

TRAVEL SOFTBALL

INFORMATION

What is Travel Softball?

Travel Softball is a program offered by girls' recreational softball programs nation wide The program provides girls the opportunity to travel to softball facilities outside of Palm Beach Gardens and compete with similarly formed teams from other areas of the state and on some occasions out-of-state.

What are the benefits of playing?

The girls that participate in the program typically benefit in a number of ways. The following are just a few of the benefits most often cited by past and present participants:

1. **Friendship:** They bond and make friends with their teammates. Many of these friendships are long term, as a number of the same girls will often participate in the program each year. The friendships provide a desirable base group of friends with a healthy common interest, softball.
2. **Skill Level:** The girls' softball skill levels typically increases dramatically as the quality and quantity of instruction coupled with level of play provide the ideal learning environment.
3. **Self-Esteem:** Developing self-esteem is vital for young girls today. Helping them to excel in a sport provides one more avenue to attain a feeling of self worth. The girls that participate in the program typically improve their playing ability and simultaneously their positive self-image.
4. **Parent Bonding:** Parent involvement is encouraged. For those that do get involved, the program offers a physical activity in which they can participate with their daughter's development. The time commitment that accompanies participation in the program can be a wonderful opportunity to bond with your daughter.

Who can participate in the Travel Softball Program?

Any girl registered with the Palm Beach Gardens Recreational Softball Program and that participates in a minimum of 50% their games played is eligible to tryout for a travel team in her age group. (Exceptions to the 50% rule may be made due to injury, sickness or board approved circumstances).

When does it start and finish?

The travel program officially starts at the completion of the recreation season. However, teams are selected prior to the completion of the season to determine the number of teams participating in each age division and to enable coaches to meet with the families and coordinate their travel tournament plans. The travel season for 8 & Under teams are typically competed by no later than mid-July.

How are the teams selected?

Tryouts are held and the team coaches select the teams based upon player performance. It should be noted, multiple teams are typically selected in each age group. The teams are often referred to as the "A and B Teams" or the "Orange and Blue Teams". Selection of multiple teams provides the opportunity for play to a larger number of girls with a wide diversity of playing abilities.

Where are the tournaments played?

Tournaments are played in parks throughout the country. However, travel coaches typically limit their schedules to local venues with one or two overnight trips. The number of overnight travel tournaments entered usually increases with the age of the participants. For example: An 8 & Under Travel Team may play one or two out of area tournaments in areas such as Orlando or Daytona Beach, depending upon the consensus of the participating families. Palm Beach Gardens annually hosts the “Swamp Classic” which is the venue for the National Softball Association’s 8 & Under Florida State Championship.

When are the tournaments played?

Tournaments are almost exclusively held on weekends, with the exception of National venues, which often encompass an entire week. On rare occasion, a tournament may include play on a Friday evening. However, this usually occurs only if the number of entries in a particular age group requires scheduling earlier games.

How many tournaments are played?

The number of tournaments played varies with age and playing level. Assuming two teams are formed in the 8 & Under Division, it is likely the “A Team” will play between 7 and 9 two-day tournaments while the “B Team” is more likely to play between 5 and 7. The same is typical of each age group. However, individual coaches may wish to increase or decrease the number of tournaments played, and typically do so upon majority request by the participating families.

What is the time commitment?

The time commitment typically varies with age group and level of play. For example, the time commitment for a 12 & Under “A” team player will be significantly greater than that of an 8 or 10 & Under “B” team player. The number of practices in each of the age groups typically ranges from a minimum of two to a maximum of four per week. In the 8’s a maximum of three would be expected.

What does it cost?

There is no defined cost. Depending upon the number of local and travel tournaments entered the budget for teams can vary greatly. Tournaments registration fees range from \$250 to \$275 per team. Fundraising efforts are typically organized by each individual team and often offset the majority of the costs incurred. Each player is required to purchase her travel uniforms, which historically have ranged in price from approximately \$125.00 to \$175.00. However, players can obtain individual sponsorships to off-set uniform costs.

When are Tryouts?

Tryouts are typically held in late February and/or early March. The tryouts are mandatory for any player desiring to participate in the travel program for the summer. If other obligations prevent your attendance, a letter of explanation must be submitted to the attention of either the Palm Beach Gardens Softball Board or one of the managers of the designated age group to maintain eligibility to participate. The designated travel managers for the various age groups will be posted prior to tryouts.