

# Waverly-Shell Rock Youth Baseball Club Coaching Handbook 2025

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## Philosophy/Core Values

1. Development - learn to play baseball the “Go-Hawk Way”
2. Enjoyment - develop a love for the game
3. Character - learn and exhibit good sportsmanship

The WSR Baseball Club is a school-based youth club vs. a for profit-based club. The coaches, board members and committee members are volunteers. We strive to field competitive teams but not at the cost of development. Our players will learn the Go-Hawk way of playing baseball as directed by Coach BJ Hermsen, the head varsity baseball coach.



## WSR BASEBALL CLUB COACH EXPECTATIONS

All WSR Youth Baseball Club coaches are expected to support the Player Code of Conduct and will conduct themselves in a manner that best serves the interests of players, parents, and WSR Youth Baseball.

*The purpose of the WSR Youth Baseball program is to provide a fun, developmental experience for boys currently in 1st through 7th grades of all skill levels that focuses on learning sportsmanship, the fundamentals of the game and playing the Go-Hawk way.*

1. All coaches report directly to the WSR Baseball Club Board. You are not an "independent" team. You represent the WSR school name and the families that we serve.
2. The WSR Baseball Club's philosophy is being competitive and striving to win but not at the cost of development (ie pitch counts, subs, trick plays)
3. USSSA rules state that a team can have 3 coaches per team. If a team wants more than 3 coaches, they need board approval. Coaches are allowed and encouraged to have parent volunteers assist at practice.
4. Each coach is required to hold a pre-season parent meeting each year at all levels of participation
5. Coaches are required to utilize WSR Baseball instruction including drills and terminology. Coaches will be asked to attend youth clinics, led by WSR Baseball Club Board. Questions on instruction should be directed to the board or the Head High School Baseball Coach.
6. Provide instruction in a manner that is constructive and supportive.
7. Coaches are responsible for each other and their players, it is the coach's responsibility to enforce USSSA and WSR Baseball Club rules.
8. Value every team member regardless of performance, talent, experience, or size. Strive to give all players similar age-appropriate playing time, plate appearances, and critical roles over the course of a season.
9. Playing time outline - understand the difference between scrimmages, league games/DHs, pool play and bracket play. Understand the difference between 8U and 13U. Games typically do not go 7 innings, they go 3-5 innings. Plan accordingly and teach them to always hustle in and out of the dugout!
10. Coaches will ensure the health and safety of all players including by adhering to all pitch count considerations as set forth by the WSR Baseball Club Board. In the absence of rules, act in the best interest of player health and longevity regardless of the situation.
11. Represent the WSR Youth Baseball Club well by respecting umpires, members of the opposing team, and host facilities. Understand that youth/USSSA umpires WILL miss calls and since development is our primary goal we will teach our players to persevere through adversity rather than develop a victim mentality.
12. Refrain from engaging in arguments or confronting umpires, coaches, spectators, or any opposing players.
13. If subs are needed priority will be given to grade level first within the WSR program, grade below within the WSR program and finally if needed, a coach can look outside the WSR program. The coach will first ask that player's coach and not their parents.
14. Encourage good sportsmanship and model positive behavior before, during, and after the game. Realize, accept and practice that a team's reputation is built not only on it's playing ability but also on it's sportsmanship.
15. Take steps to minimize running up the score when your team is clearly dominant. These could include - making substitutions, eliminating stealing bases, etc. This doesn't mean stop playing the game (getting hits, running the bases hard, etc).
16. Coaches are required to fill out nominations for the USSSA All Iowa All-State showcase
17. Coaches are not permitted to use alcohol or tobacco during any games or practices.

### **Enforcement of Rules:**

The rules and expectations listed herein are in place to ensure the quality development of our teams while maintaining the integrity of our organization. Any coaches in violation of these rules will be handled in the following manner:

- A documented conversation with at least 2 non-grade level members of the WSR Baseball Club Board
- A suspension from attending games or tournaments. The suspension can be one game up to a max of four
- Possible expulsion from the WSR Baseball

The WSR Baseball club has the right to bypass the above process and administer any such disciplinary action depending upon the severity of the violation.

## WSR BASEBALL CLUB PLAYER PLEDGE

*The purpose of the WSR Youth Baseball program is to provide a fun, developmental experience for boys currently in 1st through 7th grades of all skill levels that focuses on learning sportsmanship, the fundamentals of the game and playing the Go-Hawk way.*

I hereby pledge to be positive about my youth baseball experience and accept responsibility for my participation by following this Code of Conduct. I understand that as a member of the WSR Baseball Club, I represent my club, my team, my coaches, my family and myself on and off the field. I was selected for this team and I understand it's a privilege to play on this team

1. I will follow the rules of the game, USSSA and WSR Baseball Club.
2. I will treat my coaches, other players, officials and fans with respect
3. I will encourage good sportsmanship from fellow players, coaches and parents at every game and practice by demonstrating good sportsmanship. I understand that bad sportsmanship will not be tolerated.
4. I will be a great teammate and put the team first. I won't blame others for losses, I understand we win or lose as a TEAM
5. I will attend every practice and game that I can, and will notify my coach as soon as possible if I am unable.
6. I will be prepared for every practice and game which means I will have all my equipment, I will wear baseball pants, belt, jersey/shirt tucked in and a WSR hat on. Jewelry & eye black is permissible but not excessive at coach's discretion.
7. I will have a growth mindset and therefore do my best to listen and learn from my coaches.
8. I will practice with great energy and effort so they become habits for the games.
9. I understand my playing time is earned by my talent, knowledge, attitude, and effort.
10. Harassment/Bullying of any kind (verbal, social or physical) that happens in person or virtually/electronically will not be tolerated.
11. I understand that "having fun" does not involve "screwing around" at practice or games.
12. I will encourage my parents to be involved with my team in some capacity because it is important to me.
13. I will not engage in self-indulgence behavior, such as pouting, tossing bats, etc. and I understand that this behavior will not be tolerated
14. I will assist in cleaning up after our team after all practices and games, I will leave it better than I found it.
15. I deserve to play in an environment that is free of drugs, tobacco, alcohol, and profanity and expect adults to refrain from their use at all youth sports events.
16. I will not play regularly on another competitive baseball team during the WSR club season unless permission is obtained by the WSR Baseball Club Board. If I sub, I will let my coach know.

## WSR BASEBALL CLUB FAMILY EXPECTATIONS

*The purpose of the WSR Youth Baseball program is to provide a fun, developmental experience for boys currently in 1st through 7th grades of all skill levels that focuses on learning sportsmanship, the fundamentals of the game and playing the Go-Hawk way.*

1. Families will be positive about their child's youth baseball experience and accept responsibility for their actions by following this Code of Conduct. I pledge to represent the WSR Baseball Club in a positive manner at all times.
2. All families report directly to their coaching staff who reports to the Club Board. We understand that we represent the communities of Waverly and Shell Rock, we must uphold the highest standards in our community.
3. Families will display good sportsmanship by providing positive feedback to their child as well as other team members. Families will understand that bad sportsmanship will not be tolerated. Families will not argue with the coaches, umpires, opposition, or other parents. Promote team unity by speaking highly of and encouraging all team members
4. Families will have their child at practice and games on time and ready to play. Families will notify the coach, within a reasonable amount of time, if their child is unable to attend.
5. Families will let the coaches coach their child while on the field and refrain from yelling instruction from the stands.
6. Families will discuss issues with the coach in private, away from players and other parents. This will be done by phone or will make arrangements to meet with the coach away from the ball fields, and not immediately before, during or following practice or games. We will observe by a 24 hour rule when contacting a coach. We will never discuss another player on the team. If the issue remains unresolved with your team's coach you may contact a member of the Board.
7. Understand that a big part of the development process is failure, let them fail and learn from their mistakes.
8. This is youth baseball, there are going to be some BAD umpires. We will develop our players to be resilient and not have a victim mentality. We understand that we don't need every call to win and the game doesn't come down to one play.
9. The dugout is a place for coaches and players only. Please make every effort to bring drinks before or after games only!
10. Families understand that even though we are a developmental program, playing time is earned, not guaranteed to be equal. Talent, knowledge, attitude and effort all factor into playing time.
11. After games - praise effort not results. What did you learn? What did you improve on? Were you a good teammate? Tell them you loved watching them play! Promote self esteem - "you should be proud of yourself"
12. Families will be cognizant of throwing bullpens at home, always communicate this with your head coach
13. Families will be expected to help with any team volunteer opportunities and fundraisers when the need arises.
14. Children deserve to play in an environment that is free of drugs, tobacco, alcohol, and profanity and parents will refrain from their use at all youth sports events.
15. I understand that my fees may not be refunded if I quit or am removed from the team. Board will consider refunds on a case by case basis. All uniforms and gear will NOT be refunded. I understand that I am a WSR Baseball Club Parent on and off the field.

### **Enforcement of Rules:**

The rules and expectations listed herein are in place to ensure the quality development of our teams and players while maintaining the integrity of our organization. Any parents in violation of these rules will be handled in the following manner:

- A documented conversation with at least 2 non-grade level members of the WSR Baseball Club Board
- A suspension from attending games or tournaments. The suspension can be one game up to a max of four
- Possible expulsion from the WSR Youth Baseball

The WSR Baseball club has the right to bypass the above process and administer any such disciplinary action depending upon the severity of the violation.

## WSR BASEBALL CLUB PARENT MEETING

- I. Coaches Introductions & any relevant contact information they want to provide
- II. Club Philosophy - Be competitive but not at the cost of development
- III. Coach Expectations
- IV. Parent Expectations
- V. Player Code of Conduct
- VI. Matheny Letter (Handout at Meeting)
- VII. Playing Time
- VIII. Pitching Expectations
- IX. Practices (& Schedule)
  - A. Indoor - if there is a conflict the in-season sport takes priority
  - B. Outdoor
- X. Games (& Schedule)
  - A. Scrimmages
  - B. Waterloo League, DHs, etc
  - C. Tournaments (Pool Play vs. Bracket Play)
- XI. USSSA All-Star Showcase
  - A. There may be opportunities for players to participate in all-star games or showcases that are sponsored by outside organizations. Nominations for these opportunities are at the discretion of each coach and are not mandatory or guaranteed. Any costs associated with participation is the responsibility of the player.
- XII. Uniforms/Equipment - Examples linked
  - A. Black Belt
  - B. Black Helmet
  - C. Pants
    1. Black
      - a) Knicker Style
      - b) Long
    2. White w/ Black Piping
      - a) Knicker Style
      - b) Long
  - D. Socks
    1. Black
    2. Knicker Style High
  - E. Catcher's Gear - Team Colors

1. It's okay to review previously taught things
2. It's okay to move ahead if they've shown the ability to do it

	Introduced in 2nd/3rd	Introduced in 4th/5th	Introduced 6th/7th
Hitting Philosophy	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Technical vs. Tactical</li> <li>2. Intent</li> <li>3. Hit it in the air</li> <li>4. Swing Decisions (not "my fault" if coach throws a bad pitch)</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Plus Count &amp; Two Strike Approach</li> <li>2. Pre-Pitch Routine</li> <li>3. In the hole, on deck, etc.</li> <li>4. Timing - Be on Time!</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Situational Hitting and Bunting</li> <li>2. Pitcher Tendencies</li> <li>3. Hitting Locations</li> <li>4. Hitting Off-Speed/Pitch Recognition</li> </ol>
Technical Hitting Drills (Mechanics)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Tee - Inside Load</li> <li>2. Tee - Feet Together</li> </ol>	-In addition to previous drills <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Tee/Front Toss - Drill 1</li> <li>2. Tee/Front Toss - Drill 2</li> <li>3. Tee/Front Toss - Torque</li> </ol>	-In addition to previous drills <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. FT Only - Hook 'ums</li> <li>2. FT Only - Jump Back</li> <li>3. FT Only - Open Stance</li> </ol>
Tactical Hitting Drills	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Hit it in the air</li> <li>2. Hit as hard as you can</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Approach (OK, 2K)</li> <li>2. Be on Time! Be on go!</li> <li>3. Hit/Take - Yes, Yes, Yes, No</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Curveball Machine</li> <li>2. Inside/Outside</li> <li>3. Angle Toss</li> <li>4. Situational Hitting/Bunting</li> </ol>
Pitching Philosophy	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Develop arm strength</li> <li>2. Throw strikes</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Pitching process/no balks</li> <li>2. Pitching to zones</li> <li>3. Change-ups</li> <li>4. Pickoffs</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Locations (halfs, inside, etc)</li> <li>2. Curveballs</li> <li>3. Mixed timings/looks</li> </ol>
Pitching Drills	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Long Toss</li> <li>2. Walking wind-ups</li> <li>3. Step intos</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Horse/Tic-tac-toe</li> <li>2. Hook 'ums</li> <li>3. Jump Backs</li> <li>4. Pulldowns</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Scripted Bullpens</li> <li>2. Med Ball/Stacked/Core</li> <li>3. Situational Pitching</li> </ol>
Infield Drills	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Line Drill/Start-ups</li> <li>2. Short hops (glove, no glove) -on knees and stance</li> <li>3. Groundball w/ instep to target</li> <li>4. Force outs</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Glove side &amp; Back hand</li> <li>2. 4 Corner throwing</li> <li>3. 4 Corner flips</li> <li>4. Flamingo Drill</li> <li>5. Attack the line</li> <li>5. Tags</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Double Plays</li> <li>2. Slow Rollers</li> <li>3. Soft and Hard Back Hand</li> <li>4. Regular and Drop Glove side</li> </ol>
Outfield Drills	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Get under the ball</li> <li>2. "Ball, Ball, Ball"</li> <li>3. Commit to getting it into the INF, even if you throw it to the wrong base</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Drop progression</li> <li>2. Look/Peek run</li> <li>3. Backing up bases</li> <li>4. 1 Knee and like INF GBs</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Wrong arm drill</li> <li>2. Forehand/Backhand</li> <li>3. Do/Die</li> <li>4. Throw through vs. hit cut</li> <li>5. Flyball priority (out to in, middle to out)</li> <li>6. 1 Base Dive Rule</li> </ol>
Catching	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Stances (relaxed and ready)</li> <li>2. Receiving/ball to middle</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Blocking</li> <li>2. Giving Signs</li> <li>3. Throwing to 2B</li> <li>4. Tag plays at plate</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Backing up 1B</li> <li>2. Catcher pop ups</li> <li>3. Relay reads</li> <li>4. Back picks (1B, 3B)</li> <li>5. DP, Fielding bunts</li> </ol>
Team Defense	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Force outs/covering bases</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Ball, Bag, Backup</li> <li>2. Infield In</li> <li>3. Bunt Coverages</li> <li>4. Cuts/Relays</li> <li>5. Rundowns</li> <li>6. P Cover 1B</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. 1st &amp; 3rd Defense</li> <li>2. Pick plays</li> <li>3. Situations (outs, assume scores)</li> <li>4. Double Cuts</li> </ol>
Baserunning	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Home to 1B</li> <li>2. Home to 2B</li> <li>3. 1B to 3B</li> <li>4. 2B to Home</li> <li>5. Force vs. Not Force</li> <li>6. Tagging Up</li> <li>7. Picking up Coach</li> <li>8. Secondary leads</li> <li>9. Flyball rules (tag vs. not)</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Leadoffs at each base</li> <li>2. Stealing - read front foot</li> <li>3. Reading the front runner</li> <li>4. Anticipate vs. React</li> <li>5. go until stopped</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Reaction Drills</li> <li>2. Dirt reads</li> <li>3. Pitcher sequence</li> <li>4. 1st &amp; 3rd Plays</li> <li>5. Go back on line drive</li> <li>6. 2 out leads at 2B</li> <li>7. Stealing - reading the pitcher</li> <li>8. Bunt - see ball down</li> </ol>

### **Indoor Practice Templates**

- ☰ Youth Practice Plan Template - 2 Station Indoor
- ☰ Youth Practice Plan Template - 3 Station Indoor
- ☰ 12U Gold Indoor Practice 8

### **Outdoor Practice Templates**

- Template/Practice Options - ☰ Outdoor Practice Plan Template (April)
- Go-Hawk BP - ☰ 12U Gold Outdoor Practice 13
- Individual & Team Defense - ☰ WSR 11U Gold Outdoor Practice 27
- Live BP - ☰ 13U Practice 24
- 3 vs. 3 Scrimmage - ☰ 13U Practice 24

### **Scrimmage/Game Templates**

- Blank - ☰ Blank
- Midweek/Scrimmage/League - ☰ Vs. Clarksville 7/8 6/25/24
- Tournament - ☰ Harley Steele Invite 6/22/24 - 6/23/24

### **Pitch Count Considerations**

1. <https://www.mlb.com/pitch-smart/pitching-guidelines>
2. No consideration will be given to USSSA “competitive balance” pitching rules
3. Arm health and development will take priority over wins/losses
4. A pitcher should not increase their yearly max pitch count by more than 15 in an outing
5. Understand the difference between weekend/tournament pitchers and scrimmage/league/weekday pitchers
6. Time of the year
7. Use of throws at other positions (i.e. catcher)
8. How the pitcher arrived at their pitch count (big inning vs. shorter innings)
9. The State Tournament can be “looser” with our pitch count considerations because of the time of the year
10. Freshman baseball typically uses around 10 pitchers