

Murray Youth Baseball & Softball Association

ALL STAR TEAM GUIDELINES

I. INTRODUCTION: These guidelines have been established to communicate coaching guidelines and the program guidelines of MYBSA All Star teams. The MYBSA Board has endorsed these guidelines. All board members, head coaches, assistant coaches, parent volunteers, team parents, MYBSA umpires, and others associated with All Stars are expected to conduct themselves in a manner consistent with both the word and spirit of these guidelines.

II. ALL STAR COACHING GUIDELINES:

1. Coaches will facilitate the physical (e.g. proper use of equipment, observance of safety rules etc.) and emotional (e.g. mistakes should be met with encouragement and corrective instruction) safety and well being of all players in practice and game play.
2. Because of injury risk, younger pitchers (9-10) should focus on control and technique and generally be limited to relatively low pitch counts.
3. Coaches will follow all tournament rules, including rules pertaining to playing time for players. Coaches are encouraged to play all players as much as possible consistent with the All Star team philosophy of the MYBSA and as the coach believes is appropriate for the circumstances of each game.
4. It is not necessary that all players play exactly equal innings either in a given game or over the course of the season/tournament.
5. There is no requirement for a coach to sit any player in a given game or season/tournament – a coach may play any player as many innings as the coach sees fit.
6. A higher commitment to practice attendance and effort is expected in the All Star team program.
7. A higher level of positional specialization is expected in All Star play. Specialization to a single position should be avoided in All Star play. Specialization in 2-4 positions, including pitching and catching, is encouraged.
8. Position assignments are made at the coach's discretion based on an assessment of overall team ability and skill. Coaches will consider, in order, 1 – safety, 2 - team needs and 3 – player's interests in making defensive assignments.
9. There is no requirement for a coach to assign a player to a position based on a player's interest alone. (e.g. not every player may be a pitcher, catcher etc.)
10. Batting orders are set at the coach's discretion in a manner that will produce the most offense for the team. There is no requirement for a coach to rotate players in the batting order. When available, use of continuous batting order or EH is encouraged, but not required, as a means of keeping as many players involved in the game as possible.
11. Within this framework, coaches are encouraged to strive to win through being good teachers in practice and effectively coaching (e.g. use of game strategy and positive motivation) games.

III. ALL STAR TEAM PROGRAM GUIDELINES

Eligibility Requirements: All league players in good standing with the MYBSA will be eligible for the appropriate all-star team provided they have completed at least 50% of regular season games and have committed to being available for all-star practices and tournament games, unless due to injury, illness, or other circumstances, with prior approval by the All-Star manager. All players who played within the designated age group during the regular season will be eligible for that age group. If a player played up in age group, that player will not be eligible to play down for All-stars.

PHILOSOPHY: All Star team play affords more skilled players from the MYBSA program the opportunity to continue to develop in and through the game of baseball by participating with similarly skilled players from outside of the Murray-Calloway County community. Within a physically and emotionally safe framework, the MYBSA works with children to develop:

- An enjoyment of baseball and physical sport activity that will be sustained through adulthood.
- Motor and cognitive skills utilized in the game of baseball and an opportunity for socialization with peers.
- Positive self-image
- An understanding of, and commitment to, leadership development and the values of teamwork, sportsmanship and fair play.

WINNING: Winning is an objective of the MYBSA All Star teams, but not to the detriment of the philosophical guidelines above. The MYBSA recognizes that the children enrolled in its programs are not “tiny adults” with the adult concept of winning so prevalent in our culture. Children’s interpretation of the adult concept of winning (e.g. focusing on winning or losing a game or the final score) can be potentially damaging to young athletes. The MYBSA endorses “Athletes First, Winning Second” and “The main thing is to keep the athlete the main thing” as positions on the importance of winning. By adopting these positions on winning, a broader view of success is developed which better meets the philosophical objectives of the program. Nonetheless, as observed by Vern Seefeldt, director of the Youth Sports Institute at Michigan State University, “Striving to win is the essence of sports”. The MYBSA places a higher expectation on striving to win with its All Star teams than it does in its regular season league programs. Striving to win is accomplished through emphasis on the players and their effort toward reaching achievable individual goals within a team framework. Players strive to win by putting in consistent effort toward reaching goals that can only be accomplished through learning and executing the essentials of baseball. By focusing on effort, the elements of baseball, and the process of performing, the desired outcomes will naturally follow.