

MYAL Operations Manual

Revisions Under Consideration: 2009

MYAL is an independent, volunteer organization that provides organized youth baseball, softball, and basketball opportunities for age 5 through high school. We are primarily a recreational league, serving the community of Marlborough. Our philosophy is that all children should have the opportunity to enjoy organized sports as part of their physical and emotional growth. We do additionally offer “travel” and “tournament” team opportunities, but never at the expense of our recreational programs and always in keeping with our philosophy of participation, enjoyment, and growth. The league operations are funded by registration fees and all programs are organized and run by volunteers. We work together with town and school offices, but operate largely independently. In addition to all aspects of league operation, we organize, finance, and direct necessary capital projects consistent with our mission. We also sponsor an annual college scholarship.

Affiliations:

Eastern Connecticut Basketball League

Tri County Baseball League

Babe Ruth Baseball and Softball

Cal Ripken Baseball

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MYAL Roles and Responsibilities

The following are brief descriptions of critical positions for the smooth operation of MYAL, as currently configured. Alternate divisions of responsibilities are possible depending on interest and availability.

MYAL Executive Board Positions:

The MYAL executive board consists of 5 positions, elected by the general membership annually in September. Assistants are desired to assist with responsibilities, examples are indicated but other options are possible, depending on interest and availability.

- **President** – overall responsibility for all league activities, calls league meetings and sets meeting agendas
- **1st Vice President** - town liaison, attends monthly Marlborough Park and Recreation Board meetings (3rd Tuesday), coordinates field and gym scheduling, maintains list of active and future capital projects, assistants desirable:
 - **Gym Scheduling Coordinator** – Scheduling of gym time at ET, Rham MS and Rham HS, consistent with league requirements and coordinated with Commissioners. Submits gym reservation forms to each school in August for the upcoming season. ET Gym and Community Room are used for Instructional, Farm, Minors, and Majors (Sundays at ET are used for HS and travel teams). RMS is used for Seniors, RHS is used for HS. MYAL pays for gym time during weekends. Scheduling coordinator maintains a record of gym time used to coordinate payments at season's end.
 - **Field Manager(s)** – Scheduling of field time at Park, West, Moose, School fields, coordination with town and school officials. Planning and coordination of field clean-up days (early April) and necessary field maintenance and capital improvements.
- **2nd Vice President** – concessions and fundraising, manages separate bank account for Concessions, assistants desirable:
 - **Concession Assistants** - handle purchasing and restocking at multiple Baseball concessions (Park and West)
 - **Sponsorship Chair** - negotiate team and/or field sponsorships, consistent with sponsorship fee schedule
 - **Special Event Chair** – responsible for special MYAL fundraising events (dances, etc.)
- **Treasurer** – maintains checking and savings accounts, summarizes income and expenses, files taxes, makes arrangements with the appropriate limited number of people to be authorized to make purchases for the league, maintains a list of businesses where MYAL's non-profit status has been registered, provides instructions for structuring purchases such that payments are made directly from MYAL bank accounts
- **Secretary** – monitors PO box, maintains registration records, publicizes league activities and upcoming meetings, records minutes of meetings, maintain web site, coordinates league insurance coverage, assistants desirable:
 - **Web master** – maintain myalsports.org web site
 - **Baseball Registrar** – catalog all incoming registration data and distribute at regular intervals during registration season
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 - **Publicity Chair** – coordinates publicity for league events, including distribution to local media (rivereast@snet.net)

Other Voting Positions:

The MYAL executive board appoints the following positions, which have voting rights at all meetings. Assistants are desired to assist with responsibilities, examples are indicated but other options are possible, depending on interest and availability.

- **Basketball Commissioners (2)** – Coordination with Eastern League, oversee all basketball operations (establish budget for basketball operations, propose annual registration fee to cover expenses at August meeting, prepare and distribute registration forms, coordinate coaching selections, player evaluations, scheduling, uniforms/equipment), assistants desirable:
 - **Equipment Coordinator** – inventory, ordering, collection of equipment and uniforms.
 - **League Coordinators** – Coordination of specific league coaches, player evaluations and team selection, scheduling, trophies (Inst and Farm). Most critically needed for Farm/Inst leagues, and HS basketball leagues. Other leagues coordinated primarily by relevant commissioners.
 - **Picture Coordinator** - Schedule picture day (mid-Jan), coordinate with league schedules and photographer, distribute order forms (prior) and completed pictures (post) to teams.
 - **Tournament Coordinator(s)** – Coordinates activities associated with Marlborough Madness (March) post-season tournaments. Typically up to 4 double elimination travel team tournaments and one single elimination Eastern League tournament are hosted in Marlborough. Each tournament lasts approximately one week.
- **Baseball and Softball Commissioners (2)** – Oversee all baseball and softball operations (establish budget for baseball and softball operations, propose annual registration fee to cover expenses at January meeting, prepare and distribute registration forms, coordinate coaching selections, player evaluations, scheduling, uniforms/equipment), assistants desirable:
 - **Equipment Coordinator(s)** – inventory, ordering, collection of equipment and uniforms.
 - **Opening Day Coordinator** – Arranges baseball / softball opening day ceremony at Park Road (approx. May 1).
 - **League Coordinators** – Coordination of specific league coaches, player evaluations and team selection, scheduling, trophies (Inst and Farm). Most critically needed for Inst and Farm leagues, and Tri-County baseball leagues. Other leagues may be coordinated primarily by relevant commissioners.
 - **Picture Coordinator** - Schedule picture day (mid-May), coordinate with league schedules and photographer, distribute order forms (prior) and completed pictures (post) to teams.
 - **Tournament Coordinator** – Coordinates activities associated with post-season tournaments. Typically Marlborough hosts one post-season double elimination Cal Ripken District 3 tournament in late June / early July.
- **Referee/Umpire Coordinator(s)** – recruiting, training and scheduling of basketball referees and baseball/softball umpires, coordinates Board Certified referees and umpires as necessary (tournament play), Umpire training is typically provided by John Cassidy of Salem from Feb-April at RHAM HS
- **Scholarship Committee** – coordinates publicity and recruitment of candidates (graduating HS seniors), distribution of scholarships (typically 2 boys and 2 girls \$500 scholarships), annual fundraising Golf Tournament , manages separate bank account for Scholarship Fund
- **Member at Large** – established (“gray-beard”) or new (“green-horn”) MYAL volunteer

- **Coaches** – responsibilities: achieve NYSCA certification, attend coaches organization meeting and player evaluations, select players for fair and balanced teams, meet with parents to set expectations, distribute schedules and out-of-town directions, assign hall monitors (basketball) and concession duty (baseball and softball), discuss cancellations/rain-outs with opposing coach, advise umpires of cancelled games, never leave children at field or in gym without supervision by MYAL coach or league representative, no girl's practices, games, or team meetings allowed without an adult female present, clean gym/dugouts/field after games

MYAL Revenues and Expenses

As an independent non-profit organization, MYAL receives no direct financial support for its activities from the Town of Marlborough or any other organization. The league revenue and expenses are summarized as follows:

Revenue:

Primary league revenue source is via registration fees assessed per player for each sports season. The league also receives revenue from concession food sales (primarily during baseball season), MYAL clothing sales, tournament entry fees (tournaments in Marlborough) and business sponsorships. Business sponsor fee schedule is as follows:

Team Sponsors...

Field Sponsors...

Field Patrons...

Expenses:

MYAL uses its revenue stream to pay the costs associated with the youth sports programs that it administers. These costs primarily consist of insurance fees, gym use fees, field maintenance costs, payments to officials, uniforms, equipment, and trophies. Custodial services at gyms and general lawn maintenance at fields are provided by the relevant Boards of Education and the Town of Marlborough. MYAL pays tournament entry fees and supplies uniforms for tournament teams, but the teams occasionally assess players individually for warm-up suits, personal equipment bags, etc. The fields and gyms used by the league are owned by outside agencies (Town of Marlborough, Boards of Education, Moose Lodge). However, the league recognizes that maintenance, improvement, and expansion of these facilities is often beyond the means (both practically and politically) of these organizations and therefore MYAL attempts to maintain a surplus over operating expenses for the purpose of financing "capital expenditures" associated with their sports programs.

MYAL Complaint Procedure

Revised: 2009

Every attempt will be made to follow this protocol concerning complaints or disputes:

Awareness:

- Parents or fans with complaints should be encouraged to attempt a resolution through discussion with their coach. Issues resolved at the team level require no further action. The coach may inform the Board of the issue at his/her discretion.
- For issues that cannot be resolved at the team level, the appropriate league commissioner or other board member should be contacted **as soon as possible. Ideally, issues should be summarized in writing.** For issues raised to this level, the league President and other board member(s) should be consulted before taking any action.

Learning:

- An attempt will be made by the Board to observe the subject of the complaint “in action” at the earliest opportunity, to provide an opportunity to directly corroborate the complaint. In addition, other potential knowledgeable parties may be consulted (other parents, other coaches, referees, or umpires).
- An attempt will be made to understand all sides of a complaint or dispute and the Board members involved in the investigation should remain as objective as possible, understanding that the facts of a situation can be interpreted or perceived in different ways by different people. The league recognizes that variability in coaching skills, techniques, and effectiveness is typical for a youth recreational league, but verbally or physically abusive behavior toward players or other adults is unacceptable.
- Players will generally not be questioned about a complaint or dispute, and only in the presence of a parent.
- Complaints concerning specific umpire or referee calls in the course of a prior or ongoing game will generally not be addressed. The league recognizes the authority of the umpires and referees in these circumstances and will encourage parents, fans, and coaches to understand that the nature of recreational sports makes such complaints inappropriate. Verbal abuse of referees and umpires will not be tolerated and can result in ejection of the fan or coach from the game, at the complete discretion of the umpire or referee.

Action:

- To decide on appropriate action, these written operational guidelines will be followed as strictly as possible whenever applicable. It is understood that these guidelines cannot cover every possible situation that can develop, and many circumstances are unique.
- The subject of any complaint will be notified of the nature of the complaint. As appropriate, the person registering the complaint will remain known to the MYAL Board officials involved only.
- If the complaint is considered valid, the subject of the complaint will be encouraged to understand and address the situation.
- Valid complaints of a sufficiently serious nature can lead to the immediate removal of the subject, based on a Board vote.
- If a mistake has been made, the consequences of “correcting” that mistake will be evaluated and option of “living with it” will be considered.

Follow Up:

- At the conclusion of every sports season, a general league meeting will be dedicated to review of issues and problems. Consideration will be given to updating the operational guidelines as result.
- Subjects of valid complaints, especially if repeated in nature despite attempts at corrective action, should not be considered for future positions that provide similar opportunities.

MYAL Recreational **Coach & Team Selection Guidelines**

Revised: 2009

The following guidelines are for **selecting coaches and** forming teams in the boys and girls recreational minors, majors, and senior leagues. Teams are formed randomly by the league coordinator for instructional and farm programs.

Priority:

These guidelines are created with selection of balanced teams as the highest priority.

The following are secondary goals which may at times be desirable. While efforts can be made during team selection to accomplish these secondary goals, attention should always be paid to the primary priority of achieving balanced teams.

- Coaching matchups
- Carpooling arrangements
- Players or parents with specifically requested team or coaching assignments
- Pairing (or separating) relatives

Procedures:

Selection of Coaches:

- League commissioners and coordinators meet to collectively identify head coaches, prior to evaluations, based on an estimated number of teams. Often an extra, "as needed" head coach needs to be available in case the number of teams increases due to last minute registrations. **If an agreeable arrangement cannot be worked out between the coordinator/commissioner and the coaching candidates**, head coach assignments will be made by the MYAL Board. Coaches are selected based on interest, experience, demonstrated coaching skills, and coordinator/commissioner recommendation. Coaches with prior head coaching experience will be given priority (with experienced coaches within each league above those coming up), however proper consideration will also be given to not "locking out" otherwise qualified new coaches due to carryover **of last year's coaches**.
- All coaches (head and assistant) must be members of the National Youth Sports Coaches Association and have attended the relevant sports-specific NYSCA training **for Basketball or Babe Ruth coach's certification for Baseball and Softball**.

Evaluations:

- Open evaluations are **to be** scheduled and advertised in advance. Dates, times, and locations are included on the registration form and announced in the Rivereast newspaper.
- Head coaches should meet prior to starting the evaluation and agree upon an evaluation grading system. Any desired assistant coaching assignments (one max per team) should be discussed, but these are not guaranteed **or assigned prior to the draft**, to avoid unevenly matched teams.
- Hold evaluation, collect evaluation scoring from each coach and combine scores. Rank kids based on a total or average score and distribute this ranking to each coach prior to selecting teams. **Include a consensus ranking of any players not present at the evaluation plus any anticipated late sign-ups.**

Player Selection Draft:

- The coaches, league coordinator, sports commissioners, and MYAL President all have responsibility for insuring a fair and balanced team draft is performed. Discuss any secondary goals **with all** coaches prior to team selection, so that these can be kept in mind during the draft process. **Note: accomplishing secondary goals is not guaranteed.**

- Head coaches only, plus a league representative (commissioner or other board member who is not a coach), **are to be** present at the team selections. Do not invite potential assistant coaches or interested parents.
- Assign head coaches' children to their teams. Make first round selections with the coach with the weakest child picking first, and so forth. After each team has selected one player, rank the teams again, worst to best and make the second round selections in that order. Third and subsequent rounds **continue from that point via** snake draft (1-2-3-4-5-5-4-3-2-1-...).
- During selection, it is important to monitor the makeup of each team. Avoid teams with a large concentration of older (or younger) kids. Expect each team to have a good mix of skills, ages, sizes, **position players**, and experience.
- **Before leaving the draft, a final review of all the teams should be done, to honestly assess if any potential "unevenness" of teams can be avoided with a trade. Also, agreement should be reached regarding how late sign-ups will be distributed.**

MYAL Tournament / Travel Team Selection Guidelines

Revised: 2009

The following guidelines are for forming tournament teams in the boys and girls recreational minors, majors, and seniors leagues.

Priority:

MYAL objective is to offer tournament and/or travel team opportunities at as many different age groups as possible based on player availability and competitive opportunities. One team will be selected at each age group. Objective of tournament team selection is to field the most competitive team possible from eligible players within that age group. Travel teams are not appropriate for Farm and Instructional leagues since our goals are instructional at these ages. Travel teams have also typically not been fielded for minors (3-4 grade) basketball.

Philosophy:

MYAL offers tournament and travel teams as an "extra" benefit of the league. These teams place a higher emphasis on winning and have reduced playing time requirements, compared to the recreational league teams. However, consistent with the spirit of youth sports, coaches of tournament and travel teams are to emphasize development of ALL players. Many players can develop skills in the later years that were not evident earlier, provided they are not lost to the sport through narrow-minded coaching that over-emphasizes winning and playing only the "best" players at a young age. Coaches are expected to provide a reasonable amount of playing time for each player (2 full innings per game for baseball, 3 minutes per game for basketball). A potential coach's demonstrated understanding of this philosophy will be taken into account when making coaching selections.

Program Objectives:

Baseball tournament teams are selected at an appropriate time during the season for the purpose of fielding all-star teams to play in post-season tournaments. Practices and scrimmages will be held during the latter part of the regular season without creating conflicts with recreational teams.

Basketball travel teams are selected early in the season for the purpose of playing in the Nutmeg Travel Basketball League, in parallel with the recreational league season. Each MYAL basketball team will also host an MYAL Marlborough Madness invitational tournament at the end of the regular season.

Participation in the Nutmeg League tournament will only be allowed based on avoiding conflicts with existing commitments for both recreation and travel teams.

Additional fees may be levied for tournament or travel team participation, considering the additional costs that these programs entail.

Coach and Team Selection Procedure:

The coaches, league coordinator, girls/boys sports commissioner, and MYAL President all have responsibility for insuring fair coaching and player selections are made.

- Tournament team coaches are selected during the recreational league draft by a consensus decision of the rec league head coaches and attending league officials. Priority is granted to rec league head coaches with a child in the tournament team age bracket. Second priority is granted to other head coaches in the recreational league. Third priority is granted to ex-coaches or assistant coaches. Assistant coaches are selected by the head coach. **It is often convenient to select the basketball travel team coach from outside the rec league head coaching ranks.** The MYAL Board will have the final decision if a conflict arises in choosing coaches.
- Players are selected to the tournament or travel team roster by the head coach and assistants. Selection should be made ONLY after an open tryout (and any necessary alternate evaluations for players unable to attend the tryout) has been held. A minimum of three independent and objective evaluators should score the players on a variety of skills during the tryout. No parents of children who are trying can be evaluators. A scoring rubric should be used.

- Open tryouts **are to be** scheduled and advertised in advance. Dates, times, and locations distributed on a flyer to all players and announced in the Rivereast newspaper. Alternate arrangements should be made to evaluate players who cannot attend the tryout.
- Tournament team players must play recreational ball. **7-8 grade basketball players on the RHAM Middle School team have the option of not participating in recreational ball.** Scheduling of tournament or travel team activities (games, practices, meetings) will be done in conjunction with the person responsible for field or gym scheduling as well as the affected league commissioner or coordinator. Conflicts between tournament / travel team activities and scheduled rec league games and practices should be avoided. If a conflict arises with a travel team and a recreational team having a game scheduled at the same time, all players must put their Rec Team game as a first priority.

- Baseball Tournament Team Policy (as discussed August, 2009):

- First tournament team will be selected from all majors league regular season players, based on open tryout. Regular season minors league players are not eligible for this team. The coaches will select the best team from this group of players, with no required preference for 12 year olds. This team will play in the district 12-U 70' tournament and subsequent state tournament as possible.
- Second tournament team will be selected from all minors league regular season players, based on open tryout. Regular season farm league players are not eligible for this team. The coaches will select the best team from this group of players, no no required preference for 10 year olds. This team will play in the district 10-U tournament and subsequent state tournament as possible
- 9-U and 11-U tournament teams may be fielded if sufficient number of interested players are still available after the above teams are selected. These teams will play in the respective district tournaments and subsequent state tournaments as possible.

- Previous policy (not rigorously enforced):

- In order to maximize the opportunities for players that desire additional post-season play, MYAL will attempt to field four baseball tournament teams, ages 12 through 9. To best accommodate this, there will be no playing up into a higher age bracket, unless not enough players are available at the older level (older players should not be cut in order to move younger players up) and only with MYAL board approval. The associated tryouts and team selections will be carefully coordinated between the four teams to help provide the most appropriate opportunity to each player.

MYAL Farm and Instructional League Guidelines

The following guidelines are for operation of the farm and instructional leagues, defined as follows:

For Basketball: Instructional is Kindergarten and 1st grade (either together or separated), Farm is 2nd grade.
For Baseball/Softball: Instructional is 5 and 6 year olds (co-ed baseball), Farm is 7 and 8 year olds (separate Baseball and Softball leagues).

Guidelines:

- Small team sizes are recommended (less than 10 players per team).
- Multiple assistant coaches and parent helpers per team are recommended.
- Farm and Instructional leagues typically start a bit later than the older leagues (after April vacation for Baseball/Softball and after Thanksgiving for Basketball).
- For Instructional, NO formal games are scheduled. Concentrate on building skills through various fun drills, short inter- and intra- squad scrimmages can be had as the season progresses. Score is never kept and “games” are regularly delayed for instructional purposes.
- For Farm, Always schedule more practices than games in a given week. No scorekeeping, statistics, or standings. Concentrate on building skills, participation by all players at all positions, enthusiasm and enjoyment of the game. Beginning in mid-season, the league coordinator will develop a rotating game schedule for Saturdays only.
- Look for opportunities to use high school age players as assistant coaches (talk to HS league coordinators for volunteers.)
- Look for opportunities to involve coaches from the older leagues as “mentors” for coaches new to the league working with younger kids for the first time.
- Coaching clinics geared specifically for coaching younger kids. (See Tony Calcavecchio at the elementary school for Basketball clinic or other qualified coaches available)
- Trophies are awarded for every player in farm and instructional leagues. The league coordinator orders the trophies (per purchasing instructions from the Treasurer) for all players in a given league, with a reasonable cost limit as imposed by the Board.

MYAL Minors/Majors/Senior/HS League Guidelines

Revised: 2009

The following guidelines are for operation of the Minors, Majors, and Senior leagues, defined as follows:

For Basketball: Minors is 3-4 grade, Majors is 5-6 grade, Seniors is 7-8 grade, HS is 9-12 grade. Minors, Majors, and Senior leagues play in the Eastern Connecticut Basketball League. ~~All Marlborough teams in a league will play each other at least twice per season. Remainder of~~ Games are scheduled against other Eastern League opponents by the Eastern League Coordinator (not MYAL). ~~Marlborough teams in a league might not be scheduled to play the same opponents or each other during the season.~~

For Baseball/Softball: Minors is 9-10 year olds, Majors is 11-12 year olds, Senior Softball is 12-15 year olds, Tri-County Baseball has 13 year old prep league and 14-15 year old Senior division.

Guidelines:

- **Participation:** No out-of-town players will be allowed on MYAL teams, except on a space-available basis and by board approval. Players are to participate in the league specific to their age only. Playing up or down is not allowed without specific parent and board approval. This applies to preschoolers in basketball and 4 year olds in baseball.
- **Priorities:** MYAL sports leagues exist for the purpose of enjoyment and development of organized youth sports. Winning is not a priority. All players (win or lose) should benefit from involvement and development of sport-specific skills as well as generic values associated with practice, competition, and team and individual accomplishment. ~~Playing time rules are in place to ensure all players have an equal opportunity to participate. Reduction in playing time cannot be used a penalty for missing practices or poor performance.~~ Coaches are expected to reflect these priorities in their actions and behavior and will be selected based on their adherence to reasonable standards for youth sports.
- **Rules:** All leagues play by the official rules of the game, with modifications as agreed to by the specific intra-town league involved. All rules, including modifications, are documented and must be adhered to. ~~Any disagreements concerning rules, including interpretations thereof, should be reported to MYAL officials as soon as possible for investigation and clarification.~~
- **Officials:** ~~The following applies to all home games in Marlborough. Other towns may have other officiating standards, within the allowances of league rules. Respect for officials is expected to be taught and demonstrated by all MYAL coaches, fans, and players.~~
 - ~~Adult and teenage baseball umpires that have attended training (John Cassidy umpire course) are assigned to all Minors and Majors games. Generally two umpires are assigned per game, but one umpire may be used if scheduling difficulties arise.~~
 - ~~Teenage basketball officials are trained by MYAL for use in Minors games, two officials per game. Board certified officials are used for all Majors, Seniors, High School games, two officials per game. One certified and one teenage official may be occasionally used for Majors rec games.~~
- **Sportsmanship Expectations:** Good sportsmanship by players, coaches, assistants, parents, and all fans is expected at all MYAL sporting functions at all times. Before, during, and after a game officials have the right and authority to deal with unsportsmanlike conduct as they see fit, including expulsion from the field or gym. All unsportsmanlike conduct should be reported to MYAL league officials ~~as soon as possible~~ for possible disciplinary action. Involvement in MYAL activities as a player, coach, or fan is a privilege which can be suspended.

- **Awards:** The league does not provide awards or trophies for any recreational league players beyond farm and instructional league. Coaches who wish to recognize their players' achievements are welcome to do so but are expected to provide opportunities for all players to feel valued. MYAL provides tournament team opportunities in order to recognize players with superior talent.

MYAL Annual Calendar

<u>Month</u>	<u>Basketball</u>	<u>Baseball/Softball</u>
September Board elections (3 rd Thurs)	Pick-up and play Registration starts	Fall ball starts
October	Registration deadline (15 th) Coaches meeting (3 rd Thurs) Referee training Evaluations (last week) NYSCA training (P&R dept) Uniform /equip inventory	Fall ball end (Columbus Day) Collect uniforms/equipment
November	Practices begin Travel team selections	
December No meeting (holidays)	Games begin	
January	Picture Day	Season budget/Set registration fee (3 rd Thurs.)
February		Registration starts Signups during basketball Clinics in gym Umpire training (J. Cassidy) Sign up for field use.
March	Eastern League and Marlborough Madness Tournaments	Uniform/equip inventory Registration deadline (15 th) Coaches meeting (3 rd Thurs) Evaluations (last week)
April	Collect uniforms/equip. Season wrap-up mtg (3 rd Thurs.)	Field Cleanup (first weekend) Practices begin
May		Opening Day (1 st weekend) Picture Day Tournament team selections
June		Hebron tournaments
July		District/State tournaments Season wrap-up mtg (3 rd Thurs.)
August	Reserve gym time Season budget / Set registration fee (3 rd Thurs.)	Collect uniforms/equip Fall ball registration