



Lamorinda Little League- You're Not Just in the Little Leagues Anymore, Kid

By Nicolle Shanman

A hhhhhh, baseball. In my 'Mom World of Sports,' it ranks number one. First, they provide designated seating in the form of bleachers. This means you do not drag strange folding chairs and coolers for miles, to seat yourself in an area, only to find yourself in enemy territory. Second, there is a dugout. This is where the participating child must stay throughout the game and may not leave to ask odd questions, to complain or annoy. Third, a semi-healthy snack bar. This provides food for nonparticipating family members for sustenance as well as bribes (ie- ice cream for completed Algebra assignments...yes we all stoop this low).

Buck-eye (soon to be Chaney) field on St. Mary's Rd., provides parking close to the fields to limit walking time, as well as is in close proximity to our home. These are two other great pluses I noted as I filled out the online application. The stars were aligning. Now, my son needed to attend the tryout, get on a team, and we were ready for baseball!

Small bits of information were filtering through from various playmates on visits to our home that led me to believe my level of seriousness towards the sport was not at par with those living in Lamorinda. So it started to make me think that perhaps private batting practice would better prepare my child for the rigors of Lamorinda Little League.

The costs would be similar to an entry level C class. Our daughter wasn't ready to drive yet, I reasoned. Another option; deferring investments from the college fund would cover the price of costly bats and pros. I could contact

various parents, perhaps arrange carpools, I could make this work. I had heard of a pro who had a waiting list a mile long, however everyone used him. I would have to have that pro, I thought wearily. If I fit all of this in on an intense scale in between rugby and homework, sure my son might be a little tired, but hey, suffer for success!

The day of the tryout afforded me the opportunity to give into the instinct to dig through my son's drawer and pull out a killer baseball 'look.' A tempting option, maybe just some baseball pants and an entire bag of Big League chew shoved in his mouth, just to be official. He also has some killer baseball hats. As I was daydreaming about this, he walked into the kitchen. I looked at him over my cup of coffee, he was in shorts and a t-shirt. "You going now?" I asked; "Yep," he answered. "You'll do great buddy." He grinned and ran down the stairs to meet his dad. That conversation changed it for me.

He was just happy to be going to hit a few balls, nothing more, nothing less. No pressure. The child is ten.

Yes, the tryout was filled with dressed to the nines children who all knew their stuff, powering balls through the gymnasium and pitching fast balls. Truly amazing.

Many have what it takes; I'm looking forward to watching an amazing season. As for us, the college fund will continue to grow and I've returned to the reason sports have been part of the plan for us all along. It's about learning to work with a team and fulfilling commitments. We'll just stay focused on that.

