

# FIAA NEWSLETTER

## LETTER TO THE COMMUNITY

FIAA family and friends,

What an exciting time - the Fall 2023 baseball/softball seasons are upon us! Baseball is completing their first week of practices and softball is wrapping up their evals this week. Despite some miserably hot weather, it's been wonderful to see both parks full of players, coaches and family members. Like all of you, we are excited for games to begin and can't wait to watch these young athletes compete throughout the season!

Before we go any further, let's take a quick look back at the last month, plus what's in store over the next few months.

## JULY

### FIAA 1<sup>ST</sup> ANNUAL HOME RUN DERBY

FIAA hosted its first annual kid/adult Home Run Derby event on July 21<sup>st</sup> and it did NOT disappoint! We welcomed over 25 kid participants and 17 adult teams. The ceremonial first pitch was thrown out by Commissioner Mike Cella, a longtime supporter of all things FIAA and our very own Sofia Fortunato brought down the house with the singing of the national anthem. A special thanks to all of our wonderful vendors who participated, including Kory Warren and our friends from DBAT, our DJ Caleb AndersonWiseguyz Burgerz, Friez, and Pizza Piez, Frozen Scoops and The Main Squeeze.



Congratulations to Brandon Price and Lincoln Haslett for winning the 8/9U and 10-12U divisions respectively, and also to the FutureHasBeens for their second place finish in the adult division. The Duval Dolphins took home the grand prize of \$400 cash and bragging rights until we do it again! Many teams put on a show and a lot of baseballs were lost in the process.



Thanks to all those who attended and celebrated with us. We hope you all had a wonderful time and we can't wait to do it again! We have the best community and can't wait for the next event. Have something in mind? Comment below and let us know!

# JULY/AUGUST

## REGISTRATION, STORM TRYOUTS AND REC EVALS

The last month has seen many familiar faces return to FIAA, but we're adding some new ones as well. We've added several new coaches to FIAA this season, including in 8U - Rob Smith, Josh LaFontaine, Brett Flanagan, and Matt Persinger. In 10U, we've added Rolando Felizola, Brian Hunt and Josh Charette. Lastly, in 12U, we're welcoming Aaron Lundy and Matt Magish. We have a total of 6 teams each in 8U and 10U, along with 4 in 12U. This is a record number in recent years and points to the great growth we've seen in rec baseball within the past few seasons.

Neptune Park will also have some new faces - softball is also welcoming some new coaches this season, including Ben Carter in the brand new 6U division and Josh Alvarez & Erik Rakers in the 12U division. Smart Start is adding Tommy Barnes, and T-Ball is adding Morgan Golden and Tommy Barnes as well.

We also have two new Storm coaches for the upcoming season - Shaun Skinner (10U Storm) and Brad Gall (12U Storm). Both coaches have been a part of FIAA for many years and are taking over their respective Storm teams for the first time this season. We wish them and all the Storm teams the best of luck this season. Our advanced baseball tryouts concluded in July, and we're happy to announce the following rosters for the upcoming season!

### **9U Storm - Gene Price**

Wesley Granikowski  
Nolan Reaser  
Zachary Fleetham  
Elijah Taylor  
Kanner Rhoden  
TJ Brickel  
Myles Keith  
Lucas Filosa  
Brandon Price  
Jase Hall  
Aiden Garcia  
Tian Rodriguez

### **10U Storm - Shaun Skinner**

LJ Cayer  
Matthew Hardin  
Brantley Hinton  
Braylon Huckabaa  
Jake Mendoza  
Tatem Mobley  
Carter Moore  
Jackson Riegel  
Zavier Santiago  
Dalton Skinner  
Vance Skinner  
Tyler Zibart

### **11U Storm - Chris Kellett**

Zeke Brockhoff  
Joseph Cruz  
Dylan Bloom  
Reid Pearson  
Levi Olivant  
Jake Wroubel  
Greyson Schlofman  
Nolen Miller  
Caleb Schleif  
Curtis Delaware  
Bowen Henninger  
Colton Kellett

### **12U Storm - Brad Gall**

Ben Hermes  
Bodhi Turner  
Bridger Collins  
Colton Gall  
Grant Fleetham  
Grayson Lavoie  
Hudson McWilliams  
Joshua Zurlo  
Levi Agostini  
Preston Johnson  
Taylor Rader  
Travis Tiedeman  
Zach Brookhart

Our FIAA Softball Division will have a total of 3 Storm teams, including Chris Elwood's 12U team, Colin Mainwaring and Jeff Schultz's 14U team and lastly David Patterson's 14U team. Rosters have been finalized and congratulations to the following athletes!

### **12U Storm - Chris Elwood**

Sofia Fortunato  
Addison Elwood  
Brooke Dillfore  
Hadlee Gisson  
Isabella Tipantasig  
Kali Reed  
Kayden Costlow  
Lilly Baker  
Madalyn Baugh  
Penelope Gasbarro  
Zoey Murphy

### **14U Storm - Mainwaring & Schultz**

Aubrey Mainwaring  
Shelby Mainwaring  
Piper Schultz  
Tyler McCoy  
April Sanders  
Abby Flick  
Emma Lundy  
Ryleigh Slater  
Brielle Fuquay  
Karsyn Robinson  
Lauren Harris

### **14U Storm - Patterson**

Addison Pleiss  
Amiah Carrubba  
Chloe Riegel  
Emily Williams  
Emma Effinger  
Rylee Patterson  
Sadie Russo  
Savannah Highhouse  
Victoria Vazquez  
Yari Gonzalez

I'm proud to say FIAA had record registration numbers for the fall 2023 season, with exactly 500 players signed up across baseball and softball. Baseball has added a team in the 8U division and 2 additional teams in the 10U division. Softball added a brand new 6U softball team for the first time as well! We're happy to welcome these extra teams and can't wait to see them compete on the field! Our goal is to continue to grow, develop and become the preeminent baseball/softball program in the area. We hope to add more players and more teams for the Spring 2024 season, including adding Storm teams in our 7U and 8U divisions.

Thank you to all coaches, new and returning, for their continued support of our program and helping develop our athletes on and off the field.

# WHAT'S NEXT?

FALL 2023 SEASON

11/12U STORM FUNDRAISER



**BAGS FOR BASEBALL**

**Sunday, September 10, 2023 @ 4pm**

Paul C. Armstrong Park  
2445 CR 220  
Middleburg, FL 32068



**Entry Fee: \$50/TEAM**  
**Prizes: Top 3 Teams**



**BENEFITING THE 2023 FIAA 11U & 12U STORM TEAMS**

FOR MORE INFO. CONTACT:  
SHAWN DELAWARE  
(850) 585-1201

shawn\_delaware@yahoo.com



# PARK CLEANUP DAYS

**Neptune Park** just concluded its field cleanup day and the turnout was fantastic! Thanks to all coaches, parents and volunteers for showing up to help make our park look great for the season. As a reminder, FIAA is responsible for virtually all field/park maintenance - this includes cleaning the bathrooms, emptying trash cans, maintaining fields/batting cages and much more. Our coaches and board members put forth a lot of effort to keep our parks nice and clean for everyone to use - if you see trash at the park, please help us and relocate it to the nearest trash can!

**Armstrong Park** is set to hold its park cleanup this Saturday, August 19th. We've got some big plans in store, including adding bullpens in the south end of the park near the batting cages. We're also going to be installing some new windscreens on the dugouts and have a few other tricks up our sleeve that you'll see on Opening Day! All volunteers are welcomed (and needed) this Saturday - if you can attend, we'd love to have you! Please contact Mike Hempel if you are interested in helping out.

## MARK YOUR CALENDAR

- EARLY SEPTEMBER - Rec Baseball game schedules finalized and released to coaches/parents
- SEPTEMBER 23 - Opening Day - Armstrong Park
- SEPTEMBER 23 - Opening Day - Neptune Park
- OCTOBER 2 - 5 - Team pictures with Flashback Photography (ask coach or team mom for details)

# FINAL THOUGHTS

## FALL 2023 SEASON

We couldn't be happier with the direction that the baseball and softball programs are heading. We're excited to add new teams in a variety of divisions and want to thank everyone for entrusting your children with our organization. This season is poised to be the best one yet and we're excited for the future of FIAA.

It's also important we thank our coaches, board members and volunteers. Many may not realize, but countless hours are poured into making our parks and program what they are today - all of this time is donated as none of our volunteers are paid. The best way to show your appreciation is as simple as a "thank you". We all love what we do - working with children, developing athletes and teaching the valuable life lessons that are so intertwined with youth sports.

We'd like to wish all of our teams the best of luck this season and can't wait to see you all at the ballfields!

**Sara Hickox**  
Softball Director

**Mike Hempel**  
Baseball Director