

West Boca Diamonds Girls Fastpitch

West Boca Raton Softball Association, Inc.

RECREATIONAL PLAYER & PARENT HANDBOOK



DIAMONDS
fast pitch softball

WEST BOCA RATON SOFTBALL ASSOCIATION, INC

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League Parents and Players:

Hello and welcome to the Recreational and Travel Fastpitch softball season. The West Boca Raton Softball Association (WBRSA) was established in 1997, and we offer players from ages four to eighteen a chance to participate in instructional and competitive fastpitch softball at South County Regional Park. Last year was a great success and we anticipate that this year will be even better.

This Handbook explains to you, the parents and players in our League, what is expected of League parents and players and provides you with some information about the League. Included in this Handbook is a map of the fields and important information related to the League. We also have attached the **Players and Parents Code of Conduct and Discipline Policy** that every player and parent in the League every player and parent in the League agrees to comply with this code upon submitting their registration form.

Let us remember that the game is for the girls. Let them learn, play, and enjoy the practices and games. Let the umpires call the games and the coaches and managers work with the girls. If you see something you don't like, please talk with the coach or a Board member. Remember that all of us are volunteers and are trying to do our best to make sure the girls learn the sport and have fun doing so. As volunteers, we enjoy working together to make the League a place where all players can pursue their interest in Fastpitch softball. However, we do all have full-time jobs and families too. We will do our best to address your concerns in a timely manner.

As we continue to grow in the number of players in the League, the need for assistance grows as well. If you are interested in helping us out, please visit our website at: www.westbocadiamonds.com. At this site, you will find a wealth of information including season schedules, photographs, Board member e-mail addresses, and helpful links to our sponsors and other resources. Check it out; we think you will find it useful. This Handbook also provides details about our **eAlerts®** notification system. This is a very easy way to stay up-to-date on field conditions and last-minute changes to schedules. Subscription to the service is required. Please sign up for **eAlerts®** to make sure you have the latest information on League activities.

Again, this season we will have our concession stand open during games and possibly during our practices. We will need your help running the stand, and all teams must provide at least one parent to work during their daughter's game. Team parents who volunteer to work the concession stand will still be able to watch their daughters play as we will have your team playing on the two fields that are visible from the concession stand. The proceeds from the concession stand allow us to keep registration fees down and to continue to improve our facilities. When your team manager asks for volunteers for the concession stand, please step forward and help us out. THANKS!

We appreciate your interest and participation in the West Boca Diamonds Fastpitch Softball League. We are looking forward to our most successful season ever.

WBRSA Board of Directors

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SOFTBALL FIELDS AT SOUTH COUNTY REGIONAL PARK



eAlerts MESSAGING SYSTEM

WBRSA Enlists *eAlerts*® for Up-to-the-Minute Field Status Information and League News

WBRSA announces that it has registered with *eAlerts*® for real-time notification of field status, recreation and travel team updates, and League news. Simply go to the web site at <http://westbocadiamonds.ealert.com>, and register your telephone number (text messages); email; PDA or other two way communication unit and receive notifications & updates as they are posted. WBRSA will post an "alert" if, for example, the fields are closed because of rain, and *eAlerts*® will send a text message, or email to all those registered at the West Boca Diamonds link. **Please sign up for League News and the other categories of interest to you.** This will save countless telephone calls to individuals by the WBRSA Board of Directors and Coaches. Subscription to the service is required. Please note that the system is limited to two (2) e-mail addresses and one (1) cell number per subscriber. If necessary, log in a second time and add other contact information.

The service is free to subscribers so please help us to make communication smooth and efficient. Sign up now and be a part of this important notification system!

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IMPORTANT GAME & PRACTICE INFORMATION

- **Players should be at the field on time for a practice and 30 minutes before a game.** We want to make sure that the players have sufficient time to warm up before a practice or game and that the coach has enough time to make a line-up before the game starts.
- Every **on field** coach and assistant must have a background check performed each calendar year before being allowed on the field. The Volunteer Form is included in this Handbook and also available on the League's website at www.westbocadiamonds.com. The League will pay for up to three (3) background checks per team. Additional background checks can be conducted for \$10 each, to be paid by the applicant.
- If your daughter is **not able to make a practice or game**, **please let her coach know as soon as possible.** You will receive contact information for your daughter's coaches during the first week of the season.
- Players are not permitted to wear jewelry of any kind, including necklaces, bracelets, earrings, etc.
- Remember that we are playing in South Florida and while it might feel comfortable at the house, the conditions at the field may be hotter or colder than expected. Please have your player dress accordingly.
- Games and practices will continue in the rain at the discretion of the coaches and umpires. Play is halted if lightning is in the area or if the field becomes unplayable.
- **Sunscreen is important and should be applied before coming to the park. Make sure your player has plenty of water or sports drinks (available at the concession stand) for practice and games. These items are as important as their bat, glove, and helmet.**
- All batters must wear a protective helmet with face cage. WBRSA also suggests that all players wear shin guards. All pitchers in the younger (10U and younger) divisions **MUST** wear a protective face mask while pitching and older divisions are strongly encouraged to protect their pitchers as well.
- **Every team** must provide volunteers to work the concession stand. Concession stand volunteers will be able to see the field their daughter is playing on, so you can help with the stand and still support your daughter.
- Managers are responsible for the conduct of his/her players. Subject to the umpire's discretion, parents exhibiting unsportsmanlike conduct may be asked to leave the playing area. Failure to control parents' behavior may result in ejection of the manager.
- No smoking, alcohol, or dogs (other than service animals) are permitted at the fields in compliance with Palm Beach County regulations.
- Your daughter's coach will talk with you and your player about the equipment needed for the season. Please talk with the parents from the older divisions, other coaches, or a Board member if you have any questions regarding equipment.
- Cleats are highly recommended for all players. Soccer cleats are acceptable for softball (although the reverse is not generally true due to the softball shoe's extra front cleat).



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CONCUSSION AND HEAD INJURIES

In compliance with a change in Florida State Statute 943.0438 (<http://www.leg.state.fl.us/statutes/0943.0438.html>) and in the best interest of the safety of youth athletes participating in programs utilizing County owned facilities; the Palm Beach County Parks and Recreation Department has adopted a new permit requirement for Youth Sports Providers that each organization adopt and implement a program to:

- Educate athletic coaches, officials, administrators, and youth athletes and their parents or guardians of the nature and risk of concussion and head injury.
- Adopt policies that require the parent or guardian of a youth who is participating in athletic competition or who is a candidate for an athletic team to sign and return an informed consent that explains the nature and risk of concussion and head injury, including the risk of continuing to play after concussion or head injury, each year before participating in athletic competition or engaging in any practice, tryout, workout, or other physical activity associated with the youth's candidacy for an athletic team, and
- Adopt bylaws or policies that require each youth athlete who is suspected of sustaining a concussion or head injury in a practice or competition to be immediately removed from the activity. A youth athlete who has been removed from an activity may not return to practice or competition until the youth submits to the athletic coach a written medical clearance to return stating that the youth athlete no longer exhibits signs, symptoms, or behaviors consistent with a concussion or other head injury. Medical clearance must be authorized by the appropriate health care practitioner trained in the diagnosis, evaluation, and management of concussions as defined by the **Sports Medicine Advisory Committee of the Florida High School Athletic Association**. (www.fhsaa.org)

The WBRSA Board of Directors has adopted and implemented the required program to assure that our players, parents, and coaches are educated on injury prevention and appropriate treatment. The following narrative and informational brochure has been prepared by Lynn University expressly for the purpose of protecting their student athletes.

Concussion Education

(Source: <http://www.lynnfightingknights.com/inside-athletics/sports-medicine/concussion-education>)

Lynn University recognizes that concussions are a significant risk to those participating in athletics. A Concussion Management Plan has been developed to provide a protocol for the recognition, evaluation, management, and return-to-play decisions for those student-athletes who are diagnosed with a concussion. Part of this plan involves educating our coaches and student-athletes to recognize the signs and symptoms of a concussion, possible injury mechanisms of a concussion and the importance of immediately referring a student-athlete suspected of having a concussion for proper evaluation by appropriate medical personnel.

Please refer to the following educational links for helpful information on concussions:

- [NCAA Educational Video](#)¹
- [Fact Sheet for Student-Athletes](#)²
- [Fact Sheet for Coaches](#)³

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CONCUSSION

A FACT SHEET FOR STUDENT-ATHLETES

WHAT IS A CONCUSSION?

A concussion is a brain injury that:

- Is caused by a blow to the head or body.
 - From contact with another player, hitting a hard surface such as the ground, ice or floor, or being hit by a piece of equipment such as a bat, lacrosse stick or field hockey ball.
- Can change the way your brain normally works.
- Can range from mild to severe.
- Presents itself differently for each athlete.
- Can occur during practice or competition in ANY sport.
- **Can happen even if you do not lose consciousness.**

HOW CAN I PREVENT A CONCUSSION?

Basic steps you can take to protect yourself from concussion:

- Do not initiate contact with your head or helmet. You can still get a concussion if you are wearing a helmet.
- Avoid striking an opponent in the head. Undercutting, flying elbows, stepping on a head, checking an unprotected opponent, and sticks to the head all cause concussions.
- Follow your athletics department's rules for safety and the rules of the sport.
- Practice good sportsmanship at all times.
- Practice and perfect the skills of the sport.

WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS OF A CONCUSSION?

You can't see a concussion, but you might notice some of the symptoms right away. Other symptoms can show up hours or days after the injury. Concussion symptoms include:

- Amnesia.
- Confusion.
- Headache.
- Loss of consciousness.
- Balance problems or dizziness.
- Double or fuzzy vision.
- Sensitivity to light or noise.
- Nausea (feeling that you might vomit).
- Feeling sluggish, foggy or groggy.
- Feeling unusually irritable.
- Concentration or memory problems (forgetting game plays, facts, meeting times).
- Slowed reaction time.

Exercise or activities that involve a lot of concentration, such as studying, working on the computer, or playing video games may cause concussion symptoms (such as headache or tiredness) to reappear or get worse.

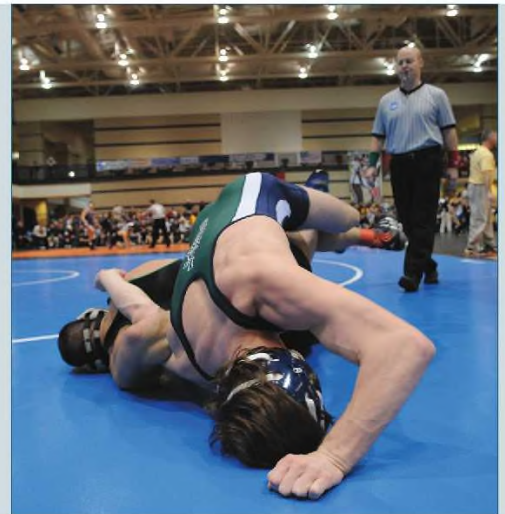
WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I THINK I HAVE A CONCUSSION?

Don't hide it. Tell your athletic trainer and coach. Never ignore a blow to the head. Also, tell your athletic trainer and coach if one of your teammates might have a concussion. Sports have injury timeouts and player substitutions so that you can get checked out.

Report it. Do not return to participation in a game, practice or other activity with symptoms. The sooner you get checked out, the sooner you may be able to return to play.

Get checked out. Your team physician, athletic trainer, or health care professional can tell you if you have had a concussion and when you are cleared to return to play. A concussion can affect your ability to perform everyday activities, your reaction time, balance, sleep and classroom performance.

Take time to recover. If you have had a concussion, your brain needs time to heal. While your brain is still healing, you are much more likely to have a repeat concussion. In rare cases, repeat concussions can cause permanent brain damage, and even death. Severe brain injury can change your whole life.



IT'S BETTER TO MISS ONE GAME THAN THE WHOLE SEASON. WHEN IN DOUBT, GET CHECKED OUT.

For more information and resources, visit www.NCAA.org/health-safety and www.CDC.gov/Concussion.



Reference to any commercial entity or product or service on this page should not be construed as an endorsement by the Government of the company or its products or services.

(Source: <http://www.lynnfightingknights.com/inside-athletics/sports-medicine/concussion-education>)

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GENERAL RECREATIONAL LEAGUE RULES

The rules for 8U, 10U, 12U and 16U recreational games are posted on the Association's website. Current versions of the rules can be found at www.westbocadiamonds.com

Please visit www.bocaimpact.com for information regarding travel teams.

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COACH'S CODE OF ETHICS

THIS CODE OF ETHICS IS APPLICABLE TO ALL RECREATIONAL AND TRAVEL PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS

COMMITMENT TO THE PLAYERS

1. Coaches shall put the welfare of their athletes above all else while maintaining professional relationships with them. The use of profanity is not acceptable behavior.
2. All games shall be conducted within the letter and intent of the rules of fastpitch softball.
3. Coaches shall always remember that their players are student-athletes and not make demands upon them that will be detrimental to their academic goals or that compromise their academic pursuits.
4. Coaches shall encourage the athletes to exhibit good sportsmanship at all times.
5. Coaches shall not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sexual orientation, age, national or ethnic origin, or qualified handicap or disability.
6. Coaches shall follow the organization and national governing body rules, and state and local laws, regarding drug, alcohol and tobacco use.
7. Coaches shall follow all local and state laws and statutes, thus setting a good example for the players.

COMMITMENT TO THE PROGRAM

1. Coaches shall behave in a way that shall bring credit to the program and to themselves.
2. Coaches shall exhibit professionalism in their actions, words, and attire.
3. Coaches shall act in full accordance with the program, national governing body, and sanctioning body rules.
4. Coaches shall report any violations of law, any violation of program rules or the appearance of coach misconduct to the Board of Directors.

COMMITMENT TO OTHER COACHES

1. Coaches have an obligation to be honest and forthright with other coaches in the program.
2. Coaches shall treat their colleagues with dignity and respect. The use of profanity is not acceptable behavior.
3. Coaches must refrain from making derogatory remarks about another coach or program.

COMMITMENT TO UMPIRES

1. All game umpires shall be treated in a professional and respectable manner at all times.
2. Any displeasure with an umpire's actions or conduct shall be addressed through the proper channels and not through public opinion or demonstration.
3. All coaches should strive to develop positive working relationships with the umpires.

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ATHLETES / PARENTS CODE OF CONDUCT & DISCIPLINE POLICY

ALL RECREATIONAL PLAYERS AND PARENTS AGREE TO COMPLY WITH THESE STANDARDS WITH THE SUBMISSION OF THEIR REGISTRATION FORM.

West Boca Raton Softball Association requires all athletes and parents to demonstrate good moral conduct and ethical judgment which reflects favorably upon the West Boca Diamonds Recreational and Travel softball program. Athletes and parents are subject to the Regulations and Penalties as stated in this Code of Conduct and Discipline Policy, as well as federal, state, and local laws. In personal development, as well as athletic development, the athlete herself plays a critical role. She must understand and respect her relationship with, and her commitment to, the team, as a member of the team and of the program. The athlete must recognize that to achieve complete success, she should respect both the values and goals of West Boca Diamonds Girls Fastpitch Softball and strive to achieve those standards. It is the parents' responsibility to ensure that their behavior re-enforces these standards. The following Code of Conduct has been developed to aid the athlete, with the re-enforcement of the parent, in achieving a level of behavior, which will allow her to become a well-rounded, self-confident, and productive human being.

Athletes have a responsibility...

- to treat everyone fairly within the context of their activity, regardless of gender, place of origin, sexual orientation, religion, political belief or economic status.
- to display high personal standards and project a favorable image of their sport.
- to abstain from the possession or consumption of cigarettes or tobacco products.
- to abstain from drinking alcoholic beverages or from using performance enhancing or mind altering drugs.
- to refrain from the use of profane, insulting, harassing or other offensive language.
- to follow the training regimens, competitive programs, and team rules as mutually agreed upon by coaches and athletes.
- to regularly seek ways of increasing your athletic development and self-awareness.
- to uphold the sport's rules and spirit of the rules, and encourage others to do so.
- to treat opponents and officials with due respect both in victory and defeat, and to encourage other athletes to act accordingly.
- to be aware of the role sport plays in all athletes' lives and respect the pressures that may be placed on yourself and other athletes as you strive to balance physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual elements of your lives.

Athletes must...

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- respect and obey the laws of federal, state, and local jurisdictions.
- report at all times individuals who may request sexual favors, who make lewd sexual advances, or who use threats of reprisal for rejections.
- act in a manner that ensures the safety of athletes, coaches, and officials in the game.
- respect other athletes' dignity; verbal or physical behaviors that constitute harassment or abuse are not acceptable.
- never use, or advocate or condone the use of, tobacco or tobacco products, drugs or other banned performance-enhancing substances.
- never conduct themselves in an unsportsmanlike manner, such as physically or verbally abusing an official, opposing coach, player, or spectator, or use profanity, vulgarity, taunts, ridicules, or obscene gestures.
- respect the property and rights of others.
- obey team rules and instructions from her coaches, within the guidelines of this code, and treat her coaches and teammates with respect.
- accept that they are role models for younger girls in the program who want to follow in their footsteps.
- realize that their actions, when representing the program either during games and tournaments effect the reputation of their coaches and the overall program.

Parents have a responsibility...

- to treat everyone fairly within the context of their activity, regardless of gender, place of origin, sexual orientation, religion, political belief or economic status.
- to display high personal standards and project a favorable image of the sport that their daughter is playing.
- to refrain from the use of profane, insulting, harassing or other offensive language.
- to support the training regimens, competitive programs, and team rules as agreed upon by coaches and athletes.
- to regularly seek ways of increasing your daughter's athletic development and self-awareness.
- to uphold the sport's rules and spirit of the rules, and encourage others to do so.
- to treat opponents and officials with due respect both in victory and defeat, and to encourage other parents and athletes to act accordingly.
- to be aware of the role sports play in your daughter's life and show consideration for the pressures that may be placed on her and other athletes as they strive to balance physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual elements of their lives.
- discuss any problems or concerns with their daughter's coach and, if no resolution is achieved, contact a member of the Board of Directors for assistance.

Parents must...

- respect and obey the laws of federal, state, and local jurisdictions.

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- register with **eAlerts®** for up-to-date notification at <http://westbocadiamonds.ealert.com>. Please sign up for **League News** and the other categories of interest to you.
- Allow the coaching staff to communicate with the players during games and practices without conflicting direction coming from the stands. Parental support is encouraged, but parental coaching during games, is confusing to the players.
- report at all times individuals who may request sexual favors, who make lewd sexual advances, or who use threats of reprisal for rejections upon an athlete.
- act in a manner that ensures the safety of athletes, coaches, and officials in the game.
- respect other parents' and athletes' dignity; verbal or physical behaviors that constitute harassment or abuse are not acceptable.
- never use, or advocate or condone the use of, drugs or other banned performance-enhancing substances.
- never conduct themselves in an unsportsmanlike manner, such as physically or verbally abusing an official, opposing coach, player, or spectator, or use profanity, vulgarity, taunts, ridicules, or obscene gestures.
- respect the property and rights of others.
- remain at the park during all practices and games, in case of accident or injury involving their daughter.
- obey team rules and instructions from team coaches, within the guidelines of this code, and treat all coaches and athletes with respect.
- accept that they are role models for their daughters.
- realize that their actions, when representing the program either during games and tournaments effect the reputation of the players, coaches and the overall program.

Consequences and Penalties

Failure to live up to the Code of Conduct, whether it be by the athlete or parent, may result in one of the following sanctions being imposed by the Team Manager and/or the Board of Directors upon the athlete:

- a) Suspension from the team - the suspension imposed may range anywhere from one game or practice to one or more games or weeks, depending upon the severity of the misconduct and the surrounding circumstances.
- b) Dismissal from the team for the remainder of the season.
- c) Permanent dismissal from the league.

ALL RECREATIONAL PLAYERS AND PARENTS AGREE TO COMPLY WITH THESE STANDARDS WITH THE SUBMISSION OF THEIR REGISTRATION FORM.