

## **Mission Statements and Operational Guidelines Sharon Springs Athletic Association**

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## SECTION 1

### **General Mission Statement**

*To provide the youth of our community the opportunity to participate in baseball and softball in a safe and healthy environment.*

## SECTION 2

# Mission of the Recreational Programs

*To provide the youth of our community the opportunity to participate in baseball and softball in an environment that emphasizes instruction and participation.*

## SECTION 3

# Operational Policies of the Recreational Programs

3.1: Our Recreation program begins with an age group designation of 5 years-old, but a child as young as 4 years of age can play if they will turn 5 years of age by August 1 of the same year in which they would be playing. For all other players and age groups, May 1 during the season of participation will be the date used to determine the Age Group assignment for players.

3.2: Coaches for each Recreation team will be selected by the Age Group Director of that age group. Every coach must complete an application/questionnaire and a release for a criminal background screening. Based on this information the Age Group Director will make his/her head coach selections. Selected head coaches will be allowed to select their assistant coaches provided that assistant coaches have submitted an application and background consent form to be approved by the Age Group Director.

3.3: Any youth who registers will participate on a Recreation team.

3.4: The number and length of team practices/meetings are governed by Forsyth County Youth Rules.

3.5: It is the expectation of SSAA that each player, coach and parent demonstrate the highest levels of conduct. The use of alcohol, foul language, tobacco or the use of illegal drugs during any organized activities is strictly prohibited. Additionally it is imperative that players, coaches and parents represent our association well by promoting great sportsmanship during games. Any inappropriate conduct by a player, coach or parent will be dealt with by the SSAA Board. Anyone ejected by an official from a game will have to meet with the Age Group Director for that team within 3 days of the offense for disciplinary action. Any player or coach ejected by an official from a second game will be suspended for the remainder of that season. Any parent ejected by an official from more than one game in a season will meet with the SSAA Executive Board along with the Age Group Director for that team for disciplinary action.

3.6: It is the responsibility of each Recreation team to maintain their own finances. For the registration fee, SSAA will provide each team assigned field usage for games and practices, liability insurance, 1 dozen practice balls, 1 dozen game balls, 1 set of catcher's gear, 1 equipment bag and 1 uniform. (Recreation teams generally pay on their own for the preseason tournament or participation trophies).

3.7: Communication is very important for our SSAA program to be successful. Each coach will be expected to communicate regularly with the Age Group Director and send an email each Sunday to the Age Group Director for that team outlining the results of any games the previous week and their schedule, and other pertinent information concerning the team.

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## SECTION 4

# Mission of the Travel Programs

*To provide a selected number of the youth of our community the opportunity to participate in baseball and softball in an environment that emphasizes performance (at) the highest level of competition.*

## SECTION 5

# Operational Policies of the Travel Programs

5.1: Our Travel program will begin no younger than 9 years-old and at the discretion of the SSAA board for any particular age group in keeping with any requirements or restrictions of the Forsyth County Parks and Recreation. All teams for any age group will be approved by the Executive Board of SSAA.

5.2: There will be a selection process for each travel team head coach regardless of whether there is an incumbent coach or not. Every coach interested in coaching a travel team will submit the items listed below to the appropriate Travel Commissioner:

1. an application/questionnaire,
2. a release for a criminal background screening,
3. a plan/prospectus (a page or less) containing the following:
  - a. What is your philosophy of your team (no more than 4 sentences)?
  - b. What is your anticipated fee (this should include the SSAA fee per player)?
  - c. Will you be playing in a league, and what league will that be?
  - d. What are the number of games that you anticipate playing for the Spring Season?
  - e. What will be your schedule for the entire year (fall, winter and spring i.e. when do you start indoor hitting, hit the fields, when do games start, when do you end the season)?
  - f. How many kids do you plan on keeping on your roster?

- g. What type of tournaments do you want to play in (local, out of town, Ripken Experience, Cooperstown, etc)?
- h. What type of team classification would you expect your team to play (Major, AAA, AA, etc)

The Travel Commissioner will consider and evaluate all applications. Depending on the number of applicants the Travel Commissioner will select from these applications those they will interview by phone. From these phone interviews the Travel Commissioner will select a group that will be interviewed by a board of panelists approved by the SSAA Executive Board. The coaches determined to be selected will be presented to the SSAA General Board for final approval. Some coaching candidates may be retained after the initial coach selection process in the event of additional teams. These coaches would be asked to attend tryouts and be fully prepared to select a team in the event that the tryouts indicate that an additional team(s) can be formed. These coaches need to understand that they are in no way guaranteed a team and suggesting anything of the like would be inaccurate and cause for revoking any rights to be selected as a travel coach for that particular season.

Selected head coaches will be allowed to select their assistant coaches after team selection. All assistant coaches must be submitted and approved by the Travel Commissioner and have completed a release for a criminal background screening.

In an attempt to minimize bias in the selection process the Executive Board can deem a panel selection member non eligible to participate in this process for a specific age group under the following circumstances:

- a. They plan to submit their name to be considered as a coach in an age group.
- b. Their spouse/child plans to submit their name to be considered as a coach in an age group.
- c. They plan on having a child attend a travel tryout.

As the Travel coach selection panel is formed an alternate should be selected who will attend all of the interviews. In the event that a panel member is deemed ineligible for a specific age group then this alternate will step into that panel member's role for those interviews

5.3: Coaches will select the youth that will participate in our travel program through team or individual or no qualifier tryouts conducted at Sharon Springs Park. Among the travel coaches selected in each age group one coach will be named as the Coordinator of the tryouts. They will work the other selected travel coaches to agree upon a date and format for tryouts. It is required that a member of the SSAA Executive Board be available during the designated dates for tryouts. The format and dates for the tryouts must be approved by the Travel Commissioner.

It is open selection for any coach in these tryouts. Within 24 hours of the initial date tryouts is completed, each coach can present to their Travel Commissioner a roster of players they would like to invite onto their team. Once receipt of this roster is confirmed from their Travel Commissioner the coach may contact players to invite them onto their team. The Travel Commissioner will also set a date by which the coach must report the progress of his/her roster solicitation. Players may be selected by multiple teams and it is their choice for which they wish to play. Any travel player in our park may only play for one team in our park.

Once a coach is selected as a travel coach they are allowed to invite players onto their team even prior to tryouts. However, once a coach offers a position to a player they have to honor that slot unless the players needs to be removed for violation of the conduct policies.

Teams that are USSSA Major (or equivalent) are allowed to have not more than 2 out-of-county players. Teams that are USSSA AAA (or equivalent) are allowed to have not more than 1 out-of-county player. Teams that are USSSA AA (or equivalent) are NOT allowed to have any out-of-county players.

5.4: The teams in an age group will be referred to as the Spartans. The number of teams in each age group will be determined by the Executive Board of SSAA as well as approval of the FCPRD. The SSAA Executive Board and Travel Commissioner must approve all rosters before the teams can be announced to the general public.

5.5: The number and length of practices/games are governed by Forsyth County Youth Rules.

5.6: It is the expectation of SSAA that each player, coach and parent demonstrate the highest levels of conduct. The use of alcohol, foul language, tobacco or the use of illegal drugs during any organized activities is strictly prohibited. Additionally it is imperative that players, coaches and parents represent our association well by promoting great sportsmanship during games. Any inappropriate conduct by a player, coach or parent will be dealt with by the SSAA Board. Anyone ejected by an official from a game will have to meet with the Travel Commissioner of that sport within 5 days of the offense for disciplinary action. Any player or coach ejected by an official from a second game will be suspended for the remainder of that season. Any parent ejected by an official from more than one game in a season will meet with the SSAA Executive Board along with the Travel Commissioner of that sport for disciplinary action.

5.7: Each coach will submit to the Travel Commissioner of their sport a potential schedule including the league in which they plan to play for approval. Any schedule beyond 45 games must be approved by the SSAA President. After a schedule had been approved any changes to that schedule must be approved within the parameters previously mentioned.

5.8: It is the responsibility of each travel team to maintain their own finances. Parents and/or Guardians of travel players should be notified prior to the selection of their player of the potential requirement to fund any shortfall in the travel team budget. SSAA will require remittance of the normal registration fee per player. For this fee SSAA will provide each team assigned field usage for games and practices, liability insurance, 2 dozen practice balls and 2 dozen game balls. All other expenses related to a travel team are the responsibility of the team. Teams are allowed to do fund raisers. Each fund raiser must be submitted for approval to the Travel Commissioner of that sport. Teams are also allowed to secure sponsorships as long as the sponsor does not represent anything inappropriate for youth athletics. Teams may display sponsors on a banner hung outside or on their dugout. Teams may display sponsors on a practice jersey as long as nothing regarding the sponsor is visible on the uniform during a game.

All travel teams need to supply a proposed budget to the SSAA treasurer before the season begins. Additionally, each travel team must submit a financial report detailing to cash flow of their team to the Travel Commissioner and SSAA Treasurer on April 1 and at the close of their season.

At the conclusion of a travel team's season if there is a positive balance in the team's account a refund of equal amounts must be distributed to the family of each team member. If there is a credit balance related to the team then each family should receive notice of a remittance to the team account of equal amounts to zero this credit balance and close the team's account.

5.9: SSAA wants to promote some level of uniformity among all the travel teams represented from our park. Each team must use Columbia (Carolina) blue in their uniform. Each team can additionally use any combination of these basic colors in their uniforms: White, Black and/or Grey. It is expected of each team that they use the approved logos and lettering style of the Sharon Springs Spartans. Each team's uniforms must be approved by the Travel Commissioner.

5.10: Communication is very important for our SSAA program to be successful. Each coach will be expected to send an email each Sunday to the Travel Commissioner of that sport outlining the results of any games the previous week and their schedule for the upcoming week.

5.11: Any replacements needed by a travel team must first be reported to the Travel Commissioner of that sport prior to any action being made. Each team would then submit for approval to the Travel Commissioner of that sport the course of action they wish to take.

## SECTION 6

### **Mission of the All-star/Select League Programs**

*To provide a selected number of the youth of our community, currently participating in our recreational league, the opportunity to participate in baseball and softball in an environment that puts a stronger emphasis on skill development and a higher level of competition.*

## SECTION 7

### **Operational Policies of the All-star/Select League Programs**

7.1: The All-star/Sunday Select League program will be for age groups 6u and older and at the discretion of the SSAA board for any particular age group in keeping with any requirements or restrictions of the Forsyth County Parks and Recreation.

All-star coaching applications must be submitted between the time the general membership registration begins and ends for spring recreation baseball/softball. The interviews will take place beginning the week immediately following the end of general membership registration. The All-star coaches should be selected prior to the recreational player evaluations.

7.2: There will be a selection process for each All-star coach regardless of whether there is an incumbent coach or not. The Commissioner and Age Group Director will consider and evaluate all applications. Depending on the number of applicants the Commissioner and Age Group Director will select from these applications those they will interview by phone. From these phone interviews the Commissioner and Age Group Director will select a group that will be interviewed by a board of panelists approved by the SSAA Executive Board. The coaches determined to be selected will be presented to the SSAA General Board for final approval. Some coaching candidates may be retained after the initial coach selection process in the event of additional All-star teams. These coaches would be asked to attend Sunday Select and ultimately be fully prepared to select a team in the event that an additional team(s) can be formed. These coaches need to understand that they are in no way guaranteed a team and suggesting anything of the like would be inaccurate and cause for revoking any rights to be selected as an All-star coach for that particular season.

7.3: During the recreational player evaluations a minimum of the top 12 kids will be offered the chance to participate in Select League. If at all possible it is good to at least select 18 kids so that you can facilitate scrimmages during Sunday Select. However, once recreational practices begin each recreational team head coach will have the option to recommend additional players to the Sunday Select program Typically this should be no more than 1-2 players, but this will be at the discretion of the Age Group Director. The Sunday Select Program should begin at the same time that recreational practices begin, but this is also at the discretion of the Age Group Director. Participation in Sunday Select is completely optional for any player invited into this process. It is also permissible for a player to participate in Sunday Select for the mere sake of personal development with no intentions of being on any eventual All-star roster. In this case it is strongly recommended that out of respect for the other players and coaches that a player make their desire to not be selected onto a final All-star roster known as soon as possible and understand that their participation will end during the first round of cuts. Sunday Select practices should typically only occur on Sundays so as not to conflict with recreational team practices. The coaches will work to develop the skill level of these players and allow these players to fully demonstrate their abilities through workouts and controlled scrimmages. During the scrimmages the makeup of the teams will change from week to week as players build better camaraderie and the coaches see a better demonstration of each player's true abilities. The coaches will cull the team down to the final All-star team(s) of no more than 12 players per team (this number may be adjusted by approval of the President, Commissioner and Age Group Director). Once a final roster has been selected by the All-star Coach that roster will need to be approved by the Age Group Director, Commissioner and SSAA President. Within an age group additional All-star teams may be added as approved by the SSAA General Board-

7.4: Based on the expected number of All-star teams to be derived each of the coaches for the respective teams should be announced at the start of Sunday Select. The Blue team will be the "A" All-star team. Any B-team will be the Silver team, any C-team will be the White team and any D-team will be the Black team if approved by the SSAA General Board. Players will be selected to the Blue team, first. Any player selected to the Blue team must play on that team and will not be eligible to play on any subsequent All-star team. After the Blue selections, any Silver team will be selected and any such player must play on the Silver team and will not be eligible to play on any subsequent All-star team. This same process continues through to the last All-star team.

7.5: The All – Star team rosters must be turned in by the Tuesday prior to the first weekend of Spring Break.

7.6: An All-star/Select League team should not meet for practice more than once per week and typically this day should be Sunday afternoon. Under no circumstances can a player miss any activities related to his/her recreational team for participation in an activity related to an All-star/Select League team. A player found in violation of this requirement will be immediately dismissed from the All-star/Select League Program. Any coach found contributing to a violation of this requirement will be immediately

dismissed from the All-star/Select League Program. Any second offense of this requirement will result in the elimination of that All-star/Select League team entirely for that season. If there is no conflict with any recreational team, the All-star team may participate in weekend tournaments prior to the conclusion of the recreational season if approved by the SSAA General Board.

7.7: It is the expectation of SSAA that each player, coach and parent demonstrate the highest levels of conduct. The use of alcohol, foul language, tobacco or the use of illegal drugs during any organized activities is strictly prohibited. Additionally it is imperative that players, coaches and parents represent our association well by promoting great sportsmanship during games. Any inappropriate conduct by a player, coach or parent will be dealt with by the SSAA Board. Anyone ejected by an official from a game will have to meet with the Commissioner of that sport within 5 days of the offense for disciplinary action. Any player or coach ejected by an official from a second game will be suspended for the remainder of that season. Any parent ejected by an official from more than one game in a season will meet with the SSAA Executive Board along with the Commissioner of that sport for disciplinary action.

7.8: SSAA wants to promote some level of uniformity among all the All-star teams represented from our park. Every All-star team will be referred to as the Spartans. Each team must use Columbia (Carolina) blue in their uniform. Each team can additionally use any combination of these basic colors in their uniforms: White, Black and/or Grey. It is expected of each team that they use the approved logos and lettering style of the Sharon Springs Spartans. Each team's uniforms must be approved by the Travel Commissioner.

7.9: SSAA will contribute \$300/team to help with expenses for recreational All-star teams completely made up of SSAA players. In the event that an SSAA player is participating on a Forsyth County Parks and Recreation recreational All-star team not made up entirely of SSAA players, SSAA will contribute \$25/player to that team to help with expenses. All other expenses related to the team will be covered through that individual team's fundraising and parental support. Accounting policies related to the team will be as follows:

- Teams are allowed to do fund raisers. Each fund raiser must be submitted for approval to the Athletic Director for that age group. Teams are also allowed to secure sponsorships as long as the sponsor does not represent anything inappropriate for youth athletics. Teams may display sponsors on a banner hung outside or on their dugout. Teams may display sponsors on a practice jersey as long as nothing regarding the sponsor is visible on the uniform during a game.
- Teams need to supply a proposed budget to the Athletic Director for that age group once their final roster is set. Uniform costs must be approved by the Age Group Director. Additionally, each team must

submit a financial report detailing to cash flow of their team to the Athletic Director for that age group at the close of their season.

- At the conclusion of a team's season if there is a positive balance in the team's account a refund of equal amounts must be distributed to the family of each team member. If there is a credit balance related to the team then each family should receive notice of a remittance to the team account of equal amounts to zero this credit balance and close the team's account.

7.10: Communication is very important for our SSAA program to be successful. Each coach will be expected to send an email each Sunday to the Age Group Director for that age group and the Commissioner of that sport outlining the results of workouts, scrimmages, rosters and/or any games from the previous week as well as their plans and schedule for the upcoming week.

## SECTION 8

# Operational Policies of the Premier/Select Leagues

8.1: Establishment of Select/Premier Leagues, where permissible by the FCPRD, and the number of teams in each age group will be determined by the General Board. The selection for All-star/Premier coaches will be conducted in the same manner as the the selection process for All Star coaches. Coaches will be selected in an order designating a #1 team, #2 team and so on. Beginning with the #1 team coach, they will be able to select their team color of designation from the colors blue, white, silver or black.

8.2.1: There will only be a Sunday Select Program for these age groups at the discretion of the Age Group Director and the Recreation Baseball Commissioner. Select/Premier coaches will select their teams after recreation evaluations and before the recreation draft. During player evaluations each player will be given the opportunity to confirm if they are willing to play on a Premier team if selected. Premier coaches must have their roster approved by the Age Group Director and Recreation Baseball Commissioner. Any players selected for Premier who did not confirm their participation during the player evaluations must be confirmed by the coach prior to the recreational team drafts. Official practices may begin for Premier teams at the same time that all recreation teams begin.

8.2.2: Premier teams in 8u may conduct separate tryouts. Such tryouts will be done in conjunction with the County calendar and will occur after registration is closed. In the event a separate tryout is held, ALL players registered in 8u may participate in the tryout.

8.3: Sections 7.7-7.8 shall apply to 8u and older Premier teams. Players may accept or reject nomination to one Select/Premier team over the selection to a different Select/Premier team in the same age group division.

8.4: Select/Premier teams will have a 10-12 game season schedule determined by Forsyth County Parks and Recreation (FCPRD). Games will be played against other Select/Premier teams within the county. As League schedules allow Select/Premier teams will be allowed to use any open weekends to practice, scrimmage, or play in tournaments.

8.5: The 8u Premier is a pure extension of recreation baseball. So that the team may participate in a post-season tournament similar to All-stars, contributions will be made to the 8u Premier team similar that made to All-stars.