

High Point Baseball Club

Overview

The High Point Pony organization is dedicated to providing the citizens of High Point and its surrounding communities with quality recreational baseball and softball programs for players of all skill levels.

Over the past several years many communities have seen their recreational programs shrink and in some cases all but disappear. While there are surely many factors involved, one of the big contributing factors is the increased popularity and availability of travel/tournament baseball and softball programs. The number of players and coaches leaving community programs to enter travel/tournament programs seems to increase each year.

High Point Pony recognizes the challenges presented by the increasing “competition” from travel programs. We believe that players who might choose to leave our programs in pursuit of the challenge and regimen of travel programs should at least be provided an alternative option to remain in our community programs. Having these players and coaches remain in High Point Pony is a big benefit to the entire organization. Likewise, avoiding the sometimes overwhelming time and financial commitment that travel programs demand is a benefit to the players who remain in HPP programs.

Additionally, while High Point Pony has a history of great success in local sectional All Star play it has become increasingly difficult to compete once our teams reach regional play. A large part of this competitive imbalance is the reality that in most of the other organizations in our multi-state region the players that play in the rec league and are ultimately are selected to the All Star teams are also playing full tournament schedules together on separate tournament teams. This provides a significant amount of team unity and collective field awareness that cannot be gained in a few weeks between the end of the regular season and the start of All Star tournament season.

With this in mind High Point Pony is endeavoring to create a “hybrid” program which has many of the accelerated development elements of travel / tournament programs. This new program in all leagues and ages is operating under the umbrella of the High Point Pony Baseball Club. At the forefront of the goals for the program are to provide a reasonable alternative to full-on travel ball inside of HPP and to increase competitiveness in summer All Star play.

What is the High Point Pony Baseball Club?

Founded in the Fall of 2021, HPBC is a player development program intended to provide a more focused instructional environment than a typical recreational environment can provide. Currently HPPBC is in a trial phase in two of the baseball divisions. The developmental teams in these divisions are a separate team and players in the developmental program are only participating in HPP on the developmental team.

Each of the HPBC teams is playing a full schedule of games against other HPP recreational teams. However, the HPBC teams are not eligible to compete for championships in HPP divisional play. As an alternative to the recreational divisional tournaments, the HPPBC teams will be participating in several local non-HPP tournaments throughout the Spring and early Summer.

The long-term plan for HPBC is to have developmental teams only during the first year players play in each age division. In this manner, the players participation in HPPBC will get focused development

when they “move up” in age groups to the next division. After a year of being in the developmental programs, players will return to be part of recreational teams for their last year of play.

How can players become involved with the High Point Pony Baseball Club?

The initial player pool for HPBC teams will be the players from the All Star teams. If some of those players choose not to continue in the HPPBC program then a tryout process will be held to fill any open spots on the team.

It is important to note that there is no assumption or guarantee that players participating in the HPPBC program are going to automatically be selected for Summer All Star play the following season. Likewise, HPPBC coaches are not assumed to be All Star coaches. The HPP board of directors will select All Star coaches near the end of each Spring season and the division coaches and All Star coaches will adhere to the current All Star evaluation and selection process. As such, HPPBC participants will be evaluated for All Stars along with every other player trying out.

Sample Developmental path starting with the 8U All Star Team

The following description and diagram is intended to assist everyone in seeing the “big picture” and understanding the flow of player development in the HPBC, HPP Rec and HPP All Star programs.

Let’s follow a given player from his (or her) 8U All Star selection (from the HPP Pinto division). That player would compete with his team for the entirety of the Summer All Star season. At the conclusion of that season, he and his teammates would be given the opportunity to join the HPPBC 9U developmental program. If he accepts he would then participate on the HPBC 9U developmental team during the Fall season in his first year in the HPP Mustang division. That team would play a full schedule in addition to local non-HPP tournament play against non-HPP travel/tournament teams. Likewise, the following Spring the HPP 9U developmental team would compete in the HPP Mustang division as a separate team and continue to develop while playing non-HPP tournaments.

At the end of the Spring season the HPPBC 9U developmental team is dissolved and the players on the developmental team will be evaluated along with all other players for All Star play. Whether our sample player makes an All Star team (or not) he will be returned to the regular HPP Player Pool in the Fall season and be drafted onto a HPP Mustang team. Likewise, the following Spring (his last season in Mustang) he will be evaluated and drafted onto a HPP Mustang team. Following the Spring season he will be evaluated for All Star tryouts.

For the sake of this example let’s assume he is selected to participate on the HPP Mustang 10U All Star team. Following the Summer All Star schedule he will again get the opportunity to participate in the HPPBC developmental program at the 11U Bronco level and the cycle will begin again. He would participate with HPBC for his 11U season and be returned to the player pool for his 12U season. And so on.