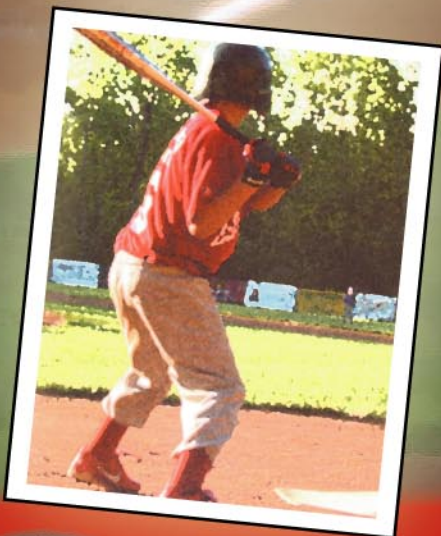




PROGRAM



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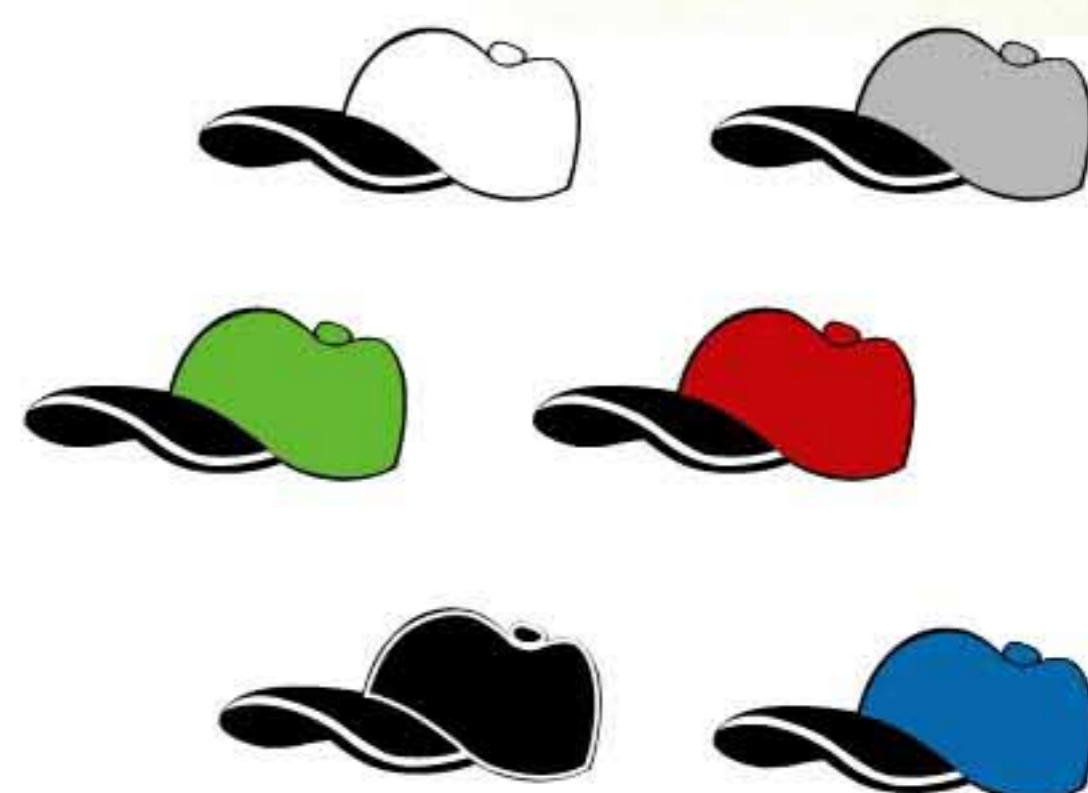


GENERAL INFORMATIONS



RALLY CAP

Program as a starting point of Long Term Athlete Development



The Rally Cap Program is one of the outcomes of the Long Term Athlete Development Program developed by Sport Canada.

LTAD focuses on the general framework of athlete development with special reference to growth, maturation and development, trainability, and sport system alignment and integration. It incorporates information from a number of sources. It draws on the experiences of various athlete development projects that have been implemented by different sport organizations since the mid-1990s.

These sciences include pediatric exercise science, exercise physiology, sport psychology, psychomotor learning, sport sociology, and nutrition. An analysis of the literature on organizational development has also contributed significantly.

The health and well-being of the nation and the medals won at major Games are simple by-products of an effective sport system.

This document is fully based on and supported by the coaching and exercise science literature, but it is written particularly for coaches and technical and administrative sport leaders. Baseball Canada members have expressed their deep desire to have a comprehensive initiation program at the Baseball Canada Summit in 2003. Baseball Canada is proud to offer this simple and detailed program to the Canadian baseball community.

Together, let's make sure this first baseball experience is a positive one for all young players in Canada.



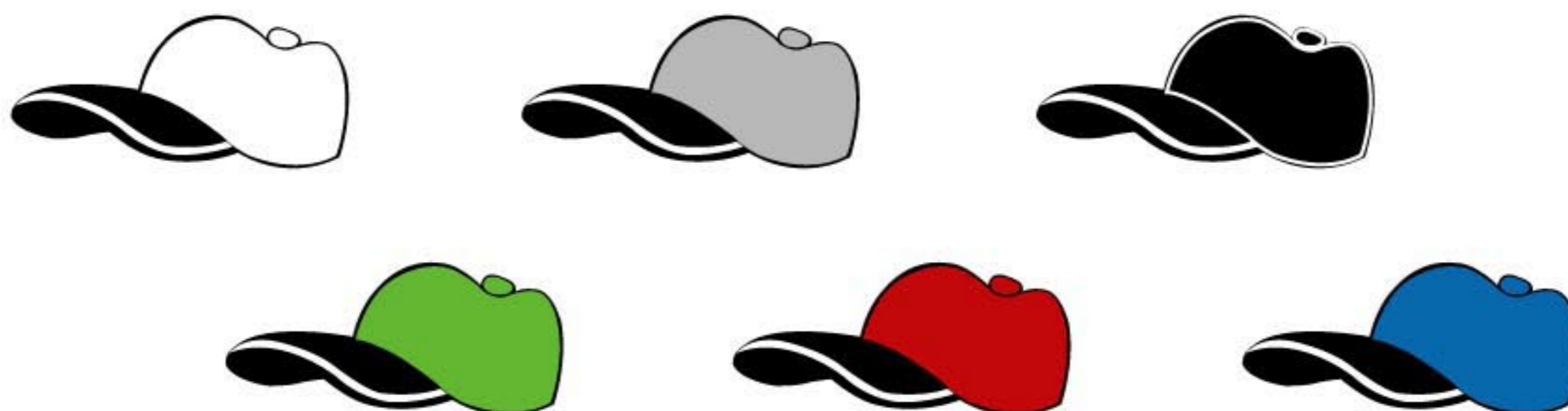
INTRODUCTION



Welcome to the Rally Cap Program. This booklet provides the information necessary to run Baseball Canada's Official Initiation Program.

The Canadian Government has proposed the development of a long term athlete development model for each sport. Our program was developed with the purpose of making the sport of baseball more attractive to young Canadians. Baseball Canada is confident that this program will satisfy young baseball players and their parents and that it will be a useful tool for those involved in teaching baseball at the community level.

Enjoy the Baseball Canada Rally Cap Program.



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Baseball Canada would like to thank everyone who submitted comments following the conclusion of the pilot year of this program. Your comments were very useful in assisting the development of this program to successfully reflect the needs of our players across the country. We would especially like to thank Mr. Benoît Lavigne of Québec for his contribution in making this document more complete.



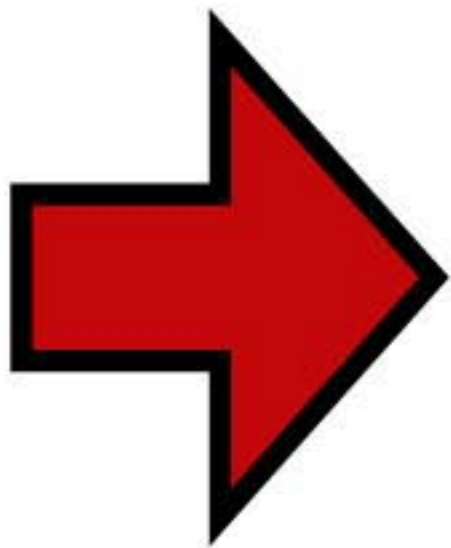
GOALS



»» The goals of the Baseball Canada Rally Cap program are to:

- 1 Create an environment in which children and adults can have fun with baseball.
- 2 Teach baseball skills, rules and strategy to our players.
- 3 Model and teach competitiveness with an emphasis on good sportsmanship.
- 4 Promote increased self-esteem among Rally Cap children and adults.

»» The Crucial Role of Coaches



The most important individual in the Rally Cap program is the coach. The coach is the person the players look at for instruction, encouragement and inspiration. The assistant coaches, as well as the parents, take their cues from the coach. Therefore, success of the program is dependant on the coaches embracing our goals and working to achieve them.



How Coaches Can Help Achieve Rally Cap Goals.
The following are **ways** in which coaches can help achieve the Rally Cap goals:



GOAL # 1

Create an environment in which children and adults can have fun with baseball.

- A** Encourage players often. Demonstrate by behavior and words that each child is an important member of the team regardless of their level of performance. Recognize and encourage effort as well as results.
- B** Allow each player equal playing time.
- C** Demonstrate your own enthusiasm and enjoyment of the game to your players.

GOAL # 2

Teach baseball skills, rules and strategy to our players.

- A** Rely on positive reinforcement for things done correctly. Minimize negative emphasis on mistakes. This is required in order for learning to take place. Players can handle only so much negative feedback without becoming discouraged. Players will learn more, try harder and be more open to accepting criticism if they are praised often. Praise players in public and correct them in private.
- B** Provide adequate repetition when teaching. Baseball is complicated and lessons often need repeating before they are understood. Once players understand, they often need repeated practice before they can perform the expected behavior well.
- C** Encourage players to set individual and team goals corresponding to their ability levels and then work to master the skills needed to achieve them.
- D** Organize practices to maximize learning and minimize inactivity.



GOAL # 3

Model and teach competitiveness with an emphasis on good sportsmanship.

- A** Teach players aggressiveness and good sportsmanship at the same time.
- B** Obey the rules and show respect for the officials even when you disagree.
- C** Acknowledge good plays by the opposing team in front of your players.
- D** Treat players on opposing teams as members of the community first and as opponents second. Always refrain from displaying actions or words that undercut the self-esteem of players on either team.

GOAL # 4

Promote increased self-esteem among Rally Cap children and adults.

- A** Encourage players whenever possible. Demonstrate by words and actions that you like and accept them regardless of how they perform. Adults often assume children can read their minds, but children determine whether they are liked and accepted by adults based on what the adults say and do.
- B** Spend comparable instructional time with all players regardless of ability.
- C** Encourage parents to become involved with the team.



STRUCTURE



The Rally Cap program was developed using existing baseball initiation programs, as well as adding new ideas in order to create increased interest for players.

In the Rally Cap baseball program, each team will consist of 6 players only. This allows for the formation of more teams, meaning more repetitions, which will allow players to improve their individual skills.

Each session will last 75 minutes. Two (2) teams will play an actual game while one (1) team will be practicing drills in the outfield area. After each inning played (both teams have batted), teams will rotate. The rotation will be as follows: Team on 1st base dugout side moves to 3rd base dugout - Team on 3rd base dugout moves to the outfield - the outfield group moves to the 1st base dugout.

75 minutes

Training
15 minutes

Station 1
20 minutes

Station 2
20 minutes

Station 3
20 minutes

THE GAME

In Rally Cap baseball, 3 teams will meet at the park at the same time. At the start of the season, the emphasis will be on specific baseball skills development and modified baseball games will be added to the program as these skills are better mastered. Two (2) teams will then be playing a game while one (1) team will be practicing in the outfield.



All six players will come to bat during their team's ½ inning. The ½ inning will end when all six players have completed their turn.

Teams will score runs the same way they score runs during a regular game (i.e. touching home plate). Teams will also have the opportunity to earn points or runs on defense. A point can be earned by catching a fly ball, or by throwing a runner out at a base. Therefore, a possible 6 defense points can be earned every inning.

VARIATIONS: You can develop a different point system to reward different defensive plays. (i.e. You can allow more points for fielding a ball followed by an accurate throw.)

To throw a runner out, the ball can be thrown to any base before the runner reaches 1st base. An out at 1st base can only be made by running to and touching 1st base before the hitter.

There are no walks, no strikeouts, no base stealing and runners can advance only on batted balls.

With hitting being the most fun part of the game, the program has been designed to help players hit the ball no matter what the skill level. Three different formats can be used:

Each player can choose the format they wish to use, depending on their development stage. All 3 formats can be used during a game.

TEE-BALL / PARENT-PITCHER / PITCHING MACHINE

Each hitter will have a maximum of 5 baseballs. If the 5th ball is not hit, a coach will roll the ball to allow the hitter to run the base paths and to allow the defense to field the ball and make plays.

When the last hitter (#6) hits the ball, the ball must be thrown to home plate in order to get the hitter out.

The batting order will change each time a team comes to bat (first hitter becomes last, etc.) Defensive positioning will also change each time a team comes to bat.

VARIATIONS: You can actually use the volleyball rotation style and proceed with defensive rotation with each opposite batter.

