



## **Frequently Asked Questions - July 2017**

### **1. What makes the Gamers program different from other programs?**

This simply boils down to two things:

**Baseball training** - the Gamers program provides more hours and higher quality instruction than other programs. This starts in the winter, and carries over through the entire summer. Our players practice a lot and work hard.

**Coaching** - All Gamers teams at 14u and above are professionally coached (no dads). And, many of our 10-13u teams are professionally coached. All Gamers coaches go through extensive training in the Gamers approach and philosophy. We teach the same fundamentals across all teams in our program.

### **2. How much baseball training is included in the program?**

Over 100 hours of training from baseball professionals is included in our program for 12-17u players-- this includes the winter program, clinics, mini-camps, and twice weekly day practices during June/July. This training is from high quality instructors who know the kids in the program, and work with them from the first day of winter practice to late July.

Gamers training is just for our players and is not open to the general public.

### **3. Do the Gamers teams win lots of games?**

Some teams win lots of games and are among the top teams in the region and nation (in particular at HS ages). Other teams are solid .500 teams. Everyone in the Gamers program is very competitive. In the heat of competition, we want to win just as badly as other teams.

But, winning is not the goal of our program. We will not sacrifice our principles, coaching philosophy or players' health to win a game or a tournament. Our pitchers are on strict pitch count limits. At 10u-14u, players play multiple positions and bat at different spots in the order. We do not throw breaking balls until age 15, because they are dangerous if

thrown incorrectly and pitchers need to learn to pitch off their fastball to succeed at higher levels.

We would rather lose 10 games per year more than put at risk the health of young pitchers.

#### **4. How much time do the players really get with Matt Whiteside, Scott Cooper and Dave Pregon?**

Our lead instructional staff has over 30 years of professional baseball experience, with 18 years in MLB. These lead instructors know every player in the program. They work with them directly in the winter, 8 hours at mini-camps, and 20+ hours at day practice sessions in June and July. There is no other program in the region that offers this amount of high quality, direct instruction as a part of the program.

#### **5. What is the cost of the program? What are fundraising opportunities?**

The program cost for 2017 was as follows. 10-11u- \$2450 12u - \$2800 (excludes the cost of Cooperstown) 13u - - \$3000 14u - \$3200 15u - \$3400, 16u/17u - \$3700

For 14-17u players, the 2016 fees included the Velocity Plus ArmCare program for throwing velocity and arm health. This program costs \$450.

We have monthly payment options available to spread the payments through March 2018.

Note Fall Baseball is optional, and is in addition to the fees shown above.

This cost covers everything except uniform costs, travel costs, team bus trip costs and admission/gate fees at the tournament sites. For 12u, it does not include the cost of Cooperstown or Ripken Experience type events.

Fees are subject to change.

**The costs show above are BEFORE any fundraising.** If you choose not to do fundraising, then you will simply pay the amounts listed above.

Teams do fundraising on their own. We encourage and support these activities across the teams. In the past, active teams have been able to offset their program costs by an additional \$400.

## **6. What do you get for the fees?**

**Program clinics** - in the past these have included arm health, current Cardinal players, nutrition, college recruiting, weightlifting and mental skills.

Injury screening by Athletico, the top sports training and rehab group in the region.

Offseason training program – 2.5 hours of baseball + 60 minutes of sports training on Saturdays, plus 2 1/2 hour rep session on weeknights. This is 6 hours of intense baseball per week.

Note – the 10-11u program does not include Athletic Republic training and is a combination of 8 weeks directors practices plus 8 weeks of cage time.

4-8 hours of mini-camp at beginning of season

Weekly practice sessions run by team coach in March/April/May (10u-14u teams). This will be either 1 or 2x per week, depending on league schedules.

Team access to All-Star cages and mounds during off-peak hours

2 1/2 hour day practice sessions with Gamers lead instructors in June and July

Weekly team practices in June and July

10-13 tournaments and/or league fees, depending on age

Gamers College Baseball process for 15u-17u players (value >> \$500)

Please note that Travel costs, team bus trips and admissions/gate fees at tournament locations are NOT included in the fees. These fees will need to be paid separately.

## **7. Why is the Gamers program more expensive than some other alternatives?**

If our program is more expensive than other alternatives you have for this level of baseball, it is due to one of the following reasons:

- We have professional coaches (no "dad" head coaches) for all teams above 14u and many of the 10u-13u teams. There is

tremendous value to having a non-parent baseball professional in the dugout. It costs extra to do this. In our view, it is worth the extra costs to eliminate the unavoidable issues that come with "dad" coaches. At high school ages, we have 2 dedicated coaches per team.

- We have A LOT more training and player development built into the cost of the program. Training is not optional in our program. There is no comparison with other local programs regarding the amount and quality of training.
- We train at All-Star Performance, the best baseball facility in the Midwest – 60k square feet, 12 cages, full indoor infield, 150x50' turf area, 75'x75' turf area, 7 mounds.

### **8. Do the Gamers cut kids from the program?**

Our program goal is to retain 67-80% of the players as they move from one age group to another. At the end of the season, we go through a rigorous evaluation of each player. We look at Baseball Skills and at Gamer Qualities. Players that cannot compete at high levels of baseball are not invited back. Young players need to experience individual success in baseball (or they will quit). Players that do not have Gamer Qualities are not a good fit for the program and are not asked back.

### **9. How many games do your teams play? How much out of town travel should be expected?**

For 10u-14u, our teams will play in tournaments 2-3 weekends per month for April, May, June and July. So they will play in approximately 8-12 tournaments. Some teams play in weekday leagues also. This is usually 40-60 games. Keep in mind that we practice 1-2 days per week in April/May and 2 times per week once school is out.

The 10u-14u teams typically play in 2-4 out of town tournaments each summer.

### **A WELL-RUN PRACTICE IS MORE IMPORTANT THAT GAMES AT 10-14U and JUST AS IMPORTANT FOR 15-17u!!!**

For 15u-17u, our teams play every weekend from Memorial Day through August 1st. This is usually 9-10 tournaments and approximately 45-50 games. Some weekday games are also included. The 15u-17u teams practice 2 times per week once school is out. So, they play baseball six days per week.

**Compare this to other HS age programs, who practice at most 1x per week and limit their season to 7-8 weekends of baseball. It costs money to practice and play games. That is why other programs collect money upfront then cut their seasons and practices in mid-July or pretend that an off-weekend is a gift.**

Unfortunately, the 15u-17u teams have to travel to play top competition. We are trying to work with people to get more elite tournaments in the St. Louis area, but it has been challenging.

Here is what to expect regarding out of town travel:

15u => 5-6 trips 16/17u => 5-8 trips

### **10. Do you have a Fall Baseball Program?**

We have at least one team at each age group for Fall baseball. 14u-18u teams are professionally coached.

We strongly encourage Gamers players to play Fall baseball unless they have a direct conflict with soccer or football. Midwest players need the extra reps and game experience that Fall baseball offers. Also, it gives new players an opportunity to learn the Gamers system before the winter workouts start.

For 10u-13u Gamers, fall teams will practice on two weekends and play approximately 5 tournaments. The cost was \$250 last fall.

For 14u-15u Gamers, fall teams will practice on two weekends and play 6 local tournaments at the 16-18u age group. Last Fall, the cost was \$500.

For 16u Gamers, fall teams will practice on two weekends and play 6 tournaments, a combination of local tournaments and college showcase tournaments. Last Fall, the cost was \$600.

For 17u and 18u Gamers, fall teams will practice on one weekend and play in 6-8 college showcase tournaments. Last Fall, the cost was \$750 for position players and \$500 for primary pitchers.

### **11. Will the Gamers program get my son a college scholarship or get him drafted by professional baseball like other programs advertise?**

We can help. But, at the end of the day, your son will get an opportunity to play baseball in college (or pro ball) because he is a talented baseball

player, knows how to play the game the right way and is a good student. It all starts with those three things.

Talent might open up the doors to college and professional baseball. But, playing the game right and being a good student will ensure success once your son gets there.

We are never going to "make promises" or "sell the dream" of playing college baseball. We will do everything we can to prepare your son for success. The Gamers leaders are very knowledgeable, well connected and respected -- coaches and scouts return our phone calls.

We are willing to help, but it all starts with your son -- to play at the next level, he needs to be: Talented, Play the game the right way, and be a good Student. There are no shortcuts despite what other people may tell you.

We will help him focus on those 3 things. We cannot and will not make promises that we cannot keep.