



## GENERAL

### **Q1. What programs does DYBSA offer?**

- A. Youth baseball is offered, both at a recreational level and community-based travel level.
- Recreational baseball teams, levels 8U through 10U, play weekday games in DeWitt to reduce the time commitment, allowing players to participate in other activities or sports, if desired.
  - At the 9U travel and older levels, weekday games are played in the greater Lansing area.
  - Our community-based travel baseball teams, levels 9U-14U, typically play two weekend tournaments per month at locations the team decides.
- B. Youth softball is offered, both at a recreational level and community-based travel level.
- Recreational softball teams, levels 8U-14U, play weekday games in the greater Lansing area.
  - Travel softball teams play weekday games in the greater Lansing area and weekend tournaments at locations determined by the team.

## REGISTRATION

### **Q2. Can my child play for DYBSA?**

- A. If your child is enrolled in DeWitt Public Schools (DPS) or lives in the DPS District, they are eligible to try out for our travel baseball and travel softball teams. Enrollment is verified with the DPS business office. Recreational baseball and softball programs do not have a school or residency requirement.

### **Q3. How do I register my child?**

- A. All registration is done online at [www.dybasa.org](http://www.dybasa.org). For recreational baseball and softball, registration officially closes about a week after evaluations so we can properly prepare for team placement.

### **Q4. Is DYBSA a “club” or “community-based” organization relative to travel programs?**

- A. DYBSA is a community-based organization, so travel players either attend DeWitt Public Schools (DPS), or live within the DPS District. Community-based travel programs typically offer competitive play at lower cost, playing with classmates, and closer practices/games. Being local, this also makes it easier for players to participate in other DeWitt sports in the

baseball/softball off-season, versus traveling outside the Lansing area for off-season baseball/softball practices.

**Q5. I noticed a reference to "PONY". What national baseball organization is DYBSA affiliated with?**

- A. DYBSA is affiliated with a national non-profit organization, PONY. PONY offers a "scaled" approach to the game of baseball. Here's some background information on this organization:

"PONY is an acronym, which stands for Protect Our Nation's Youth. PONY Baseball and Softball is dedicated to creating a safety first/ fundamentally sound and challenging game for children of all ages. With field sizes and dimensions best suited to appropriate age play and rules designed to allow each charter their own ability to create the best style of baseball and softball tailored to your own community's needs." [more info can be found at ( [www.pony.org](http://www.pony.org) )]

**Q6. In what age division will my child play baseball or softball?**

- A. Baseball: A player's playing age is determined by calendar year format, using April 30th as the cutoff date. For example, to play 12U baseball, players must be 12 or younger as of April 30th of the current year.
- A. Softball: A player's age is determined by calendar year format, using September 1st of the previous year as the cutoff date. For example, to play 12U softball, players must be 12 or younger as of September 1st of the previous year. There is a calculator on the USA Softball website at <https://www.usasoftball.com/play-usa-softball/memberships/>

**Q7. My child has no experience playing baseball. What level of skill is expected of the players?**

- A. DYBSA welcomes players of all skill levels for both recreational and travel programs. Recreational baseball teams are formed without making player cuts. Travel team formation may involve player cuts, depending on registration numbers.

**Q8. I think my child is better suited for a different division. How do I request to "play up" or "play down"?**

- A. Our registration program will show age divisions which your player is eligible for. Players are not allowed to play down unless age appropriate but may request to play up. Following tryouts/evaluations, if you have requested to play up, DYBSA can provide feedback if necessary if you are concerned about moving them up. Please keep in mind there are several factors in a player being considering for an older age level, including tryout/evaluation results, the number of players on a team, previous coach evaluation/feedback, etc.

**Q9. Do I need to provide proof of age?**

- A. You will enter your child's birthdate when the player is registered. Travel players may need to provide a birth certificate to their coach for any tournaments they play in.

**Q10. My player has many obligations. Can I request a specific practice night?**

- A. After teams are established, coaches give their preferred practice days/times. Field

availability also comes into play to determine open practice days/times. It is important to remember that once the regular season begins, games are played throughout the week with game days varying each week in some cases.

**Q11. Can I make a carpool request?**

- A. When you register your player there is a special request field where you can enter in a “same team as” request based on carpool needs.

**Q12. Can I request a specific coach?**

- A. When you register your player for recreational baseball or softball, there is a special request field where you can enter in a specific coach request. Please keep in mind some requests may not be able to be accommodated due to evaluation numbers, carpooling, roster size, etc.

**Q13. Can girls play DYBSA baseball?**

- A. Yes, girls can play in DYBSA baseball, as DYBSA is affiliated with the PONY organization.

**Q14. Do you offer refunds?**

- A. Yes, registration refunds for recreational baseball and softball are offered at the following levels:
- **100% refund before March 15**
  - **50% refund March 15 – April 14**
  - **25% refund until May 1 for baseball and June 1 for softball. No refunds after these dates.**

Note: Travel refunds will be based on when the refund is requested.

**Q15. I missed the registration deadline. Can I still sign up my child?**

- A. Possibly. Please send an email to [dybsa@dybsa.org](mailto:dybsa@dybsa.org) to get more information.

**FIELD LOCATIONS**

**Q16. Where are the fields for different baseball and softball levels?**

- A. Click link below, or on DYBSA.org website, click on **Field Locations**, below the scrolling picture bar:  
<https://bsbproduction.s3.amazonaws.com/portals/5962/docs/tournament/dybsa%20fields%20map.pdf>

**LEVELS OF PLAY**

**Q17. What are the differences in the levels of play?**

- A. Recreational baseball
1. 8U is coach pitch for 2/3 of season. For last four games of the season, kids begin

pitching to prepare them for the 10U level. 8U level does not use umpires. Coach is at pitcher's mound and another coach is in the infield to make calls and instruct as needed.

2. 10U -14U baseball is all player pitch, with young umpires at the 10U level and registered umpires above the 10U level.

A. Softball

1. 8U is coach pitch for the entire season.
2. 10U is a combination of coach pitch and kid pitch. Players will pitch 5 pitches and if the batter hasn't reached base or struck out, the batting team's coach will then pitch 2 more pitches and the batter will either reach base or strike out.
3. 12U-14U is all player pitch.

## **PRACTICES & GAMES**

### **Q18. When does the recreational season begin and end?**

A. Baseball

Recreational practices begin in mid-April with games starting in May and ending in late June/early July.

A. Softball

Practices will begin in mid-April with games starting in June. Plan each year to end season by August. Fall ball is an option if teams choose to play.

### **Q19. When are practices?**

A. Baseball

During the preseason, teams usually practice once a week on a weekday (usually starting at 5:30 pm or 7:00pm). The specific weekday and practice times are determined by the coach at a preseason meeting. Depending on the calendar, a midseason practice may be scheduled in May.

A. Softball

During the preseason, teams usually practice once or twice a week on a weekday (usually starting at 5:30 pm or 7:00pm). The specific weekday and practice times are determined by the coach at a preseason meeting.

### **Q20. How many games will be played?**

A. Baseball

1. For recreational baseball, 10-12 games are scheduled, but the number of games played may be affected by weather.

A. Softball

1. For recreational softball, 10-12 games are scheduled, but the number of games played may be affected by weather. 8U will play single games each night and 10U-14U usually will play double headers each night.

## **EVALUATIONS**

### **Q21. When are tryouts/evaluations?**

- A. Travel baseball tryouts occur in late July/early August. Travel softball tryouts are held in

August. Recreational baseball and softball evaluations occur in late February/early March. Specific dates will be posted on our website as each session nears, posted on our social media sites, and/or included as a handout in school "Friday Folders".

**Q22. What are tryouts/evaluations?**

- A. Tryouts for both travel baseball and softball are the process of placing players on teams based on attitude, performance, and previous coach feedback/stats. Evaluators are volunteers from outside organizations (high school coaches & players) to keep current/past coaches and board members separate from the evaluation process.

**Q23. Will there be makeup evaluations?**

- A. Travel baseball and softball may offer an additional makeup date that will be determined at the time of evaluations. There are no makeup nights for recreational evaluations and all recreational players will be placed on a team. If you are unable to attend the specific night for your division you can attend the other night, but please notify DYBSA so we are aware of this change.

**Q24. What equipment should my child bring?**

- A. Recreational evaluations are held indoors and travel baseball/softball evaluations are held outdoors, so please wear appropriate shoes and clothing to each. At a minimum, your player will need a glove and, ideally, a bat, and a helmet. For softball, a protective face/fielding mask is needed. For baseball, a protective athletic cup is needed for any player wanting to try out for the catcher position.

**Q25. How long should we expect to be at evaluations?**

- A. Travel tryouts usually last about 2 hours and recreational evaluations last about 1-1.5 hours.

**Q26. What happens after recreational evaluations?**

- A. Once all recreational evaluations are done, the DYBSA board will form teams and notify coaches and players as soon as possible. The goal of forming recreational teams is to make the teams as even as possible to ensure competitive games during season. Note that all players make recreational teams, but there are evaluations to balance teams

**Q27. What happens after travel tryouts?**

- A. Once all evaluations are done, the DYBSA board will form teams and notify coaches and players as soon as possible. The timing of player team invitations depends on the number of evaluation sessions, makeup sessions, amount of information to review, DYBSA board member schedules, etc.

**Q28. What information does the Board use to form travel teams?**

- A. While we try to place all players, team placement depends on a number of factors, including participation numbers, assuming 11-12 players/team with approved volunteer coaching staff. The tryout session is used to establish a baseline to compare experienced travel players to new tryout players. Additionally, previous season's coaches are asked for input and/or stats for both recreational and travel players. Previous season stats are used to establish a baseline to compare within each travel level.

Primary criteria used in forming teams:

- 1) **DYBSA Eligible** – player either lives in DPS District or attends DPS.
- 2) **Age Eligible** – players must meet the DYBSA/MMPL/PONY Age Requirement for the upcoming season, in order to play in local PONY organization league play as well as outside tournaments.
- 3) **Player Safety** – Evaluators are asked to note any player safety concerns evident during tryout session (e.g. speed of hit or thrown ball exceeds player’s ability to safely participate).
- 4) **Previous Season Stats** – this information is reviewed and compared to multiple previous seasons stats, if available, to determine any trends in player development. A 90% cutoff line is applied first to make initial assessment. In absence of stats, if previous travel coach provides player groupings or rankings, this information is included. Player rankings and comments from previous season recreational coaches are gathered and used in assessment.
- 5) **Travel Evaluation Session** - weighted scoring in areas of Infield, Outfield, Hitting, Pitching and Catching. Note that the Pitching and Catching scores are kept separate from the overall score and used as secondary criteria. Pitching and Catching are specialty positions and viewed as a “bonus” position after basic skills are assessed. A 90% cutoff line is applied first to make initial assessment.
- 6) **Age/Grade Level** - Prefer as many players at each level to be in same school grade, this is community-based goal. In some cases, a player may “play up” due to ability and parent request, or “play grade down”, also due to parent request.
- 7) **Number of teams per level** – Depending on the number players registered and range of evaluation scores, there may be more than one team per level. For example, if 24 players try out, that does not mean two teams of 12 players each. At each age level, all player evaluation scores need to be above a minimum competitive level. If sufficient players are at or above this level, then a Gold and Silver Team are formed. This lines up with the weekday leagues these teams will play in, an “A” Division and a “B” Division, for example. With a primary goal of travel program being player development in competitive environment, Gold or Silver Coaches will have a clearer picture of game concepts and player development with players grouped in an “A” and “B” Format. The difference between “A” and “B” Teams may be very close, depending on the number of athletes at that level, coaching, catching & pitching talent, and player development.

**Q29. For travel teams, what is determined first, a head coach for a team or the team itself?**

- A. Travel team rosters are established first, then candidates for head coach, assistants/ team managers are reviewed and determined based on experience, parent survey feedback, and background check. In cases of multiple coaching candidates, a quick interview process may be conducted. The reason that the team roster is determined first is to set the priority for coaches to want to coach the team for the right reason, rather than offering to coach so their player makes the team automatically.

**Q30. Does DYBSA perform background check on team volunteers?**

- A. Yes, all volunteers submit their basic information including driver’s license number. All of this information is submitted for criminal history background check, similar to the what a game official would undergo. If a coaching applicant has a criminal history, this information

is reviewed by DYBSA and appropriate action taken.

## **VOLUNTEERS**

### **Q31. Do you need volunteers?**

A. DYBSA is an all-volunteer organization, with board members performing their daily jobs or traveling during the day. Accordingly, we're always looking for volunteers. During evaluation time if you would like to help out please notify us ahead of time so we can plan for the best use of your time. As they say, it takes a village...

## **STILL HAVE QUESTIONS?**

Please contact DYBSA via email ([dybsa@dybsa.org](mailto:dybsa@dybsa.org)) or contact a board member by phone.