

Welcome

The entire 2014 Board of Directors would like to thank each of you for taking on the challenge of coaching a youth sport. It is not always easy, but it can be one of the most worthwhile and rewarding experiences you will have. We really do appreciate the time, energy and sacrifices you make to help our community's youth grow and develop through the game. We hope you will take a few moments to read through this handbook as it is filled with valuable information that will help you succeed as a coach this year.

Please do not hesitate to contact any of us with questions, suggestions, and/or concerns. We are here to support you and always want and need to hear your feedback. We hope you have a fun and rewarding season.

Play Ball!

Mission

The **Roy-Hart Youth Baseball/Softball League** is a non-profit organization whose mission is to perpetuate the interest and love of the game in a league that:

- Develops a strong, clean, healthy body, mind and soul.
- Provides youth with organized competition in a safe environment
- Brings our youth closer together through common interest
- Instills the values of education
- Acquaints the players with the fundamentals of the game rules
- Teaches sportsmanship, discipline and love of the game that develops courage in defeat and tolerance and modesty in victory
- Develops students into true citizens of the Royalton-Hartland School District community



Roy-Hart Youth Baseball/Softball League

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Coaches Conduct, Responsibilities and Game Play

Coaching Philosophies

- a) **FUN:** Baseball and softball is Fun!
- b) **SAFETY:** Safety habits must be developed when players are young.
- c) **FUNDAMENTALS:** Sound fundamental running, throwing, batting, fielding, and knowledge of the game are the basis of future mastery and enjoyment of the game.
- d) **MOTIVATION:** Positive reinforcement is the best form of motivation!
- e) **UNIQUE TALENTS:** Each player has unique talents that can be improved through individual attention.
- f) **GOOD SPORTSMANSHIP:** Good Sportsmanship is a MUST. It starts with the coaches and parents.
- g) **COMMUNICATION:** Open and frequent communication between the managers, coaches and parents promotes consistency and reinforces the learning environment.

Season Goals

- a) Each player will have fun!
- b) Each player will want to come back to the Roy-Hart Youth Baseball/Softball League next year.
- c) Each player will improve their fundamental Baseball and Softball skills.
- d) Each player will know the basic rules of the game.
- e) Each player will respect the facility, their opponents, league officials, their teammates and coaches, their equipment, and their skills.

Coaches are responsible for:

- a) Their team's conduct during the game and will maintain order, including the seating of all players on the bench when not otherwise occupied at bat, on deck, or in the field. A game forfeit is at risk if a coach cannot calm an abusive player. A team parent is an excellent resource to help keep order on the bench.
- b) Safeguarding the safety of the players, both on and off the field, during games and practices. Before games and practices, make a visual inspection of the field for any potential hazards.
- c) Being aware of any health concerns of their players (i.e. asthma, allergies, etc.).
- d) Checking all team equipment regularly to ensure it is in good repair and safe for use. Watch for cracked bats, cracks in batting helmets, and improperly sized or defective catcher's equipment. Contact the Equipment Manager immediately if you feel any of your equipment needs repairs or replacement.
- e) Addressing unsportsmanlike conduct by a player. Take necessary steps to stop or correct that behavior as it only leads to a negative team environment if let unaddressed.

Coach Behavior

- a) All coaches are expected to exhibit exemplary behavior, setting a good example for the players. Remember that this game is for the players. No coach should antagonize opposing players, coaches or umpires.
- b) Coaches must remember that our umpires are sometimes young, learning how to umpire and may make mistakes. It is unacceptable for anyone to embarrass an umpire.
- c) Coaches are reminded that they must remain at the diamond until the last player has gone home or is properly supervised. This applies to all team activities.
- d) All coaching staff must be aware of the way to speak to players.

Player Notification

- a) This should be your first order of business as a coach.
- b) The league will send out a general notification to each team no later than *Sunday, March 24, 2013*.
- c) We encourage all coaches to contact their team shortly thereafter to introduce yourself to the team and announce when your first meeting/practice will be.

Parents Meeting

- a) We strongly recommend that this take place second on your list behind notifying your players that they are on your team. You can go over any team policies, review procedures, etc. It's a great way to get the season started off on the right foot and for your staff to get acquainted with the parents and for the parents to get to know you. The more up front you are with the parents now, the fewer headaches you will get later! A sample meeting outline/agenda is included in this handbook.
- b) Use the meeting to get parents to volunteer to help out throughout the season.

Team Party/Awards

- a) If desired, someone can be assigned to coordinate a team party/picnic at the end of the season.
- b) RHYBS League gives awards to division winners only, but you may choose to do awards on your own if you wish. (T-ball/Coach Pitch players will receive participation medal on All-Star Day.)

Team Website

- a) You may wish to set up a team website through www.eteamz.com. It's a great way to get information to your team and build team pride.
- b) This is another area you may want to appoint someone to take the lead on.
- c) You can be as elaborate as time allows and it is FREE to use.

Coaches that are Parents

- a) Most of us have a child on the team we are coaching. That is one of the very reasons we are doing this. Please keep in mind that you need to coach the other players the same way you would your own child. Also keep in mind that your child may not want to hear what he or she did wrong on the ride home from the game. Ask if they want to talk about it before you offer them the "inside scoop" on why they missed the ground ball. Try to separate the parent/coach role as much as possible.

Game Ejections

- a) Smoking, abusive or foul language, throwing or misusing equipment and generally behaving in an overly aggressive manner will result in ejection from the game and/or park.
- b) A coach may be replaced if unsportsmanlike behavior persists.

Batting Order

- a) The coach or scorekeeper of each team is responsible for submitting their batting order to the opposing team with all substitutes clearly marked.
- b) If there is a change during the game, it is up to the coach to let the opposing teams know prior to the change.

Player Training

- a) It is the job of the head coach to ascertain that the players on his/her team are receiving proper training. The head coach is also responsible for making certain that all times of practices are coordinated, supervised, and that the players and other coaches have these rules and regulations made available to them.
- b) Generally, a coach will want to meet with his/her team at least three times per week. Either 3 practices, or 1 game and 2 practices, or 2 games and 1 practice.

Game Pace

- a) Coaches, umpires and players are jointly responsible for keeping the game moving briskly. This is accomplished by hustling players on and off the field, preparing for games in advance and generally encouraging players to keep hustling to and from their respective position. Do not delay the game.

Player Participation

- a) Coaches are responsible for ensuring that each player participates in every game that he/she attends and that all players receive playing time.
- b) All players will play a minimum of 3 innings in the field and have registered at least one "at bat" per game.
- c) Coaches of the home team are obligated to satisfy all requirements of this rule by substituting for a player "due up" within the next 6 batters beginning in the fourth inning to prevent a player from not receiving an "at bat" as the home team will not bat in the bottom of the 6th inning if they have the lead after the top of the 6th inning. If a team fails to meet these requirements and the RHYBS League's Board of Directors receives a game protest, an audit of the scorebooks will be conducted. If found in violation of this rule the offending team will forfeit the game.

Umpires

- a) Umpires are assigned games by the Umpire Coordinator.
- b) Contact the Umpire Coordinator immediately if an umpire does not show. If someone other than the scheduled umpire fills in, put their name and phone number on the game sheet and relay that information to the Umpire Coordinator.
- c) Umpires will inspect the field to determine the presence of obstructions and/or debris.
- d) Umpires will press to have their games start at the scheduled time after explaining the ground rules to the coaches and captains of the teams.
- e) The umpire's watch/and or designated watch will be the official timepiece for the game.
- f) At the end of the game, the umpire shall check the game sheets to see that the scores are the same and sign the scorebook and then leave the diamond promptly.

Uniforms

- a) All players and coaches shall wear the shirts provided for that season.
- b) Players must wear grey pants.

Sportsmanship

- a) In the interest of promoting good sportsmanship, players and coaches must shake hands at the end of each game.

Team Equipment

- a) First Aid Kits – Always have at games and practices. If supplies start to run low, please contact the RHYBS League Board of Directors as soon as possible so supplies can be replenished.
- b) Balls - Each bag has practice balls in it. New balls are game balls. Once a game ball has been used it is now considered a practice ball.
- c) Do not give out balls supplied by RHYBS League as “player of the game” balls.
- d) Check equipment condition. Call the Equipment Manager as soon as possible if you need replacements throughout the season. Be sure to monitor certain items such as throat guards, shin pad straps, helmet buckles, etc.
- e) End of year – RHYBS League Board of Directors will arrange an equipment drop-off after the conclusion of the season.

Practices

- a) Coaches may schedule practices beginning Monday, March 24, 2014.
- b) Coaches MUST use the online practice calendar to ensure that the field/location they would want to practice on/in is available. If the desired field/location is not taken, then the coach may reserve the space. When a conflict occurs, please feel free to contact the other coach or find another location.
- c) Use of the school facilities requires filling out and submission of the Royalton Hartland Central School District School Facility Use Form. You may find this form on their website at www.royhart.org in the information section. Please note the school requires 2 weeks notices.

Bases

- a) Coaches are required to ensure that all necessary bases and pitcher’s rubber is installed and at the correct distance before the game.
- b) It is the responsibility of the home team to ensure that the bases are secured at the end of the game. If there is a problem please contact your Division Representative or a Board Member.

Cleanup

- a) It is the responsibility of the home team coach to make sure the fields are clear after any game or practice.
- b) It is the responsibility of each team to make sure their bench is clear of equipment and garbage.

Inclement Weather/Darkness

- a) Games may be called due to inclement weather/darkness at the discretion of the umpire, board member or Division Representative.
- b) When there is inclement weather the game will be delayed up to 30 minutes. If after 30 minutes the conditions are not suitable for game play (i.e. still raining, fields are sloppy, darkness) then the game will be called.
- c) The following guidelines apply if there is inclement weather prior to a game:
 - a. Rain during the day or for a couple of days prior (before 3:00 pm):
 - i. Coaches will tell their team to show up at their normal game times. If there is a problem with the fields, a league representative will contact the coach.

- b. If it rains between 3:00 pm and 5:00 pm (weekday) and 6:00 am – 8:00 am (weekend):
 - i. A league representative will check out the condition of the diamonds and will contact coaches and umpire if a game is going to be suspended.
- c. After 5:30 pm (weekday) and 8:30 am (weekend):
 - i. The teams must show up at the regular time and the umpire(s) will call the game if necessary.

Borrowed Players (Senior Boys Only)

- a) Teams may borrow players from the division below them only (major boys division). A maximum of three (3) players can be borrowed to bring the number of players to a maximum of nine (9).
- b) Borrowed players may not be played in the catching or pitching position.
- c) Borrowed players may play for the same team a maximum of three (3) times during the season.
- d) If a team cannot field a full roster and cannot contact a player who hasn't played for them three (3) times, the game may be played with a minimum of eight (8) players.
- e) Coaches should make every effort to contact each of their players in the event of a schedule change.
- f) Coaches must submit the batting order to the opposing team with borrowed players indicated on the roster.
- g) Borrowed players must, if reasonably possible, wear a matching team uniform while playing for another team.

Closing

- a) This document will help guide you throughout the season. It was created to make your job as a coach easier. It is imperative that you get your parents involved to help you. If no one volunteers, assign it to someone. You cannot do all tasks by yourself and manage a team effectively.
- b) Remember, baseball and softball is to be a fun learning experience for both you AND your players. We do keep score and league stats (expect for T-ball/Coach Pitch), but it does not mean that it is "win at all costs." ***We expect there to be a level of professionalism and sportsmanship displayed at all times.*** If you feel uncomfortable with how an opposing team is conducting themselves, please contact any member of the RHYBS Board of Directors as soon as possible.
- c) You are grooming these kids and we want to keep them coming back to baseball/softball year after year. Enjoy the experiences and friendships you will be creating for yourselves and others. Keep the lines of communications open with your families and use their assistance as often as possible. Provide positive reinforcement to your players before you make a criticism/correction. Be a role model. Have fun.

Field Availability

Hartland Fields (Fields A, 1, 2, 3)

- Location:** On Ridge Road (Rt104) behind Hartland Fire hall, across from Hartland Town Hall. The fields are numbered in order A, 1, 2, and 3.
- Open:** Year Round
- Available:** Mondays & Fridays – Field A only
 Tuesday, Thursday & Saturday – All fields Available
 Wednesday June 2nd and before – All fields Available
 Wednesdays after June 2nd – No Fields Available
 Sunday – No Fields Are Available
- Notes:** Please clean up after games and practices.
 Major Girls please fill in divots at the pitcher mound when done.

Royalton Ravine Field

- Location:** Gasport Road, Gasport NY. From Middleport take Rt31 to Gasport road. Turn left on Gasport Road, the park will be up about a mile on the right hand side.
- Open:** Year Round
- Available:** Monday through Friday – Field is Available
 Saturday & Sunday – Must be scheduled.
 If there is a party at the pavilion please be courteous.
- Notes:** Please clean up after games and practices.
 No work can be done to this field by anyone other than Park officials.

Vet's Park (Fields 1 & 2)

- Location:** In the Village of Gasport on Telegraph Road. Located down the road from the Yellow Goose, which is on the corner of Rt31 and Telegraph Road.
- Open:** April 1st until October 31st.
- Available:** Monday, Thursdays and Saturdays – All Fields Available.
 Tuesdays – No Fields are available.
 Wednesday – Available after May 12th.
- Notes:** Vet's Park is designated for Coach Pitch/T-Ball divisions. You may use the fields if available but must yield the field over if Coach Pitch/T-ball teams arrive.
 Please clean up after games and practices.

Terry's Corners (60')

- Location:** Behind Terry's corner fire hall on route 77 (Near Mill Road)
- Open:** Year Round
- Available:** Mondays & Tuesday – Field is not available.
 Wednesday, Thursday, Friday & Saturday – Field available.
- Notes:** Please clean up after games and practices.
 Do not use kitty litter or any other field conditioner for puddles.
 Do not park in the fire hall parking lot on Mondays.

Terry's Corners (90')

- Location: On Chestnut Ridge Road behind Terry's Corner Fire hall. Senior field can be accessed from Mill Road (around the corner).
- Open: Year Round
- Available: Field is available every day.
On Mondays all vehicles must park in lot off Mill Road. No parking at the fire hall.
- Notes: Please clean up after games and practices.
Do not use kitty litter or any other field conditioner for puddles.
Do not park in the fire hall parking lot on Mondays.

Gasport Elementary #1 Senior Field

- Location: 4486 Emerson Place, Gasport, NY 14067, Behind Gasport Elementary School off Rt. 31 near the Varsity Soccer field.
- Open: Year Round
- Available: Scheduled Games Only
- Notes: Please clean up after games and practices.

Gasport Elementary #2 Practice Field

- Location: 4486 Emerson Place, Gasport, NY 14067, Adjacent to JV soccer field behind Gasport Elementary School.
- Open: Year Round
- Available: When not being used by the JV or Varsity teams.
- Notes: Please clean up after games and practices.

High School JV Softball Field

- Location: 55 State Street, between the High School and Junior High School. Lower Field.
- Open: Year Round
- Available: When not being used by the JV or Varsity teams.
- Notes: Please clean up after games and practices.

High School Varsity Field

- Location: 55 State Street, between the High School and Junior High School. Upper Field.
- Open: Year Round
- Available: When not being used by the JV or Varsity teams.
- Notes: Please clean up after games and practices.

Practice Organization – Tips for Success

Introduction

- 1) A well planned practice gets more out of players – Have specific goals
- 2) Spend time teaching proper fundamentals EVERY PRACTICE
- 3) Follow a routine
- 4) Practice is the coach's game time
- 5) Know how many assistant/parents you have to help you ahead of time
- 6) When a good practice is over, they are tired and practice time flew by
- 7) Write a practice plan or put your ideas down on paper

Daily Practice Routine

- 1) Discuss practice plan, your goals for the day and any communications
- 2) Stretch routine
- 3) Warm-up job (Can incorporate running the bases)
- 4) Throwing routine (Very important, warm-up throwing with a purpose)
- 5) Fielding routine (Rapid fire/4 corners or another drill to see if team is ready to practice)
- 6) Skill Development
- 7) Team Offense
- 8) Team Defense

Offensive Situations

- 1) Remember – there is nothing worse for the players than having one player hitting and ten players standing around
- 2) Groups (Depending on how many coaches you have)
 - a. Tee – against fence with whiffle balls
 - b. Soft toss – against fence with whiffle balls
 - c. Short toss – on field
 - d. Fungo – in outfield
 - e. Cage
 - f. Dry Land/Skeleton swinging

Live Game Situations

- 1) Can be practiced in batting practice
- 2) Break team into groups of 3 or 4 (Each offensive group has a hitter, base runner, tee, on deck)
- 3) Have hitter bunt runner to second, third and home
- 4) Defense plays live in field (other groups are there with coaches around field)
- 5) Same hitter, same runner, hitter hits to player to second, third and home
- 6) Third hit, the hitter runs and becomes live scrimmage

Batting Practice Idea

- 1) Give every player a number.
 - a. Number 1 is the hitter, 2 is on deck, 3 is runner, 4 at 1B, 5 at 2B, 6 at SS, 7 at 3B, 8 in LF, 9 in CF, 10 in RF and you rotate on your command.
 - b. Players get to play all positions as they are always moving.
 - c. Play live like on last hit like previous drill.
 - d. Players are always in position during batting practice rather than standing in one spot with 3 or 4 other players.

Defensive Situations

- 1) There are numerous ways to spend time on defense. It is important to plan ahead in regards to how many coaches you will have at a given practice. Better to work in smaller groups for each player’s better understanding.
- 2) Groups can be divided into: Infield, Outfield, Pitchers, Catchers

Sample Fielding Stations

- 1) 3B to 1B, SS to 2B to P
- 2) 1B to 3B, 2B to SS to P
- 3) SS to 1B, 3B to 2B to P
- 4) 1B to SS to P, 2B and 3B throws home
- 5) P and C (covering first, catchers throw to bases)
- 6) CF to 2B, LF to 3B
- 7) RF to home, CF to 3B
- 8) RF to 2B, LF to home

Sample Practice Schedule	
Date:	Site:
Time	Activity
5:30 – 5:35	Announcement and daily practice plan review
5:35 – 5:45	Warm Ups
5:45 – 6:00	Throwing Routine
6:00 – 6:45	Group Work <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stations 1 & 2: Infield Work/Hitting • Stations 3 & 4: Outfield Work/Hitting
6:45 – 6:55	Base Running
6:55 – 7:00	Discussion <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practice Comments (Positive/Negative) • Announcements (Upcoming events) • Handouts (if any) • Schedule for Week (practices and games)

Basic Fundamentals of Baseball

Pitchers	
Fundamentals	Thoughts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full wind up mechanics • Field Ground Balls • Backing up bases • Double plays to mound • Covering home plate • Fielding bunts (if allowed) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pitching is 80% of the game • Throw strikes (over 80% of walks end up scoring with less than 2 outs) • Practice skeleton/dry land work • Grips – 2 and 4 seam
Catchers	
Fundamentals	Thoughts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stance (with and without runners) • Target • Giving Signals (if used) • Framing pitchers • Throwing to bases • Blocking pitches (Drop to knees) • Handling Pop-ups (Get rid of mask) • Retrieving wild pitch (Slide to ball) • Tag at home • Fielding bunts (if allowed) • Backing up first • Ball back to pitcher (Quick, but not hard) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must be a leader • Must communicate • Must be tough
Infielders	
Fundamentals	Position Specific Fundamentals
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ready Position (Stance and Glove) • Creep Step (Before each pitch) • Getting a jump • Fielding ground balls • Charging ground balls • Throwing • Fielding slow rollers • Fly ball communication (Wind, sun, glove side, where ball is being thrown) • Proper calling of fly balls (Mine, you, name) • Communication (Between Infielders and Outfielders) • Tag Work • Cutoffs/Relay Techniques • Double Plays • Rundowns • Bunt coverage (if allowed) • Preventing delayed steal (if allowed) 	<p>FIRST BASE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All fundamentals at right • Footwork on receiving throws • Throws in the dirt • Proper stretch for the ball • Covering second base on extra base hit <p>SECOND BASE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All fundamentals at right • Covering first and second base <p>SHORTSTOP</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All fundamentals at right • Covering second and third base • Leader/quarterback on field <p>THIRD BASE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All fundamentals at right • Covering third base • Cutoffs hit directly to left fielder • Throw to first base

Outfielders	
Fundamentals	Defensive Team Thoughts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ready position • Positioning by each pitch, hitter, individual pitcher, count and situation • Getting a jump on ball (Footwork) • Catching fly ball • Fielding groundball (Knee down) • Charging ground balls • Throwing – Crow hop (Always hit your cut) • Fly ball communication (Sun, wind, glove side, where ball is being thrown) • Proper calling of fly balls (You, mine, name) • Fly ball responsibilities • Backing up bases • Backing up each other • Use of angles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be ready EVERY Pitch • Know where you are going with the ball before every pitch • The team with the fewest mistakes generally wins
Hitting Fundamentals	
<p>GRIP</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Firm, not tight • Align knocking knuckles <p>STANCE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comfortable base (balanced) and on balls of feet • Hands near back shoulder • Head on front shoulder (both eyes should see the pitcher) • Tension free (upper half must be loose and relaxed) • Closed, Straight, Slightly Open (Always step closed) <p>TRIGGER</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hands move back and up (backward “C” or “J” movement) • Do not bar arm (do not straighten bottom arm) • Slight inward turn of front knee, hip, shoulder (do not over-rotate) <p>STRIDE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Short (6 inches or less) • Weight on inside of front foot • No head movement • Soft (step on ice) • Stride foot needs to land closed 	<p>APPROACH/SWING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Throw your hands across plate, throw the barrel to the ball • Barrel stays above the hands (no belly or loop in bat path) • Short stroke (short to the ball, long through the hitting zone) • Hands stay inside ball (do not cast away from body) • Slight downward swing • Head down during approach <p>HIP EXPLOSION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fire the backside • Hit against a firm front leg (front knee should be inside front toe) • Belly button to the pitcher • Back toe strings to the pitcher (squish the bug) <p>FINISH</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finish with two hands on the bat • Finish with chin on rear shoulder • Head down on contact

Base running	
Fundamentals	Thoughts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Home to first, thru bag on ground ball (Glance and then run thru bag) • Home to first, over throw • Banana cuts to first • Rounding first, base hit (Pick up ball in outfield) • Rounding first to second base • Primary lead/jump from 1st base • Secondary lead • Straight steal (if allowed) • Delayed steal (if allowed) • Reading balls in dirt – get to next base • Leads from second base • Stealing third base (if allowed) • Leads from third base • Scoring on groundball • Tagging on fly ball • Stealing home (if allowed) • Suicide squeeze play • Safety squeeze play • Sliding • When to pick up base coach • Signs (if used) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be aggressive, but smart • Place pressure on defense • Being a good base runner and base stealer are two different things • You do not have to be fast to be a good base runner or base stealer • Always get the extra base when you can (scoring position and no force out) • Bases run in a circle pattern

Traits of Successful Coaching

KNOWLEDGE SEEKER

Pursue additional insights
 Read
 Observe
 Attend clinics
 Expose yourself to new ideas
 Browse the Internet
 Talk with fellow coaches

GOOD ORGANIZATIONAL SKILLS

Practice plans for day, week, month
 Details regarding equipment, schedules
 Players know when a coach is unprepared

HARD WORKING

Strong work ethic
 Time and Effort
 Be persistent
 Be present in mind and body

GOOD COMMUNICATOR

With RHYBS League, assistants, players, parents, fans
 Transfer of knowledge and techniques to players
 What is expected of players and how can they accomplish their goals
 Positive attitude, enthusiasm, concern, humor

APPROACHABLE AND CARING

Coaches have a human side – show it!
 Find time to laugh with players and show them you have a sense of humor
 Don't be too serious, it is only a game
 Be able to bounce back from mistakes
 Remember – baseball is a great life lesson. Be a teacher!

HONEST AND FAIR

Integrity
 Loyalty
 Players should know their roles on the team
 Be aware and concerned about your reputation

*Overall, it is the coach who sets the tone and leads by example.
 Whether you realize it or not, whether you want to be or not, you are a role model.*

Dealing with Pressure from Parents

Dealing with the parents of your players is one of the most important ingredients to a successful and rewarding season. Your team can have the league's best pitcher, fastest lead-off hitter, and an outstanding shortstop, but if you fail to handle the pressure from parents you will have a very long and frustrating season.

One of the best ways to deal with parental issues is to address them before they become a problem, starting from the very first day of practice. Schedule a parent's meeting as soon as possible after your team is formed. Insist that all of your parents attend. Prepare for the meeting and have a complete list of roster contacts (both coaches and parents), team rules and a schedule of games and practices.

At the meeting, introduce the team concept. Use examples to make these points:

1. Every player is a very important part of the team regardless of ability
2. The team needs support and help from parents
3. Encourage the parents to attend the games
4. Insist on team spirit and encouragement for all team members
5. The team comes first

The team meeting is your opportunity to make it clear what your rules are. The parents need to know that you are in charge and that your rules will be followed. This will also be your opportunity to explain to the parents what your philosophy is. Tell the parents that you feel their son or daughter is a very important part of the team. Explain that the players will learn, develop and have a lot of fun playing baseball. It is also recommended that you communicate to the parents that the players will learn more than just baseball because they will also learn a lot about teamwork, sportsmanship and friendship.

No matter how hard you try to communicate up front, there will always be problems. Ask parents to come and talk to you directly if they have concerns. This discussion can be done over the phone, email or meeting set up ahead of time. This could be done before rest of team arrives for a practice or game or after everyone has left the field. But, NEVER just before a game, during a game or just after a game. It is good to suggest to the parents that they do not talk with players or other parents about their related problems and you can assure them that we will do what we can to work out any differences. If you as a manager or coach sense any problems, use some of the other parents to find out about a problem only if you TRUST those parents. Some of the parents will be your best supporters, use them as middle men/women and they can help you out with some of the other parents and you can at least get a feel as to what concerns may be out there.

Never let problems get out on the field. Try to keep the problems away from your players if there is a parent problem. Keep your emotions in control and never let them get out of control with either players or parents. When the pressure is getting to you, step back and give yourself time to get your emotions under control before you address an issue. Always try to deal with the problems in private, away from the other parents of players. Experience will teach you how to deal with all types of problems. Most of the time, you will find that problems relate to parents believing that their son or daughter is a better player than they really are in the game of baseball.

We coach because we love baseball and softball and working with kids. We need to plan ahead to prevent parental problems which have a negative effect on our team. We need to put the right player in the game at the right time despite pressure from parents.

With proper planning and organization, we can minimize parent problems and spend more time on the field doing what we enjoy the most – COACHING!

Sample Parent Meeting Agenda

Roy-Hart Youth Baseball/Softball League

XXXXX Division

Team: XXXXX

Head Coach: XXXXX

Assistant Coaches: XXXXX

Parent Meeting

April 1, 2013

Welcome – Reason for this meeting is positive communication, answer any and all questions

Introduction to Coaching Staff

Introduce Team Mom/Dad – Explain their role, have Team Mom/Dad encourage treat sign ups, etc.

Game Schedule – Handout game schedule, cancellation procedures, review game reporting time, review penalties for missed game (if you decide there needs to be penalties), review team policy for notification if going to miss a game or be late to a game, ask if there are known conflicts and report this to the league, etc.

Practice – Hand out practice schedule, cancellation procedures, go over field locations, review penalties for missed practice (if you decide there needs to be penalties), review team policy for notification if going to miss a practice or be late to a practice, etc.

Equipment – Review what makes a complete uniform

Academics/School - #1 priority, get all work done

Behavior – on and off the field

Program Philosophy – RHYBS League philosophy, playing time, etc.

Problems/Concerns - player/coach, parent/coach, parent/coach/RHYBS League; positive coach/player/parent relationship is vital to the success of the team and our league, must accept the coaching process, parents coaching from the sidelines, spectator sportsmanship, etc.

Important Dates – Memorial Day Parade, Picture Day, All Star Day, League Raffle, etc.

Other – questions, comments, concerns

Practice Work Plans (Example)

Weeks 1-4	Weeks 5-8	Weeks 9-11
<p>All players know each other's names.</p> <p>Teach safety: handling a bat, throwing the ball, falling.</p> <p>Review respect for the equipment.</p> <p>Coaches emphasize good points each players practice or game.</p> <p>Fun drills.</p>	<p>All players know and use each other's names.</p> <p>Coaches emphasize good points of each player's game.</p> <p>Player of the game award.</p> <p>Fun drills emphasize teamwork and game situations.</p> <p>Lead team warm ups.</p>	<p>Coaches emphasize good points of how the team is playing.</p> <p>Family party or game.</p> <p>Fun drills emphasize teamwork.</p> <p>Coaches emphasize good points of each player's game.</p> <p>Lead team warm-ups.</p>
<p>Running: sprint, turn, rounding</p> <p>Throwing: grip, step and throw</p> <p>Fielding: glove position, body position, catching</p> <p>Covering a Base: foot position, giving a target, get the ball</p> <p>Batting: hands, stance, eye on ball, contact</p> <p>Positions/Plays: Basic positions, simple outs, lead runners, complete the play</p>	<p>Running: signals, extra-base, tagging up.</p> <p>Throwing: accuracy and power</p> <p>Fielding: lateral movement, foot speed, hand-speed, backing up</p> <p>Covering a Base: roles, Tag vs. Force</p> <p>Batting: bunt, power, sweet spot</p> <p>Position/Plays: Double-plays, run-downs, cutoff plays, simulation drills</p>	<p>Running: team speed, sliding</p> <p>Throwing: quick release, power</p> <p>Fielding: anticipate, communicate, self-correction</p> <p>Covering a Base: Blocking, Stretch, swipe tag</p> <p>Batting: situation hits, visualization, power</p> <p>Position/Plays: Self-directed decision, simple offense/defense strategies</p>
<p>Field markings: Innings, time-out, over throws, throwing the bat.</p> <p>Making outs, strikeouts</p>	<p>Player interference, Tagging up, extra bases</p> <p>Sportsmanship, forfeits, batting order. Substitutions.</p>	<p>General knowledge of the game for the division in which you play.</p>
<p>Teach respect for the officials of the game, the facility, and the other team</p>	<p>Honor our teammates</p> <p>Discuss what other teams do well</p>	<p>Discuss Baseball/Softball strategy, self confidence in decisions</p>
<p>Teach positional play – infield/outfield, batting/running</p> <p>Select primary and secondary fielding positions</p>	<p>Players grouped as squads, drill with common partners in the field</p> <p>Consistent batting line-up developed to build confidence</p> <p>Knowledgeable runners</p>	<p>Players fully comfortable and confident playing a primary and secondary position</p> <p>Players understand their roles as Batters/Runners</p>

Resources

Please visit the **Coaches Corner** on www.royhartyouthbaseball.com for a list of baseball and softball specific skills and drills. If you have a great drill or resource you would like to share and it is not listed on our site, please email us at info.rhybsleague@gmail.com and we will add it to the Coaches Corner.