

OPBA Travel Team Handbook

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Opening Commentary

This document establishes the base structure of the OPBA Travel Baseball program. This is the 6th edition, as such, some sections are written in a somewhat informal manner. It includes some recommendations and some absolute rules. Like all OPBA documents before it, this is a work in progress. It is fully expected that all future OPBA Boards will review this document, consider its successes, failures and relevance, and improve upon it, year to year.

OPBA is a family membership-based organization, operating in facilities owned and operated by Cobb County Parks and Recreation. The objective of OPBA is to serve the baseball needs of the member families, and citizens of the West Cobb area. To the extent that the Travel Baseball program does that within the Official Policy of OPBA, OPBA is interested in supporting a Travel Baseball Program. The existence of this document should not be seen as any more than that. OPBA Travel Baseball offers our community the opportunity to participate in year-round competitive baseball while remaining in a not-for-profit program. OPBA Travel Baseball also offers its teams the opportunity to use its two certificates for the Cooperstown Dreams Park as 12U teams.

This document received final ratification on June 23, 2023. Future modifications to this document should be completed by June of each year and ratified before the start of each new season.

Distribution

Copies of this document will be provided to each member of the Board of Directors and each individual selected to be a manager in the travel program.

Travel Team Handbook

This document is a supplement to the OPBA bylaws and is specific to Travel Ball. The OPBA bylaws and rules, as amended, are to be utilized in cases not specifically mentioned in this document. Travel Team managers, coaches, players and parents are subject to the same penalties as all other OPBA participants for violations of any OPBA bylaw or rule of conduct.

Travel Program Management

1. The Assistant Athletic Director shall be responsible for the general oversight of the Travel Program and is responsible to the Athletic Director and President.
2. Each Travel Team Manager shall be responsible for operation and oversight of all activities associated with their travel team.
3. There shall be a Travel Ball Committee, chaired by the Assistant Athletic Director and composed of a subset of members of the OPBA Board of Directors, which shall consider specific issues related to the Travel Program, including rules and manager selection, and make recommendations to the full OPBA Board. The committee shall be chaired by the Assistant Athletic Director and consist of 4 other at-large board members selected by the Assistant Athletic Director, President, and Athletic Director.

4. In order to properly support the Travel Program, certain actions (advertising for managers, manager selection, for example) must occur prior to the June OPBA Board meeting. Despite this, the board members responsible for taking these actions will be the incoming board members who will be responsible for the program during its actual execution. The board on or after August 1st shall ratify actions taken by these board members prior to August 1st. (Example: A new Travel Coordinator is elected in May 2007. That person shall be responsible for taking the necessary steps in June and July 2007 to administer the Travel Program that will be run from August 1st, 2007, to July 31st, 2008. Similarly, all members of the Travel Ball Committee will be members of the 2007/2008 OPBA board.)
5. As with all aspects of the Oregon Park Baseball Association, the OPBA Board of Directors has ultimate authority over the Travel Program.

Travel Team Season

The Travel Baseball season shall be from August 1 of the current year and run through July 31st of the following year.

Travel Team Names

All travel teams added for the 2018/2019 travel ball season and subsequent seasons will be required to use Oregon Park Mavericks and Rangers as their team name. Where we have multiple teams at one age group the team formed first will get first choice of names. The 2nd team will be assigned the remaining name. All travel ball teams who began prior to the 2018/2019 season will not be required to change their name.

All Travel Team Managers must ensure their team is registered with all outside organizations (USSSA, Perfect Game Triple Crown, etc.) as an Oregon Park team, i.e. Oregon Park spelled out, not OP. No other outside organization's name may appear in the team's registration name. Failure to comply will result in loss of field time until the name is corrected.

Travel Team Manager Selection

Travel Team Managers shall be selected on a yearly basis. All persons wishing to be travel ball managers shall submit a resume to the Assistant Athletic Director by the published deadline.

The Assistant Athletic Director shall take steps to publicize this process which should include e-mailing notice to all current managers, posting to OPBA website and other appropriate web boards.

Returning travel ball managers will not be required to re-interview with the board each year unless any member of the Travel Ball Committee has been made aware of a situation that needs to be addressed by the full Board.

For new applicants for the travel ball manager position, a thorough investigation of the manager's qualifications will be performed. Applicants will be given a personal interview by the OPBA Board where the Board shall be given the opportunity to ask questions of

each applicant. Selection of the manager will take place soon after, and the board has an option to decline all candidates for a team.

Travel Team Base Number of Teams

OPBA will provide for a base of one team at the 9U age group and two travel teams for the 10U, 11U and 12U age groups.

There are no A and B team designations; each manager will have an opportunity to field a competitive team. This allows for players and families to have the ability to choose a team and manager they feel is best suited for their needs.

OPBA is not required to implement any of these teams.

Travel Team Tryouts & Player Selection

1. The travel team manager has the sole responsibility in player selection. The exception to this is in the case of a player that was banned from OPBA at any time. This player will require the approval of the full board to be placed on a Travel team roster.
2. The travel team tryouts & selection process must be made known to all OPBA member households with players in the age group of the specific team. This will be accomplished by posting on the OPBA web site.
3. The travel team tryouts & selection process may be further publicized as the team manager sees fit.
4. Each travel team may have one pre-selected assistant coach.
5. Travel team tryouts must be open to all OPBA members.
6. Travel Team Managers are responsible for providing their complete rosters (with any updates or changes) to the Assistant Athletic Director and ensuring that all players are properly registered with OPBA in a timely manner.
7. Travel teams may have no LESS than 7 OPBA players. (An OPBA player is defined as a player who has played the previous fall or spring; in an OPBA program (travel or rec).

Special Situations:

- In the event of a special situation, the manager may petition the Travel Ball Committee to obtain an exemption from the Player Eligibility rule. Example: An OPBA player leaves the park and wants to come back.
 - Managers can petition the committee to waive the eligibility requirements. The request should be made in writing and clearly define the situation that caused ineligibility along with the reasoning for the waiver.
8. All existing players from a previous team, plus any new participants will be required to attend a tryout.
 9. Each manager will schedule his tryout date(s) on dates given to him by the OPBA Athletic Director (typically in July). Managers must hold a minimum of one tryout and must complete their tryouts during the designated timeframe. They may select a portion of the team after the first tryout and use subsequent tryouts to fill out the roster.

10. The travel team manager and/or their one assistant coach must be present throughout the tryout process.
11. Each participant will be given a fair opportunity to display their fielding, hitting and throwing talents.
12. The Head Coach will notify participants who do not make the team within 72 hours of a tryout.

Commentary:

OPBA fully expects that each manager will apply all their knowledge of the players and their families to the selection process. The players and their families selected for each team will form an extended family for the next year and will be tied together socially, financially and temporally. The proper selection of that team will determine the level of success that the team enjoys. Success is not defined only as a win-loss record. Obvious issues to be taken into consideration are the skill of the players, the support of the families and the compatibility of everyone involved. The families and players have every right to select a team/manager for which they would like to play for as the manager has the right to select players.

OPBA, also, fully expects that every member player will have a fair and equitable opportunity to be selected for an OPBA travel team regardless of past participation on the subject travel team.

Travel Team Rosters.

1. Each parent must register their player on the OPBA website, and pay the applicable registration fee, in the fall and again in the spring on time. Failure to register and pay before the deadline may result in loss of field time. All Travel Team registration fees are non-refundable.
2. Any changes to a team's roster must be reported to the Assistant Athletic Director immediately.
3. If a team adds a new player, the player must pay the registration fee at the time of registration.
4. Any irregularities between a team's roster on file and their actual roster may result in loss of field time.

Travel Team Uniforms

1. All OPBA Travel Baseball Teams will utilize the designated OPBA Travel Baseball "OP" logo on caps and helmets. The OPBA Travel Baseball Team hat logo will serve as a park designator for the uniform. The Oregon Park logo will be provided to each team so there is a consistent logo appearance for all travel teams.
2. Travel teams will otherwise be responsible for the selection and acquisition of their own uniforms utilizing OPBA approved colors. The primary color scheme of OPBA Travel Uniforms is Kelly Green and Navy Blue with white and gray for accent colors. Additional color schemes for alternate uniforms may be used, but must be approved by the Assistant Athletic Director.
3. All teams will submit new uniform order proofs to the Assistant Athletic Director for approval prior to the order being placed.

4. If a team wears an unapproved uniform while representing OP they will lose field time and be required to replace the uniform with an approved uniform at team expense.
5. Oregon Park, OP or the team name, i.e. Mavericks and Rangers, will always be the predominant name on the Jersey. No other logo or names are allowed, other than the manufacture of the uniform item, on all uniform items.
6. Travel teams formed prior to the 2018/2019 travel ball season will not be required to change their uniforms or colors to comply with the new rules.

Travel Team Field Time

1. Oregon Park is a recreational park first and as such all travel team field times are subject to change and or cancelation at any time, if the field is needed to accommodate re-scheduled rec games. Every effort will be made to minimize disruptions to Travel Team field times.
2. Travel Teams will be scheduled for up to 2 weekday practices slots and 1 weekend slot, but not guaranteed. Each practice will be 1 hour and 30 minutes in time. Please be aware, as stated above, Rec comes first and may result in you losing practice time. We will do everything we can to minimize these disruptions, and where we can reschedule any missed practices at a future time.
3. Teams are required to notify the Assistant Athletic Director if they are not using their allotted practice times, so they may be made available to other OPBA teams. This usually happens when teams play weekend tournaments. Failure to notify the Assistant Athletic Director in a timely manner may result in the loss of field time.

Travel Team Field Assignments

1. All travel team field space will be assigned through the Athletic Director and coordinated with the President and Assistant Athletic Director with in the following guidelines.
2. Teams will be primarily assigned to the field that the corresponding rec age group utilizes. In addition to Field 1, 11U and 12U teams will also use Field 8. Changes to field assignments may be necessary to accommodate the rec schedule.
3. Weekday travel practices are primarily scheduled for Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays. Weekend practices are primarily Saturday night or Sunday. Consideration will be given to requests for other days if granting the request doesn't interfere with the rec schedule.
4. Weekday practice schedules will include 1 early and 1 late time slot.
5. If 2 or more teams have made the same request, the team with the longest continuous Oregon Park tenure of the travel team manager will determine which team's request is granted.
6. Teams may swap practice times with another team but the Assistant Athletic Director needs to be informed so the changes can be made on the OPBA website.

Travel Team Roster Adjustments

Any player added will require the majority support of the households already selected for the team. Such a player must register and pay fees just as any other player does. All Travel Team registration fees are non-refundable.

No player shall be eligible to be added to an OPBA travel team if during the current spring/summer season:

1. The player was drafted onto another Oregon Park team and the date of the tournament championship game for that league has not passed.
2. The player was selected for an Oregon Park All-Star team and has not completed the obligation to the Oregon Park All-Star activity.

A player may withdraw from a team at any time. If a player withdraws from a team, it is desirable that the player or Travel Manager informs the Assistant Athletic Director in writing and gives a reason for the withdrawal.

A manager may suspend a player for disciplinary reasons. If a player is suspended from a team, the manager must inform the Assistant Athletic Director in writing and give a reason for the action.

The Assistant Athletic Director shall inform the Athletic Director and Team Information Manager of any additions, withdrawals or suspensions.

If a travel team manager does not abide by the team roster adjustment rules, the minimum penalty shall be an open competition for the travel manager position for the following year (an automatic vote of no confidence). The maximum penalty shall be the immediate loss of the travel manager position. In this case, the OPBA Board shall determine whether to disband the current team.

Travel Team League Service Requirement

Travel Teams will be required to run the recreation league player evaluations for both Fall and Spring seasons. Each team will be assigned up to two fields to support during player evaluations. At any given time, a minimum of two named coaches must be present and conducting the evaluations. Managers, coaches and at least five players will be available to assist with player evaluations. Each Travel Manager will be responsible for scheduling coverage of its fields.

Travel team players may not pitch to players being evaluated.

Travel teams will not be assigned age groups older than themselves. Travel teams should be assigned age groups younger than themselves when possible

Travel Team Umpires

1. Umpires for all home games or tournaments will be scheduled through the OPBA Assistant Athletic Director.

2. Travel teams will receive umpires for 10 home games or scrimmages as part of the OPBA player registration fee. These umpire credits cannot be rolled over to following seasons or refunded in any manner.
3. Unless the OPBA umpiring contractor is unwilling or unable to comply, all umpires will be scheduled through the OPBA umpiring contractor.

Travel Team Participation Issues

There are no OPBA rules that explicitly address participation. Travel team managers are asked to only select players whom they feel can contribute to the team and will have an opportunity to play.

Travel Team Finances and Fundraising

1. All travel team players will be registered with Oregon Park Baseball Association.
2. It is a goal that there should be a basic definition of the travel program for all teams and that the fees charged for this basic part of the experience should be the same across all teams. All Travel Team registration fees are non-refundable.
3. The OPBA Travel fee per player will be calculated based on providing umpires for 10 home games, 8 dozen game balls, insurance, and a per player park use fee to be determined by the OPBA Board.
4. Each travel team shall have a treasurer. The travel team treasurer shall report to the OPBA Treasurer and the Assistant Athletic Director as requested, but at a minimum shall provide a financial plan at the beginning of the season and a financial summary at the end of the season.
5. A checking account shall be established explicitly for each travel team at the formation of the travel team. The checking account shall be closed, and all funds distributed to the members when the team disbands.
6. Beyond the OPBA registration fee, each team shall establish a required contribution level for all players and a date certain by which that contribution must be submitted. An estimated per player figure should be established prior to player tryouts and will be made known to all applicants. The travel team management should budget this amount carefully. It is expected that this number will be sufficient to cover all uniforms, equipment, tournament fees, facilities rentals and other related costs of the program. Beyond this amount, it is not expected that participants will be required to provide any other direct funding unless the team decides as a group to participate in some other significant activity. An example of a significant activity might be going to Cooperstown or a World Series tournament. You also do not want to establish an amount that is any more prohibitive than necessary. All funds received from Travel Ball members and/or sponsors must be used to benefit all members of that team. It is suggested, but not required that families be given direct credit for any sponsorships obtained directly by that family.
7. No Travel Team may have a sponsor that has been determined by the OPBA Board to be a conflict of interest and/or does not properly reflect the OPBA mission.

8. Each travel team shall keep an accounting of all funds received. It is up to the manager to determine if all fund-raising dollars are pooled into a team account, or if individuals receive 100% of the credit for anything they raise.
9. It is suggested that each travel team appoint a Fundraising Director. This person should create organized programs coordinated with the OPBA Fundraising Director to help the participants in their fundraising efforts.

Travel Manager Violations Issues

Travel Team Managers and coaches are always subject to discipline by OPBA Board for any issues arising from the operation of the travel team. If a Travel Team Manager does not abide by the rules provided, the OPBA Board shall take appropriate action to address the matter.

Travel Team Managers MUST report all cases in which any member or fan of the team is ejected from a game within 48 hours of the incident to the Assistant Athletic Director AND Athletic Director. Failure to report such an incident will result in an automatic three game suspension, regardless of any further actions taken by the OPBA Board.