

PARA Softball VP - Jimmy Potucek

Finalized - January 3, 2024

PARA Softball Mission Statement/SOP/Rules

1. Teach fundamental skills of the game in a positive environment, while stressing sportsmanship and above all safety.
2. Making the softball experience for each player a positive one that promotes affection for the game, which hopefully leads to a desire to always play the next season at the next level.
3. Promote the competitive brand of Pace Patriot softball. We expect to win and we will try to win.
4. Operate softball in a fiscally responsible manner that positively affects the sustainability of the PARA organization and facilities.
5. Properly administrate and maintain all PARA Softball facilities and equipment.
6. Generate and administrate alternative sources of revenue for the PARA organization utilizing the PARA Softball facilities, provided they do not negatively impact the PARA Softball program.
7. Work closely with the Pace High School Softball program to accomplish the following:
 - A. Promote Pace Patriot Softball pride in all age divisions at PARA.
 - B. Provide coaches knowledge on safety, techniques, game & practice planning, etc.
 - C. Prepare our players (skills, attitude and knowledge) to smoothly transition to Pace High School Softball.
 - D. Promoting Pace High School Softball youth softball clinic(s), while at the same time, exposing our players to the expertise and experience of the Pace High Softball coaches & players.

PARA Softball Standard Operating Procedures

1. Softball Budget Planning: Prior to the first registration session, the softball income and expenses will be projected in a budget plan.
 - A. Income categories should include registration fees, team sponsorships, fundraisers, donations, tournaments, etc.
 - B. Expenses should include equipment, field maintenance & supplies, field lights usage, umpires, sanctioning dues & insurance, etc.
2. Softball Registration:
 - A. Fees: Softball registration fees will be determined based on projected registration numbers and expenses. This determination will be made by the Softball VP and PARA President based on the Softball budget and other PARA assessments and considerations.
 - B. Dates: Softball Registration Dates will be coordinated with the PARA Secretary and presented to the PARA President for approval. Within 5 business days following a regis-

tration session, a summary report of total registrations (by league) will be sent to the PARA Secretary (for distribution to the PARA Board of Directors) and the PARA Softball head coaches.

C. Dates & times of each player registration will be recorded. In the event that there are not enough volunteers to act as Head Coaches, non-Frozen players who registered last will be placed on waiting list. For 8U, maximum team size is limited to twelve (12) players. For 10U, 12U & 16U, maximum team size is limited to eleven (11) players. Maximum number allowed can be increased at the discretion of a Head Coach and PARA Softball VP.

3. Softball Coaches: Any member of PARA can volunteer to coach, pending successfully passing a Background Check. At any time, coaches may be removed from their position by the PARA Softball VP, PARA President and/or PARA Board of Directors.

A. Head Coach: The names of all selected Head Coaches will be presented to PARA Board of Directors for review and approval. It is the responsibility of the Head Coach to ensure that each parent is aware of the time and place of all team activities. If there are more Head Coach volunteers than there are teams available, preference will be provided based on the following priorities:

- i. Returning head coach to same league as previous season.
- ii. Returning head coach to different league as previous season.
- iii. Current PARA Board Member.
- iv. Returning assistant coach to same league as previous season.
- v. Returning assistant coach to different league as previous season.
- vi. Returning head coach to same league with interruption in coaching.
- vii. Returning head coach to different league with interruption in coaching.
- viii. Volunteer with any coaching experience at other park.
- ix. Volunteer with no coaching experience.

B. Assistant Coaches: Assistant Coaches are selected by the Head Coach and serve at the will of the Head Coach. Although a team may have more than two (2) Assistant Coaches, PARA will only pay for background checks for three (3) total coaches for each team. Any additional coaches beyond three (3) the individual team is responsible for paying the cost of a background check to be completed.

C. Coaching Issues and Rules: All coaches should make every effort to meet with other coaches and/or parents to explain and/or resolve any issues. However, coaches are not required to discuss issues immediately after a game (allow all parties time to cool off). If there is an issue with umpiring, it must be addressed with the UIC. Any other issues must be brought to the Softball VP. A meeting time should be agreed upon and, if requested, the Softball VP can be in attendance to assist in resolving outstanding issues. In extreme instances, coaching issues will be handled by the PARA Softball VP and the PARA Softball Committee.

- i. Findings and recommendations will be presented to the PARA President for review and follow-through with the PARA Board of Directors.
- ii. Immediate temporary suspension of any coach at any time may be done by the PARA President and the PARA Softball VP.
- iii. PARA Board of Directors will be notified within 24 hours of any immediate temporary suspension of a coach.
- iv. PARA Board of Directors can vote on the suspension disposition either 1) in an emergency meeting; or 2) during a normally scheduled PARA Board of Directors meeting. The suspended coach will have an opportunity to present their case at the meeting.
- v. The suspended coach may not return to coaching duties until the Board of Directors has reviewed and voted on the suspension disposition. As part of having coaching duties suspended, the suspended coach may not be physically located on the field or in a dugout for any practice or game.
- vi. Head Coaches are responsible for the behavior of assistant coaches and parents/spectators of the team. Heckling or foul language of umpires or opposing teams will NOT be tolerated. Head Coaches, assistant coaches, and parents/spectators can be suspended and banned from PARA facilities for unsportsman-like conduct.
- vii. Head Coaches are responsible for the scoreboard controllers. If a controller is damaged or lost the head coach is responsible for up to the full cost of replacement.
- viii. Head Coaches are responsible for the cleanliness of the dugouts and stands at the end of practices and games.

4. Dugout Coordinator: Any team parent can volunteer to be the Dugout Coordinator for their child's team. The Dugout Coordinator ensures the team is prepared before and during games.

5. Players: Players deserve to be evaluated fairly by coaches when assigning fielding positions or batting order placement. Through the season, players will develop and should be continually reevaluated concerning their position on the team. Given the natural disparity in players' abilities and ages, although a player and/or parents may desire to play in a certain position on the field, it is the responsibility of the Head Coach to consider the safety of the player when assigning positions. For example, having a 5-year old play in the pitcher's spot against 8 & 9year olds would generally not be prudent.

A. For Spring Ball, a player's age on December 31st of the previous calendar year shall determine for which league a player is eligible. A player may be allowed to move up early, following these stipulations; 1. The player must have played for the same Head Coach for at least 1 season. 2. The player must be a freeze. 3. The player is only allowed to move up 1 age group. 4. Once the player moves up, she may not go back down. *GCGSA (2016) 16u is allowed to have 17 year olds play on teams, allowing girls to play softball who didn't make school ball.

B. For Fall Ball, league is determined as the league player will be participating in the following Spring Ball season. In some circumstances, PARA Softball VP does have the authority to allow players to play up or down a league (certain league does not make, not enough teams in a league, etc.)

C. Players are NOT allowed to have electronic devices on the fields during practices or games except for watches. This includes but is not limited too: cell phones, headphones/earbuds, and music devices.

6. Player Freezes: For Fall Ball, there is no limit to the amount of players that a Head Coach can freeze for their team. For Spring Ball, each Head Coach is allowed to freeze six (6) players for their team, with the following stipulations:

A. Completed freeze form signed by both Head Coach and player parent must be turned in to PARA Softball VP by designated date before Tryouts & Draft.

B. For 12U & 16U Leagues, PARA Softball VP reserves the right to limit players with pitching experience from being frozen to a team with other pitchers, until all teams within a league have at least one (1) pitcher. The purpose of this rule is to help ensure every team has at least one (1) pitcher and help ensure a quality experience for all players & parents. For this to be accomplished, all Head Coaches must be honest when evaluating their player talent and understand the reasoning behind the rule prior to selecting players to be frozen.

C. Frozen players are not required to participate in Tryouts and will be excluded from Draft.

D. Siblings will count as one (1) freeze. If that coach has seven (7) or more players, he/she will go last in the draft.

E. Head Coach's and Assistant Coach's children, or relatives, count as freezes.

7. Tryouts: For Fall Ball, there are not tryouts. Players not frozen will be randomly distributed to a team. For Spring Ball, players not frozen will be required to participate in tryouts to allow coaches a chance to gauge each player's abilities. Tryouts will consist of simple drills of fielding, throwing, running & hitting.

8. Draft: For Fall Ball, there is no Draft. For Spring Ball, the Draft will be held following Tryouts to allow Head Coaches to select their team. The Draft will adhere to the following:

A. Draft will be administered by PARA Softball VP, with at least one (1) other Softball Committee Member in attendance.

B. Only one (1) representative for each team will be allowed to participate. Typically, this is the Head Coach, but may be a designated representative.

C. The draft order is determined as follows:

i. Team with least number of freezes selects until they are even with the next lowest team(s).

ii. When at least two (2) teams have the same number of players, numbers drawn out of a hat determine the draft order until teams are even with the next lowest team(s).

iii. When all teams have the same number of players, numbers drawn out of a hat determine draft order for remainder of draft.

iv. The pick will go as following. #1 will have the first pick and will move up after.

Ex. 1,2,3,4,4,3,2,1.

D. At the conclusion of the Draft, teams may elect to trade players. The purpose of trades is not to obtain a competitive advantage, but typically for personal reasons involving player or coach (transportation requests with another player, etc.) All trades must be completed prior to any other team leaving the Draft and trades must be approved by all teams. PARA Softball VP reserves the right to adopt or veto any trade.

E. Each team is limited to a maximum of six (6) players of the oldest age allowed in the league, with exceptions. For example, if an 8U team has frozen six (6) 8-year olds, said team will not be allowed to draft another 8-year old until either 1) every other team has six (6) 8-year olds; or 2) only 8-year olds are available to select from.

F. Any non-frozen player who did not participate in Tryouts is not eligible for the Draft and will be chosen randomly depending on the player's position ability.

G. For 8U, maximum team size is 12 players. For 10U, 12U & 16U, maximum team size is 11 players. Maximum number allowed can be increased at the discretion of a Head Coach and PARA Softball VP.

9. Team Equipment: Each team is responsible to provide all necessary Equipment for play, ex. Catcher's gear, bats, gloves, practice balls, etc. PARA will provide game balls prior to the first games to be played each season.

10. Softball Alliance Affiliation: PARA is currently a member of the Gulf Coast Girls Softball Alliance (GCGSA).

A. The PARA Softball VP will represent PARA with the (GCGSA). In the event that the PARA Softball VP cannot be present, another member of the Softball Committee may be designated to represent PARA.

B. When possible, any GCGSA voting will first be discussed with the Softball Committee and recommendations will be presented to the PARA President and/or PARA Board of Directors for review and vote. The vote cast in the name of PARA will NOT be different from the vote approved by the PARA President and/or PARA Board of Directors.

C. For all games during the season, rules set forth by GCGSA shall be followed.

11. Regular Season: The regular season is composed of League Games and Friendship Games. The complete season schedule will be generated by the PARA Softball VP, in coordination with the GCGSA. All games played at PARA will be seventy (70) minutes in length, unless otherwise determined by the Softball VP or PARA President.

A. League Games:

i. League Games are those games played between PARA teams at PARA. PARA follows USSSA fastpitch rules while regarding GCGSA bylaws, and PARA SOP's. The Softball VP is responsible for game scheduling.

ii. For Spring Ball, League Games count towards the team records in determining the League Champions.

iii. Within each league, each team will play the same number of games, against the same opponents an equal number of times.

iv. League Standings will be determined as follows:

a. Overall record.

b. Head-to-head record: If two teams have the same overall record, the head-to-head record between the two teams will determine standings placement.

c. If the teams have tied head-to-head records then run differentials will determine standings placement.

v. For Spring Ball, PARA will award trophies to the Champions & Runners-Up within each league.

vi. Player availability rules: The player availability rules are merely intended to provide coaches with options for helping ensure all games are able to be played. Forfeits due to not having enough players are not good for anyone. Any attempt to abuse these rules to obtain a competitive advantage will not be tolerated. Foremost, each coach is to ensure the playing time of their own players.

a. 8U: The number of players in the field is ten (10). All players, whether they are starting in the field or not, must be in the batting line-up (bat the entire team). All players on the team roster must play at least one (1) inning on defense. Before the start of a game, if a team only has nine (9) players, the team may pick up an available player from another team. The pick-up player must play an outfield position and bat at the bottom of the line-up. Before the start of a game, if a team only has eight (8) players, a team may pick up two (2) available players from another team. First player must play an outfield position. Second player can play an infield position, with the exception of pitcher or 1st base. Both players must bat at the bottom of the line-up. During a game, if a player is pulled from the line-up for whatever reason (injury, family emergency, etc.), there are no substitutes allowed for that player from another team. A player from another team may not be listed as a substitute on the line-up card. If a team falls below the allowed number of field players during a game, team will NOT be forced to take an out every time the removed player is due to bat. The team is already at a disadvantage for playing with less than allowed number of field players.

b. 10U, 12U & 16U: The number of players in the field is NINE (9). All players, whether they are starting in the field or not, must be in the batting lineup (bat the entire team). All players on the team roster must play at least one (1) inning on defense. Before the start of a game, if a team only has eight (8) players, the team may pick up an available player from the same league or a lower league. The pick-up player must play an outfield position and bat at the bottom of the line-up. Before the start of a game, if a team only has seven (7) players, the team may pick up two (2) players from the same league or a lower league. The first player must play an outfield position. The second player can play an infield position, with the exception of pitcher or catcher. Both players must bat at the bottom of the line-up. During a game, if a player is pulled from the line-up for whatever reason (injury, family emergency, etc.), there are no substitutes allowed for that player from

another team. A player from another team may not be listed as a substitute on the line-up card. If a team falls below the allowed number of field players during a game, the team will NOT be forced to take an out every time removed player is due to bat. Team is already at a disadvantage for playing with less than allowed number of field players.

vii. For Spring Ball, PARA will provide each team with a season's worth of game balls to use for League Games.

viii. For all games, coaches are responsible for cleaning of the dugouts prior to leaving.

ix. Home team is responsible for keeping the official score, also providing one (1) new and one (1) like-new game ball to the umpires. The away team will operate the scoreboard for the game.

x. Each team is responsible for keeping its own scorebook. For Spring Ball, at the end of each game, both coaches are responsible inspecting the umpire's scorecard for accuracy and signing said scorecard.

B. Friendship Games:

i. Friendship Games are those games played between PARA teams and teams from other parks, either at PARA or at another park.

ii. Friendship Games do not count towards the PARA team's records in determining the PARA League Champions.

iii. For the last game of the day/night at PARA, PARA team is responsible for ensuring all field equipment, ex. Score boards are turned off, scoreboard controllers are turned in.

v. Although keeping of a scorebook is recommended, there is no requirement to sign the umpire's scorecard at the end of the game.

12. Mid-Season Tournament:

A. For Spring Ball, one of the parks within GCGSA hosts a Mid-Season Tournament for all teams within the GCGSA.

B. As PARA provides the entry fee for each team, participation by all PARA teams is mandatory.

C. If divisions are offered within each league, the records of League Games will be used in determining whether teams will be placed in Division A or Division B. Typically, those teams with winning records will be placed in Division A, while those teams with losing

records will be placed in Division B. With input from Head Coaches, PARA Softball VP has the discretion to alter division placement for any team. All teams will play in the Mid-season tournament. If your team does not participate you as a coach will NOT be considered as Head coach for ALLSTARS if you win your age group.

D. Won-loss records during the Mid-Season Tournament does not count towards the team records in determining the PARA League Champions.

13. All-Star Tournament:

A. For Spring Ball, one of the parks within GCGSA hosts an All-Star Tournament.

B. PARA provides the entry fee for one team per League. The Softball VP can authorize an additional ALL-Star team for a League depending upon the number of registered players and quality of players in a League.

C. For each League, the Head Coach of the League Champion has the first right to act as Head Coach for the All-Star Team. If the Head Coach of the League Champion declines, the Head Coach of the Runner-Up has next right, and so on. Assistant Coaches are selected by the Head Coach and serve at the will of the Head Coach.

D. Player selections for the All-Star Team will be held following the conclusion of the Regular Season and will adhere to the following:

- i. Via the All-Star Selection Form, all players must indicate whether they wish to be considered for All-Star selection.
- ii. All-Star selections will be administered by PARA Softball VP, with at least one (1) other Softball Committee Member in attendance.
- iii. Only one (1) representative for each team will be allowed to participate. Typically, this is the Head Coach, but may be a designated representative.
- iv. For 8U, the maximum team size is twelve (12) players. The first ten (10) players must be chosen unanimously by the team representatives. The remaining 2 players can be chosen at the sole discretion of the Head Coach. Maximum number of players allowed can be increased at the discretion of Head Coach and PARA Softball VP.
- v. For 10U, 12U & 16U, maximum team size is 11 players. The first nine (9) players must be chosen unanimously by the team representatives. The remaining two (2) players can be chosen at the sole discretion of the Head Coach. Maximum number of players allowed can be increased at the discretion of Head Coach and PARA Softball VP.