

Shades Mountain Park (SMP) 9U division is offering a new competitive alternative for players who demonstrate the ability to play at a higher level. This program is known as Select. SMP formed this competitive program due to an increased number of players interested in a higher level of competition and tournament play. Because SMP's core focus is our Recreational Baseball Program, SMP limits the number of Select teams it forms to players who demonstrate the ability to perform at a AA level or above. SMP is committed to ensuring the Recreational Baseball Program remains a strong and vibrant program.

Select teams will be formed through a tryout process before each 9U Spring season. There can be up to 2 Select Teams formed from the 9u spring registered players with the teams being picked in sequential talent order.

Alternative options to the Select program exist and consist of the SMP Recreational Baseball Program, and the Greater Birmingham Baseball Association (GBBA) All-Stars. All registered and eligible players can participate in the recreational program. The GBBA teams are All-Star teams formed to participate in the GBBA tournament which starts in May and runs through the 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> week of June. Any player wishing to participate in GBBA must register and complete the necessary try out sessions. The GBBA teams are selected by the group of registered GBBA coaches and are based on the try out sessions and observation/experience/performance in the recreational league.

### **Eligibility**

To be eligible to participate in SMP Select, players must qualify under the Shades Mountain Park residency and 9u age requirements. Players must also register their interest in Select during the annual spring registration process.

### **Commitment**

The Select program time commitment is significantly higher than the recreational or GBBA. Each Select team player will practice and play all of the scheduled recreation season games on the teams they are drafted for during spring draft. No player shall miss a recreational game or practice due to Select team commitments. They will also practice 1-2 additional times per week throughout the season with their Select team along with playing in additional games and tournaments.

The financial commitment for Select is also higher than for the Recreational and GBBA programs, although the costs remain far lower than privately run travel teams in the area. Additional costs for Select teams relative to Recreational league costs include uniforms, tournament fees, travel expenses, equipment, and other related expenses. The total projected cost for each player will be \$250-\$300.

SMP Select teams are provided access to Shades Mountain Park facilities on Wednesdays and Sundays for practices and games.

Depending on the number of tournaments played, the Select teams can expect to play in a minimum of 40 games (this includes 12-14 recreational games). The tournaments will be played during the regular season and will extend until the end of June. The following are possible tournament dates during the regular season

- March 23/24
- April 13/14
- Post season tournaments will take place starting around May 5 and extend through June.
  - These tournament dates and locations will be determined by the Select team coaching staff and communicated to the team accordingly

The teams will participate in local (within approximately 75 miles) tournaments which may involve a variety of hosting organizations such as Playmakers, Grand Slam, etc. If an individual team would like to participate in any tournaments requiring overnight travel, universal agreement among the team parents will need to take place prior to registering and incurring costs.

### **Coach Selection and Qualifications**

- An email solicitation will be sent to all registered head and assistant coaches, returning 9U coaches in good standing, and any previous head or assistant coach within the 9U age group during the month of December.
- Interested candidates must submit their name for consideration along with the following
  - Number of years as a youth baseball/softball head coach
  - Number of years as a youth baseball/softball assistant coach
  - Number of years as either a head or assistant at SMP
  - Total number of years with competitive baseball/softball, including as a player
- The Coaches Selection Committee will be comprised of the 9U Commissioner and registered 9U recreational head coaches. Selected coaches must agree to abide by the rules, protocols, expectations, and philosophies of SMP in order to be considered.
- The Coaches Selection Committee will consider each applicant based on their skills, experiences, and general fitness to run the Select program. The Coaches Selection Committee will have an anonymous vote on the potential candidates. Coaches will be ranked in the order of total votes and presented to the SMP Executive Committee.
- Once final approval is granted, the head coaches will be ranked in the order of votes and notified individually by email. This will be completed by the end of December.
- The coach who has the most votes will have the right to choose their team first. For any additional teams, team selections will go in the order of total votes received with the coach receiving the second most votes selecting their team after the 1<sup>st</sup> team is filled.

### **Team Formation**

- Tryouts and evaluations will be held for all positions by the end of January 2019 and specific dates will be communicated by the chosen head coach/s.

- A player must try out to be eligible to be drafted. Although technically protected, the head coach's son(s) is required to participate in the tryout and be scored like others who attend the tryout. It is possible that the head coach's son might be a "bubble" or "on the edge" player, which is acceptable in many cases, as we are focusing on the larger good for purposes of selecting who the head coach should be from the pool of individuals who apply.
- If a player cannot attend a predetermined tryout or tryout make-up, the player cannot be considered eligible for a Select team unless the 9U Commissioner has granted an exception.
- A head coach may choose to have certain players stay behind for additional repetitions at the end of a tryout or invite certain players to a second tryout to ensure the most appropriate selections are made for the team. Head coaches are expected to attend all tryout dates.
- Each tryout requires an Independent Evaluator to be present to evaluate each player and provide those evaluations to the head coaches for review and consideration. The independent evaluator will have no direct affiliations or connections to the specific age group but must be experienced in the necessary skill level for the 9U Select team.
- The Independent Evaluator will complete the evaluation form as prepared by the coaches, which will include an assessment as to whether each player who tries out appears qualified to for the Select team.
- Only the head coaches, or volunteers from other age divisions, should facilitate the tryout (i.e., hitting balls, throwing balls, etc.). Parents with kids trying out may assist in keeping kids organized on the field if requested by the head coaches. Any other exceptions should be approved by the 9u Commissioner.
- Player selection will be as objective as possible and it is expected players will be selected by the Head Coach based upon ability, attitude, baseball knowledge, positional needs/strengths, and other relevant attributes. Ultimately, the goal is to draft the best and most qualified players to the teams. If there is more than one Select team or head coach identified, the teams will be assembled in sequential talent order. The head coach with the most votes will pick their team first.
- Assistant coaches will be selected by the Select team head coaches after their teams have been selected. Children of probable assistant coaches cannot be protected or assigned to specific teams.
- All players drafted by a head coach should be contacted by the head coach to discuss expectations, commitment, etc. prior to rosters being posted to ensure the player is truly willing to accept the invitation. Equally as important, any incumbent player bumped from a team (first to second, second to neither team, etc.) must receive a call from the team's head coach prior to rosters being finalized.
- The number of players to be chosen for each team is at the discretion of the head coach.

- The top team, over time, is expected to play at the AAA level and the bottom team at the AA level. This is largely based upon the talent and success of each team.
- All Players must qualify under the Shades Mountain Park residency requirements to be considered for the SMP Select teams.
- Any and all exception requests to the rules described above should be directed to the 9u Commissioner.