

SYOSSET BASEBALL ASSOCIATION – SAFETY INITIATIVES

SYOSSET BASEBALL ASSOCIATION
SAFETY DIVISION

2007 APPROVED HANDBOOK

SYOSSET BASEBALL ASSOCIATION – SAFETY INITIATIVES

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Syosset Baseball Association “Is a non-profit organization whose mission is to promote, develop, supervise, and voluntarily assist in all lawful ways, the interest of those who will participate in the SBA.

Through proper guidance and exemplary leadership, the SBA program assists youth in developing the qualities of citizenship, discipline, teamwork and physical well-being.

By espousing virtues of character, courage and loyalty, the SBA program is designed to develop superior citizens rather than superior athletes”.

The Safety Officer has been tasked with the review, assessment and development of a comprehensive set of guidelines and “best practices” that will insure the safety and well being of our young athletes and volunteers. While the Safety Officer is the “coordinator” for the program, ultimate success and continued growth of the program will require the cooperative feedback and input from all Board Members, managers and coaches throughout the season.

The extensive research, interviews and observations of other Safety Officer programs have demonstrated that through leadership, knowledge and repetition at an early age, young athletes are more inclined to adopt polices as part of their sports program. As they grow in age and, as they climb through divisions, athletes carry this positive safety attitude in everything they do.

SYOSSET BASEBALL ASSOCIATION – SAFETY INITIATIVES

1. Pre Game/Practice - Player stretches:

Continually overlooked is the importance of a proper warm up and stretch process. Going from the house to the car to the field and into a practice or game at “full tilt” at any age is not a recommended practice. Suggestions include having your team report to the field no later than: 30 minutes prior to the start of the game is one way to avoid the problem.

Most player injuries reported are due to little or no warm up. This does NOT mean “full tilt” once again. The Manager and coach need to insure that the players are not going too fast or, are over doing the stretch through supervision. Remember, speed is not the objective. Slow deliberate movements within each players range are the objective. DO NOT go beyond what is comfortable – “no pain no gain” is NOT a slogan the Syosset Baseball Association supports.

How do I get the team into the program?

Empowerment. I have found that this is the best way to address the issue based on past experience and, its FUN since every team member gets to participate. At the beginning of the season, when you hand out your schedule – assign “co captains” for each game week, this should include practice. Ask the co captains to be a lead the stretch. It should include – in order:

- Standing Stretch:
 - Legs straight and together touch
 - “A” position (3 part) left toe, center, right toe
- Seated Stretch:
 - Legs straight and together – touch toes
 - A position (3 part) left toe, center, right toe
- Standing Quarter Turns
 - Hands across chest, turn right return to center, left return to center
- Left elbow (quad) stretch
 - Stretch arm with slight pull by placing right hand on left (elbow)
- Right elbow (quad) stretch
 - Stretch arm with slight pull by placing left hand on right (elbow)
- Jumping Jacks
- Wind Sprints
 - Baseline drill – age (distance) dependant
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The above drills should take no more than 15 minutes. Each player should participate. Latecomers should still perform before they hit the field. Normal fielding/batting/throwing drills should now proceed under the direction of manager and/or Coach.

SYOSSET BASEBALL ASSOCIATION – SAFETY INITIATIVES

2. Pitchers:

Another overlooked and high percentage of safety concern is warm ups for pitchers. Not only the safety and well being of the pitcher but the warm up catcher, other teammates and bystanders.

We have rules governing the use of pitchers and, days of rest mandated for innings pitched. We do not have any regulations regarding numbers of pitches offered. Lets start from the top:

Under close supervision – either Manager or Coach:

- Pitcher warm ups:
 - Do not hit the mound with top speed. 4 slow, 4 medium, 4 regular
 - Build up allows arm to “warm”
- Catcher warm ups:
 - ANYONE who warms up a pitcher MUST wear full protective gear. No exceptions on this
 - Warm up catcher must be wearing “groin protection” (cup). Once again, no exceptions
- Pitcher/Catcher Location:
 - Warm up area is clear of any teammates, bystanders or debris
 - Preferably a true mound and, at measured (division) length. Over or under throwing due to unknown distance can cause injury.
- Team Warm Up:
 - All pre game warm ups are to be performed on the field, away from public walking areas and – where spectators sit. SPREAD OUT.

3. Pitchers:

All pitchers should be properly warmed up prior to a start in any game. A proper warm up consists of stretches and, proper “flat throws” to a catcher. A gradual progression of speed should be introduced so as to ensure that the pitcher is ready to enter a game.

If a pitcher is called into duty from another field position (mid inning), all attempts to gradually warm the arm should be made. League rules for warm-up pitches will be used.

Warming up a pitcher will be performed by a fully equipped catcher or, by the coach or manager of the team. There are no exceptions.

4. Catchers:

All catchers at ALL times will wear complete protective equipment provided. There are no exceptions to this rule. Catchers will additionally be required to wear protective cup with athletic supporter.

SYOSSET BASEBALL ASSOCIATION – SAFETY INITIATIVES

5. Batters:

All Batters are required to wear protective helmets during practice and game while at the plate and on base. Only ONE (1) person has a bat in his/her hand – that is the on deck batter.

- **On Deck:**

One issue, game in and game out on multiple levels in our program is the on deck batter, where he/she is to stand to warm up and, what are the regulations on weights/doughnuts?

This is where the “co captain” principle can come into play again and assist. Co Captains can help our Manager and Coach with the flow and position of “who’s on deck?” POST the player batting rotation on the end of the dugout for all to see, ask your Co Captains to make sure the flow is moving.

- Only one person “on deck” at any time, **NO SWINGING THE BAT.**
- On Deck batter is to have helmet ON and ONE BAT
- NO “DOUGHNUTS” are allowed. Slip over bag weight is only recognized tool
- On Deck area is to be determined by managers prior to game with umpire approval and input (due to different field conditions)

6. Dugout:

All players are to be reminded that the dugout is their “home” for the game and the equipment provided – whether SBA or personal should be treated with care and placed in areas that do not present issues to team members moving around. All players, except “on deck” must remain seated in the dugout. No running around or horseplay. The dugout is for players and coaches ONLY.

- Use your team co-captains to set the dugout up:
 - Establish the Helmet area
 - Bat Area
 - Team Bag Area and Personal bag area

Keep all refuse out of the dugout, including water bottles Gatorade bottles etc. Insure that your team cleans the dugout at the end of the game or practice. Be a good teammate.

7. Safety Kit:

Each Team Manager is issued a team safety kit containing a First Aid Supply kit and disposable ice packs.

This safety kit and ice packs are for use in emergency and as such should be ready to go for all practices and games. Inspect before each game or practice. Contact the Safety Officer for any new equipment needed throughout the season.

SYOSSET BASEBALL ASSOCIATION – SAFETY INITIATIVES

8. Foul Weather:

As per revision 3/13/2006 of the Syosset Baseball Association, League Rules – page 4 outlines all conditions related to Rainouts, postponements and Forfeitures will apply. Again, reference page “Key League Rules” All Divisions, section 4.

9. Field Inspection:

Prior to the start of each game or practice, the Manager or Coach of the team will inspect the grounds for broken glass, sticks or refuse that may present a hazard to players. Hazards will be removed and placed in closest trash receptacle.

Prior to the start of each game or practice, the Manager or Coach shall inspect the infield base paths, pitching mound and outfield (any live play area) for any abnormalities or holes that may present a hazard to our players. Attempts to remediate the issue should be made to the best of your ability.

Trash receptacles sometimes make their way onto the field or, close to the baseline or area of play. Managers and or Coaches are encouraged to move these items to a safe location, removing the potential for a run in with one of their players.

10. Base Coaches:

All base coaches are to be 13 years or older – with helmet or, an adult. No exceptions.

11. Spectators:

All spectators, parents, children family members etc. are to be reminded to sit in an area that would be less prone to “errant” fly balls or, on supplied bleachers. At no time shall any spectator be standing behind the backstop while game is in play.

No parents, other S.B.A. players or small children will be allowed in the dugout during play unless approved by team Manager, Coach or Umpire.

Managers are requested to remind all spectators of these simple rules.

12. Jewelry

All players are to be reminded to remove all jewelry, rings or watches that might create an additional hazard to their person or others during practice or games.

13. Slides

No head first slides to any base. Please refer to Syosset Baseball Association – league Rules Rev. 3/13/06 page 14, section 14; Pete Rose Rule – Rule 7.08 for sliding clarifications. Please refer to League Rules for further information.

14. PREVENTION: Know your players & their needs:

Some players have pre existing medical conditions that require Manager/Coach knowledge in case of emergency. There are very specific laws that protect this information (HIPAA) and while not suggesting a violation of this personal information, it is strongly recommended that you socialize the topic with your parents to insure that any player has the necessary medications – should they need it. Also, by including you and your coach - another layer of support is “in the know”.

General examples of this would include:

- Allergic to Bee Stings or certain foods?
- Asthmatic?
- Diabetes?
- Epilepsy?

15. PREVENTION Injury examples: PLAY IT SAFE

While you as managers and coaches are the first step in the process, it is important to be able to identify and make an informed decision in the event of an injury. It is important to note that the examples provided are not all-inclusive and is not to be interpreted as such. The Manager and Coach are responsible for the assessment and “final call” while on the field in all situations.

We as managers and coaches want to lead by example. The Physical well being of our players is paramount. Making informed and decisive decisions is critical.

- **Minor Injury examples:**

For instances that involve MINOR injury to players, all effort will be given to allow the player to remove themselves (under his/her own power) to the bench area or continue play based on the evaluation of the situation. This includes discussion and, continued observation of the player after the event.

Sprains, twisted ankles hit by pitch (body) or instances where players’ come in contact with one another (body) shall be reviewed by the manager and, if needed – by the player’s parent(s) or legal guardian to determine if the player needs to be rested. Remember, good judgment (included with pre and post event observations) is critical here.

“He’s o.k.” “He can play”; “Walk it off” are terms too loosely used. Your observations and final call make the difference. Play it safe.

Pitching and or catching injuries are most significantly overlooked. Ask your parents (for the pitchers that day) if there are any issues that you need to be aware of – especially with “multi sport” players. This raised awareness by you and your coach will influence the degree of observations or ultimate decisions going forward.

Watch your pitcher for any overt signs of discomfort or, struggling. If you visit the mound, reinforce your questions with **DIRRECT EYE CONTACT**. Ask if there is any pain, in the arm, legs or feet. If at any point you suspect or see that the pitcher is in any discomfort, make a change. Play it safe.

Your catchers need attention too. Foul balls, contact with errant bats, throwing hand NOT positioned behind back upon delivery of a pitch, plays at home plate – slides, contact with other players and long throw downs to stealing runners. **YOU** need to be observant and aware. Question your catcher at the time of observation AND at the conclusion of the inning.

Remember – PLAY IT SAFE.

SYOSSET BASEBALL ASSOCIATION – SAFETY INITIATIVES

- **Significant** Injury examples:

In rare instances, if an injury is SIGNIFIGANT:

- BATTER - hit in head by wild pitch (damage or mark to batting helmet) ringing in ears, dizziness, headache, blurred vision (all/some might be delayed) red mark, swelling, bruising
- FIELDER - hit in head by ball fielding batted/line drive/fly with ringing in ears, dizziness, headache, blurred vision (all/some might be delayed) red mark swelling, bruising
- CATCHER hit in head by bat CATCHER (damage or mark to helmet) ringing in ears, dizziness, headache, blurred vision (all/some might be delayed)
- BATTER/FIELDER - hit in face by ball – wild pitch (bruising, blood, teeth loose or bleeding)
- UNCONCIOUS – any means (Bee Sting, Food Allergy, Seizures etc.)
- Broken bone – suspected broken bone or sprain
- Neck/Spine injury due to collision with fixed/portable property or another player
- Headache or vomiting after any trauma listed above

SIGNIFIGANT INJURY CASES:

GET TO YOUR PLAYER. ASSESS THE SITUATION. TAKE CHARGE AND APPLY BASIC FIRST AID AS REQUIRED

IMMEDIATELY AND UNCONDITIONALLY NOTIFY 911 AND 921-0000 FOR AN AMBULANCE. CLEARLY STATE THE INJURY AND CURRENT PLAYER CONDITION. INCLUDE YOUR CELL PHONE NUMBER

IT IS IMPERATIVE THAT THE CALLER IDENTIFIES THE FIELD LOCATION, NEAREST CROSS STREETS AND FIELD NUMBER (LIKE STILLWELL) TO THE OPERATOR.

IT IS STRONGLY RECCOMENDED THAT IN THE SIGNIFIGANT INJURY CATEGORY THAT THE PLAYER INVOLVED IS NOT MOVED OR DISTURBED IN ANY WAY. ICE PACKS PROVIDED TO EACH MANAGER SHOULD BE USED WHERE/WHEN APPROPRIATE.

INSTANCES WHERE BLOOD IS PRESENT, (NOT A SCRAPE) SUCH AS NOSE, EARS, EYES OR MOUTH – APPLY A CLEAN CLOTH TO ASSIST WITH CLOTTING. DO NOT MOVE PLAYER.

A COACH OF ANY TEAM, IN SIGNIFIGANT INJURY SITUATIONS AND, AFTER NOTIFYING EMS VIA 911 AND 921-0000 IS TO CONTACT THE SAFETY OFFICER eeenan@SYOSSETBASEBALL.ORG WHO WILL RESPOND.

SYOSSET BASEBALL ASSOCIATION – SAFETY INITIATIVES

16. Injury & Reporting Procedure:

In any case of injury listed above, MINOR or SIGNIFIGANT will require a written report to be filed with the Safety Officer via email within 48 hours of the game or practice. Email keenan@syossetbaseball.org.

This is a mandatory Syosset Baseball Association regulation.

All questions or comments can be directed to the Syosset Baseball Association – Safety Officer by email keenan@syossetbaseball.org. Please include your name, child's name, team name and age group in the message for a prompt reply.

Enjoy the 2007 season and,

PLAY IT SAFE!

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