?

HYB has a longstanding philosophy that players should play their age. While HYB understands the natural inclination for players/parents to want to play with an older age group, the benefits to playing with players their own age is far greater.

The leagues that have long-time sustainable success in their travel programs build from the bottom up and build strong teams in each age group. (i.e. 9 year old's staying with 9 year old's, 10's with 10's, etc.) This allows players to grow as a group at their natural pace. For the same reason leagues don't allow players to move up in ages during the rec season, the same holds true for travel ball.

HYB shares the belief of baseball experts across the country that it is better for a player's development to excel in their age group (to develop leadership skills, build confidence, compete with peers, etc) rather than playing up and likely being a "middle of the pack player", essentially depriving them of the experience of being a leader. This is also the rationale as to why HYB doesn't allow 10 year olds to move up to the Majors Division.

Cost to Play Travel Ball:

There are some additional expenses to participate in travel baseball, including uniform costs. HYB covers tournament fees for up to four summer tournaments. Your team's head coach may gauge interest from families regarding indoor practices, extra team apparel, or additional games which may result in other expenses. That said, HYB travel ball is a very inexpensive endeavor in comparison to other travel team opportunities.

Playing Time:

Because travel ball is more competitive in nature than the rec season, not every player will play their favorite position. Most travel tournaments employ playing time rules that travel coaches must adhere to. For example, many invitational tournaments will require every player to get one bat and play 3 innings in the field per game. District, state and regional tournaments employ slightly different playing time and substitution rules. That said, when competing in tournaments that do not mandate playing time, HYB requires that every player gets in every game in some capacity.

Cooperstown Trip:

HYB's 12u team typically participates in a special tournament to cap off their HYB career. In 2014 HYB began the tradition of sending our 12u team to play a week-long tournament at Cooperstown Dreams Park in New York. Through commitment of the HYB Board, 12u coaches and families, this tradition has continued each year since. Team fundraising covers the cost of this memorable experience. Families not interested in this trip or the fundraising can work with the coach on options.

Questions:

Every HYB family will receive email notifications regarding travel tryouts and the dates will be posted on the league web site. Please visit www.hudsonyouthbaseballnh.org for more information.

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