



Oakland Recreation Baseball General Information

updated December, 2014

Perspective

- Less than 1 out every 15 kids playing little league and youth baseball ever make their HS' baseball varsity team.
- Less than 10.1 percent of all high school varsity baseball players go on to play college baseball (includes both scholarship & walk-ons).
- Just 1 out of every 936 high school players is drafted to Pro Baseball each year.
- Less than 1 out of every 15,000 little league or youth baseball players ever make a MLB baseball team.

Conclusion – Helping your kid become a solid youth league player that loves and enjoys the game of baseball should be the goal of every baseball parent - **NOT** the allure of a “full ride” or “stardom”.

Overview

Oakland Recreation Baseball is a volunteer group facilitating participation in organized baseball practices and games by Borough youth. Our mission is to foster a **safe and fun** environment, emphasizing teamwork and good sportsmanship; while developing baseball playing skills of all participants, regardless of skill level.

Oakland Travel Baseball offers qualified players a more competitive environment in preparation for high school baseball. Our mission is to provide a supportive and competitive environment so that the boys can improve as athletes on the field and young men of good character off the field. We teach positive TEAM skills in a fair environment.

<u>Category</u>	<u>Recreation</u>	<u>Travel</u>
Participation	Open to All (Draft)	Qualified via Tryouts
Competition	Oakland Youth	Other Towns
Competition Level	Novice / Intermediate	Intermediate / Advanced
Playing Time	Guaranteed / Equal (except for safety concerns)	Not Guaranteed / Results Based
Calendar	April – end of School	April – end of July
Commitment	Loose	Established Guidelines

Summary

Rec Grades & Numbers	Travel Ages & Info
<p>T-Ball – Kindergarten</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Boys & Girls •\$62 <p>Farm – 1st/2nd Grade</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Coach Pitched, no results logged •\$72 <p>Minors – 3rd/4th Grade</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Playoffs & All Star Game •\$87 <p>Majors – 5th/6th Grade</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Playoffs & All Star Game •\$87 <p>AAA – 7/8/9th Grade (64)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Playoffs •\$117 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Gold” and “Blue” teams (varies by number of players, skills & leagues) • Spring & Summer Leagues + 1 Tourney (varies per team) • “Gold” carries 11 or 12. “Blue” carries 12 or 13. • Spring League is a warm up for Summer <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We encourage all travel players to play Rec • A player must play his age (as of 4/30) to be tryout-eligible for this team: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – 8U/\$129; 9U/\$179; 10 (same as 9); 11U/\$264; 12, 13 and 14U is \$294 • The program’s goal is for boys to play with their <u>grade</u> to ensure 2 yrs. of play on each size field and to “feed” HS with a true <u>class</u> after 14 Year Old. • No players playing “up” a grade (effective 2014 season tryouts). • 3 or 4 players from “Blue” team (per tryout scores) tagged as “Call Ups” to “Gold” team (within age group) <u>as needed</u>.

Safety

- Coaches – MUST be Rutgers Certified, 2014 Background Check Process, Concussion Course Certified. Borough Rec Secretary keeps log.
- Recreation Bat Policy:
 - Adherence to Little League International Policy:
<http://www.littleleague.org/learn/equipment/baseballbatinfo/batrules.htm>
 - Diameter: 2 1/4" in TeeBall, Farm, Minor & Major divisions. 2 5/8" (Big Barrel) allowed only in AAA division.
- Travel Bats:
 - Most leagues follow Little League "Approved Composite guidelines"

Safety (continued)

- Pitch Count & Rest Time per A.S.M.I. (American Sports Medicine Institute) are strictly enforced
- NO Breaking Pitches (curve balls, sliders, screwballs, knuckleballs, etc.) permitted in Rec
- Recommended that pitchers wear a “heart guard”
- Bullpen Safety
 - A coach must “Spot” the pitcher warming up
- Must wear cup (all levels)
- Must wear a helmet while batting (even soft toss or off Tee)
- No metal cleats in Rec (Travel – depends on League)

Code of Conduct / Zero Tolerance

- Any and all behavior not consistent with Oakland Recreation Code of Conduct will be dealt with by Zero Tolerance.
 - This includes behavior by managers, coaches, spectators and players.
 - Suspensions, expulsions and Oakland Recreation Commission grievance charges may be enforced.
- Code of Conduct is available on the Recreation Website

Rec Player Selection Process

- T-Ball and Farm:
 - Based on school / addresses (best effort)
- Minors, Majors & AAA:
 - Teams are assembled by draft, with no effort made to keep children within any school geography
 - This drafting method is chosen to attempt to give each team competitive balance.
 - Draft order is pulled from a hat.
 - Managers select players in that order, then reversed, and so on until the draft ends.
 - At the draft, players are drafted by Skill Level (based on previous season's manager's evaluations), then older grade, then lower grade.

Travel Commitment

- Being chosen and accepting to play on an *Oakland Travel Baseball* team means accepting the responsibility of participating in all practices, games and tournaments, and acknowledging and agreeing to the following:
 - After 1 “free pass”, if a game or practice is missed it is up to the discretion of the Manager to sit the player for up to one game.
 - “24 Hour Rule”: Parents to wait 24hrs after an event to address a Manager with a grievance.
 - Grievance escalation process 1st) Manager, 2nd) Travel Director 3rd) Baseball Commissioner 4th) Recreation Chairman
 - No parent should enter the dugout during a game &/or actively provide coaching instructions to their son during a game
 - No badgering umpires or opposing coaches, players or parents
 - No distracting or negative comments from the stands
- By signing this letter you have also agreed to committing and prioritizing the Oakland Travel Baseball Program over other regularly conflicting obligations; otherwise it may result in being dismissed from the Oakland Travel team.
- The news of the dismissal will come from the Manager, but ultimately the decision will come from the Oakland Travel Baseball Director and the Oakland Recreation Baseball Commissioner.

Travel Player Selection Process

- **2015 Season Tryouts:** Fall, 2014 on Field 5 for all groups except 8U. 8U will be in March, 2015. (Follow Web Site for Details)
- IHHS Varsity Coach George Hill, his staff and other neutral evaluators will evaluate all necessary skill sets with sufficient “reps” to obtain a representative score in each category from which to build stack rankings.
- Tryout evaluation, GameChanger (stats from previous season) and previous season’s manager’s stack ranking & evaluation will be considered to support establishing balanced teams based on skill and positional alignment.
- Players try out with their age & are no longer permitted to try out ahead of their grade. Players are encouraged to try out with their grade to get 2 years’ experience on each field to be best prepared for HS Baseball.
- But if a player is age-eligible to play “down” a grade, he can try out for a slot on that team.
 - For example, “Jimmy” is a “young” 5th grader at 2015 try outs. He will be 10 years old on 4/30/2015 while most of his classmates will be 11.
 - Based on Jimmy’s development at this time vs. his classmates, the program offers Jimmy’s parents the option for Jimmy to try out for the 10 Year Old team (versus the 11 Year Old team) while most of his classmates’ only option is to try out for the 11 Year Old team.
 - Hypothetically, let’s fast-forward to try outs for the 2016 season. Jimmy is now a 6th grader. He “caught up” with his class from maturity & baseball skill perspectives. Therefore, Jimmy’s parents should give serious consideration to register Jimmy to try out for the 2016 12 Year Old team.
 - Though in this scenario Jimmy would bypass 11 Year Old (1 yr. on 50x70 field), he’ll get the CRITICAL TWO years’ experience on the 60x90 field; putting him in the best position to play Freshman (HS) baseball.
 - Conversely, if Jimmy does NOT “catch up”, Jimmy’s parents can choose to continue trying Jimmy out with the same group annually. But at 14 Year Old he will be a HS freshman (not an 8th grader) and will have experienced only ONE YEAR of play on the 60x90 field at 13U before trying out for his HS Freshman Team (a detriment to an aspiring HS player in our experience).

Travel: Cooperstown Eligibility (effective 2014 team)

Each player must make the 12 Year Old Gold team, AND:

- must have tried out for the 11 Year Old team the previous season, AND
- have made at least one (1) Oakland Travel Baseball Team – playing the entire season – prior to that player's 11 Year Old season.

The only exceptions are:

- 1) New to town entering either the 11 Year Old or 12 Year Old season
- 2) Try out registration received for the 11 Year Old season, but injury (validated in writing at time of try out by the Baseball Commissioner and Travel Baseball Director) prevented the player from trying out and participating on that year's team
- 3) Tried out, but did not make at least two (2) Oakland Travel Baseball Teams prior to the 11 Year Old season
- 4) A roster spot (or multiple spots) on the 12 Year Old team becomes available due to an insufficient number of players registered to try out

All exceptions need to be approved by the Baseball Commissioner and Travel Baseball Director.

If a player does not meet these eligibility requirements to join the 12 Year Old Cooperstown team, he is welcomed to try out for a spot on the 12 Year Old Blue team (if one is supported by the Oakland Travel Baseball Program) that season.

How Can You Help?

Volunteer to:

- Manage or Coach
 - Desirable candidates have completed mandatory certification, and are:
 - Repeat (or past) managers and coaches in good standing (e.g. have consistently demonstrated good sportsmanship and behavior consistent with the Oakland Code of Conduct)
 - Sponsored or nominated by past or current managers / coaches in good standing as people who are highly likely to consistently demonstrate good sportsmanship and adhere to the Oakland Code of Conduct
 - Emphasis on “Baseball Guys” (Qualified IHHS Baseball Grads, Adults with no personal agenda)
- Rec Division Coordinators
- Registrar (Runs Registration Administration)
- Treasurer (Budget Manager)
- Uniform Coordination & Distribution
- Parade & Carnival Committee
- Webmaster
- Field Maintenance Committee

Thank you!!