

“Total Team Protects” FAQs

“Why is JCB doing this?”

For three main reasons. First, it was felt that keeping a team together for several seasons in a row would establish more consistency, teamwork and team spirit, and allow coaches to “hit the ground running” each season since they would be familiar with their players, and their players (and their parents) familiar with them. Secondly, like other sports that use this system, it was believed that greater friendships would be formed among the kids and also the parents of a team. Finally, our old system of complicated tryouts, judges’ scores, and lengthy drafts was a huge time drain on our very limited volunteer base. This new system will allow our coaches to spend more time coaching their players, and our commissioners and other volunteers more time running their divisions and their other duties.

“Wouldn’t it have been fairer to institute this BEFORE the Draft, so the coaches would know that the kids they are drafting might be on their team for more than one season?”

This – either “total team protects” or the keeping together of a core of 5-6 players on every team, instead of just the current two coaches’ sons – was actually brought before the Board last Spring, and tabled until the Fall, when it was brought up again. It was tabled again until this Spring in order to give it more thought, and also to allow a chance for an ambitious new “points”/team parity system to have a chance to work. The “points” system only led to very complicated tryouts and drafts, and “parity” never evolved anyway as teams W-L records followed their historical “bell curve”. There was no significant difference in the team records when all was said and done, and all we did was burn out our volunteer base.

“What if I’m dissatisfied with our team? Am I stuck on a bad team that never wins any games?”

No. Parents/players always have the choice to “opt-off” a team at the end of every season, and to re-enter the Draft.

“Other than the “opt-off” provision, was there anything else done in order to ensure that ‘dynasties’ aren’t created here?”

Yes. The league also instituted a “clean slate” at the end of Rookies, and again at the end of Majors, where **all players** will once again enter the Draft, and new teams will be formed entirely. This was done not only for the reason you state, but also because many coaches expressed that they enjoyed the challenge of coaching new children each season, and meeting new families.

“What about the Juniors/Seniors division?”

“Total team protects” will not be instituted in these divisions.

“Won’t the best teams just get better, and the worst teams weaker, under this system?”

Not necessarily. *All* teams will now have more time to focus on developing the players, and to work together as a team since they will be familiar with each other from the previous season. Since parents will always control the system, via the “opt-off” provision, they – our paying Members – ultimately hold the cards. Our written coaches’ evaluations each season, as well as parents corresponding directly to the league and its Board, have historically expressed a broad range of what parents consider to be a “good” team, and a “good coach.” Some parents look at Won-Loss records, but some don’t even care about them. Nearly ALL also consider things like teaching/coaching skills, team communication, team morale, sportsmanship, and just plain-ol’ personalities when evaluating the success of the team their child is on. We think this system will force teams to get BETTER – in ALL of these aspects – not just W-L records. Coaches will be very visibly accountable under this system, coupled with our normal written coaches’ evaluations at the end of every season.

Also, keep in mind that there will still be a certain amount of attrition on each team from season to season, thru opt-off’s, families moving, players discontinuing playing baseball, or just taking a season off.

“Will there still be a draft?”

Yes – there’ll just be a *lot* fewer players in it – perhaps 80-90% less. A Draft will still be held at the beginning of each season, consisting of players new to our area, new to JCB baseball, and those who chose to opt-off their previous teams.

“Will there still be tryouts?”

Yes – for those players mentioned above. Coaches will do their own evaluation of the players’ skills at the tryouts, however, rather than using Judges’ scores, and will use these notes when drafting their replacement players.

“How will draft order be determined?”

If our membership continues to grow, 1-2 entirely new teams may be needed in several divisions each season in order to keep roster sizes at their current levels. If that’s the case, the new team’s manager will draft first, and he will keep on drafting until his roster is equal to the size of the other teams’ rosters (two new teams would draft in alternate order, until this roster size is reached). Once his team is of equal size, all teams will then draft, in randomly-drawn order.

“What happens if one of the coaches leaves a team?”

If a *Manager* (the #1 coach) leaves a team, the JCB Coaches Coordinator will contact the team’s other two coaches to see if one of them is interested in taking the team as its Manager. If a #2 or #3 coach leaves a team, the team’s Manager may recruit a new coach for his team, either from among the team’s parents, or by recruiting a new coach from another team or someone new to JCB. This latter coach must be approved by the JCB Coaches Coordinator, in conjunction with that division’s Commissioner, however, to protect against teams recruiting players from across town, or selecting a coach solely for his child’s playing ability, which is not in the spirit of our recreational league.

“How did this new system come about? Was it just a few strong teams that pushed for this?”

No. It’s come up in past years, and was brought up again last Spring and also last Fall as a result of the huge stress on our volunteer base caused by a complicated system of move-ups, tryouts, drafts and attempted team parity. A committee, consisting of the league President, Vice-President, Coaches Coordinator and each of the five division’s Commissioners, was appointed by the JCB Board to look at the matter and make a recommendation. The committee’s recommendations were brought before the board at its regularly-scheduled meeting on February 28th, and the motion passed 9-3.

“What happens if one or two kids leave a team, either by opting out or their family just moves out of the area or something?”

That team will have an opportunity to replace those players thru the Draft, the draft pool consisting of players new to our area, new to JCB baseball, and those who chose to opt-off their previous teams. If our membership continues to grow, entirely new teams may be needed in several divisions each season. If that’s the case, the new team’s manager will draft first, and he will keep on drafting until his roster is equal to the size of the other teams’ rosters. Once his team is of equal size, all teams will then draft, in randomly-drawn order. If the number of teams does NOT change from the previous season, then teams with the smallest rosters (those losing the most players) will draft first, with random drawing among teams of equal size, and each team will draft in the above-described manner.

“What if a team loses its best player? Under the draft system you describe, the best players will all be gone by the time that team gets to draft.”

Yes, this could happen. If our membership grows, and we have to add an entirely new team, that team will get to draft first until their roster is equal to the size of the existing teams. But this is the only fair way to ask an entirely new team to start; like the Jaguars in 1995, expansion teams get draft priority.

“I know a PARENT/child can “opt off” of a team, but can a team’s COACH not want a player back?”

No! This would send the wrong message to the child! In fact, an alternate plan of 5-6 team protects per team was rejected because many felt that it would split the league roughly in half, and thereby send a message of “these are the ‘wanted’ kids, and these are the ‘unwanted’ kids.” Most importantly, one of the MAIN REASONS the league went with this system was *to make our coaches accountable to developing their entire roster*. No longer could a coaching staff just focus on the 3-4 best kids, as *all* of his players were probably going to be back on his team the following season.

“OK, I can see how this system would be EASIER for a league to manage, but how does it make for BETTER BASEBALL for my son/daughter?”

Because it will provide more consistency from season to season, and will also make our coaches more accountable. By not having to spend as much time getting a new team up to speed, team administration is simplified, and more time can be spent *immediately* each new season coaching the players. Furthermore, a coaching staff’s success will have to come from spending the time developing the players that they have, and teaching them baseball skills, rather on “hitting it big” or getting lucky in the next season’s draft. It is the league’s opinion that those players on the bottom half of a team’s roster will particularly benefit, as the coaches will have to spend more time developing the skills of these players, and not just working with a few “stars” on each team.

“My child plays Pop Warner football in the Fall, and I know other families who take the Fall off from baseball entirely. Will they still be on the same team when they come back in the Spring?”

Yes. Ours is a “Spring-to-Spring” team protect system. A child who is on a team’s roster in the Spring is automatically returned to that team’s roster the following Spring, regardless of whether or not they played baseball in the Fall. Likewise, players added to a team’s roster in the Fall are NOT protected for the Spring – those players will re-enter the Draft.