

RSPA - How To Start A New Team - 2012

Revised: February 22, 2012

1. **Start early** - in March, and spread the word;
If you have a solid core of players, and females are priority, then the rest will follow.
Spread the word (and be positive), friends of friends, etc; pass the word on;
As the weather turns nicer, more players will turn up;
If you have a core of players, including female players, the league will have a list of players looking for a team. If you have a core of players, you can build on that.
The first RSPA League team rep meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, April 3, 2012.

2. **Number of Players:**
Optimum roster for a first year team is 14 players – 5 female and 9 males;
The batting order ratio allows all those players to bat; (4 more guys than gals);
If you have less, you risk defaulting games; if you have more, more players will have to sit;

3. **Cost** – the first question everybody asks;
Allow for a team fee of \$190.00 per player for the first year only; - see below;
(inquire about RSPA league subsidy for new teams)
If they complain about the money, forget them, as that cost is minimal compared to other sports; If you have a problem collecting money from them, cut them;
see #4 – Team Cost and #17 – Collecting Money;

4. **RSPA New Team Cost for 2012:** (tentatively the same as 2011)

League Fees (new team)	\$ 1600.00	drops to \$1350 for second year;
Tournament Fee	325.00	all teams must play one tournament;
Banquet Deposit	270.00	see #21 – Banquet
Equipment – bases	100.00	maybe reduced if used set is available;
Equipment – pitching mat	40.00	
Equipment – bats	0.00	hopefully, some players will have bats;
Balls	0.00	balls are supplied by the league;
Uniforms (see #6 below)	280.00	can really cut this if you wish, or go more;
TOTAL:	\$ 2615.00	comes out to \$186.79 per player with 14 players

5. **RSPA Team Cost for Second Year:**

League Fees (return team)	\$ 1350.00	(assuming costs stay the same)
Tournament Fee	325.00	all teams must play one tournament;
Banquet Deposit	270.00	see #21 – Banquet
Equipment – bases	0.00	
Equipment – pitching mat	0.00	
Equipment – bats	0.00	
Balls	0.00	balls are supplied by the league;
Uniforms (see #6 below)	0.00	
TOTAL:	\$ 1945.00	= \$140 per player (allow for some increase)

6. **Uniforms** – can be as simple as matching colour t-shirts (\$0.00-\$5.00), or as expensive as full button baseball shirts (\$35-\$80)
Order extra so you won't have to order more next year;
The cost of 2-3 additional shirts is expensive;
When the season starts, carry a spare uniform in case someone forgets theirs;
Shoes – make sure that all players wear some sort of cleat or turf shoe for better performance and for safety reasons. Metal cleats are forbidden.
7. **Nights** - Select what nights you and the majority of players are available; you may lose a player or two if they are not available on the night or nights that the majority of the team prefers;
8. **Parks** - Select what parks are available on those nights and which parks you prefer;
9. Avoid players who play for another team and are making your team the second priority. They may make your team better when they are there, but the other players who have to sit on the rare occasions that they do show up, will resent the fact.
Commitment beats talent any day. Hotheads and egos aren't good for just starting out.
10. Cater to your female players – they will make or break a coed team.
Always play all your female players; treat your girls like gold.
11. **Player Positions** – the only position that you cannot live without, is a pitcher;
Make sure that you have a starting pitcher, and that they know they will be pitching, and one or even two back-up pitchers;
Practice pitching by drawing a rectangle 24" wide by 36" deep, pace off 50 feet from there, and pitch with a 6-12 foot arc (basically just over a persons head).
12. **Practice** – set your first practice for the second week or middle of April;
The season starts first week of May, so you do not have that much time;
At your first practice, determine who can really play the level that they say they can play;
Don't worry about competitiveness; just focus on catching and throwing.
Determine who will be your shortstop and who will be your centre fielder;
Determine who is best suited to play infield, who is best in the outfield;
and a "swing" player that can play either infield or outfield is great;
Money – collect deposits at the first practice; see #17 – Money;
13. **Level of Ball** – do not worry if the players are not as good as they think;
What is important is that they are all basically the same level;
It does not matter what level the team is, RSPA will have a division suited for that level;
14. **Team Name** – pick a team name or vote on a team name;
15. **Running A Team:**
There is a fine line between being competitive, and being over-competitive;
The goal is to have fun; this is not the big leagues;
Just learn and play the basics. Know the rules.
Rotate your players fairly. Treat your girls like gold.

16. **Delegate** – don't do it alone; have someone help you with some of the duties:
- collecting money; on field coach; contacting players; etc.
17. **Money** – make sure you collect money from players **BEFORE** they play;
Do not pay it yourself and try to collect later; If you start with a problem collecting money, it will only get worse.
18. **Team** – make sure that every player understands, that it is not just about showing up five minutes before a game, throwing your shoes on and leaving when the game ends.
A slo-pitch team is a social commitment. Make sure your players show up early enough to warm up. After the game, do something together. Either find a bar sponsor (see #19 below) or go to someone's house. Also, every team has to play in one league tournament. And all teams are committed to a minimum of six banquet tickets. The RSPA League banquet is a great party – not to be missed. There are several other league functions that are optional, but let them know that their money goes toward these functions – the All-Star Night & Barbecue; Volleyball Night; Poker night; Euchre night; etc. Make sure the commitment is understood.
19. **Sponsor** – most teams will only be able to get a bar sponsor. RSPA will provide a list of bar sponsors that are looking for teams to sponsor, which would entail your team going back to that bar after your games; no bars (or very few bars) will give cash up front, specially if they don't know the team; most bars offer a percentage discount of your team's bill, and can offer it one of two ways: - off the bill each night, or save it up as a total; save it up as a total and you can use it for a year-end party or forward it to next year's league fees;
The percentage varies - normal is 10% if in cash; or 15% if taken as a year end party at the bar. Also push for a team freebie - free pizza, plate of wings or nachos, whatever the bar specializes in; They will stipulate a minimum number of players each night, usually 8, maybe as low as 6, before your sponsorship kicks in;
Most bar sponsors don't care about the name on the shirt, but some do;
ask if they have a deal on shirts; if they don't, the league will;
if they provide shirts, they will probably take it off whatever else they are going to give you;
20. **Tournament** – every team is required to enter one of the RSPA League Tournaments.
These will be held Saturday-Sunday; with 3 scheduled games on the Saturday, starting at about 9:30 am on the Saturday; it is an all-day event; 75% of the teams advance to Sunday with elimination games; play until you lose; Tournaments are a lot of fun, get a lot of playing time into one weekend and are a terrific team bonding experience.
2012 dates are May 5-6; June 9-10; July 14-15 & August 18-19;
21. **Banquet** – The RSPA League banquet is split into three (3) Saturday night parties;
2012 dates are: Saturday, October 13 & Saturday, October 20 & Saturday, October 27;
22. All the RSPA information is available on the web site at:
<http://www.slopitch1.com/rspa/index.htm>