

## Frequently Asked Questions

### 1. Where does my registration money go?

East Bay Youth Athletics (EBYA) relies solely on community support from sponsorships and our registration fees in order to operate. We get very little support from the County other than maintenance of the physical structures. EBYA is responsible for maintaining the fields and batting cages. The following items are partially covered by your registration fees: Uniforms, field maintenance (fertilizing, pest services and mowing of the grass), clay, sand, chalk, field dry, fencing, batting cage maintenance, equipment, safety bases, insurance, charter fees and dues for Babe Ruth League and District 14, all improvements (outside of restrooms and concession stands), to renovate existing or build new fields. Fundraising activities and corporate sponsorship provide some funding. As we become more successful with fundraising activities, it will allow us to keep our registration fees as low as possible.

### 2. When are the East Bay Youth Athletics Seasons?

East Bay Youth Athletics presents a fall and spring season. The fall season is instructional in nature. It starts after Labor Day and runs until mid-November. The spring season is more formal and competitive. It begins in late January for tryouts, with games starting in late February and runs until mid-May. Registration for both seasons starts several months in advance. Registration dates are announced on this website and the leagues Social Media sites. Additional announcements are sent to local schools and media. The fall season is an ideal time for the beginning player to venture into baseball or softball. It affords them more opportunity to learn basic fundamentals in a learning environment. It is also an opportune time for the player that is moving to the next level to get acclimated to the differences of playing at a higher level.

### 3. Why can't we keep score in the fall?

The fall season is only allowed to be played if we use the season as instructional per Babe Ruth League International Rules. The emphasis is on learning and using proper fundamentals in a fun environment.

### 4. What ages are eligible and where will they play?

East Bay Youth Athletics provides baseball and softball opportunities for young people ages 4-18. By Babe Ruth League rules, a player's league age is determined based upon their age as of **April 30**. For instance, a player that does not turn 9 until late March is considered league age 9 and plays in that division for the entire year. Softball players League age is figured for the entire calendar year as of December 31. The Babe Ruth League year begins with the fall season. A player that is slotted into an age division in the fall is also in that division for the spring season. You can use these links for a description of the [baseball](#) and [softball](#) divisions for each age group.

### 5. What equipment will I need to have for my child to play?

Your player needs a fielder's glove, bat and batting helmet. Baseball shoes (cleats) and baseball pants are desirable. Some players find batting gloves to be helpful. The

League furnishes a team jersey and hat. It is best to wait to purchase pants as the team manager will normally indicate the color, along with contrasting socks and belt. Game and practice balls are provided to the team along with and catcher's equipment. The League has a minimum number of batting helmets available.

#### **6. What Team will my player be assigned to?**

For the fall season, the manager or player agent of each division assigns players to a team by age group in an attempt to keep the skill levels among teams as evenly balanced as possible. The size of the teams is kept to a smaller number to facilitate more instruction and playing time. Siblings can be paired on the same team; and a parent coach can have his/her child/children on their respective team.

The spring season is more competitive in nature. All baseball divisions (with the exception of T-Ball), and some softball divisions conduct a draft in order to distribute the better players equally among teams to foster even competition. To prepare for the draft, tryouts are conducted to give the coaches an opportunity to evaluate basic skills. Players are required to attend at least one of the tryouts for their age/division in order to be eligible for the draft. Tryout dates and information will be posted on this website and Facebook. All players get assigned to a team. Those players that do not attend the tryout are randomly assigned to teams after the draft is completed. Everyone registered gets to play on a team.

#### **7. I want to select the team my child is on?**

Unfortunately, this is not possible, even in the fall. Teams are randomly assigned by the Player Agent or Division Manager. There are just too many special requests for us to handle, and we wouldn't be able to fulfill the requests to everyone's satisfaction. Part of the Little League experience is for our young players to participate with new teammates and experience instruction from different coaches.

In spring season, the tryout allows us to evenly distribute the players based on their skills throughout the different teams within the division. This keeps the teams even and hopefully we will enjoy good competition. If you would like your son/daughter on a certain team, please contact a manager. They will then have the option of picking your child.

#### **8. How will I be notified what team my player is assigned to and when will practice start?**

Once the teams have been formed, you will be contacted by your new team manager to which your child has been assigned. This website will have information on the schedule of events when the team selection process is completed. Practices usually start once the teams are set and players notified. In the fall, there is usually about a week of practice before games begin. In the spring, there are several weeks of practice. Practice schedules will be available on this website.

#### **9. When are the games?**

For the fall season, games are conducted on Saturday. Each team usually has one game a week. Field practice is Monday through Thursday. Games that are cancelled for weather are normally not rescheduled. During the spring, games are conducted every weeknight and Saturday. Most teams can expect two games a week, one on a weeknight and the other on Saturday. Games affected by weather are made up and are to be scheduled the next available day. Game schedules will be posted on this website. Changes to the schedule due to weather or other circumstances will also be announced on the website. If the park is closed for inclement weather, that will be indicated on the website.

#### **10. How are managers and coaches decided upon?**

All prospective managers and coaches desiring a team must submit an East Bay Youth Athletics volunteer online application that is available on this website. Background checks are performed on all individuals (Manager, Coaches, Volunteers) that will be in the dugout or on the field during any activity. Prior to the start of the season, the Board of Directors and Division Managers go through the list of prospective managers and coaches. Based on their knowledge of the candidates, and an interview process (if necessary) they select the manager for each team and obtain approval from EBYA's president. The directors involved in the selection process try to find the best qualified candidates to run each team.

#### **11. My child's manager is awful what can I do?**

First, speak to your manager. It's important to have an open line of communication between the parents and the managers. Let them know your expectation and they will communicate theirs. Then speak to the Director of Baseball or Softball, whom may be able to provide you more help. Lastly, you may seek out the President of the League. Please keep in mind that if your manager is following the rules and it's really a matter of personality or the level of instruction that you believe they are not providing, then it's a little more difficult. All managers and coaches are volunteers. Some have more experience than others, but all of them are there trying their very best. We are constantly evaluating our coaches and endeavor to improve their skills when possible. At the conclusion of the spring season, we ask each parent to complete a questionnaire and rate their child's coaches.

#### **12. We are experiencing financial issues, but I would still like my child to play?**

East Bay Youth Athletics doesn't turn anyone away. We want to afford every child the opportunity to play ball. We offer scholarships for those situations that are complex and need based. For scholarships you will need to talk with the Registrar or the President of EBYA. They will be more than happy to help you out and everything is kept confidential.

#### **13. Why isn't there more fields at East Bay Youth Athletics?**

We have experienced considerable growth in our program and could use additional fields. Space for additional fields has to be approved by Hillsborough County Parks and Recreations. The Parks Department prefers to keep Vance Vogel Park as a multi-use

sports park. Although Vance Vogel Park is already one of the largest parks in the county, we continue to look for opportunities to develop new fields. In the meantime, we continue to improve our current fields to provide the best possible playing conditions and to accommodate as many teams as possible.

**14. Why do I have to work concessions, isn't my registration fee enough to support the park?**

The registration fee is kept as low as possible to allow all families to be able to afford to play. It takes many volunteers to staff the park to allow it to function properly to offset funding shortfalls. We ask that all parents take pride in the park and the continued growth of EBYA. Without volunteers to help staff the concession stand, we would be limited in the services and funding for our many other areas required to operate the program. In addition to staffing concession, volunteers are needed in many other areas. We never have enough coaches. We need umpires and field workers, too. We rely on volunteers to help with the workload in all these areas. If we have to pay workers to staff or augment any of these areas, that becomes very expensive.

**15. How are the rules decided upon?**

As a chartered league under Babe Ruth League International, we follow the operational procedures and the Babe Ruth League rule book. Our local ground rules that supplement Babe Ruth League rules are available on this website and contain valuable information. Each year the Board of Directors reviews and updates our local rules.

**16. Why does softball have to travel?**

Currently EBYA does not have enough girls to support their divisions within the park, without having to interlock. We are currently working with District 14 who is in charge of the schedule, to ensure that the away games are based on the number of teams within the park. This hopefully will prevent us from having the 50% travel games. The more girls that play will greatly increase our ability to support the league internally and will reduce the amount of travel. Let your friends know!

**17. Why aren't the post season tournament dates announced at the beginning of the season?**

Tournaments are governed by Babe Ruth League International. District 14 selects the dates for TOC and District All Stars, however, they have to wait on State, Regional tournament dates as well. It's a long process and it takes time to coordinate the different entities involved in the post season tournaments.

**18. Why don't we know whether my child is on the All Star team until the middle of June?**

Tournament announcements are dictated by Babe Ruth League International. We have to be very careful not to violate this rule or we could forfeit All Star participation altogether.

**19. Why do I have to pay for my child's All Star uniform?**

Playing All Stars is a privilege, not a right. The vast majority of kids that play at EBYA will not play All Stars. We do not believe that it is fair for the families who are not participating in All Stars to help fund the cost of the All-Star uniforms. The League does pick up the fee to enter the different teams. And if the teams advance to State and above, the League picks some of the cost associated with travel and lodging.

**20. I have a travel ball/AAU team and I would like to use the fields at East Bay since they are county property.**

Although our fields are on County property, we lease the fields from the County. We also have invested a considerable amount of money in the fields and batting cages. The County has given us full-access rights to the fields which allows us to determine who can use the fields. Unorganized get-togethers are usually not a problem, provided there are no teams practicing. However, organized teams must follow a process for approval. First, they must be insured properly and provide documentation to the Hillsborough County Athletic Department. They will need to have the coach's certification and background checks done as well. Then they need to obtain EBYA Board of Director's approval to use the fields.