



WESTFIELD ROCKS
TRAVEL BASEBALL
FAQ & INFORMATION

YOUTH BASEBALL TRAVEL PROGRAM

The Westfield Shamrocks, aka Rocks, travel team provides an opportunity to Westfield players to compete in a more competitive environment than recreation baseball. This requires a more significant parental and player commitment than the in-house recreation league.

The Westfield Rocks Travel program proudly represent the Westfield community and provides an opportunity for players to compete at the highest level of competition and have access to more advanced teaching and fundamentals of baseball. The goal of our travel program is to enhance our player's baseball skills but also continue to teach + develop characteristics that they will carry with them in the future: teamwork, work ethic, discipline, handling adversity and competing. Lastly, our Leadership Team and Coaches strive to create an environment that is centered on teaching of the game, sportsmanship and friendship with your fellow teammates. Players must reside or attend school in Westfield – Washington district. All other requests must be approved by the Travel commissioners and WYSI Board of Directors.

THE WESTFIELD WAY

We win and we lose with dignity and respect. We play the game the right way, by treating the game, umpires, coaches, fans, and the other team with dignity and respect.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Can my athlete play multiple sports?

Although not specifically prohibited, players are strongly discouraged from playing travel baseball and another travel sport simultaneously during the season (March-July) given the time commitment of practice and games. Generally speaking, the rosters are small to enable more playing time and opportunity to develop so it is critical the coaching staff and teammates can consistently depend on that player's participation. A multi-sport athlete is absolutely encouraged outside of the spring season.

What is the difference between Recreation (In House) and Travel Baseball?

*Rec baseball (In House) does not have cuts - all can participate on a team. Any experience level or skill level is appropriate, and you will be placed on a balanced team and play in a league format with one tournament at the end of the regular season. There is no traveling as all games are held within Westfield either at Shamrock Springs Elem or Grand Park. There is typically one game per day when a game is scheduled. There are typically 12 players on a team. Sunday is an off day.

*Travel baseball has an evaluation to make a team as there are no guarantees the athlete will make a team. Travel teams will practice multiple days per week, play single games, double headers, and play tournaments. It is normal for a team to play 3-7 games in a long weekend tournament based on pool play and final bracket play (1-2 games per day with 3-4 games possible on Sunday). The competition level is higher than rec, but there are different levels of

competition that each team can choose to fit their appropriate level. There are typically 11 players on a team.

Travel, Select, and Community-Based Travel Baseball: What does it all mean?

***Select and Travel** baseball can be used interchangeably, however there is a key difference.

Travel indicates that the player/team is ready and willing to travel to tournaments, or travel just to attend practice on a team.

***Select baseball** is a group of athletes that are selected from an evaluation and picked to be on a specific team, typically having a primary, and a secondary position. Select/Travel athletes are typically needed to pitch, due to the large quantity of innings played in any given tournament weekend.

***Community-Based Travel/Select** is a restricted roster team, due to a geographic restriction. Rocks teams are restricted based on Westfield Washington School eligibility. Community-Based Travel is not attempting to be an elite Travel system. The focus is still on development, while increasing competition to an appropriate level for continued growth. Travel may be included, some common locations are: Greater Indianapolis, Columbus, Kokomo, Fort Wayne, border states, etc. but it is not the normal. In the Indianapolis region alone, there are many Community-Based Travel organizations, and we are typically at a similar competition level. For Example: Noblesville, Fishers, Avon, Zionsville, Carmel, etc. all have Restricted Roster Travel teams.

What are the different tournament levels, and what should I expect the competition to be like?

Each tournament or governing body has their own nomenclature and divisions. Rocks are typically a D2 or AA competition, however some teams play above or below that level.

Do I need a private hitting or pitching coach for my athlete?

That decision is up to the athlete and their family. Due to specialization of positions, and the technical aspects of hitting and pitching, as a player is developing, it may be beneficial for your athlete. The Rocks organization does not require private lessons. You can talk to your specific coach for advice.

What divisions are offered?

1st (7U), 2nd (8U), 3rd (9U), 4th (10U), 5th (11U), 6th (12U), 7th (13U), 8th (14U), 9th (15U)

If a grade does not have enough players or coaches, then a team will not be formed for that year. If enough players and coaches for multiple teams in a grade are available, they will be color coded Gold, Green, White. If there is a case for a 10th-12th grade team, you can contact the commissioner.

What is the age cut off?

The age cut-off date is May 1st. Some tournaments have this hard cut date. Regardless of tournament rules, our philosophy is that we would prefer that kids play with their given grade as long as they meet the age cut off requirements. For any new player joining the Rocks program, there will be very few scenarios where a player is approved to play "down" a grade regardless of

their birthday. Ultimately it will be best for that player to play with their peers and develop alongside their classmates. For a player to be approved to play up a grade - several factors will be considered such as skill level, primary position that needs to be filled, maturity/development level and ability to make a major contribution on their Team - ideally the Gold Team in that age group. All exceptions will be reviewed by the baseball board and decisions made in line with the best interest of the program and player.

Ex: For 10U 4th Grade: Players who turn 11 prior to May 1 are not eligible unless they are in the 4th grade. Also, any player turning 12 prior to September 1 will not be eligible.

Players who are Under 10 years old prior to May 1 are eligible for this division regardless of their grade. However, playing up is an exception that needs to be reviewed by the baseball commissioners as stated above.

How are teams established?

In July WYSI will host an open evaluation for all age groups. Parents are welcome to view the tryout, however please refrain from sideline coaching, and cheering from the stands. Evaluators will be selected from a group that the WYSI Sports Director, Travel Commissioner and previous coaches believe possess the best ability to judge baseball talent. Each player will be put through drills to demonstrate their ability to hit (contact/power), catch, field, throw (speed/accuracy), run (speed), pitching (9U and above), and catching. Once scores are tabulated the Gold Coach will be selected or retained. If the coach of any team is a parent, their child must evaluate high enough to qualify to play on that team. The Gold team will be selected first. If enough players, the next coach(s) will then be retained for the Green team. They will select their team from the remaining players who evaluated. All players that are not selected are welcome to evaluate next season.

If I don't attend evaluations, can I still make a team?

There are few circumstances that allow this, but it is possible. There is a makeup date for evaluations prior to the official weekend of evaluation. You should make every attempt to attend evaluations. If you move into the Westfield community after teams are formed, you will need to contact the commissioner to see if an opening is available.

How many games do the travel teams play?

Each teams' schedule will vary. During the season the 1st - 3rd grade teams will play approx. 5 to 7 tournaments, or 35 games. The 4th grade and older teams play approx. 8-11 tournaments, or 45 games per year.

How much does it cost to play travel baseball?

The total cost for participation varies on each team, but there are some standard fees.

Typical Fee Structure:

WYSI Fee - \$270 (Due upon acceptance of team roster spot)

Team Fees - \$350 for younger ages, \$550 for older ages (Due in winter)

Uniforms - \$275 (Due in winter/spring)

“Travel” tournaments are possible, and a team may travel to one or two out of town or overnight locations. Families will need to anticipate incurring additional costs for those tournaments.

*Sponsorships and Fundraisers will typically reduce the total cost by 25-50% depending on the efforts of each team. Sponsorships and Fundraisers can be donated to WYSI non-profit organization, and allocated to your specific team. Typically these off-set total team costs, not one player's fees.

How long is the season?

Each team sets their own schedule. Typically, a team begins practices once a week in January and begins practicing twice a week in early/mid-March. The season usually ends sometime in July. Some travel teams will have optional practices and a fall ball league from September – October (this is not mandatory and will be up to each coach).

How much playing time will a player get?

In travel baseball, playing time for each player will depend on a number of variables including but not limited to: attitude, ability, performance at practice and games, and team needs. There is no guaranteed playing time or batting order, typically each player will rotate the bench somewhat. We do not encourage substitute players (benched until substituted in for another player) until 6th grade or higher. The Head Coach and/or assistant coach make the final decisions.

Are positions set, or rotated?

We encourage multiple positions especially in the younger ages. As your player gets older we encourage a primary and secondary position, and all players capable should attempt to be a pitcher.