WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS TO PLAYING IN THE MBA?

Challenging Superior Players in Minnesota since 1988

SUMMARY

The Minnesota Baseball Alliance (MBA) is an amateur baseball league set up to accommodate both travel and in-house leagues. Established in 1988, MBA has teams competing in 18 age brackets from 9 through Unlimited; in 2005 Minnesota AABC has had the Stan Musial League, which is the unlimited age league. While participation is High School Attendance residence restrictions, players come primarily from Albertville, Andover, Anoka, Arden Hills, Becker, Big Lake, Blaine, Brooklyn Center, Brooklyn Park, Buffalo, Cambridge, Champlin, Clear Lake, Coon Rapids, Crystal, Dayton, Delano, East Bethel, Elk River, Foreston, Forest Lake, Golden Valley, Graham, Ham Lake, Isanti, Langola, Maple Grove, Mayhew Lake, Milaca, Minden, Minneapolis, Monticello, Mora, Mounds View, New Brighton, New Hope, North Oaks, Oak Grove, Osseo, Otsego, Plymouth, Princeton, Ramsey, Robbinsdale, Rogers, Roseville, St. Cloud, St. Francis, St. Michael, Sartell, Sauk Rapids, Shoreview, Soderville, Spring Lake Park, Vadnais Heights, Watab, White Bear Lake and Zimmerman. **Uncompensated private volunteers administer the program.**

The MBA league season, which extends from late spring (May-June) through the end of July, includes approximately 16 league games, which permits games in independently scheduled outside tournaments during the season and later competitively awarded post season tournament opportunities. MBA is affiliated with the Minnesota American Amateur Baseball Congress as well as the American Amateur Baseball Congress. For the Mickey Mantle level they are crossed registered in Babe Ruth and Junior Legion.

Teams organized by the communities are admitted by application and payment of league fees. Organizations should also arrange for use of a school or park baseball facility as a home field for the season. MBA team Registration forms is available from the website or the MBA Guide Book.

MBA convenes an annual meeting in January, which is open to anyone interested in the program. Meeting details and general program information may be obtained by contacting MBA in the following ways:

Mail:	P.O. Box 474, Champlin, MN 55316-0474
E-Mail:	mba@qwestoffice.net
Website:	www.mnmba.com

ORGANIZATION

MBA is a non-profit corporation governed by a Board of Directors consisting of five Officers, assisted by a nine member Advisory Board. Officers are elected bi-annually, for two-year terms, in January. Advisory Board members are elected annually, for one-year terms. Day to day management is entrusted to an Executive Committee of three elected Officers.

MBA Officers may, but need not, be community members and may or may not have children playing in the program. Advisory Board members are appointed from the ranks of community representatives, team managers and coaches. Specific individuals may hold more than one elective office. MBA Officers and Advisory Board members receive no monetary compensation.

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ELIGIBILITY

Eligibility of a player for participation in an MBA league is established by: (1) age certification – establishing calendar age, in full years, as of April 30, (2) amateur status – as defined by the AABC, (3) good standing – not under suspension by MBA or by any other amateur sports program, and (4) roster signing – properly signed player/parent commitment and waiver documents. Managers must be adults and must meet the "good standing" requirement. There is the High School Attendance residence restriction.

Players may not play simultaneously for more than one MBA team. Players are not prohibited, however, from simultaneously playing for another team in a different program (Park & Recreation, Little League, American Legion, for example). However, players' primary allegiance must be to their MBA teams, and failure to meet their MBA team responsibilities (including, in particular, failure to appear and compete in an awarded post season tournament due to absence while playing for another team) may, depending on circumstances, be grounds for suspension from the MBA program.

Players initially signed may be removed from a team roster by the team manager (with Community Representatives approval) and may afterwards be signed to another team roster, subject to certain date restrictions. Players released from a roster at their own request, however, may not be signed by another team if the players' release request was made after the original team's first league game.

All teams which register and pay the required fees and deposits by April 15 are accepted for MBA league membership unless they are under suspension by another program or unless the MBA Board has some other similarly reason to deny their admission.

Ongoing eligibility of both teams and players is contingent upon their continuing adherence to the rules and philosophies of the MBA. MBA rules of conduct apply on the field and also off the field whenever players, coaches, parents or other spectators are congregated together as a team or are acting on behalf of the team or are wearing any identifiable part of the team's uniform. MBA will support coaches in reasonable disciplinary actions toward players, including those necessary to address parental misconduct.

LEAGUE PHILOSOPHY

The Objective of the Minnesota Baseball Alliance is to implant firmly in the boys and girls of all communities the ideas of good sportsmanship, honest, loyalty, courage and respect, so that they may be well adjusted, stronger and happier children and will grow to be good, decent, healthy and trustworthy men and women. Managers, coaches, players, members and spectators of the Minnesota Baseball Alliance program are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that furthers the Objective of the Minnesota Baseball Alliance. Provide for, and to promote, the Minnesota Baseball Alliance for the benefit and enjoyment of all the communities.

Over the years, a number of MBA players have advanced to play collegiate baseball – accomplishments in which MBA takes considerable pride. For the vast majority of players who do not move on to advancement play, however MBA is still proud to have contributed to success in their high school baseball careers and to have provided them an environment conductive to development of a work ethic, focus and determination which will serve them well as they move on to address life's more important aspirations.

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BASEBALL RULES

MBA rules, like those of many amateur baseball programs, are based on the Major League Rules with some modifications primarily to promote: (1) higher safety levels – pitching restrictions, no jewelry, bat restrictions, (2) game speed-up – six or seven innings, mercy run rules, and (3) broader player participation – number if innings a player must play, starter re-entry and eight player continuation.

MBA further modifies the Major League Rules: (1) generally, to acknowledge administrative differences between scholastic and private programs and (2) specifically, by individual league, to acknowledge the major differences in player age, size, strength and experience.

LEAGUE FORMATS

MBA league designation and player ages (full year as of April 30) are as follows:

NAME	AGE BRACKET	CLASS
Willie Mays	9-10 & Under	"AAA"
Jackie Robertson	9-10 & Under	"AAA – B"
Willie Mays	9-10 & Under	"AA"
Gil Hodges	11 & Under	"AAA"
Pee Wee Reese	12 & Under	"AAA"
Pee Wee Reese	12 & Under	"AAA – B"
Pee Wee Reese	11-12 & Under	"AA"
Sandy Koufax	13 & Under	"AAA"
Sandy Koufax	14 & Under	"AAA"
Sandy Koufax	14 & Under	"AAA – B"
Sandy Koufax	13-14 & Under	"AA"
Mickey Mantle	15 & Under	"AAA"
Mickey Mantle	16 & Under	"AAA"
Mickey Mantle	16 & Under	"AAA – B"
Mickey Mantle	15-16 & Under	"AA"
Don Mattingly	17 & Under	"AAA"
Connie Mack	18 & Under	"AAA"
Stan Musial	Unlimited	"AAA"

In the "AAA" and "AAA – B" leagues, teams usually play in a single pool of teams and compete for a single league championship and for one unified group of awarded post-season tournament berths. While these leagues may be divided into different sections for scheduling purposes, such sections are not considered as separate competitive entities.

In order to promote more uniform levels of competition, leagues are frequently divided into "AAA" and "AA" classes, with assignment by relative competitive ability. The objective, for the most part realized, is that the better teams in Class "AAA" will be assured of consistently strong competition and that dominant stronger teams will not consistently overwhelm the developing teams in Class "AA". The two classes compete for separate championships and in the award of post-season tournament berths. The assignment of teams initially to their respective classes and the subsequent award of tournament berths are based primarily on MBA assessment of the teams' relative competitive ability as demonstrated in league competition.

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LEAGUE SCHEDULES

The typical league will have a schedule of approximately 16 games as determined by the MBA Board and Community Representatives assessment of various factors, including the league structure, the number of teams, travel distance, and the length of the season. Individual team schedules are developed by the MBA, within the parameters established by the Board.

For the younger Willie Mays and Pee Wee Reese players, the league season typically begins in early to mid-may. The older Mickey Mantle and Connie Mack leagues usually start in lat May due to high school rules prohibiting non-scholastic play until the end of a player's school season. Sandy Koufax teams may begin the middle of May if they do not have players engaged in middle, junior or high school play. Playing seasons typically end for the younger leagues in early July and for the older leagues in mid-July, as dictated by the starting dates for the post-season tournaments.

The typical league schedule leaves opportunities for teams to participate in independent tournaments during the season. Most teams play as many, or more, games in tournaments as they do in actual league competition. A combined total of 40 games are not unusual, and some especially ambitious teams have accumulated 60 games, or even more. MBA encourages tournament competition and can provide help in locating opportunities.

POST SEASON TOURNAMENTS

MBA is allotted a number of berths in the State sponsored by the Minnesota American Amateur Baseball Congress (MNAABC) and Regional stages of the World Series tournaments sponsored by the American Amateur Baseball Congress (AABC). In total, these berths are usually equal to about a third of the total MBA teams. MBA awards these berths to individual teams based on performance in league play.

Teams in the "AAA" awarded tournament berths may invite a certain number of players from other league teams to play with them in these tournaments. These invitations are issued in a "draft" process, the order of which is determined by the qualifying teams' order of finish in league play. Players are not required to accept draft invitations, but refusal of any invitation makes the player ineligible for any subsequent invitation for that post season period.

The final championship stage of these World Series tournaments usually occurs in late July or early August. As a practical matter, however, many teams are eliminated in the first phase, and very few survive to the final stage. Travel outside the local area is frequently required, even at the first stage, and the distance typically increases as play advances toward the championship stage. While MBA pays awarded post-season tournament entry fees, travel expense is, in most cases, the responsibility solely of the participants.

The "AA" teams will only participate in a State Tournament with no further advancement.

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UNDERSTANDINGS

Baseball, like any other sport, carries with it the risk of serious or even fatal injury to both participants and spectators. There are similarly risks associated with travel and other activities incidental to the sport. Players and parents must accept these risks as an unavoidable consequence of participation and may not hold MBA responsible.

MBA requires that its teams be secured with acceptable amateur sports insurance coverage to the American Amateur Baseball Congress, MBA's primary national sanctioning body. MBA participants should satisfy that this coverage meets their needs.

MBA does not have the resources to investigate not the expertise to certify the competence; judgment or character of team managers and coaches and, accordingly, MBA accepts no responsibility for harm resulting from failure, negligence or even malice on their part. Parents and players must exercise vigilance and immediately remove themselves from situations of possible harm and must, simultaneously, report their concerns to MBA officials.

While MBA strives to be reasonable, fair and impartial in its administration, it does not warrant that its actions, policies, rules and decisions will, in all cases, be free of any unfavorable impact on program participants. MBA will, upon request, review issues of concerns, but it cannot assure complete satisfaction for all parties on all questions.

FINANCES

The cost of fielding an MBA team can vary widely. Some expenses are essentially the same for all teams, the MBA fees. All MBA teams receive the following with their fees:

- AABC National Dues
- MNAABC State Dues
- MBA League Dues
- AAU Dues
- Pony Baseball Dues
- Babe Ruth Dues
- Jr. Legion Dues
- MBA Patches
- MBA Pins
- Scorebook
- Major League Rule Book
- AABC Rules Book ("AAA")
- Coaches Guide Manual
- Simplified Child Abuse/Molestation Manual
- Complete Game Schedule
- Access to website
- Umpires (Mickey Mantle)
- General Liability
- Participant Coverage

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Other expenses can vary greatly, depending on individual team circumstances and preferences (uniforms, equipment, field rentals, tournaments and travel, etc.).

Most teams rely for funding on a variety of sources, including local business sponsors, fund raising programs, individual player fees and, in some cases, local community support.

Some groups have developed programs to support multiple teams in different MBA age leagues. This approach can dramatically reduce some costs by recycling uniforms and equipment and by securing quantity purchase discounts, for example, and it can also increase team income by expanding sponsor bases and fund raising activities.

"Simplified Child Abuse/Molestation Risk Management Program"

POSITION STATEMENT

MBA and its Affiliate Members shall not knowingly permit any applicant or member convicted of a crime against persons or a crime of violence, to become or remain in any volunteer position in the organization. If background checks reveal convictions of any crimes within the timeframe laid out in the Disqualification Criteria section, the person's application shall be rejected or the applicant or member will be dismissed from any position she or he holds in the organization.

As a prerequisite for participation, any adult who care, custody or control of youth participants in any youth program or activity is required to successfully complete a Background Check. This condition applies to youth programs or activities sponsored by American Amateur Baseball Congress (AABC), Minnesota American Amateur Baseball Congress (MNAABC), Minnesota Baseball Alliance (MBA), or Local Organization that is a Member of any of the three (3) listed above.

Any convection older than those guidelines set forth in the Disqualification Criteria section may be considered by the MBA Risk Manager in determining, the applicant or member suitability for the position, but will not automatically disqualify the applicant or member.

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OTHER LEAGUE COMPERISON

Comparisons to see how other National Organization are for the Leading Off and Stealing in their Regional and World Series Tournaments. Y= Yes and N= NO.

	Leading Off/Stealing			
National Organization	**10's**	**11's**	**12's**	**Website**
AABC	Y/Y	Y/Y	Y?Y	http://www.aabc.us/
AAU	Y/Y	Y/Y	Y/Y	http://image.aausports.org/handbooks/baseball/baseball_handbook.pdf
Babe Ruth	Y/Y	Y/Y	Y/Y	http://www.baberuthleague.org/60to70.htm
Continental	Y/Y	Y/Y	Y/Y	http://www.cababaseball.com/CABA06/rulebook.pdf
Little League	N/N	N/N	N/N	http://www.littleleague.org/
Pony	Y/Y	Y/Y	Y/Y	http://www.pony.org/files/home/52977%20Boys%20R&R%20book.pdf
USSSA	Y/Y	Y/Y	Y/Y	http://www.usssabaseball.org/content/reports/USSSABaseballBylaws&Rules.2006.AMENDED

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INFORMATION

MBA maintains an Internet website which has become the primary means of communication with all of its team managers and coaches. The website is also accessible by players and parents, local media organizations, prospective program participants and the general public. To visit the website, simply point your Internet browser to www.mnmba.com.

While some technical information on the website is available only to community representatives, team managers and coaches, most information is also available to website guests.

Prospective team organizations can access, complete and submit team Admission Application forms directly to MBA.

Prospects and any current participants needing additional information may also contact MBA directly, as follows:

Mail: P.O. Box 474, Champlin, MN 55316-0474
E-mail: mba@qwestoffice.net
Phone: 763-433-8355

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