



Frequently Asked Questions - June, 2021

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

This simply boils down to two things:

Player Development - 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 more and work harder than players in other programs. This is across all ages, 10-17u.

Coaching - All Gamers teams at 14u and above are professionally coached. All Gamers coaches go through extensive training in the our approach and philosophy. We teach the same fundamentals across all age groups in our program. Our 10-13u Gamers are instructed by some of the top coaches in the region for hitting, pitching, fielding and catching.

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

Over 100 hours of training from baseball professionals is included in our program for 10-17u players-- this includes the winter program, clinics, mini-camps, and in-season practices. This training is from high quality instructors and trained coaches who know the kids in the program, and work with them from the first day of winter practice to late July.

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



At 14u, we do not allow players that weigh over 140lbs to swing -5, USSSA bats. These bats are dangerous and destroy the integrity of the game. Our 14u teams would probably win an additional 5-8 games per year if they swung -5 bats like their opponents.

4. How experienced is the Gamers coaching staff?

The Gamers coaching staff has an average of over 6 years in our program and includes former professional and college players, many of which have been with us for more than 10 years. We now have a number of former Gamer players that have moved into our coaching staff. Our lead instructors work directly with every player in the program during winter training and summer practice sessions. 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 difference between the Gamers program and the Gamers Academy program?

As outlined above, the Gamers program is a comprehensive player development program that runs for 7 months for middle school players and 6 months for high school age players. The Academy program is designed to be more like other club programs in the region, with fewer games, fewer practices and a less demanding schedule. Academy teams can choose their appropriate level of competition. Academy players get access to All-Star Performance, the top training facility in the region, and have a clear path to move into the Gamers program for more training as they get older.

	 Gamers Academy	 Gamers Baseball
Age Groups	8U to 14U	10u to 17U
Number of teams	varies based on age group	3-4 teams at 10U to 14U 2-3 teams at 15U to 17U
Coaches	volunteer coaches	volunteer coaches (10U to 13U) professional coaches (14U to 17U)
Travel Commitment	limited to moderate	10U-13U limited 14U moderate 15U to 17U moderate to extensive
In-season Practice	2 hours per week	4-6 hours per week
Access to professional pitching, hitting, fielding and catching instructors (Mach 1)	individual	individual (10U-13U) Included (14U-17U)
Off-season team practice	12 weeks (2-3 hours per week)	12 weeks 2-3 hours per week (10U-13U) 4-6 hours per week (14U-17U)
Gamers professional coach-led off-season training	optional team training available	12 weeks (2-3 hours per week)
Gamers professional coach-led mini-camp	n/a	season opening weekend
Gamers professional coach-led summer practices	n/a	6 weeks (2-3 hours per week)
Average games per season (summer + fall ball)	varies based on team	65-75 games
Player characteristic	baseball is not necessarily the players #1 sport, wants to play at a competitive level that matches interest level.	baseball is the players #1 sport, interested in playing as much as possible as a desire to play at the highest level.
Program Fee (excludes optional fall baseball)	from \$1,500	from \$2,700
Average Uniform Cost	\$100	\$250

All Gamers Academy players are invited to annual tryouts if they are interested in transitioning into a Gamers program team

6. What is the cost of the Gamers program?

The program costs vary by age. Here is a breakdown for 2021:

Gamers Program 2021 Fee Structure

Age Group	Tournaments, Games (including paid)	In-Season Practice/ Training	Off-Season Practice/ Training	Technology Fee	Total Program Fees	Uniforms	Fall Baseball
15-17u	\$2225	\$790	\$1000	\$275	\$4290	\$50-250	\$750
14u	\$2150	\$740	\$1000	\$100	\$3990	\$50-250	\$550
13u	\$1900	\$700	\$800	—	\$3400	\$50-250	\$250
12u	\$1750	\$700	\$800	—	\$3250	\$50-250	\$250
10-11u	\$1400	\$600	\$700	—	\$2700	\$50-250	\$250
Academy Teams (7-14u)	\$850-\$1150	\$300	\$350	—	\$1500-\$1800	\$50-150	\$100-250

The costs above do not include travel costs, bus trip fees or gate fees. Players can reuse many items in our uniform package year after year, which allows parents to only buy what they need after the first year.

Fall Baseball is optional for Gamers, with participation ranging from 50-67% of players.

The lower costs of the Academy Program reflects the limited game schedule and less intense player development program. But, Academy teams still practice and play as much or more than many other club program teams.

Fees are subject to change. We collect a \$500 deposit upfront to hold a roster spot and then offer 4-6 month payments plans.

The costs shown 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 per player.

7. What do you get for the fees?

Here are the details:

Tournaments/Games

- At the 14-17u level, we play in the best tournaments regionally and nationally with two paid coaches per team. Typically this is 45-55 games.
- At 10-13u level we play an intensive summer schedule of 45-55 games and practice on the handful of weekends that we do not play. Games are coached by volunteer coaches (dads mostly) at this age group.

In-Season Player Development

- At the high school level, we practice/train 2-3x per week, with strength training included. The training is coordinated with Mach 1 Pitching and Mach 1 Hitting, two of the leading development programs in the region. This training runs for 11 weeks, from mid-May to the end of July.
- At the 10-14u level, teams practice 2x per week with practices led by combination of paid instructors and volunteer coaches. This runs for 4 months, April - July.
- Prior to opening day at each age, we run a four hour mini-camp that focuses on defensive fundamentals and team defensive plays. The sessions are led by paid coaches/instructors.

Off-season Player Development

- At the 14-17u level, we train 2x per week led by Mach 1 Instructors, which includes strength training up to 3x per week. Most players are in the facility 3 hours for each off-season session. These sessions run for 3 months - Dec - Feb.
- At the 10-13u level, paid Gamer coaches and Mach 1 instructors lead one practice per week and then team volunteer coaches repeat the same practice session one time per week. This continues from Jan 1 to March 31.
- Academic Review for all players. Players with GPA >3.25 names are posted on Academic Achievement Wall.

Technology and Tools

- 14-17u Gamers have full access during the offseason and in-season programs to:
 - [Rapsodo Pitching](#) (2 systems with Insight cameras)
 - [Hittrax](#) (2 systems)
 - [Blast Motion](#) (sensors/iPads to cover 200 players)
 - [eHack Pitching Machines](#) that reliably throw with game speed and movement (3 machines)
 - [Fungoman](#) fielding machines (2 machines)

- [Driveline TRAQ](#) programming software
- [Latest bat speed and constraint based hitting tools](#), including plyo balls, long/short bats, heavy/light bats
- [WinReality](#) pitch recognition and hitting systems (4 VR systems)
- [Latest pitching, arm care and recovery devices](#). The list is extremely long, but includes [MarcPro EMS](#) machines.
- 10-13u Gamers also have limited access to the tools above
- [SportRecruits](#) — the leading software tool for identifying colleges, communicating with college coaches and marketing yourself to college coaches. All Gamers 15-17u have SportsRecruits profiles.

Fall Baseball

- We highly recommend fall baseball for players that do not play football, soccer or hockey. Our fall rosters are made up entirely of players that will be in the program the following year. We do not bring in players just for the Fall season.
- Our 15-17u players play in the top regional and national events during the fall, including Perfect Game WWBA in Florida, PBR Invitational in Grand Park and Perfect Game Kernals Event in Iowa. A lot of college recruiting happens during September - October. Our fall season runs for 6 weeks.
- 10-14u players do not travel during the fall and typically play a 6 tournament schedule which is still very important for additional game reps.

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

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

- We have A LOT more training and player development built into the cost of the program. Training is not optional in our program. As detailed above, there is no comparison with other local programs regarding the amount and quality of training.
- We have professional coaches (no "volunteer" head coaches) for all teams above 14u and older. There is tremendous value to having non-parent baseball professionals 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 professional coaches per team.
- 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, outdoor infield and a fully outfitted D1 strength training room.

- We play in the top (and most expensive) tournaments in the region and country.

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. If we do a good job, that number is >80%.

At the end of the season, we go through an evaluation of each player. We look at Baseball Skills and at Gamer Qualities. Players that struggle to successfully 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. Gamer Qualities include:

- Work ethic
- Coachability
- Being a good teammate
- Following the Gamers style of play guidelines that relate to how we play the game.

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 3-4 weekends per month for April, May, June and July. So they will play in approximately 12-13 tournaments. Some teams play in weekday leagues also. This is usually 40-60 games. Keep in mind that we also practice 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.

For 15u-17u, our teams play every weekend from Memorial Day through August 1st. This is usually 10 tournaments and approximately 50 games. The 15u-17u teams practice 2-3 times per week once school is out. So, they play baseball six days per week.

Unfortunately, the 15u-17u teams have to travel more to play top competition.

Here is what to expect regarding out of town travel:

15u => 4-6 trips

16/17u => 5-7 trips

10. 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 or professional baseball. We will do everything we can to prepare your son for success. The Gamers directors 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 will not make promises that we cannot keep. And, we will be honest with you.

11. Will the Gamers get my son a coveted "early-commit" at 14/15 for a big name D1 school?

Early commitments at 14/15 years old are meaningless. They represent ZERO actual commitment from the college coaches, many of which will not even be on staff when you show up on campus in four years. If you are not at elite player at the age of 18/19, your scholarship and roster spot will be pulled without a second thought.

Early commitments make a small number of young players feels special, make parents feel super-special and provide marketing fuel to Showcase organizations trying to sell exposure. Although there is zero risk to college coaches, they still should know better and behave with more integrity since they are coaching in a sport where the whole concept of "early-commitment" is a farce.

So, no we are not going to jump through hoops to get your son a meaningless early commitment, We have had our fair share of players that committed at 14 and 15u. It almost never works out and sends all the wrong messages about player development and hard work.

There is not an easy path to success in baseball. People that tell you otherwise are selling snake-oil.