



AAA HANDBOOK – 2020 REVISION

Introduction

Winnipeg South Minor Baseball Association (WSMBA) sponsors AAA level baseball for 3 age groups: 13U, 15U, and 18U.

The mission of our AAA program is to develop the skills of baseball players to a high level of excellence. We promote strong character both on and off the field. We insist on good sportsmanship and proper behavior. Most importantly, we want everyone to have fun and enjoy AAA baseball – from the players, to the coaches, to the parents, and the fans. We also want our opponents, their fans, and the umpires to enjoy the experience of participating in baseball.

Commitment and Program Philosophy

Commitment

AAA baseball requires a significant time and financial commitments, depending on each individual team's performance and tryout time. Once the team is formed, every player is expected to attend all practices and games. Absences could result in a reduction of playing time.

League play of 20 – 28 games, begins in May and continues into July. Also 2 - 3 weekend tournaments and possible exhibition games will be scheduled during the season. The number and location of tournaments is at the discretion of the individual team.

Commitment from parents of AAA players is also very important. In order for our association to be a success and for our children to maximize their enjoyment of playing AAA baseball, your participation is required.

AAA Program Philosophy

The AAA program firmly believes that:

- The level of effort committed to the program, determines the result one will achieve. Players are expected to work hard to be given their opportunities to practice, participate, and play.
- In order to fully enhance skills and development, players and parents should commit to the expectations of the program with regards to effort and attendance.
- There is a high expectation of respectful conduct of our players, both on and off the field.
- The definition of fair play differs from that of A or AA level baseball. For the WSMBA AAA program, fair play will also differ as age levels advance.
- It is important that Coach's communicate their play time policy/strategies to parents and players at the beginning of the season.

Community Involvement

The expectation of all AAA players is to lead by example on and off the playing field. To help foster the leadership role in baseball, we ask that all AAA players volunteer in the baseball community in one of the following ways:

- Volunteer as a clinician at Winnipeg South pre-season clinics
- Volunteer (in pairs) as a coach's assistant with a Community Centre 13U, 11U or Grand Slam team at a practice.
- Volunteer at Community Club A/AA Tryouts
- Volunteer as a buddy at a Challenger Baseball Game (15U & 18U players only)
- Any other event as requested by the AAA Committee Chair

When players are participating at a Community Involvement event, they are representing the Winnipeg South AAA organization and are expected to dress in either full uniform (including jersey & game hat) or in black shorts, jersey & game hat, depending on the event.

Volunteer Bond

The team manager will collect a \$300 volunteer bond cheque (dated September 30th) at the beginning of the season. This bond cheque is payable to Winnipeg South Minor Baseball Association, not to the individual team, and must be handed in with the registration fees. It will be held by the WSMBA Treasurer until the end of the season. Any family that volunteers a minimum of 15 hours will have it destroyed. It is up to the family of the player to determine who is going to work the hours needed to satisfy the bond requirements. Failure to work the minimum hours will result in the complete forfeiture of the bond.

Examples of volunteer work include but are not limited to:

Assisting at tournaments/provincials hosted at Charleswood Place (this includes selling 50/50 tickets, canteen duty, scoring, gate duty), moving equipment, field maintenance, assisting with tryouts/clinics, team management, coaching, WSMBA board membership with ensuing duties.

Scorekeeping, pitch counting, or selling 50/50 tickets at league games or any other activity from which just your team receives a direct financial benefit will not count toward volunteer hours.

Any families with multiple players in the AAA program are required to complete 5 additional volunteer hours and pay an additional \$100 on their bond cheque, per player. The volunteer bond is collected by the team manager of the oldest player.

Registration Fee and Other Costs

The Winnipeg South AAA registration fee is suggested annually by the WS AAA Committee and approved by the WSMBA Board of Directors. The registration fee for those players selected to WS AAA 13U, 15U, and 18U teams in 2020 is \$720 per player. The \$600 registration fees do not include any additional team fees (see below.) The additional \$120 on the registration fee is considered a fundraising fee (see Fundraising below).

All fees are payable directly to your individual team and must be handed in to your team manager (along with all additional team fees, volunteer bond & jersey fees) prior to the first game of the season. (All teams must forward registration fees to WSMBA no later than June 15th)

A \$20 service fee will be charged for any returned cheques, and a new cheque must be issued immediately. A second returned cheque must be replaced by a certified cheque or cash and another \$20 service fee.

No player will be permitted to play if the player's registration fee and volunteer bond have not been received in accordance with the above policy. Also no player will be allowed on a WS AAA roster if the family has a prior outstanding balance with any program under the auspices of the WSMBA or Baseball Manitoba.

A player called up, or joining the team mid-season, will be assessed a charge based on the number of games played. The charge will be levied from the 4th game played forward. The registration fee is determined by dividing \$600 by the total number of scheduled games (including league playoff games) multiplied by the number of games (after 3) the player is on the individual game roster. This formula is also used to calculate the player's share of additional team fees.

Any roster spots held for players attending an out-of-province baseball academy, the registration fee will be the greater of either the calculation above or \$200. Additional team fees will still be calculated based on the calculation above.

Registration fee covers the following expenses:

- Winnipeg AAA Baseball Association (WABA), Baseball Manitoba, and Baseball Canada fees which include:
 - Umpires
 - Baseball Manitoba insurance
 - Administrative expenses
- League games and playoff games at Charleswood Place
- Practice time at Charleswood Place
- Head Coach and Assistant Coach honorariums
- Coaches' jerseys
- Hats for coaches and players (1 each)
- Baseballs (new) for games
- Program administration
- \$120 toward mandatory fundraising initiative

Registration fee does not cover the following expenses:

- Gym time for winter workouts or team selection
- Player jerseys
- Additional optional team clothing as determined during the season (t-shirts, jackets, etc.)
- Additional hats for players who misplace their hats
- Team specific administration costs and tournament registration fees
- Coach and player travel expenses
- Team and parent social functions
- Personal equipment, lost or stolen personal items
- Nationals apparel if necessary

Additional Team Fees

In addition to the registration fee, each team member will pay their share of costs for team administration, tournament registration, and the coaching staff's meal and accommodation when travelling to tournaments.

Additional money may be required as determined by the coaches, manager and parents for team costs such as shirts, jackets, and team meals/gatherings.

Players called up for tournaments and championships are expected to pay their share of costs.

Team Travel Policy

Coaches are expected to convey to parents and players, prior to travelling, the code of conduct expected of all players, stressing that players are competitors first and foremost and tourists second. Team rules, curfews, schedule, etc. should be communicated by the coach or team manager as soon as they are available.

Free time, when parents are expected to supervise, and structured time, when coaches are in charge, should be clearly defined and scheduled so no assumptions are made.

A group hotel booking will be made with adequate rooms to include all players and coaches. Families will be responsible for booking their own rooms within the group booking.

Any coaches' travelling expenses are the responsibility of the individual AAA teams and are paid for from team revenues, i.e. fundraising, parent contributions (see additional team fees), etc.

Winnipeg South teams support their coaches' travel costs in the following ways:

- Auto: team pays gas expenses at \$0.45/km for head coach & non-parent assistant coaches only (maximum of 2 cars/trip – maximum is combined with below)
- Auto: if a non-parent coach gets a ride with a parent, the team will offer to pay gas expenses at \$0.23/km to the parent providing the ride (maximum of 2 cars/trip – maximum is combined with above)
- Hotel: team pays for a maximum of 2 rooms, head coach & non-parent assistant coaches only. It is expected that two Coaches would share one room.
- Meal allowance: team pays \$35 per day for a maximum of 3 coaches & 1 manager, parent coaches/manager included, if tournament is in USA, this meal allowance is paid in USD
- Airfare: for Western/National Championships only, team pays for a maximum of 3 coaches, parent coaches included

If a team travels together, such as flights to Nationals pre-booked by Baseball Manitoba, players choosing not to travel with the team will receive no reimbursement from the team or from Winnipeg South. Those players are still responsible for their share of coaches' costs for the trip.

Players added to a Winnipeg South roster for travel to a championship tournament will prepay their own travel costs and, if there was sufficient fundraising, they will be reimbursed an appropriate amount by the team. Such players are responsible for their share of coaches' travel costs.

Fundraising

Presently we hold an annual fundraiser for all AAA teams. If families would like to provide their fundraising fee and not participate in the fundraiser, they can “purchase” all fundraising tickets for themselves.

If you choose to participate in the AAA fundraiser, it will allow you to earn your fundraising dollars back. Each player is provided with \$120 worth of event tickets or ticket sales that are included in the cost of their registration fee. These tickets can be sold to friends & family, and the money is kept by the seller.

All proceeds from this fundraiser go toward the maintenance of Charleswood Place. For any individual team fundraiser events, all proceeds are kept by that team.

Uniforms & Equipment

The only part of the player’s uniform provided by WSMBA program is one game hat. These hats are for game use only. Hats for practice / social wear can be purchased at an additional cost.

Player’s jerseys will be available to order at a cost of \$85 per jersey from the team manager. For 2020, while we have a transition year with our team name, 13U players require only a black jersey. 15U and 18U players usually require both an orange and a black jersey, however in 2020, we will only require a black jersey. Players are required to pay for their team jersey(s) as per the payment schedule provided on the individual team budget. Jersey numbers, once assigned, are yours to keep and not re-issued within 3 years. If the same number is requested by more than one player, preference will be given to the older player. If the same number is requested by a player and a coach, preference will be given to the coach.

It is the player’s responsibility to acquire white baseball pants, striped game socks or stirrups (if wearing short pants), black undershirt (only AAA gear, or solid black is to be worn on the field before games), and a black belt. Many of these items can be purchased at the annual Gear Night event.

Team Equipment

The AAA baseball program supplies:

- New league approved game baseballs
- Batting tees
- Bat weight
- First aid kit
- Scorebooks

Any damage caused by negligence or intentional abuse by a player will be reimbursed by the player. Failure to do so will result in the denial of the player’s or player’s family further participation in any WSMBA program.

Personal Equipment

Each player must provide his/her own glove, bat, cleats, batting helmet, athletic supporter with a hard protective cup, sunglasses, water bottle, and any other personal or safety equipment they want.

Catchers are required to purchase their own catching equipment. Consult the coaching staff to make sure your player's equipment is properly sized and correctly fitted to maximize their success.

WSMBA and Winnipeg South teams are not responsible for lost or stolen player equipment. Players are required to use baseball shoes with cleats. 13U players use only hard rubber cleats. 15U and older players have the option of using hard rubber or metal cleats.

Wood bats are now optional at the 15U and 18U levels. As per Baseball Manitoba: On Sunday, November 3, 2019 at the Semi-Annual General Meeting in Brandon the Board of Directors of Baseball Manitoba Ratified a Motion that will allow the use of BBCOR Certified Metal Bats at 15U AAA and 18U (all categories, A, AA and AAA) in competition in 2020. Baseball Manitoba believes that Wood bats should still be used as a training aid and/or in competition, if the batter's skill level allows. Baseball Manitoba's 15U, 16U and 17U Male Provincial Team Programs will continue to promote the use of Wood bats, as the National and WCBA events will be played with wood bats and these players are striving to compete for Baseball Canada's National Team.

Positive Behavior and Conflict Resolution

Umpires

All umpires utilized during league play as well as City and Provincial playoffs are certified by Baseball Manitoba. At the National and Western Canada Championship all umpires are certified by the provincial affiliate which is a member of Baseball Canada. While we expect the quality of umpiring to be high, we must always exercise patience, understanding, good sportsmanship, and respect for their efforts. The character of our players, coaches, fans, and community is gauged by the message the umpires carry out into the baseball community.

Suspensions

The WSMBA reserves the right to suspend and/or remove any coach, parent, or player who violates any WSMBA AAA policy as stated in this handbook, their respective Code of Conduct, the spirit of good sportsmanship and/or is objectionable by normal social standards. This suspension may be in addition to any action taken by game officials.

A coach may suspend any player, parent, or assistant coach who acts in an unsportsmanlike manner.

Subsequent violations may result in the player, parent, or assistant coach being removed from the program. All violations will be reported to the WSMBA.

Player Removal

Once a team has been formed, the coach has the option to remove a player from the team. A coach cannot remove a player solely due to a lack of skills. Reasons for player release include but are not limited to:

- Frequent, flagrant disregard of the player's responsibilities
- Continued play (conduct) in such a manner as to endanger others and/or self
- Displaying an uncaring attitude and/or hurting the team's competitive potential
- Failure to work within a team environment
- Repeated unsportsmanlike behavior

Before requesting the removal of a player, the coach will make a reasonable attempt to resolve the situation with the player. If this is not successful, the coach will consult, in writing, with the AAA Committee. If the AAA Committee feels it is necessary, the issue will be taken to the WSMBA Executive Committee for a decision. Each step along the way must be carefully documented and demonstrated to be consistent with the process and procedures in this handbook and Winnipeg South governance in general.

The coach can remove a player from a game for inappropriate behavior if it is deemed necessary.

Problem Resolution Guidelines

The WSMBA provides an avenue to resolve team issues with fairness and consistency. When issues arise, they are dealt with swiftly so frustrations and further escalation of issues does not take place. Players or parents with a question on general policies or procedures of WSMBA AAA baseball or a specific issue should ask the coach or parent representative. Choose a time and place that is convenient for both parties and address questions in an appropriate manner. This should not be done during a game or practice or when other players are present. (See parent representative section below)

If a problem between the player or parent and the coach cannot be resolved (utilizing the parent representative) within 72 hours, it should be brought to the attention of the WSMBA AAA Committee Chair by e-mail. The Chair may discuss it with the AAA Committee and may ask all parties to meet to discuss the situation and strive for a solution.

If the problem cannot be resolved at that level within 72 hours, it will be brought to the attention of the WSMBA Executive Committee by the AAA Committee Chair. The decision of the WSMBA Executive Committee will be final.

Parent Representatives

The parent representative will be selected or elected by the team parents immediately following the first coaches' meeting. The parent representative's primary function is to be a liaison between coaches and parents. The parent representative is not part of the coaching staff and has no coaching responsibilities. This person should be diplomatic and able to attend a majority of the team's games. The parent representative will endeavor to mediate, in private and in confidence, between an individual parent and the coaching staff should a concern arise. If mediation is unsuccessful, the parent representative will request the assistance of any member of the AAA Committee.

It is strongly suggested that parents with serious questions or concerns discuss them first with the parent representative in private. A 24-hour delay is advisable between when the concern arises and the discussion, to allow for greater clarity and perspective. The parent representative will advise the coach/manager of any problems, not try to solve them on his or her own, and respect the confidential nature of his or her duties.

Parents who prefer to address the coach or manager directly are welcome to do so, but **must** wait 24 hours after the concern arises. Parents must not approach the coach with a concern less than one hour before or after a game or practice, and should do so privately in a calm and respectful manner.

The coaching staff must not be subject to parental or player interference; however, neither should they ignore genuine parental or player concerns.

Winnipeg South AAA Policies

Abuse Policy

WSMBA will conduct child abuse registry checks and a criminal records check for all AAA coaches. These checks will be good for a period of 2 years. The checks will be coordinated by the VP High Performance and results reviewed by the WSMBA Executive if required.

Drug, Alcohol & Tobacco Policy

WSMBA mandates that any player or coach, regardless of age, shall not participate in any game or practice if that person has consumed alcohol and / or drugs immediately prior or immediately after the activity, is under the influence of alcohol and / or drugs, or is deemed to be under the influence of alcohol and / or drugs immediately prior to, or during the game or practice by any individual in authority. Prescription drugs are included in this policy. If said prescriptions drugs alter or affect the judgment or performance of any player, that player may not participate.

WSMBA prohibits the use of tobacco, cannabis, or vape products in any form by all players and coaches during practice and games and all times while wearing a Winnipeg South AAA uniform.

Parents are reminded it is illegal in Manitoba to consume alcohol or smoke on or nearby the playing field. This includes any area designated for use by the fans.

Codes of Conduct

All AAA players, coaches, parents, and spectators are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that will serve as a positive example to others. Players, Parents, and Coaches are required to sign a Code of Conduct that applies to them. The signed Codes will be kept by the Team Manager.

Fair Play Policy

The intention of our Fair Play Policy is to provide a guideline for Coaches on how to treat players fairly so that players receive a reasonable amount of playing time for development, over the course of the baseball season. WSMBA AAA Program believes that fair play holds a different meaning as age levels advance.

- 13U – We consider our 13U team to be in a development stage of baseball, however it should be understood that even at this level, the AAA program brings together the best players within the WSMBA catchment area. With that in mind, our 13U Fair Play Policy is as follows:
 - During 90% of the regular season, all players will play within 10% of the average innings played of the team. Coaches will calculate players' innings played during the course of regular season play. If players miss games and/or practices, the coaching staff is not obligated to give players additional playing time for personal time missed; their play time may be affected at their next attended game; this will not be calculated against their 10% average innings played.

- Not all players will play all positions, however the goal will be for every player to play an outfield position and an infield position, during the course of regular season play. All players will have opportunities to pitch during regular season play and/or during tournaments. The positional play will be assessed by the coaches, and decisions made based on not only player ability, but also player confidence.
 - Batting order will be at the discretion of the coach.
 - During postseason play, some players may see less playing time, at the Coach's discretion, with the focus on winning the game. However, all players will play in postseason games.
- 15U & 18U – At the more advanced 15U & 18U age levels:
 - Fair Play does not mean that all players will receive an equal amount of playing, however they will be given equal opportunities to earn their playing time.
 - Not all players on a team will play every position. Players will play positions to the strength of the team, where the coaching staff believes that players will contribute and develop their skills for the best of the team. The Coach's objective is to develop all players.
 - Batting order will be at the discretion of the coach.
 - During postseason play, some players may see less playing time, at the Coach's discretion, with the focus on winning the game.
- All age levels:
 - Head coaches will convey their policies regarding playing times at an initial parent meeting.
 - It is acceptable for a coach to use playing time as a consequence of inappropriate behavior including disrespect of teammates, coaches, officials and fans, and lack of effort at practices.
 - There may be instances, during some game situations where players won't play. Coaches will provide additional opportunities in future games to those players whose playing time was adversely affected.
 - In the event that teams advance to Western or National Championship play, roster additions are generally made to enhance the overall strength of the team. Players and parents should be aware that roster additions may play more time than some original team members.

Social Media and Photos Policy

Winnipeg South Minor Baseball Association reserves the right to use any picture taken during camps, tryouts, and during the season/post-season play for instructional purposes, advertising, or posting on our website and social media outlets. Should individual players or parents have concerns with photos possibly being used of themselves or their player, please contact the AAA Committee Chair.

While we encourage positive promotion of the Winnipeg South AAA teams, coaches, and organization through social media, please be advised that our Social Media Policy is consistent with that of Baseball Manitoba with regards to conduct and discipline. This policy can be found on the Baseball Manitoba website at:

<http://www.baseballmanitoba.ca/sites/default/files/2014%20Social%20Media%20%20Policy.pdf>



We encourage our AAA families to follow and participate on our Facebook, Instagram, & Twitter pages at [wpgsouthaaa](https://www.facebook.com/wpgsouthaaa)

Other Information

Inclement Weather

In case of inclement weather, the coach and/or Winnipeg South employee will determine if the field is playable before and during a practice.

For games, the home team's coach is responsible for determining whether a game will be started. Once a game is started, the umpire decides if the game will be continued.

Unless you receive notification from a team official, you should arrive at the site of the game or practice as scheduled. Weather conditions and field conditions can change over a short period.

If you as a parent/guardian are not able to be present during an event, be sure your player knows another parent who will be present with whom he/she can take shelter if bad weather suddenly threatens.

Medical Information and Contingency Plan

Players and parents must provide to the Head Coach or Manager, a completed player medical information form. This form must be submitted prior to the first game of the season.

Coaches must have any emergency action plan that is communicated to the assistant coaches and parents who would be involved in any emergency situation. First aid kits are to be present at all practices and games.