

SYBA TRAVEL TEAM SELECTION PROCESS

Travel basketball is in addition to the Town basketball league. It provides additional, more competitive play for more advanced players who are chosen at competitive tryouts. Player cuts are an unavoidable part of Travel basketball team selection each season, and parents should prepare their children for this possibility. The full tryout schedule for all grade levels is posted at www.southboroughbasketball.org. For each grade, teams will be selected by neutral evaluators as described below.

Parents are urged to read this memorandum carefully before tryouts begin. SYBA requires all players in the Travel program to commit fully to their teams and appear at all practices and games, except in special circumstances. Players who cannot do so should not try out for a Travel team. Players at tryouts will be selected for teams in accordance with the process described here. All selection decisions will be final upon the announcement of each team by SYBA.

I. Travel Team Tryouts

1. All children interested in playing travel basketball must appear at one of the two tryout sessions for their grade levels, unless a specific exception is granted in advance and in compliance with these procedures. SYBA strongly recommends that children appear for both sessions if possible. This gives tryout evaluators a better opportunity to observe each player.
2. Each gym will have a Travel Tryout Coordinator who is responsible for registering players and overseeing the tryout process, with assistance from others. They will ensure that tryout procedures are followed. To be eligible for a tryout session, each player must:
 - a. Register for the season prior to the start of the first tryout session. Parents can register their children at the SYBA web site;
 - b. Be a current member of the grade for which the tryout session applies;
 - c. Register for the tryout prior to the start time by checking in at the entryway to the school gyms;
 - d. Wear a plain white or colored t-shirt without words or images, if possible. Players will be provided pinnies with numbers for use during tryout sessions. Please do not allow your child to wear a shirt with his/her name on the back.

Questions that may arise during a tryout session should be directed to that evening's tryout coordinator.

3. The actual tryout session will be run by one of the town grade coordinators or his/her designee. The sole function of a coordinator during the travel team selection process is to manage the tryout. He or she does no more than coordinate players in an effort to display to evaluators the basketball skills of each player. During the tryouts, evaluators may ask coordinators to conduct various drills or game play, depending on the routines they find most helpful. Evaluators will not ask for and coordinators will not offer to provide input about players. Coordinators have no input into the selection process.

II. Tryout Evaluators

The role of tryout session evaluators is to assess player abilities, in accordance with criteria provided by SYBA, based on their own observations of player performance at tryout sessions. Evaluators are chosen from parent volunteers. SYBA endeavors to avoid bias in the tryout process. Toward that objective, players are identified by number and not name. No person who has a child trying out for a travel team may serve as an evaluator for that tryout session, and SYBA will not permit any person it believes has a bias to evaluate players in a session at which the bias may apply. At the start of the first tryout, evaluators for the session are provided with guidance on the rating of players and are asked to carefully evaluate the skill levels of players in various areas, including dribbling, shooting, passing, defense and rebounding. Player size and other important basketball abilities, such as effort, court sense, and basketball knowledge, may also be considered. Please make sure that your child is aware that the tryout is the primary process to select the travel team.

Evaluators will each perform their own analyses but are encouraged to consult with each other during tryout sessions. They may approach tryout coordinators to request particular activities, such as drills or game play. Tryout coordinators will not provide opinions or other information concerning any player at any time. At the close of the second session, evaluators will meet to discuss the players they have assessed. They will select proposed teams, with coaching input in accordance with the process described below. The results will be delivered to SYBA Travel Coordinator handling the session. Results will be reviewed for consistency by SYBA and subsequently announced by the Board, generally within 7 days of completion of tryouts.

Parents should not communicate with evaluators during sessions or ask them at any time to discuss any aspect of the evaluation process. Evaluators will be instructed that their observations and deliberations should not be disclosed outside the evaluation process.

III. Coaches' Input

At the close of each season, all travel coaches for grades 4 to 7 are asked to provide written evaluations of their players. Coaches are asked to rate their players and to provide two to three sentences about each player, with emphasis on intangibles that are not easily observable at tryout sessions.

Coaches' evaluations will be in the hands of the Tryout Coordinator during travel tryout sessions. The Coordinators will be in regular contact with evaluators during tryouts to inquire about their progress and answer questions. After the first night of tryouts, the Coordinators will review the evaluators' progress and may, during the second tryout session, refer to coaches' evaluations to help evaluators; that is, they may point out to evaluators that observations they are making about particular players are inconsistent with the observations made by their prior year's travel coach. At any time during tryouts and as requested by evaluators, Travel Coordinators may read coaches' comments to the evaluators to assist them in making team selections.

Parents are advised that SYBA does not in all cases receive coach evaluations as requested. Where evaluations are not available, player selections will be made by evaluators alone without coaches' input.

IV. Tryout Waivers

In the event a player is injured or otherwise not able to try out for a travel team due to a physical limitation or extreme personal situation (such as family emergency or the like), he or she may apply to SYBA for a tryout waiver. SYBA will accept or reject the waiver request in its sole discretion and notify the applicant. If granted, the player will be considered for a travel team based on information available to SYBA on the player's basketball abilities. SYBA will add the player to a travel team only where it determines the player would clearly have made a team but for his/her excused absence from a tryout. In cases where SYBA cannot make a clear distinction between players, those who attend tryouts will receive preference. Waiver requests must be made in advance of the applicable tryout session and should be directed to SYBA's president.

V. Travel Teams

Travel teams generally consist of 10 players each. There will be two girls' and two boys' teams for each grade level, participation levels permitting. In the event that low turnout prevents the selection of at least one team in any grade, SYBA may field no team in that grade or, in rare circumstances, consider combining different grades into a single travel team. In some cases and as player abilities may permit, SYBA may field three teams. For grades 5, 6, 7 and 8, there will be an A team and a B team. For grade 4, there will be two equal teams. Teams will be announced via the SYBA website within 7 days of the final evaluation night. Teams will be posted to the SYBA website by grade. SYBA does this in order to ensure that all families receive tryout results at the same time. All results are final.

VI. Playing Schedules and Coaches

1. Travel teams are selected in late September to comply with requirement of the Metrowest Basketball League in which Southborough participates. Practices begin in late October / early November based on gym availability, as determined by the Southborough Recreation Commission. Games start in December and are played on Sundays at various locations, some of which may be up to an hour away from Southborough. Players must pay fees of between \$165 and \$200 to cover league costs. This expense is in addition to SYBA's town program registration fee. Information on the Metrowest Basketball League can be found at www.metrowestball.com.
2. Travel coaches are generally selected from among parents whose children are selected for each team. This is done after team selections are complete. Where no suitable parent is identified by SYBA, non-parent coaches will be chosen to coach the team. Players are required to appear at team practices and games on time, to engage fully with coaches, and to

follow their instructions. Failure to do so could result in reduced playing time, in coaches' discretion.

3. The Metrowest league offers from three to five divisions for each grade level. Southborough is therefore able to place our teams in groupings that provide appropriately competitive play, regardless of a given team's skill level. After teams are selected and with coaches' input, they are placed in divisions that SYBA thinks make sense, in consultation with Metrowest League officials. Though we cannot be assured our teams will all be appropriately competitive, SYBA has been successful in placements in the past. Most of our teams have fared well and our players have enjoyed the Metrowest League experience.

We hope this information is helpful and invite you all to visit the SYBA and the Metrowest Basketball League web sites for more information. We look forward to seeing the children at tryouts and anticipate another successful year. If your child is trying out for a team or if you simply want to be involved with the travel team process, SYBA welcomes your help. We are also seeking to identify experienced coaches who may no longer have children in the program but are interested in continuing coaching.