



North Toronto Baseball Association



8U AAA / Select (2012)

Combined Program

Mission Statement: Our overall goal is to provide the opportunity and support to help players find out how good they can be as individuals and as a team at something they have chosen as one of their favourite extracurricular activities. We believe that by taking this approach, we will create an environment where all the participants in the program will be set up for success, as they learn that the real competition is not with other players or even other teams, but with themselves. We believe that by enabling the players to develop themselves into strong baseball athletes, they will learn important life lessons that can be replicated in other parts of their lives and in the future.

Guiding Principles: Our objective is to approach the program in a manner consistent with the following themes:

- Fun! Structured. Variety of activities.
- Long-term Athlete Development (LTAD) model ABC's + P + MT
 - o A = Agility; B = Balance; C = Coordination
 - o P = Power; MT = Mental Toughness
- AAA and Select to be viewed as part of the same competitive baseball program over the long-term
- Reinforcing values the players are learning at home: respect; hard work; cooperation with others; striving for excellence; the importance of having a good time!
- Transparency
- Total team effort: players; coaches; parents; fans; NTBA
- Baseball as #1 sporting priority during outdoor season
- [Note that baseball is not expected to be the players' #1 sporting priority during the winter season. This is consistent with the LTAD model.]
- Please watch our Intro Video! <http://www.ntbaseball.com/video-introduction-to-rep-and-select/>



North Toronto A's 8U AAA – 2019



#1 LUCY

#7 SHANE

#9 ZAIN

#11 BRYCE

#19 BENNY

#20 CLIVE



#24 LUKE

#26 COOPER

#45 SAM

#57 MAX

#75 QUENTIN

#88 JORY







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SUMMARY NOTES

- I. AAA and Select as a combined program
 - Recognizing that players develop and grow at different rates
 - Ensuring long-term health and success of the program
 - Shared resources (coaching and professional instruction; facilities; practices) and equivalent training opportunities so there will be no structural development disadvantage at Select level
 - Select players will be called-up as frequently as possible and try-outs will remain open each year to allow for certain players to play their way onto the AAA team
 - AAA and Select try-outs held at the same time
 - Day 1: NHL-Combine style assessment
 - Day 2: Baseball skill assessments
 - Day 3: Final try-out: both teams finalized by Sunday Sept. 8, 2019.
 - Roster target: 13 players per team
- II. Estimated Short-term and Long-term Timeline
 - Sept 2019: try-outs
 - Late Nov 2019—Apr 2020 indoor training at Baseline and UCC dome
 - May 2020: Outdoor baseball! Pure development approach
 - June 2020: Transition to competitive approach
 - 8U (2020) and 9U (2021) seasons: 3 tournaments + TBA and OBA Championships
 - 10U (2022): Pitching!
 - 11U / 12U (2023 / 2024): U.S. Tournaments, including Cooperstown!
 - 13U and beyond: Ontario Elimination Tournaments – which lead to Nationals
- III. Expectations
 - a. Volunteering
 - NTBA (North Toronto Baseball Association) is a volunteer organization (not pay-for-service), so this will only work properly if everyone chips in!
 - b. July Break
 - 8U/9U (2020/2021): 4 weeks
 - 10U and above: Guidance from NTBA: 2 weeks. Please read note below.
 - c. Estimated fees and other expenses
 - Assuming we achieve similar sponsorship contributions as in 2019, team fees <\$2,000 per player
 - Note that there will be individual family expenses as well (uniforms; hotels; August baseball camp). See summary budget below.

Thank you for your interest! Please register as per the instructions below. If you are interested in further details, feel free to read the appendices of this note.

Coach Tim and Coach Randy

Appendices

I. AAA and Select as a Combined Program

The AAA and Select teams will function as part of the same program over the long-term, rather than two largely disconnected teams. Players do not develop and grow at the same rate, so there will be opportunities for kids to play their way onto the AAA team, and the AAA team will utilize Select players as call-ups as frequently as possible. To ensure that this relationship functions properly over the long-term, the Select development path and training opportunities will be roughly consistent with those of the AAA teams. The implications of this approach include:

- The AAA teams and Select teams will share facilities.
 - o For example, **our winter training from late November – April will consist of: (1) one weeknight session per week at Baseline Sports, a first-class indoor baseball training facility near Downsview Park (day/time TBD), and (2) practices in the Upper Canada College dome facility on every second Sunday from 7:30am – 9:30am between late November – mid-March (already booked).**
 - These practices will be shared between the AAA and Select teams, with some of the activities being run together, and some of the activities being run separately, with each team using their half of the dome.
 - Option A: We are hoping to have the Baseline training for both teams running on the same night and at the same time as well, but this scheduling is handled by NTBA, so we will wait for confirmation. I have already requested that we be offered the same training times in adjacent spaces at Baseline.
 - Option B: If there are too many conflicts (especially with hockey), it may be better for the program to have these training sessions on different nights so that players can opt into a session that is more convenient. We will sort this out after the teams are selected in September.
- Professional coaching resources will be shared between AAA and Select.
- Coach Tim and Coach Randy will be Special Advisors to the Select team over the long-term, and we will choose and support the coaching staff.
- Uniforms will be identical to facilitate call-ups. AAA players will choose preferred numbers first, then Select players will choose preferred numbers so there is no overlap.
- Note that the Select team players will be expected to play in the NT House League system during the 8U (2020) and 9U (2021) years.
 - o As of the 10U year (2022), it is expected that the Select team will declare as an “A” or “AA” team, and would then no longer participate in House League.

Combined AAA/Select Try-outs

- Both the AAA and Select teams will carry 13 players. Although traditionally 12-player rosters were the norm, there are new pitching rules coming in that require increased rest time for pitchers. Therefore, by the time our teams reach 10U in the 2022 season when pitching begins, we will need to develop more pitchers than in previous years, and therefore we need to develop more players in the earlier years.
- Try-outs for the AAA and Select teams will be held at the same time at the same location
 - o The try-out schedule will proceed as follows (all sessions at Oriole Park: 201 Oriole Pkwy near Chaplin Crescent/Davisville and Yonge St.)
 - **Day #1: Tuesday, September 3rd, 2019 @ 5:30pm – 8:00pm**
 - NHL Combine-style general physical fitness assessment (see details below)

- **Day #2: Thursday, September 5th 5:30pm – 8:00pm**
 - Baseball skill assessments

First round of cuts

- **Day #3: Saturday, September 7th 6:00pm – 8:00pm**

Final AAA and Select team selections made during the day on Sunday, September 8th. Offers must be responded to on the same day, as we will need to offer spots to other players if necessary.

- Registration deadline: Monday, September 2nd, but please send an email with the following information to Coach Tim as early as possible as these will be highly structured sessions that need to be tightly organized in advance.
 - **Player registration info:** pls send to Coach Tim: timobrien99@gmail.com:
 - Name
 - Phone number
 - Address and major intersection
 - Birthdate
 - Current team; baseball development program; camps
 - Guardian(s) email contact info
 - Confirmation that you have read Page 1 & 2 of this Intro document and have shown your player the videos to prep them for Day #1 of try-outs (link below).
- One-time try-out fee: \$10 to cover materials costs and payments to evaluators (older NT baseball players)
- Note that we may be using TeamGenius, (<https://www.myteamgenius.com/>) to log performance during the try-outs.

Try-out plan: Day #1

NHL Combine-style general physical fitness assessment (tentatively: Tuesday Sept 3, 2019 5:30pm-8:30pm)

Two stages with 6 stations per stage for a total of 12 stations/assessments, selected based on the following Long-term Development Athlete goals + Power + Mental Toughness:

ABC's = agility; balance; coordination; P = power; MT = mental toughness

Stage 1

- 1.1 Standing Vertical Jump [P]
- 1.2 65' timed sprint: 1 x to 1B; 1 x to 2B with slide (assess whether player slides properly) [S]
- 1.3 Accuracy throws (against the vertical board) [C]
- 1.4 Running long jump: no need to land balanced on two feet; feel free to fall/step forward after landing [P;A]
- 1.5 Agility run (zig zag run with pylons) [A]
- 1.6 Long balance walks (on the balance beams: 1 x straight walk; 1 x carrying something in front; 1 x carrying something in each hand to the side) [B]

Stage 2

2.1 Running vertical jump [P;A]

2.2 Juggling [C]

2.3 Hardest throw - measured using radar gun [P;C]

2.4 Interview

2.5 Longest throw [P;C]

2.6 Standing long jump – landing balanced on two feet [P;A;B]

Try-out videos: Please show the associated videos (where applicable) to your athlete so they will know in advance what will be expected of them. This will help to keep things on track.

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/uupcsehv8mljkz1/AABch2pjInzu7EDIKtHCFhZa?dl=0>

Try-out plan: Day #2: TBD but focus will be on core baseball skill assessments

Try-out plan: Day #3: TBD

II. Estimated Short-term and Long-term Timeline

(this is the AAA timeline; the Select timeline is expected to be largely consistent)

Sept 2019	Try-outs and team selection	AAA and Select at same time
Sept 2019	Fall ball	Practices and exhibition games
Sep/Oct/Nov 2019?	Parents' meeting	Combined AAA and Select
Late Nov 2019	Winter training begins	Every 2 nd Sunday at UCC dome; one weeknight at Baseline. <u>Option A:</u> AAA and Select teams training at same time – some shared activities; some separate. <u>Option B:</u> If too many (hockey) conflicts, we may run practices on two different nights to accommodate schedules. [Note that baseball is not expected to be the players' #1 sporting priority during the winter season. This is consistent with the LTAD model.]
Late April 2020	Boardgames at seniors' residence	We did this at Baycrest in April 2019, but if anyone has a relative in a residence who would like to host us, please let me know. We bring the board games and the kids will dress in full white uniforms. It's only a few hours on a weekend morning, but a nice team building activity, and a way for us to tip our hats to "the community" which has built and continues to maintain spaces for us to play through tax dollars.
May 2020	OUTDOOR BASEBALL!	Our AAA schedule in 2020 will likely be similar to 2019: <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Sun practice 9-11am at Oriole➤ Monday home games at Oriole (6pm or 6:30pm)➤ Tuesday practice at Oriole 6-8pm➤ Usually 1 away game per week; maybe a 2nd on the weekend

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ 3 tournaments in May/June (1 overnight) <p>Select schedule TBD.</p>
May 2020	PURE DEVELOPMENT APPROACH	In May, we will be using completely random batting orders and positioning. This should be a good learning experience for players and coaches as everyone gets a better sense of the players' skill sets and interests. Assistant coaches will also be rotated into different roles game-to-game.
June 2020	TRANSITION TO A COMPETITIVE APPROACH	<p>In June, we will transition to a more competitive approach of determining lineups and positioning. We will try to find a couple of positions where we feel the kids will be most likely to succeed and will take the kids' interests into consideration. Coaches will be given permanent roles.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Batting order will be organized to maximize our team strengths ➤ Batting order will be fluid – hard work at practice and at home by players trying to develop the proper technique and an aggressive attitude at the plate will be rewarded. Coachability is extremely important for the kids to develop proper technique. They really need to listen and be willing to make adjustments. ➤ Baserunning will be a consideration re: batting order. Players that are consistently alert and aggressive on the base paths will benefit in the batting order. Players need to run with 100% effort without slowing down and need to listen to and watch for base coaches. ➤ Sliding technique and mentality also a factor. ➤ Positioning will not be carved in stone, but repeated exposure to a couple of core positions will really help the kids to develop expertise and greatly increase their chances of making successful, and increasingly more complex plays in games <p>As always, communication lines will always be open between coaches, players, and parents/guardians, so this process will be completely transparent.</p>
June/July 2020	4-week break	Tentatively June 27 – July 26, 2020
August 17-20, 2020	Baseline camp	Mon-Thurs; Tentative dates
August 21/22/23, 2020	TBA's	Tentative dates; (Toronto Baseball Association Championships). Results determine which teams go to OBA's.
Sept 4/5/6, 2020	OBA's	Tentative dates; (Ontario Baseball Association Championships). In 2019, there are 16 teams in Ontario that declared as 8U AAA, and it is a 16-team tournament, so all 8U AAA teams will go to the OBA's in 2019. This is not always the case; sometimes TBA only receives a certain number of OBA "slots" and therefore placement in the TBA's determines who goes to OBA's and who doesn't.

Sept 9-13, 2020	Try-outs for 2021 season	2012 9U AAA and Select try-outs will again be held at the same time
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ And this annual cycle will repeat going forward (without the Development Approach month) ➤ Notable events planned for the years ahead are listed below 		
Labour Day weekend 2021 (9U)	Hosting OBA's	We will be hosting the OBA Championships at Goulding and Clanton fields. We will therefore be guaranteed entry into the tournament, but this will require a significant volunteer effort, led by two convenors: one for Goulding and one for Clanton. Note that at least one parent from each 9U AAA family in 2019 is volunteering. We will also have student volunteers from older NT baseball teams.
2022 season (10U)	Pitching!	No more pitching machine
Fall of 2022 (start of 11U)	U.S. tournament?	Possible U.S. tournament trip; they don't use pitching machines in the U.S. at 8U/9U so we can't plan a U.S. trip earlier than this.
2023 season (11U)	U.S. tournament?	
2024 season (12U)	Cooperstown, New York	Baseball Hall of Fame and tournament weekend; August long weekend?
2025 season (13U)	Elimination tournament	The elimination tournament is a province-wide tournament at the beginning of August. The winner of the elimination tournament goes on to Nationals.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ And this pattern continues beyond 13U... 		

North Toronto A's: 8U AAA
Toronto Baseball Association Championship Finalists!!! (2019)



III. Expectations

Volunteering

- NTBA is a volunteer-driven organization. The league President, Treasurer, Board and Committee Members, Coaches, and Team Managers are all volunteers. All fees are used for the enhancement of the baseball program.
- Therefore, it is important to distinguish this volunteer organization from a pay-for-service business. With this perspective in mind, please understand that parents/guardians are expected to be engaged in this program in some way beyond fee payment. There are plenty of important opportunities to fulfill these commitments:
 - o Team Manager
 - o Assistant Coach
 - o Away-tournament organizers
 - o Away-tournament food prep
 - o GameChanger data entry at games; preparing scouting reports for upcoming games based on data collected in GC on other teams through the season (and previous seasons!)
 - o Two convenors will be required in the 9U year (2021) when we host the Ontario Baseball Championships on Labour Day Weekend

July Break

- 8U (2020 season) and 9U (2021 season): **AAA and Select**: NTBA currently has a 4-week July break policy at the 8U and 9U age levels for AAA and Select. This policy is not expected to change, so we will also have a 4-week July break for both teams in 2020 and 2021. (Tentatively June 27 – July 26, 2020)
- **AAA from 10U**: Once the kids start playing with pitching, the game changes dramatically and a long break shortly before TBA's can sabotage the whole season. Therefore, NTBA is moving toward a 2-week policy for the July break for AAA starting from the 10U age cohort. This will be our 2022 season. While we will not be completely inflexible on this issue, it's important that everyone understand why the association is moving in this direction, why I agree with this perspective, and why we should all plan to work together to follow this guidance.
 - o At the 10U level with the introduction of pitching, it is not possible to maintain a high level of competitiveness in both batting and pitching terms after a 4-week break. In fact, the same is true of basic fielding as well.
 - o The Toronto Baseball Championships (TBA's) are held in mid-August. Therefore, teams taking a long break may have only two weeks to regain form in order to compete in this tournament.
 - Performance at TBA's determines which teams go to the Ontario Baseball Championships (OBA's) on Labour Day Weekend. Achieving entry to the OBA's and having a chance to win it all is the main competitive goal of the entire season.
 - Note that this year, at the 10U AAA level, only the winner of TBA's (out of six teams) gets to go to OBA's.
 - o The drop-off in performance for the 10U AAA team this year after the break was significant. In June, they were clearly one of the elite teams in the TBA. But then after the July month-long break, they came back and were easily "mercied" (beaten badly) by the two other elite teams in their league, neither of which takes more than two weeks off in July.
 - Here's what the drop looked like by the numbers (June vs. first two games back after a 4-week July break)
 - Team batting average: .363 dropped to .219
 - Hits per game: 9.6 down to 3.5
 - ERA: 4.8 up to 11

- Errors per game: 1.5 up to 5
- It just makes no sense to me to invest all of this time, effort, and money into winter training, and outdoor practices, tournaments, league games, development camps, and solo practice efforts, only to put the team into a position of clear weakness just before TBA's, with the season on the line.
- **Select from 10U:** As noted above, it is expected that the Select team would declare as either "A" or "AA" as of the 10U (2022) season. Even so, the guidance from the league is only for the AAA level at this time. Teams will need to decide on their own how to approach the July break. That said, it is really the rationale behind the NTBA guidance that is more important than the guidance itself. And since the Select TBA's are one week earlier than the AAA TBA's, the amount of time to recover from any performance drop will be even shorter.
- Note that there are expected to be numerous opportunities for Select call-ups to the AAA team in July.



Estimated team fees and other individual family expenses

	2020 rough budget estimate		Comments
Team Expenses	2012's		
Baseline winter training	-\$6,500	24%	\$325 per session x 20 sessions Nov-Apr
North Toronto Assoc fees	-\$5,500	20%	Admin and Committee fees; groundskeeping; baseballs; First Aid kits; coaching clinics/certification; OBA/TBA fees; player pix; TeamSnap fees; insurance; permits
Professional coach fees	-\$5,000	18%	
UCC Dome training fees	-\$2,400	9%	\$600 per session / 2 teams x 8 session Nov-Mar; every other Sunday
Tournament fees (3)	-\$2,000	7%	3 x May/June tournaments; TBA's; OBA's
Coaches' uniforms (x5) and parents' meeting expenses	-\$1,500	5%	
Umpires' fees	-\$1,500	5%	
Misc (incl bank fees; obstacle course materials)	-\$1,000	4%	
Team equipment	-\$750	3%	
Team bats	-\$600	2%	2 high quality team bats
Team banner and posters	-\$400	1%	
BP equipment	-\$375	1%	
GameChanger	-\$133	0%	
Total team expenses	-\$27,658		
Sponsorship assumptions: [In 2019 we raised \$3,000 (before family rebates of 25% per donation; 75% net to the team)]			Note that all sponsorships reduce family team fees by 25% of total donation. 75% net to the team
Sponsor #1: Team equipment	\$1,000		Catcher's gear etc.
Sponsor #2: Team Banner and posters	\$550		Posted at all games
Sponsor #3: Tournament #1 entry fee	\$550		We will play in 3 tournaments in May/June
Sponsor #4: One team bat	\$500		1 high quality team bat
Sponsor #5: BP equipment	\$500		Soft toss machine; bownet; tee
Sponsor #6: GameChanger	\$200		
Sponsorship goal:	\$3,300		
Total team expenses excluding sponsored items	-\$25,200		
Estimated team fee per family (13 families)	-\$1,938	Just an estimate for now	
Additional individual family expenses			
Uniforms	-\$500		
Hotels (x2 nights)	-\$500		We will have one overnight tournament
August Baseline day camp	-\$200		Likely Mon-Thurs Aug 17-20, 2020

Thank you!

Coach Tim and Coach Randy

2012 AAA and Select Competitive Baseball Program

North Toronto Baseball Association

