



Roseville Area Fastpitch Rules and Regulations

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Mission Statement

Roseville Area Fastpitch is a non-profit organization dedicated to providing an opportunity for girls up to 18 years old to compete on the softball field. RAF is organized and administered by an all-volunteer Board of Directors who share a common belief in providing an opportunity for girls of similar age and ability to participate in a **competitive** organized softball program.

Purpose

The purpose of Roseville Area Fastpitch is to mold our teams into not only great athletes, but also great young women. The discipline we learn from our softball experience will extend into our daily lives and the success we achieve from our hard work and perseverance through adversity will teach life lessons that will extend far beyond the diamond. We are committed to creating strong personal foundations in character, integrity and sportsmanship through the promotion of positive social, emotional, and physical development in our players. We are **committed** to making our athletes champions of life as well as in softball.

Eligibility

Age Group	Birthdays in the calendar year:
8U (8 and under)	2011 or later*
10U	2009 - 2010
12U	2007 - 2008
14U	2005 - 2006
16U	2003 - 2004

* 8U has a soft ceiling for age. You can start here for developmental play even if you're eligible for 10U.

Registration Fees

Registration fees are determined year-to-year and pay for: uniforms (pants, socks, jersey), league fees, umpire fees, field maintenance, coaches' fees, tournament entry fees, and equipment replacement. The cost for Summer 2020:

Age Group	Total Cost
8U (8 and Under)	\$125
10U - 18U (Competitive)	\$300

Fees for the fall season are dependent on registration numbers and will be communicated after fall registration.



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Proof of Age / Identity

Every player will be required to provide a copy of or verify the birth certificate on file at the time of uniform pickup. Additionally, a photograph will be taken for proof of identity. These will be converted to electronic files and each head coach will receive a copy of their players' birth certificates and photographs. The head coach is responsible for taking these to tournaments in the event that a player's eligibility is questioned.

Code of Conduct

Our goal is for all coaches, players, and parents to have an enjoyable, positive experience with us. To that end, we have developed a Code of Conduct that we expect every coach, player, and parent by which to abide. In this document, the word "coach" also includes managers and any other volunteers. **All coaches, parents and players participating in the RAF Fastpitch Travel program are expected to abide by the following sections in the Code of Conduct.** In addition to the code of conduct, head coaches are required to have an ACE coaching certification and yearly background check.

Coaches

Our coaches understand they have a significant influence, positive or negative, on each of their players and therefore, shall never place the value of winning above instilling the highest ideals of character.

Our coaches shall strive to set an example of the highest ethical and moral conduct.

Our coaches shall respect and support all umpires and contest officials. Furthermore, if any parent or spectator associated with our organization is not acting appropriately, the coach and/or manager should, using his or her best judgment, politely ask said person to alter their behavior or leave the event. Managers and coaches will promptly report any inappropriate behavior to the RAF Board.

Our coaches will refrain from openly demonstrating negative mannerisms and disappointment with players when they make mistakes (i.e. frustration with errors, etc.).

Our coaches shall make playing time and position decisions based on demonstrated ability, attendance at practices/games, and attitude/effort during practice and games.

Our coaches will respect the feelings of their players by providing individual constructive criticism while working directly with a player, not in front of other players or parents. Conversations with more than one player should cover general team/group feedback.

Players

Our players act with good sportsmanship at all times, win or lose.

Our players recognize the game is for them and their teammates and not their parents, family members, and/or friends.

Our players understand that winning is a result of practice, execution, and teamwork.

Our players realize they represent themselves, their family, the team, and Roseville Area Fastpitch when they put on the uniform.

Our players treat all teammates, coaches, umpires and fans with respect.

Our players do their best to be on time for practices and games. They realize that being late affects the entire team and that playing time may be affected by repeated lateness and/or absence from games or practices.



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Our players understand that communicating with their coaches is important; they should ask as many questions as they need for guidance.

Our players understand the best way to be assigned a preferred position, place in the batting order, or additional playing time is through hard work and practice to improve their performance. They accept the decisions of the coaches and will not badger the coaches about these coaching decisions..

Our players cheer for their team and teammates but never cheer against an opponent or umpire.

Our players never criticize their teammates, coaches, opponents, umpires, or fans by word or gesture.

Our players play hard but never try to hurt, interfere with, or bully other players.

Our players seek to learn and follow the rules of softball.

Our players care for both their own and the team's equipment. They treat equipment with respect at all times.

Our players will immediately make coaches, other players, and officials aware of any unsafe equipment or field conditions.

Our players will immediately make coaches aware of any unsportsmanlike conduct by the opposing team (abusive language, illegal slides/contact, intimidation, bullying, threats, etc.).

Parents

Parents will encourage good sportsmanship by demonstrating positive support for all participants, coaches, and officials.

Parents will keep winning in perspective. A child usually forgets the outcome of the game: it is the adults that have a tendency to stress about the win/loss record.

Parents will review the Players Code of Conduct with their daughter and expect them to abide by it.

Parents will let coaches coach and players play. I understand my role at any game or practice is strictly limited to cheering and giving encouragement and I will address concerns with a coach privately and after any game or practice.

Parents will strive to be a good role models for their daughters and their RAF teammates. They will encourage their daughters to learn to win with dignity and lose with grace.

Parents will ensure their daughters are on time for practices and games. Should circumstances arise where their athlete will be late or absent for a practice or game they will communicate with the team coaches in advance. They understand that being late affects the entire team and its coaches. They also understand that their daughter's playing time may be reduced by repeated lateness or absence from games or practices.

Parents need to recognize the importance of volunteer coaches and will communicate with them when necessary and support their decisions.

Parents having a complaint or concern with respect to a coach, teammate, or the program will either discretely and respectfully speak with the coach or contact the President. No conversation with a coach relating to a complaint or concern will take place in a location where any player or other parent can involve themselves in the situation. If the concern is regarding playing time or position, they will wait a minimum of 24 hours from the time of the previous contest before contacting the coach or President.

Violations of the Code Of Conduct will be addressed by the Board of Directors who may take such action as deemed appropriate. The severity and frequency of the violation(s) will determine the action of the Board.



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Player Safety Provisions

Weather During Practices:

If conditions are too hot, cold or stormy (where lightning strikes are a risk), players must be brought to a safe shelter (**NOT** a dugout) for a period of no less than thirty (30) minutes after the last time anyone hears thunder or sees lightning. Practice may be cancelled or moved indoors. In extreme heat, lighter workouts will be conducted and extreme exertion will be avoided.

Weather During Games:

If any coach observes unsafe weather conditions that are not noticed by the umpire, the coach shall bring such conditions to the attention of the umpire. If the umpire allows play to continue during unsafe conditions, the coach shall pull his or her team off the field. While this may result in the forfeit of the game, we will not imperil the safety of any player for the sake of completing any game.

Hydration:

Coaches will be cognizant of making sure players are hydrated, especially in extreme heat and humidity. Players or their parents should provide water or sports drinks, but it is the coach's responsibility to build into practices time for sufficient hydration.

Medical Emergencies.

Keep your phone readily available and do not hesitate to call 911 if you feel your athlete is in need of immediate medical attention.

Concussions:

If there is suspicion of a concussion or other head injury, remove the player from play until a doctor clears her return.

Background Checks:

All coaches and trainers must submit to a background check and head coaches must be ACE certified.

Two-Deep Leadership:

No practice or other team function may be conducted unless there are two adults present at all times (the 2nd adult may be a parent) and at least one of the two adults has passed a background check. Coaches and managers should not put themselves in a position where even an allegation of improper conduct can be made.

Inappropriate Conduct:

If a coach becomes aware of any criminal activity, particularly of a sexual nature, the coach will report the incident immediately to the local police and, unless requested by the local police, to the Board of Directors.

Player Pickup:

At least two coaches must stay at the location of any practice or game until the last player has been picked up. It is **PROHIBITED** for any manager or coach to be left alone with any player other than his or her own daughter without the permission of that player's parent/guardian. Such permission may be given in advance.

Violation of any of the terms set forth in the Player Safety Provisions will subject a coach to actions by the Board which may include, but is not limited to, removal as a coach in the program.



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Equipment

Each player is responsible for providing her own equipment. At a minimum, this includes a glove, bat, batting helmet, fielding mask, and cleats. Hair should be kept out of one's eyes/face and secured prior to games/practice. Optional equipment, such as sliding pads, sunglasses, and personal catcher's gear are up to the player's discretion to bring. Missing any of this equipment may result in a player being held out of a practice or game.

Tryouts

Players must tryout with their designated age group. If a player chooses, they may try out for one age level higher than their age group. The decision to allow a player to "play up" will be based on organization/player needs at each age group and tryout results at the higher level.

Tryout dates and times will be posted to the website at least two weeks in advance of the actual tryouts. In the event a player cannot attend her designated tryout time, the player must attend the makeup tryout date or contact the Tryout Director to make alternate arrangements.

At tryouts, players will be evaluated on hitting, bunting, fielding, throwing and running. Parents are not allowed to participate in or watch their daughter's tryouts. The number of teams to be formed at each age level and the level that the teams will play at (A, B, C) will be determined by the Board of Directors.

Team Placement

Summer

All players (with the exception of 8U) must participate in the tryout process to be considered for placement on anything but the lowest level team at their age level. Player evaluation will be completed by a panel of non-parent, non-coach individuals. The Board may consult with coaches regarding bubble players but the final decision will be made by the Board. Teams will ideally consist of 10-12 players, unless the Board approves additional players. At no time can a player move down to play in a lower level than her age. However, one or more players can and may move up one level, depending on the need of the team and at the discretion of the RAF Board. If players wish to play up one level, player preference would be given to the player in the 2nd year of eligibility, however the board reserves the right to play any player up one level. If a player playing up one age level would prevent an age-appropriate player from occupying a spot at their age level, the player would not be allowed to play up. In the event there are more players than teams, tryouts will be used to determine who will play. Team assignments for the different age levels will be handled as follows:

8U: Players will be placed equally on 8U teams with a focus on skills development for all players. Attempts to honor school grouping and friend requests will be made at this level.

10U to 18U: Players will be divided into multiple teams based on skill level:

- "A" Team – Tri-County League
- "B" Team – Tri- County League
- "C" Team - Tri- County League



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For the selection of any team, the primary consideration will be given to position players receiving the top eight (8) scores as well as the top two (2) pitchers and the top two (2) catchers during tryouts. **In addition to these scores**, the Board will also consider the following:

- a) playing experience,
- b) coach's evaluations from previous year,
- c) need at skill positions,
- d) commitment and desire to play,
- e) and the attitude of the player.

Using these considerations, the "A" team will be selected. Additional teams will be selected from the remaining players using the same criteria. If a player is not placed on a team, a full refund will be given. If a player is placed on a team and she decides **NOT** to continue, **NO REFUNDS** will be given, unless approved and authorized by the Board.

The team selection meeting will be restricted to RAF Board members due to the privacy issues with player identification.

Fall Ball

The process for selecting teams for the fall ball season is currently under review.

Playing Time Grievance Procedure

As with most youth sports, RAF works with a "24 Hour Rule" in which we request that prior to filing a grievance, the person considering filing the grievance wait 24 hours from the time of the event or activity in question occurs. RAF reserves the right to disregard any grievance sent less than 24 hours after the event or activity occurred.

RAF requests that you consider approaching your grievance on an individual basis with the person or people involved. We recommend you consider a face to face discussion with patience and professionalism. If not in person, we recommend at least a phone call to express your concerns and/or objections.

If a solution or satisfaction is not reached, we recommend you next contact the board Player Representative as they are versed in the particular rules and issues related to the level of play they represent.

In the event that a solution or satisfaction is still not reached you can get the grievance escalated by the representative. The grievance will be immediately emailed to the RAF President. The President will review the grievance and determine whether to schedule a private Action Review Meeting with all available parties and applicable RAF Board of Directors within five business days of receiving the online grievance however, while not trying to minimize any specific grievance, not everything warrants the attention of the Board of Directors.

The Board will hear descriptions and arguments of both sides and render a decision and solution.

It is recommended the complaint include all parties involved, references to dates and times, and any witnesses to the event or actions described.



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It is the policy of RAF not to reprimand or discriminate against any party simply for filing a grievance through the forum described here. In addition, any party described or included in any grievance in this forum will be afforded the same policy.

Commitment

Playing on an RAF competitive tournament team is both AND choice and a commitment. Please remember that you have a choice as to whether you will expose your child to tryouts and this competitive level of play. When trying out to make an RAF softball team, the expectation is that you would agree to play for that RAF team for the entire summer season. Not all children are ready for this level of play and commitment. Playing with RAF is meant to be a challenging and rewarding experience as players are exposed to a more competitive level of play. Girls will receive quality and consistent instruction as well as the opportunity to develop their softball ability with a group of their peers with similar skills. There is no guaranteed equal playing time on the competitive teams. All decisions in this regard will be at the sole discretion of the coach. We ask parents to be supportive of coaches' decisions.

Players on the "A" team are held to a higher level of commitment with regard to participating in practices, games and tournaments. Commitment to attendance is necessary to improve the important physical and technical skills to become competitive on the field. Coaches will provide teams with a list of important dates for which team members will be required to attend. Failure to attend said dates may result in a player forfeiting their spot to another person.

Development Goals

Our goal is to create exceptional softball players ingrained with an understanding of the skills, fundamentals and heart of the game focusing on specific elements of the game particular to that age group.

8U

Pitching: Girls will get a few repetitions during practice sessions to get familiar with pitching during the season. Off season workouts are also available to this age bracket.

Catching and fielding: thrown and hit balls; fingers up versus fingers down; see the glove and the ball; properly using two hands; forehands and backhands; first-base fundamentals; crossover and drop steps.

Learning the basic rules: force outs; tagging up; baserunning (when you don't have to run; not running into or past teammates on the basepaths); balls and strikes.

Throwing mechanics: introduce the four-seam grip; point the front shoulder, step, and throw; introduce the concept of generating momentum toward the target and following the throw.

Hitting: choosing the right bat; proper grip; hitting pitched balls; introduce drill work (tee, soft toss, short toss).

Learning positional play—learn the positions and the areas each player should cover; cover the nearest base when the ball is not hit to you.



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10U

Pitching: Proper follow through, alignment, and playing the position. Off-speed pitches are only practiced at this level if all previous elements and accuracy are attained.

Learning the basic rules: infield fly rule; Leading off.

Baserunning: leads; steals; extra-base hits.

Pitching and throwing mechanics: throw, follow through; pitcher covering first.

Hitting: repetitions: drill work (tee, soft toss, short toss, stickball, lob toss, one-arm drill); bunting.

Learning team fundamentals: cutoffs and relays; basic bunt defenses; basic first-and-third situations; underhand flip (box drill) and double plays; defending the steal; infield and outfield communication and priorities.

Fielding: Fly ball drop steps; Footwork; Double hand infielding; Weight Transitions; introduce the underhand flip; basics of cutoffs and relays. Proper tag technique for each base.

Catching: Proper footwork; Blocking technique.

12U

Throwing mechanics and pitching: emphasis on generating momentum toward the target and following the throw (larger field); breaking balls; change-ups; pitching mechanics and using the body effectively (longer distance); pickoff mechanics; flat-work (drills); introduction to long toss. Knowing the difference between a pitchers pitch and a hitters pitch.

Hitting: introduce situational hitting (inside-out swing; hitting behind runners; hit and run; productive outs); sacrifice bunting versus bunting for a hit; understanding the count, game situational learning. Proper hot-box positioning.

Baserunning—first-and-third situations; steal breaks; delayed steals; reading situations and reacting to them.

Fielding—generating momentum back toward the target on throws when necessary; crossover and drop steps; backhands and when to use them; double-play depth; pitcher covering first; infield communication.

Learning team fundamentals—pickoff plays; full bunt defenses; full first-and-third defenses; pop-up and fly ball priorities; double plays and underhand flips; Team communication.

14U-18U

Throwing mechanics and pitching—long toss; flatwork (drills); continue mastering breaking and off-speed pitches; throwing for accuracy; generating momentum toward the target and following the throw; pickoff mechanics.



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Hitting—mental aspects (hitter's count versus pitcher's count); two-strike hitting; aggressive versus defensive swings; situational hitting; productive outs; advanced game situations and defenses.

Baserunning—one-way leads; going on the first move; reacting to batted balls; tag-up situations; third-base rules; no-out, one-out, and two-out rules.

Fielding—understanding and adapting to playing conditions (grass versus dirt, sun, bad fields); fence drill (outfield); crossover and drop steps; do-or-die plays at the plate; preventing runners from taking extra bases; communicating between pitches.

Learning team fundamentals—cutoffs and relays (introduce the trailer concept); advanced pickoff plays (daylight play; plays put on by fielders) and when to use them; double plays; advanced game situations and defenses.

Recruiting

Contract: A signed championship roster, signed player contract, or a registration fee paid to an association.

A. Recruiting will be allowed from the completion of the National Tournaments until January 1st of the current playing year, exceptions:

1. If a manager, coach, assistant coach, parents, legal guardians, players or any other person acting on behalf of the team contacts a player or the players' parents or legal guardians and they are informed that the player has committed to play for a team, no further contact will be allowed through the current playing year.

2. If a player is under contract, no further contact will be allowed through the current playing year.

B. Recruiting players who have signed a contract will be a recruiting violation (unsportsmanlike conduct) and the manager/coach and or team may be placed on probation or suspended from Minnesota ASA competition up to 5 years.

C. A contact in person, by phone, in writing, e-mail, text message, or other means by a manager, coach, assistant coach, parents, legal guardians, players or any other person acting on behalf of the team of a player and/or her parents or legal guardian making false or misleading statements about another, manager, coach, player or team will be a recruiting violation (unsportsmanlike conduct) and the manager/coach and or team may be placed on probation or suspended from Minnesota ASA competition up to 5 years.

D. Exceptions (recruiting allowed):

1. If the team officially disbands prior to the start of championship play, players from that team may be recruited.

7.0.5 OPEN DIVISIONS. 14UA, 16U, and 18U are the only "Open" divisions of play for girls' fast pitch and will be allowed to play outside of their local association. Teams found in violation may be eliminated from league play and ineligible to participate in advancing and post season play.



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Fields

Central Park - Victoria Ballfields
2490 Victoria St N, Roseville, MN 55113

Pioneer Park
2950 Centerville Rd, Little Canada, MN 55117

Concordia High School
2400 Dale Street N, Roseville MN 55113

Off Season Workouts

Pitching/Catching

Pitching is a position that needs commitment outside of season play. To give our teams a competitive edge we have an expectation that pitchers work outside of practice. We also offer our own pitching clinics.

Hitting/Fielding

We offer clinics during the offseason to help everyone build on their skills.

Board Members

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