

High-Performance Selection Policy

INTRODUCTION

This policy aims to outline the process of selecting athletes to represent Baseball NSW in all identified High-Performance Programs thereby enabling athletes to participate in all sanctioned events and competitions by Baseball NSW.

This policy may be amended or supplemented by Baseball NSW at its discretion. Specifically, where matters arise which have not been provided for in this policy or where the application of this policy would not achieve the intended outcomes, changes can be implemented forthwith. This policy is to be read in conjunction with the Baseball NSW Ethics and Expectations document (Policy Document 01).

PLAYER ELIGIBILITY

To be deemed eligible all athletes **must** meet the following requirements. The requirements include:

1. Hold a current membership and registration with an affiliated Baseball NSW club (i.e. be identifiable on the member database);
2. Meet the eligibility requirements for each National Championships as outlined in the Australian Baseball Federation National Championships Operation Manual;
3. Demonstrate a commitment and pay the specified levy in full before departure for the National Championships;
4. Uphold all components of the event organizer's, Australian Baseball Federation and Baseball NSW Code of Conduct including the BNSW Ethics and Expectations policy document (PD01);
5. Complete and return the forms required by the event organizer, ABF and Baseball NSW (to be distributed by the Executive Officer) and returned to the Executive Officer by the specified deadline;
6. Attend all selection trials as stipulated and all further sessions as advised;
7. Must compete in a Baseball NSW sanctioned competition;
8. Must complete the online registration form within the identified time frame.

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SELECTION OF ATHLETES AND THE RATIFICATION PROCESS

The selection process comprises two phases. The phases include the base data collection and squad formation, and the final team selections. All teams will be selected with consideration of objective and subjective measures (see the specific Selection Guidelines noted on page 4) and will be subject to ratification and endorsement by the Baseball NSW Board. The team members will be informed of their selection, by the office of Baseball NSW. Engagement and or communication before the official release and ratification process to other members, athletes and or parents by other parties other than Baseball NSW will result in disciplinary action.

ADDITIONAL PLAYERS NOMINATED TO THE SELECTED SQUAD OR TEAM

The Coaching staff, subject to the endorsement of the Baseball NSW Board, may add to the squad at any stage, subject to those athletes selected satisfying the requirements of players as stated in this policy. If the Baseball NSW Board has already endorsed the team the addition of players shall be managed through the General Manager Baseball NSW on the advice of the coaching staff and High-Performance Manager Baseball NSW.

SITUATIONS AND CIRCUMSTANCES NECESSITATING APPROVAL

In considering the performance of athletes at trials or other attendances required under this policy, the selectors may give weight to extenuating factors that may have impeded the performance of athletes during the selection process. This will be at the discretion of the selectors and will be discussed with the High-Performance Manager Baseball NSW before the approval in all instances. All such requests are to be made in writing to the High-Performance Manager Baseball NSW.

Athletes unable to perform or appear for the trials or other attendances required under this policy must advise Baseball NSW in writing of this fact as soon as practicable and the reasons before the commencement of the trials or requested attendances by Baseball NSW. Advice in writing is required to be forwarded to the High-Performance Manager in the first instance for notification and consideration. The High-Performance Manager will provide communication to the applicable party/parties regarding the outcome of the notification for consideration.

In the case of illness or injury, athletes will be required to provide a doctor's certificate or may be required to undergo a medical examination by a medical practitioner nominated by Baseball NSW. If a medical certificate has not been furnished the player/players will be excluded from further selection until submitted.

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REMOVAL OF ATHLETES FROM THE SELECTED SQUAD OR TEAM

Any athlete who breaches any of the following conditions is ineligible for selection to or continued membership of the squad or team. These include:

1. Demonstrated breaches or failure to observe this policy;
2. In the event of illness or injury where the identified player/players are unable to perform to the required standard as determined by the selection panel. This determination will be made following advice in writing from a medical practitioner. In such cases, the advice in writing must be received by the High-Performance Manager within five days of the initial notification. Progressive notifications and updates are to be made on weekly basis via telephone and in writing. Failure to provide the required documentation as stipulated will necessitate omission from the selected squad or team until medical clearance has been received by the High-Performance Manager Baseball NSW;
3. Breaches or failure to fulfil a requirement of the anti-doping policy of the ABF;
4. Failure to observe and adhere to the Baseball NSW Ethics and Expectations document (PDO1);
5. Failure to adhere fully to the specified training program. This includes participation in all the required training sessions, games or other nominated training requirements without approval for a leave of absence by the High-Performance Manager Baseball NSW; or
6. Non-payment of the specified levy for the program or team within the identified timeframe.

SELECTION GUIDELINES

The selection process comprises of two parts; the base data collection and squad formation (Part A) and the final selection of the team (Part B). All teams will be selected with consideration of the objective and subjective measures.

BASE DATA COLLECTION AND SQUAD FORMATION PART A

Part A of the selection process involves participation in four (4) sessions conducted over a two (2) week time period where the coaching staff, collect base data information on each athlete. This information is to be used to formulate the composition of a squad. All applicable information will be collated and after the two (2) weeks, and the NSW Teams Squads will be formed. The number of athletes in each squad will be determined by the coaching staff in conjunction with the High-Performance Manager Baseball NSW in all instances. If the coaching staff would like to repeat any of the sessions and extend Part A, liaison and discussion with the High-Performance Manager Baseball NSW is necessitated.

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The High-Performance Manager Baseball NSW must endorse any repetition or extension of the sessions. If this is the case communication will be forwarded via email and posted on the Baseball NSW website as soon as practicable.

Coaches may separate athletes who based on performance have been determined to be successful in the allocation to the squad and as such, concentrate their attention on athletes who have been assessed to be outside the skill range of the larger cohort or who are unknown.

Players may also be cut at any stage during Part A of the selection process. In all instances, the coaching staff are to record appropriately the rationale and justification of their decision. This justification is to be at a minimum a one-sentence assessment. There is a requirement at the end of the sessions that the coaches will provide the athletes with their times and velocity.

Part A of the assessment includes the following aspects:

1. Raw Tools - Run, Throw, Hit.
2. Controlled Skills - Field, throwing to bases, Bullpens, BP skills.
3. Game Sense - simulated and real game responses.
4. Squad Composition- ensuring the team has the appropriate number of players at required positions.

1. Raw Tools - Objective Measures (Run, Throw, Hit)

Coaches are to collect the run, throw and hit data for all athletes. There is a high correlation between the athletes that score well in these tests and successful selection in the team.

Run (60-yard sprint)

1. Test Protocol preparation includes the following:
2. Measure out sixty (60) yards in a straight line.
3. Utilise the best surface possible.
4. Run downwind.
5. Each athlete is to run twice.
6. Start at a base in the stealing stance.
7. Starter gives "ready" then cut arm/cap sharply down to start.
8. Athletes are to go when they see arm/cap start down.
9. Time off commences with the athlete's first movement.
10. Each player is to be given his or her time after each run attempt.
11. Minimum of 1 timekeeper per runner.
12. The best time will be recorded.

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Throw (Arm Strength)

Test Protocol:

1. For all radar gun testing, the gun (stalker) must be set to 'Range = high' and 'Setting' = 'ball Lo 50'.
2. The Coach who is using the radar gun stands in the cut off position in line with the player and base (can use a cutoff man here and stand next to them).
3. The Coach is to hit or roll balls to athletes in the right field. Players are to field the balls and throw to home or third base.
4. Players are to make between three (3) and five (5) throws in total.

Assessment

Coaches are to record the player's best score. Each player is to be provided with his or her velocity results following each attempt.

***NOTE- Throwing tests may vary between age groups and taking into account the time of year and throwing volume of athletes. Please note that this is at the discretion of Baseball NSW.**

Hit (Bat Speed)

Test Protocol:

1. The measurement of the exit speed of baseball off the bat using a radar gun.
2. Metal Bats are used to test for U14 and U16. Wood or wood composite is to be used for U18 (the newer the bat the better to maintain consistency).
3. Hit new/good baseballs off the tee.
4. Take the radar reading from in ten (10) to fifteen (15) metres in front of the hitter behind a safe screen.
5. Give the hitter a target (e.g. line drive height) to aim for.
6. The Player receives 5-6 swings at the tee.

Assessment:

- Only record the player's best score.
- Provide each player with their velocity results following each attempt to reinforce their learning.

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2. Controlled Skills - Subjective measures (Field / Throw / Hit)

Observation is used to assess the baseball actions for players as specifically outlined for each tool. Players' level of athleticism, body type, size and structure also assist in identifying players. Fast-twitch and explosive type movements and actions are also recorded.

Field (Infield)

Test Protocol:

- Locate athletes at each position and rotate through shortstop (except left-handers).
- Two coaches using fungo bats one hits to 3B and 2B (field and bucket), the other to shortstop.
- Players at shortstop throw to first base.
- Hit Regular / Forehand / Backhand / Slow Roller groundballs.
- Left-handers work at first base.
- 1B work even, behind and coming off the base and throw to second base.
- Hit Regular / Forehand / Backhand.
- Then a long throw and slow roller to third base.
- All players turn double plays through second base (if time permits).

Assessment:

- Provide a 3 - 2 - 1 score for fielding.
 - 3 = definite squad member standard for this tool
 - 2 = maybe a squad member (saw something you liked)
 - 1 = tool not sufficient for inclusion into the squad
- Area of Assessment – Look For 'Baseball Actions'
 - Athleticism / Range
 - Glove and Feet
 - Arm Action

Throw (Pitching)

Test Protocol:

- Bullpen- Pitching Coaches are to take players through a specified bullpen routine that allows players to display velocity, command and ability to throw secondary pitches.
- Bullpen routine will vary from age group to age group and be communicated to players at the trials.

Assessment:

- Provide a 3 - 2 - 1 score for pitching.
 - 3 = definite squad member standard for this tool
 - 2 = maybe a squad member (saw something you liked)
 - 1 = tool not sufficient for inclusion into the squad

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Area of Assessment – Look for ‘Baseball Actions’

- Body Synchronisation
- Arm Action
- Velocity
- Command
- Secondary Pitches

Use Bullpen Sheet to record Velocity and Command.

Hit

Test Protocol:

- Hitters to take swings on an open field from front toss or hack attack machine to provide consistency
- Allow hitters to get set – do not rush.
- Two (2) or more rounds per hitter as desired.

Assessment:

- Provide a 3 - 2 - 1 score for each area of assessment:
 - 3 = definite squad member standard for this tool
 - 2 = maybe a squad member (saw something you liked)
 - 1 = tool not sufficient for inclusion into the squad
- Areas of assessment:
 - Barrel Head Match Consistency (e.g. Line Drive Consistency)
 - Ball Flight
 - Body Synchronisation
 - Bat Speed
 - Power

3. Game Sense - Simulated Games

Simulated games provide the opportunity to assess players in real test and game-like situations.

Assessment:

- Provide a 3 - 2 - 1 score for each area of assessment:
 - 3 = definite squad member standard
 - 2 = maybe a squad member
 - 1 = does not meet standards to be included in the squad

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COLLATION OF DATA AND OVERALL ASSESSMENT

Each athlete is to be ranked in each category (run, throw, hit) from lowest to highest and slowest to fastest. Once this has been attended complete an overall ranking combining the Run/Throw/ Hit data (optional). Each tool is to be assessed and documented appropriately.

Using the Objective Measures and Subjective Tool Assessment categorise players as:

Definite / Bubble / No

FINAL TEAM SELECTION PART B

The last component of the process for the selection of athletes to the teams is phase B. This final phase of the team selection is to enable the players to be assessed through regular training and simulated games. Commencement of the squad training will be communicated to the athletes by the coaching staff or Executive Officer. This will enable the continued assessment of players before the final selection of the team by the coaching staff.

The following is the process that will be enacted before the final selection. This includes the following:

- Squad training will commence as outlined by the coaching staff or Executive Officer;
- The coaching staff will continually assess athletes through regular training and simulated games and document accordingly;
- The Head Coach is to liaise with the High-Performance Manager on the final team composition before submission to the General Manager Baseball NSW and the Baseball NSW Board;
- The Head Coach is required to contact the player/players that have been cut from this section and provide assessment and feedback information as outlined previously. This information will be discussed and communicated to the High-Performance Manager Baseball NSW before players are released from this section and will include at a minimum a one-sentence assessment for all cut athletes;
- Submit the final team rosters to the Baseball NSW office to ensure all players are financial and eligible for selection;
- Forward the final team rosters to the Baseball NSW Board via the General Manager for endorsement and ratification;
- The final team selected is to be notified in the first instance via email and then announced on the Baseball NSW website within the specified timeframes.

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SELECTION PANEL

The selection panel for the High-performance programs will consist of:

1. The High-Performance Manager Baseball NSW;
2. Head Coach;
3. Assistant Coaches.

Selectors outside of the above group may be included at the Head Coaches discretion; however, this is to be discussed with the High-Performance Manager Baseball NSW prior. The selector must be approved by the High-Performance Manager Baseball NSW and is cognizant of and willing to abide by the selection policy. Failure to adhere to the policy will result in omission from participating in the selection process. The selector must have completed all required Working with Children's checks and requirements stipulated by the High-Performance Manager Baseball NSW.

COMMUNICATION

Communication of a player's status on a squad or team will be forwarded via email from Baseball NSW. The communication will be forwarded to the email address provided at initial registration for the program. Athletes and parents will not be contacted via phone.

FEEDBACK RELATED TO PLAYER PERFORMANCE

Feedback regarding a player's performance will be provided after the trial to incorporate the objective measures of running time, hitting time and pitching velocity. In the event of a request for further feedback by the athlete or parent, if the athlete is under the age of eighteen years, the following is to be adhered to.

Feedback will only be provided for players under the following circumstances:

1. The request is placed in writing or via email;
2. The feedback request is directly related to the player in question. No feedback related to any other players will be provided in any circumstances;
3. Feedback will be restricted to objective testing and 3-2-1 assessment in particular fields;
4. If the coaching staff or the High-Performance Manager Baseball NSW is contacted directly by phone for feedback this will not be progressed until the request has been received in writing. This is to ensure that the appropriate documentation specifically about the identified player is available to ensure feedback is accurate.

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COMPLAINTS/GRIEVANCES AND APPEALS PROCESS

In the event of a complaint or a grievance the Board of Management of Baseball NSW, or its appointed Committee, will hear all appeals. The sole grounds for any appeal is prefaced on the fact that this policy was not properly followed and or implemented. There is no right of appeal against a decision of the selection panel in any instance. The following is the process for the management of all complaints and grievances.

1. All notices of appeals are to be made in writing via email within forty-eight (48) hours of the announcement of the team/squad and are to be addressed to the General Manager, Baseball NSW;
2. A deposit of \$100.00 (cash/electronic transfer/cheque) must accompany all notices of appeal. If the appeal is dismissed or found to be frivolous, the deposit will not be refunded;
3. Baseball NSW will convene a hearing as soon as possible after the submission of the grounds of appeal. The hearing may occur in such a manner as the Chairman Baseball NSW decides, including telephone or video conferencing. Baseball NSW is not bound by rules of evidence but must observe the principles of procedural fairness. No legal representation is permitted for the appellant concerning the conduct of the appeal;
4. If the athlete is under the age of eighteen years a parent representative is permissible to attend if required;
5. The outcome of the appeal will be recorded and sent in written correspondence to the appellant within five days of the panel meeting;
6. There is no further process for appeal.