



LSA LIGHTNING BASEBALL – 2024/2025

1. LINCOLNSHIRE LIGHTNING PROGRAM (WINTER/ SPRING/SUMMER TRAVEL LEAGUE) –

The Lincolnshire Lightning Program is for those players looking to play at a higher level than house league and gain the travel experience. The program is available for players that reside in the District 103 and surrounding communities. Tryouts are generally in Late July/Early August for the upcoming year (some of the lower age groups tryouts are pushed out until Spring - please view the LSA Calendar page for exact dates for this year). The teams start practicing in January and generally play baseball games from Early April to late July. Our number 1 focus is on DEVELOPMENT. While we do play the game, with the attempt to win, winning is not everything with Lightning Travel Baseball. We are continuously creating an environment, where our kids want to develop, play at a high level, but more importantly continue their love for the game. We have partnered with SLAMMERS and their staff, and we share parallel views on our goal within each program and what's best for our kids each calendar year.

2. COSTS –

The Lincolnshire Lightning Program generally costs between 1000.00 – 2250.00 (Depending on if paid coaches are utilized for the season. Initial cost for 8U, is \$1000.00 (Which includes uniform package and inclusive to all other activities). This covers travel league registration fees, tournament entry fees, umpire fees, training/coaching, etc. If a team decides to play in additional tournaments, there may be additional costs. Fees established for 9U-14U will include uniform costs. Fees are non-refundable.

12U – COOPERSTOWN

We sent our first team to Cooperstown in 2024. The total cost per child was 3500.00. This can be offset by fundraising, etc. The 3500.00 includes all other seasonal activities, uniforms, etc.

3. AGE GUIDELINES RECOMMENDED - (GRADES AS OF 2020 TRYOUT)–

8U – 1st or 2nd Grade

9U – 3rd Grade

10U – 4th Grade

11U – 5th Grade

12U – 6th Grade

13U – 7th Grade

14U – 8th Grade

**It's advised that all players try out for their correct age level, but will consider kids to play at a higher level based on their talent and attitude

4. TIME COMMITMENT –

One of the reasons for holding tryouts in the summer for 9U – 14U, is to allow the teams to practice over the winter, specifically starting the 3rd week of January. The timing and number of practices are up to the coach, but usually consist of 8-16 team workouts @ Five Tool Baseball Academy on Saturday's and Sunday's, and 3-5 individual clinics. Coaches do realize that some players are active in other sports, and may have conflicts. However, once the season has started, players are expected to attend practices when forming teams.

Lightning Players are expected to be COMMITTED to baseball from the beginning to the end of the season, and parents are required to volunteer during the Lincolnshire Travel Baseball Tournament "Summer Slam". This will require 2 hours throughout the Tournament weekend.

**Practices will be held 2-3 times a week once the weather breaks and will continue throughout the season.

5. PAID COACHES –

Lincolnshire Travel Baseball will consider paid coaches for the 10U – 14U levels. However, if a Parent who is knowledgeable of the game, shows interest and is willing to put in the time with the kids, then he will be interviewed with the Director of Travel Baseball, and if deemed a fit, will be selected for the baseball season.

6. TOURNAMENTS –

Each program from 9U – 14U, will play in 5 Tournaments at a minimum, all hand-picked and discussed with the coaches and Travel Director. We will evaluate each team, and while we will challenge each program, we will enter tournaments for the kids, where they can compete, and teams that have the same level of ability.

**From the 10U level and above, we will look to enter 1 overnight tournament, which will be selected by the Travel Director. The out of state tournament will be selected by Mid Fall of the year prior, so families can plan.

7. DIVISIONS –

Lightning Baseball will have multiple teams at each level, which will encompass at least 1 A Division Team, and 1 B Division group. In some instances, there may be more than 1 team at each level. As stated above with tournaments, the same holds true when evaluating what makes sense for each team, on what division we enter them in.

8. LEAGUES –

The Lightning Baseball program competes in the MSBL and the LSFBL baseball leagues in the Chicagoland Area. Tournaments will be scheduled through Game Day USA, Seminole Sports, JP Sports, and Local Tournament Affiliations.

9. HOW ARE COACHES CHOSEN AND WHAT CRITERIA ARE USED IN MAKING CHOICES ABOUT COACHES?

- All information can be found on the LSA website. www.lincolnshiresports.org.
- The LSA Board of Directors determines the coaches for each team.
- All former and potential new coaches are interviewed by the Travel Baseball Director and approved by the LSA Board of Directors; coaching a travel team for one year does not guarantee selection as a coach for the following year(s).
- Spring/Summer Managers and Coaches are not compensated. Most Lightning teams will be parent coached unless desired by 10U or older Teams
- All coaches must attend at least one of the Positive Coaches Alliance (PCA) seminars provided by LSA annually.
- Coaches must be able to demonstrate competency regarding knowledge of baseball and have sufficient time to devote to coaching the travel team.
- Coaches must be able to demonstrate proficiency in their ability to: 1) teach mechanics of baseball to players; and 2) have the proper temperament to both teach baseball and serve as a role model for managing issues on the field during games
- Coaches should not assume that their children are guaranteed placement on a travel team; children of travel coaches must have the ability to be selected for a travel team independent of whether or not their parent is a travel coach.
- End of season surveys to travel parents are of great use in determining the effectiveness of a travel coach and whether the coach should be considered as a travel coach for the following year(s)

10. HOW ARE TRAVEL TEAM PLAYERS CHOSEN AND WHAT CRITERIA ARE USED IN MAKING CHOICES

- Players interested in playing in the Travel program must be available for practices and games.
- Players who are interested in travel team participation must try out for the travel team.
- Tryout dates, times and locations are announced by the travel committee and also posted on the LSA website, www.lincolnshiresports.org.
- Extenuating circumstances, such as injury or illness during the tryout period, must be communicated to the Director of Travel Baseball in advance of the tryout session, so that a player can be evaluated at some other time, if possible (there are no guarantees that this will be possible).
- Tryouts at each age level will be conducted by the Baseball Committee, 3rd Party Evaluators and selected volunteers who do not have children trying out for the team.
- Selected volunteers may include the future travel baseball coach of the said team.
- Tryouts will be approximately 90 minutes in length, as determined by the Travel Director.
- The type of drills used will be determined by the Travel Baseball Director or 3rd Party Evaluators, but generally include infield play (grounders and throws), outfield play (fly balls and arm strength/accuracy), pitching (control and velocity) hitting (power and contact) and possible scrimmage.
- Other skills may be added at the Baseball Committee or 3rd Party Evaluators sole discretion.
- The evaluations will rely heavily on mechanics, e.g.: 1) swing mechanics (e.g., head down, bat speed, pivoting the back foot, and striding towards the pitcher; 2) the mechanics of fielding (e.g., charging the ball, fielding the ball in the center of the body, using two hands to field ground balls and fly balls or pop-ups, throwing over the top and following through a throw).

- Sound mechanics are much more important than hitting the ball or picking up every ground ball. It is important to understand that these mechanics can be identified easily whether pitched balls are hardballs or whiffle balls, or if the ball is hit off a tee.
- Potential players must have sound mechanics in all areas of baseball. For example, a player fielding 5/5 ground balls may not necessarily receive a higher grade than a player fielding 2 of 5 ground balls if the latter player has used better mechanics. The same is true for hitting drills.
- The previous year evaluations from Summer Travel will be used in addition to try-out evaluations. Travel Director and the travel coach input will be used as well, if needed.
- The number of players chosen for a travel team and the number of travel teams will be predicated on the skill of those trying out for the team. The number of skilled players will determine the number of teams.
- At no point shall any parent of a player trying out for the team be on the field or helping their child during the evaluations.

11. HOW IS TALENT DIVIDED WITHIN AN AGE GROUP?

- If it is determined that more than one team can be fielded at a particular age group, it will be at the discretion of the Travel Director as to how those teams are divided in an effort to field the most competitive teams.

12. WHAT IS LINCOLNSHIRE'S TRAVEL PHILOSOPHY?

- The LSA Travel Baseball program shall provide a quality environment that promotes instruction, advancement, sportsmanship, teamwork and an overall love for the game necessary for a competitive travel baseball program for the youth of our community and beyond. We look to promote the game and provide an outlet for interested players who are looking for enhanced competition and a longer sporting season such as through the spring/summer months and winter clinics and workouts.