

Positive Sports Training, Inc

Eastern Iowa USSSA Youth Baseball League

2006 Handbook



“The BEST in Youth Baseball”

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Positive Sports Training, Inc. Handbook 2006

Welcome to USSSA baseball and Positive Sports Training, Inc - The *BEST* in youth baseball. Positive Sports Training, Inc., is the governing body for the Eastern Iowa United States Specialty Sports Association (USSSA) Youth Baseball League. Founded in the early 80s originally as a Continental America Baseball Association (CABA) league, the league has evolved into one of the major youth baseball organizations in the State of Iowa.

Our league consists of an Executive Board, Advisory Board and numerous teams and volunteers.

Board Members

Executive Board:

President: John Taylor – One West Knoll Drive, Robins, IA 52328 hm# 393-9609, wk 373-3191 cell# 573-5735 JBtay11@aol.com

Vice President: Patrick Clemence 877 Tripperary Rd, Iowa City, IA 52246 319-358-9972 Patrick.Clemence@pearson.com

Secretary/Treasurer: Cyndy Staton 187 13th Ave SW, Cedar Rapids, IA 52404 hm#363-9123 cell# 721-6921 sandccrreds@mchsi.com

Executive Board members are nominated and elected for terms of two years. There are currently no term limits. They are responsible for setting and enforcing the rules and regulations of Positive Sports Training stated in this document and otherwise changed and/or modified by said board.

Advisory Board Members:

Tom Sadler - tsadler@sadlermachine.com 360-6490

CR Reds – Scott Staton sandccrreds@mchsi.com hm# 319-363-9123 wk# 355-7513

Cougars – Jim Ecker JECKER6815@aol.com hm# 319-390-4236

IC Firehawks - Julie Nessler 337-9212 cell # 330-6581 julie-k@mchsi.com

IC West Trojans –Martin L. Jones martin.jones2@med.va.gov hm# 319-337-5047

Linn Mar – Doug Miller miller4@ccr.net 6923 Candlewick Dr NE Cedar Rapids, IA 52402 373-2628

Marion Indians – Phil Lala lalaland@mcleodusa.net

Marion Indians - Jamie Jones Secretary/Treasurer jonez101@mchsi.com

Mount Vernon - Paul Tuerler pat_dat@mchsi.com hm# 895-6757, cell #533-2534

Saints – Al Caslavka accaslav@rockwellcollins.com hm# 319-395-7626

Saints – James Tipton 373-1287 tiptonJ@mchsi.com

Warriors - Bud Griffin dgri684032@aol.com

Umpire-in-Chief: – Ben Long Benjamin.Long@loras.edu or Joy/Brian Long, 1631 Emerald Ct. Robins, hm# 378-1017, cell #560-6502, fax# 378-1051 unclenube@fmtcs.com

Advisory Board members are volunteer representatives from each major participating baseball organization and any participating independents that are willing to attend special meetings and assist in organizational duties, such as forming guidelines, establishing procedures and setting goals.

USSSA

Positive Sports Training (PST) is a member of USSSA (United States Specialty Sports Association). Each team will declare if they are an A, AA, AAA or Major team, and pay a yearly membership fee. Your team will then be given a USSSA number which can be used for any USSSA sponsored tournaments.

Before your first game, your roster needs to be filed on the iowaussa web site. Please refer to the “Roster” section later in this handbook for guidelines.

Any Player who before May 1st of the current season reaches an age above the level which he plays is not eligible to participate in that division. Example: If you play in the 10U division, you cannot turn 11 before May 1st of that season. See rule IV of USSSA rules.

USSSA TEAM CLASSIFICATION GUIDELINES

USSSA offers four levels (classifications) of play: Major, AAA, AA, and A

The guidelines below are to help determine your classification. The ultimate classification is determined by the overall strength of your team. Teams may be reclassified at *any* time by the Iowa USSSA State Office. Teams must play in at least the same division as they finished the previous season if not the next higher classification. **YOU CANNOT DROP DOWN.**

MAJOR

An all start team that plays competitively almost every weekend. This is a strong team that competes on a national level successfully.

AAA

An all star team that plays competitively most of the time. This is a team that competes successfully in their region. One step below Major.

AA

A team that has restricted rosters, drafted players. This is a team that competes successfully at the league level and has some limited success in area tournaments. Most school based teams fall in this category. One step below AAA teams.

A

A team that is a drafted league level, or recreational team. This is a team that doesn't play a lot of tournaments and has very limited success playing teams in the levels above them. One step below AA teams.

Any team that is reforming from the PREVIOUS season, must start the CURRENT season in the same class that they finished the PREVIOUS season. Exception: Teams that won more than 90% of their games in that class the previous season, must move up a classification, or a team that chooses to, regardless of record, move up a classification. If four (4) or more players from a

PREVIOUS roster are on a new team, that team must classify as the PREVIOUS team's classification that those said players played on the prior season.

Complete USSSA rules can be found on their web site: www.ussa.com or www.iowaussa.com. See exceptions under "Game Procedures."

Iowa USSSA State Director: Bob Egr
2714 Caulder Ave Des Moines, IA 50321
Tel# 515-256-0490 fax# 800-966-0637
e-mail: bob@iowaussa.com.

Eastern Iowa USSSA Director: Rick Smejkal.
Tel# 319-270-4000
e-mail: rsmejkal@mmimail.com

Baseballs

Balls are preordered at the January meeting for \$26.50 per dozen. [Each ball has the Eastern Iowa League Logo on it.](#) You are not required to buy balls through the league. Teams will each have to provide reasonably good usable, not necessarily new, balls to the umpire for league games, which you will get back. Many tournaments also require that you provide 2 or 3 new balls when checking in.

Age Commissioners

Every age group shall have a volunteer commissioner for the A-Upper, A-Lower and AA divisions as necessary and possible. The commissioner's duties include; aiding in the scheduling process, recording and reporting the league standings via e-mail to Jim Ecker by noon on Thursday at jim.ecker@gazettecommunications.com, and helping to determine USSSA status for new and existing teams in their respective age groups.

Cancellations

Cancellations will only be made in very extreme situations. They should be done ASAP in the season and only rare exceptions will be accepted. A one-week notice at minimum must be given. The team canceling the scheduled game will need to call:

- The Umpire-in-Chief to change the master schedule and the umpire schedule
- The umpire(s) scheduled to do the game
- The field manager to correct the field schedule
- The age commissioner
- Copy an e-mail to the Sec/Treasurer and the President.

Consistent problems with a team in this area will result in a dismissal from the league with no refunds given.

Schedule Changes

Schedule changes can be made on a mutually agreeable basis. Meaning BOTH teams agree to reschedule a game already set in the master schedule. If a new location is needed and not available through the efforts of the teams involved, the President will need to be contacted to check available fields. BEFORE you contact the President, have two or three dates in mind.

If you have a field, please notify the President, Umpire-in-Chief, and scheduled umpires of the changes ASAP. We need to keep the master schedule up to date throughout the year.

Remember, YOUR GAMES AFFECT MORE THAN JUST YOUR TEAM!

Rain Outs

City Line is no longer available. The City of Cedar Rapids has a new number for information. Coaches determine playability as early as possible and then notify; 1) umpires (not responsible to pay umpire if cancelled in advance due to weather), 2) field manager, 3) team members, and 4) the opposing team. Once the game is in progress, the umpire determines playability. If lightning is present, the game must be suspended immediately (not one out or a ½ inning later). If game is suspended the umpires still get paid.

Rain Out Numbers:

Cedar Rapids City Diamonds _____
Iowa City _____
Kirkwood _____
Cedar Hills _____

TO RESCHEDULE a game or double header that is rained out, get with the opposing coach to determine two or three possible make-up dates. Contact the President to see if there are any fields available. If a field is available and scheduled, the *coaches* are responsible for contacting and scheduling umpires for the makeup. They do not have to be the umpires scheduled for the original game(s). Refer to the Umpire Contact List for available personnel.

Conduct

Coaches Conduct: You are a role model. Not every call will be perfect, nor will every play go your way. Always show sportsmanship and set a positive example for not only your players, but also parents. Judgment calls are at the discretion of the umpire, and yes there is always going to be a questionable call. Questioning an umpire on an interpretation or explanation of a rule should be done appropriately showing professionalism and respect.

As the head coach, it is your responsibility to control the behavior of your other coaches, players and your parents. If any of your players demonstrate poor sportsmanship, for example by throwing bats, helmets or swearing, the umpire has authority to warn the player first, then the coach. If the behavior continues, the player, coach or parent will be ejected from the game and/or asked to leave the area around the field. The responsibility is yours to deal with the situation and shouldn't have to fall on the umpires. The same is true for unruly parents or your assistant coaches.

Use of alcohol or tobacco products during games or on the playing field is prohibited. Any situation regarding inappropriate behavior by coaches or umpires should be reported to a member of the Executive Board to investigate. After all information is gathered and if determined to be founded, the following disciplinary action will result:

1st Offense - a warning will be issued

2nd Offense - a one-week suspension from all league activities

3rd Offense - person will be asked to leave their position in the league. In the case of parents, they will be asked to no longer attend games.

Parent Conduct: Positive cheering or even disappointed reactions are part of being a fan, but insist that your parents or spectators don't, 1) coach from the stands, 2) heckle the umpires, and 3) make negative demeaning comments about the other team in an outspoken manner.

Player Conduct: You should not only be teaching good baseball, but also good sportsmanship. This can be achieved by enforcing rules, discipline and positive examples. Players throwing gloves, helmets, or bats; swearing, disrespecting umpires or other players should be encouraged to observe some time with the coach... on the bench.

No jewelry or exposed body piercings of any kind will be allowed.

The Golden Rule can always be applied.

Diamonds

PST (league) teams play in Cedar Rapids city parks (C Street, Cherry Hill, Daniels, Ellis, Hayes, Jones upper and lower, Kirkwood, and Noelridge). We also play away games at diamonds such as Kennedy, Palo, Catholic Parishes, Hiawatha parks, Marion parks, Iowa City parks, Hills, Solon, Walford, and Mt Vernon.

Setups and Maintenance: The league is responsible for maintenance and setups of: Hayes, lower and upper Jones, and Daniels (14U). The fields should already be setup when arriving, but "Post Game Field Procedures" must be shared by both teams (exception is Daniels where both setup and post game procedures are taken care of by the umpire). **DO NOT** dig up plates, base pegs or Pitching rubbers for any reason.

Field Marking Procedure: Batter's boxes are 3' x 4' with six inch offset from the plate, extending approximately 1 ft in front of the plate. Foul lines flush with the outer edge of the base. Coaching boxes can vary. Upper Jones and Hayes have two home plates and two sets of baselines, 13U using 80ft base paths and 14U using 90ft base paths.

Post Game Field Procedure: All holes should be raked full, base plugs installed if they exist, the mound should be raked and tamped. If a clay mound, cover with tarpaulin. If a tractor is available, drag infield, but do not mark for next game. Keep a trash bag in your equipment bag at all times and remove trash from the field and dugouts.

Equipment

- a. Metal spikes are prohibited for ages 12 and below.
- b. Catchers must wear protective gear: chest protector, shin guards, cup and mask (skull caps no longer allowed – must be hockey style). Mask must be worn by any player warming up a pitcher.
- c. All players, even players coaching bases, bat boys and girls must wear batting helmets when outside the dugout. Players called out, at home or at any base, must not remove their helmet until in the dugout.
- d. Bats are not restricted for league play. Keep in mind for 13U & 14U teams that stamped, certified -3's are mandatory for High School and many tournaments do have restrictions.

Rosters

Every team registering to play as a member of the Positive Sports Training, Eastern Iowa Youth Baseball League must submit an official roster online, and submit a copy of your online roster at the scheduling meeting. Copies of the submitted rosters will be available by request during the season. Only players on the roster submitted at the scheduling meeting are eligible to play league games. Any team found to be using ineligible players in any game will forfeit that game, and the coach will be sanctioned (to be determined). Reference IOWA USSSA guidelines, located at <http://www.iowaussa.com/handouts/Roster%20Requirements.pdf>.

Exception: If the coach of the team with a player that is not considered eligible discusses with the opposing coach and it is agreed to let the player participate. This cannot be the rule, only the occasional exception. The player MUST have an insurance waiver on file with Positive Sports Training.

Registration

Teams must be registered by February 15th. Registration forms will be sent out via e-mail prior to the January meeting and also copies will be available at the meeting. Your USSSA fee (\$20.00), Insurance fee, baseballs if needed, Equipment Fee (\$10.00), and Scheduling Fee (\$15.00) must be paid at time of registration.

Fees

Equipment Fee: Every team is charged a \$10.00 equipment fee. This fee helps the league provide equipment such as rakes, bases, tractor (purchases; parts and repair), chalk, etc., for the diamonds that we have to maintain. Due at registration.

Game Fee: There is a \$5.00 fee, per game scheduled, to pay for field usage. If you are the home team and playing on your home diamond, then your fee is waived, *plus* you get the \$5.00 fee from the visiting team. An exception is if playing in Iowa City or Hills, then the fee is \$14.50 for a single game and \$23.50 for a double header, and there is no home team. **Example 1:** Your home field is Mt Vernon, you schedule 6 games @ home and 9 games away - you owe \$15.00. **Example 2:** You

have no home field and play all your 15 games away - you owe \$75.00. **Example 3:** You play 10 games @ your own field and 5 games away, the league owes you \$25.00.

Scheduling Fee: Every Team is charged a \$15.00 scheduling fee. This fee goes to the Umpire-in-Chief for cross scheduling the games and umpires. Due at registration.

USSSA Fee: The league is a member of USSSA, so all teams must have a USSSA number. The fee is \$20.00 for all teams, regardless of your determined/registered level of play – i.e. A, AA, AAA or Major. Due at registration.

Insurance: Every team must have insurance. It can be purchased through the league at \$65.00 for teams 8U-12U and \$85.00 for teams 13U-17U. See more details under “Insurance” header later in this publication. Due at registration.

Field Managers

C- St: _____

Cherry Hill: _____

Daniels: _____

Ellis: _____

Hayes: Cyndy Staton hm# 363-9123 cell# 721-6921

Hiawatha: _____

Hills: _____

Iowa City Parks and Rec - 1st contact: Patrick Clemence (319)358-9972

Patrick.clemance@pearson.com or 2nd contact: Mike Moran, Director, Iowa City Parks and Recreation Department Tel# 319-356-5100, e-mail: mike-moran@iowa-city.org

Jones: _____

Kirkwood: Charlie Visek _____

Marion: _____

Noelridge: _____

Game Procedures

Pre-Game: Contact the umpire(s) (refer to the Umpire Contact List) and opponents (refer to Coaches Contact List) **two days prior** to confirm date, start time and location.

Always have your Coaches Contact information, birth certificates, insurance certificate(s), and first-aid kit with you at all games and practices.

Game Warm-up: Teams should arrive early to get properly stretched, check field conditions and setup. Give the opposing team your lineup at least 15 minutes prior to start time, discuss with opposing team and umpires the rules and terms of the game or games. Examples of discussion:

- 1) If your team is participating in league standings and you are playing a double header, does the first or second game count toward standings.
- 2) Are you going to play/bat your entire roster.
- 3) Strictness of the balk call.

Please try to remember to pay the umpires before the game(s) starts.

Teams may warm up in the outfield but the infield is never used for warm up unless both teams agree to take infield prior to the game start time.

Game Rules: The league uses USSSA rules, which can be printed from their web site www.ussa.com or www.iowaussa.com.

Game Length: 8-12U games are 6 innings or 1 ½ hours whichever comes first with no new inning starting after 1 ½ hours. 13U- and above games are 7 innings or 2 hours whichever comes first with no new inning starting after 2 hours. 7 inning games can be modified if daylight restrictions exist. Both teams must agree to the changes. You can either limit the games to 1-1/2 hour as stated above and/or play two 5 or 6 inning games. If a shortened game is agreed to, there is no modification allowed after the start of the game.

Balks: In ages 10 and below, pitchers will be allowed some leniency in regards to balks. Pitchers will be called for major violations and warned for minor violations that do not affect the outcome of the game. 11U and above will be enforced.

Home team shall be decided by coin flip or by some mutually agreeable arrangement. (Usually if playing a double header, the teams switch as the home team the second game.)

Exceptions to the USSSA Rules:

The League does not enforce bat restriction, but keep in mind for 13U & 14U teams that certified - 3's are mandatory for high school and many tournaments do have restrictions.

PST also encourages that for league play, you bat your entire roster and not conform to the 9 player 1 EP rule (if one team doesn't want to play entire roster they cannot prevent the other team from doing so).

Show good sportsmanship and if the score is one sided stop stealing bases, change your players around, throw someone that usually doesn't pitch, **don't humiliate the other team**. Sometimes it can be touchy to decide, especially at early ages because the score can vary 10 points an inning. Just be aware and try to do the right thing. Treat your competitors like you would want to be treated.

Injury

Coaches are encouraged to purchase or put together small medical kits (Band-Aids, antiseptics, ice packs, towels, etc.) You should also carry with you to all games and practices, emergency contact information and numbers for each player AND coach.

All coaches should have a method of contacting and directing emergency personnel to the scene of an injury. Having someone on your staff that is CPR or first-aid trained would be very beneficial. Error on the side of caution when dealing with an injury.

Any claim against insurance should be directed to the League President's attention. Claims cannot be processed without a pre-signed valid insurance waiver. **ANY AND ALL SERIOUS INJURIES**

NEED TO BE REPORTED TO THE LEAGUE PRESIDENT ASAP AFTER IT HAPPENS – REGARDLESS OF INSURANCE CLAIM.

Insurance

Every team must have insurance – this IS *mandatory*. Insurance can be purchased through the league, but it is not a necessity. Every player and coach must sign an insurance waiver and have it on file with Positive Sports Training before any activity begins – including practice.

Cost for insurance is:

\$65.00 for 8U -12U

\$85.00 for 13U-17U

Certificates of Insurance are mailed directly to the named. Copies of the certificates will be e-mailed to you and claim forms so you can carry your proof of insurance necessary for most tournaments and your practice fields. List of additional insured certificates holders are: Cedar Rapids Public Schools and The Archdiocese of Dubuque and St Jude, St Josephs, St Elizabeth's, St Pius, Regis, Xavier. College Community Schools. Eastern Iowa Positive Sports. AAYBA. City of Iowa City Parks And Recreation, City of Hills, City of Marion, City of Hiawatha, City of Robins, City of Cedar Rapids, City of Palo.

Our insurance policy is effective from March 1 to March 1.

League Standings

Teams can participate in league standings by playing every team in their division a predetermined equal amount of times. The amount of games for standings is determined each year depending on number of teams that are in each age group, division (A, AA), and are participating. Teams can choose not to participate and play any team in or out of their division and/or age group. Scores need to go to the age commissioners every Sunday from the games played the prior week. They will be recorded and sent to Jim Ecker at jim.ecker@gazettecommunications.com by noon each Thursday so they can be posted in the Cedar Rapids Gazette.

If you choose NOT to participate in league standings, you will need to register as and “Independent” league member.

League Tournament

The league tournament for 2006 is scheduled for June 17th and 18th. If and when possible an A and AA division will be offered. Jim Ecker with the Cougar program is in charge of this tournament. All net profits come back to the league. It is not a requirement to participate in this tournament whether you participate in league standings or not. Teams outside of our league will not be allowed to participate.

Scheduling

Make a team calendar and bring it to each meeting. Block off all your tournament dates and any other dates that your team members won't be available. 13U and 14U coaches have to remember that school track can be a conflict. Keep in mind if scheduling double headers, that school is not out until the first week in June. Double check your calendar with the opposing team calendar and the master calendar. Verify all have the same information which should include both team names, age, date, time, place, single game or double header and if umpire/umpires needed. If participating in league standings, schedule with the other teams in your division first. You can schedule outside of your division and outside of your age group if you so desire. League games usually commence the last week or 10 days in April and run 2-4th week in July. See the "Cancellations" section.

Umpires

We have an Umpire-in-Chief to help recruit, train and schedule umpires for our league and its participants. The Umpire-in-Chief is a paid position in the Positive Sports Training organization. The person holding this position has the final say under the Executive Board regarding all umpires and umpiring issues.

For younger ages 8U, 9U, 10U, only one umpire will be scheduled unless specifically requested or if an umpire "team" decides to work together – you are NOT obligated to pay both. 11U and 12U, you should have two umpires but if both teams agree, you can choose to only have one, but should be designated on your scheduling sheet. 13U and above, which are played on regulation sized diamonds, should always have two umpires. The league is trying to utilize certified umpires, but in some circumstances due to the number of teams and lack of umpires, we will have to use some non-certified umps. The Umpire-in-Chief will try to schedule a non along with a certified.

Examples:

- 1 certified alone single game - \$35.00 (ea team pays \$17.50)
- 1 non-certified alone single game \$25.00 (ea team pays 12.50)
- 1 certified alone double header - \$70.00 (ea team pays \$35.00)
- 1 non certified alone double header - \$50.00 (ea team pays \$25.00)
- 1 certified \$30.00 & 1 non \$20.00 single game (each team pays \$15.00 to certified & \$10.00 to non-certified)
- 2 certified single game - \$30.00 to each (each team pays one umpire \$30.00)
- 2 non-certified single game - \$20.00 to ea (ea team pays one ump \$20.00)

Please try to remember to pay the umpires prior to the game.

Have a pre-game conference with the opposing coach and umpire to go over rules of the game. See "Game Procedures."

Umpires are human and make mistakes. It always seems to be easier to call the game from the bench or stands than on the field. **Getting and keeping umpires is a very difficult task.** If anyone thinks it could be a rewarding experience for them, please contact the Umpire-in-Chief for information. See "Rules of Conduct" section.

Have a great season and good luck to all of you!