

Blastball Division

Coaches Package



Welcome to Blastball, an introduction to baseball that focuses on fun activities at stations which introduce and re-enforce fundamental baseball skills

Session Plan Methodology

- First and foremost, the kids should be having FUN!!!
- The program is centered around Five Cores – Throwing, Catching, Hitting, Fielding, Agility/Running
- Each practice session will incorporate all or most of the Cores with the objective of giving the players the opportunity to progress their development each week.
- ***Focus on them having safe fun, the skill development is hidden and will occur without most of them knowing about it.***

Important Dates

- April 2 – 6 -7:30 pm: Coaches and team managers' night at Elm Lawn Bowling Club
- April 5 – Fields Day: volunteers prep the field for play – fixing the sand, weeding, setting up the scoreboard, etc. (volunteers needed)
- April 8 – Blastball Starts!
- April 26 – Opening Day Parade and Celebrations. It goes from the Kerrisdale arena down 41st Ave to Elm Park. This coincides with Kerrisdale Days. You don't want to miss this. It was so much fun for kids and parents alike last year - even if rainy!
- April 27 – Photo Day at Elm Park
- June 1 – Coaches/Managers World Series Game (who says only kids can play?)
- June 14 – Closing Day at Elm Park

Season goals for Players – Blastball

Overall goal: Players will have a fun introduction to sport , learn various ways to move their bodies, listen to coaches, and work together with others	
Have fun	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Players will have a fun introduction to sport – learning various ways to move their bodies, listen to coaches, and work together with others
Throwing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Players should be able to grip a ball and take a step as they throw a ball- Most of the time be able to throw directionally at a target
Catching	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Able to throw a ball into the air and catch numerous times
Fielding	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Run to the ball, scoop with two hands- Throw left (to 1st base)
Hitting	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Proper stance- Swing flat- Solid contact with ball
Agility/Running	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Run through first base to the outside- Foot beside base consistently to start

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Practice Sessions (55 min session)

- Coaches, please try to arrive 10 minutes early each practice to get stations ready
- Day 1 will include handing out uniforms (remember this will take some time)
- Approx practice schedule:
 - o 5 min warmup
 - o 12 min per station (4 Stations, rotate clockwise)
 - o 2 min Take-a-knee finish debrief
- Adapt to your kids and pivot/change it up if they are losing attention. Keep them having fun!

Equipment:

- Equipment is located in the locked box beside each of the diamonds (Maple Grove South & North)
- Please ensure equipment is returned to box unless the T-Ball teams afterwards are using it and you can leave it out for them.

Field Set up/clean up:

- Teams will meet at their 'home cones' (near the star on map).
- Do the take-a-knee debrief in the field with players (they can get distracted back at their 'home cones' with their gear and parents) and do a final cheer to finish

Take-a-Knee (baseball tradition for wind-down/session debrief)

- Have players come up with one thing they liked about the game; one thing they did well in the game; and one thing they would like to work on for next game!
- Try to point out specific moments that you really liked (e.g. I like how you all worked as a team; I like how quickly you ran the bases; I saw a huge improvement in your throwing/hitting/etc today)

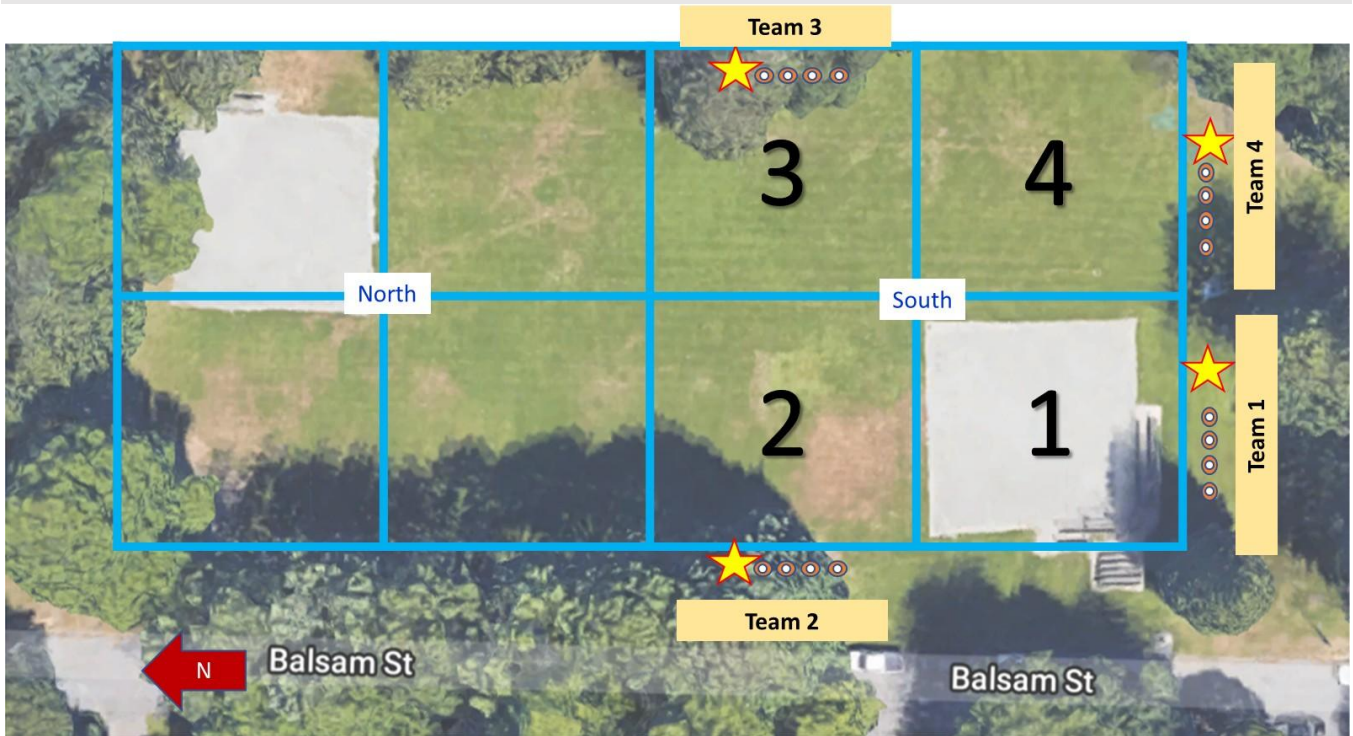
General tips for all sessions

- Ask lots of questions, especially at Take-a-Knee
- Kneel when talking to players (meet them at their level)
- Smile and Have fun yourself!!!!
- Don't worry about gloves (especially as some children may come with the wrong hand)
- Batting left or right? Hold the bat straight up and see how they naturally grip it with two hands

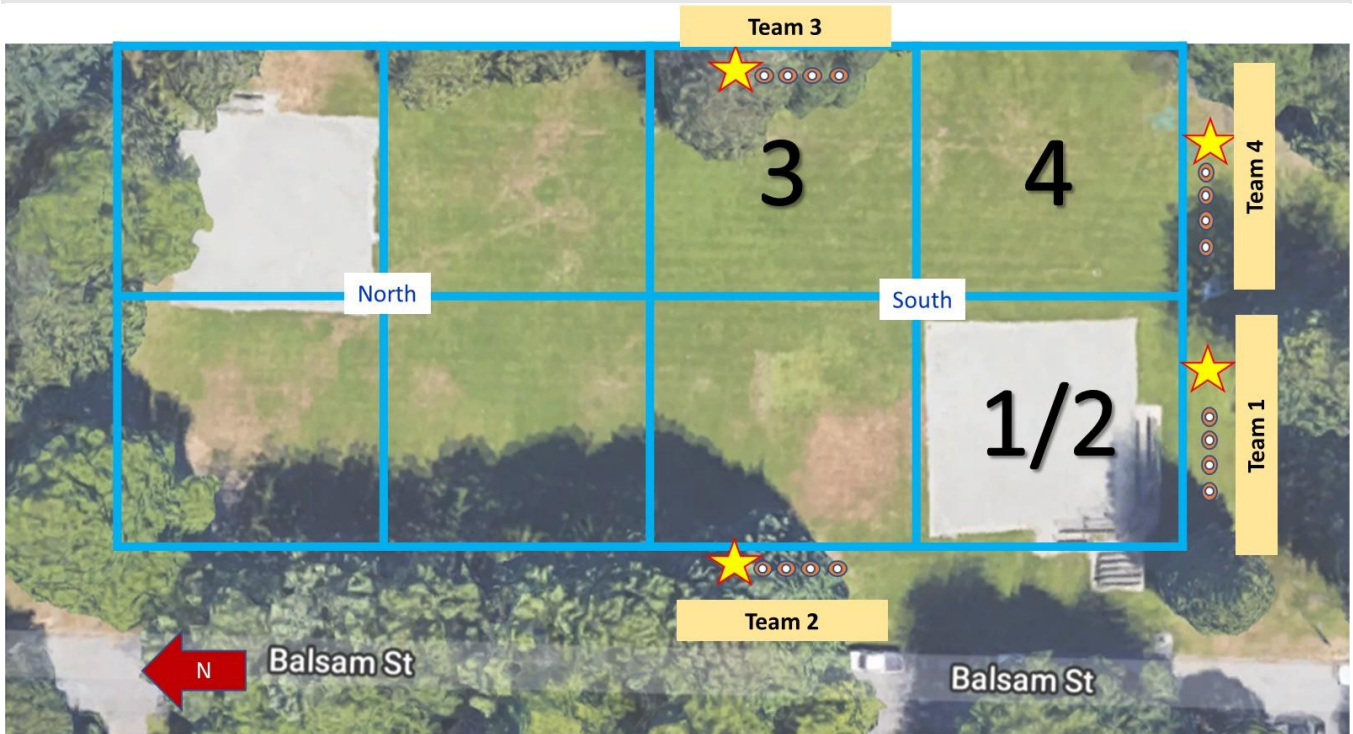
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Field Layout – Weeks 1-5



Field Layout – Weeks 6-10



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Weekly Practice Plan Schedule

Week	Day	1	2	3	4
1	Apr 8	Running Bases	Throwing	Catching	Hitting T
2	Apr 15	Fielding	Throwing	Catching	Hitting T
3	Apr 22	Running Bases	Throwing	Catching	Hitting T
4	Apr 29	Fielding	Throwing	Catching	Hitting T
5	May 6	Running Bases	Throwing	Catching	Hitting T
6	May 13	Batting Team	Fielding Team	Catching / Throwing	Hitting T
7	May 20	Batting Team	Fielding Team	Catching / Throwing	Hitting T
8	May 27	Batting Team	Fielding Team	Catching / Throwing	Hitting T
9	June 3	Batting Team	Fielding Team	Catching / Throwing	Hitting T
10	June 10	Batting Team	Fielding Team	Catching / Throwing	Hitting T

Catching – Rotate between the Toss and Catch, Coach to Player and other variants. Include Parents to get as many reps as possible

Throwing – Rotate through the Throwing Lessons Plans as you see works best for your team, work on rotating between Distance, Accuracy, One Knee Throwing, Rub/Grab/Throw – use creative targets

Batting Team – This is a station simulating a baseball game where the players will play through the order. Players will hit and then get to run from base to base on each next hit. No Outs.

Fielding Team – This is a station simulating a baseball game where the players will try to field the ball and get it thrown over to first base faster than the runner can get there. No Outs.

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Feedback

Tips for providing feedback

Focus on the process, not the outcome

- We often cheer VERY loud when the child hits the ball or target... but it's important to give positive feedback based on the technique or the effort **"wow, did you notice how when you took a step the ball went farther - what did that feel like?"** (this will build the child's confidence/self-esteem as they see improvement through effort)

Provide meaningful/specific feedback

- It's easy to fall into the trap of becoming a 'cheering squad' - 'good job, well done', but ...
 - o If they actually didn't do a good job, they will know and stop believing you when you say it; and/or the words just become part of the backdrop... and the player stops listening to them at all.
 - o They will continuously look to you (externally) for the appraisal, instead of learning to enjoy the movement for what it is;
 - o They don't **learn** anything from good job ... instead, try 'I like the way you held the bat over your shoulder that time! Let's see if you can keep your arm up like a chicken wing next time' is positive & provides information they can improve from

Less is more: Don't over-analyze / over-coach

- 3-6 year old's will get the 'feel' of swinging a bat & throwing a ball through exposure and then they will begin to fine tune a skill... if we provide too much feedback, too often, they rely on us - sometimes, just letting them swing the bat a few times lets them feel what might work better
- Providing visuals/imaginary ideas can help the movement more than explaining it. e.g. Step on the bug with your foot as you throw or hold your back arm up like a chicken wing before you swing
- As a coach, we are watching for technique & working to build strong skills... but to the players – they are having FUN!