

Welcome to North Branch Fastpitch Association

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1. Welcome

Dear Player & Family,

Welcome to the North Branch Fastpitch Association! We are thrilled to have you join our softball family. Whether you are new to the game or have previous experience, our goal is to ensure you grow as a player while having fun. We believe in teamwork, dedication, and continuous learning, and we are excited to start our upcoming softball season!

Play hard, have fun, and enjoy the journey!

2. About Our Association

Our association focuses on developing skills, sportsmanship, and building friendships on and off the field. Teams compete within the **Centennial League (8u) & Tri-County League (10u +)** and aim to foster an environment where players can learn, compete, and have fun.

Our coaching staff is committed to helping every player reach their full potential, no matter their experience level. Whether you're learning the fundamentals or refining skills, there's a place for you on our team.

3. Practice and Game Schedules

- **Practices:** Typically, 2x per week. Day, time & length TBD by coaching staff.
- **Games:** Schedules look different for each age group. A full game schedule will be provided once the season starts.
 - 8U – Two games per week on Tuesdays and Thursdays
 - 10U – Double Header Games on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Tuesday games do not start until June
 - 12U – Double Header Games on Monday and Wednesdays.
- **Tournaments**
 - Each team will have a chance to play in tournaments throughout the season. If a team chooses to enter more tournaments than what is covered by NBFA, then fees will have to be paid for by that team. *See below for what is covered by the association:*
 - 8u (Centennial League Tournament)
 - 10u + (2 Paid, Tri – County Qualifiers & State Tournament)
 - Tournaments vary from **1-3 days in length.**
- **National Tournament**
 - Teams are given “berths” to play in a National Tournament within their respective age group. These “berths” are typically awarded during tournaments (not all give berths for nationals).
 - National Tournaments are typically held locally within MN or surrounding states and are towards the end of regular season play.
 - The NBFA supports the teams that have been given the chance to play in these tournaments and covers a portion of the costs. The remaining fees will need to be fundraised by each team that plans on attending.

4. Player Equipment (*Gently used/donated equipment available upon request*)

- Players are provided with a uniform package as part of the season fees. Packages include 1-2 player jersey(s), 1-2 sets of socks & 1 custom sweater.

*Softball pants, player belts & extra apparel/merchandise will be available for purchase
(more information to come)*

Players are required to bring the following to every practice and game:

- **Glove:** A well-fitting glove is essential for every player.
- **Cleats:** Rubber cleats are recommended for a better grip on the field. *(14u and older are allowed to wear METAL cleats)*

- **Bat:** While the team does provide bats to use, having your own is beneficial for practice. Ensure it complies with league regulations & it is an appropriate size for the player.
- **Helmet:** A batting helmet is necessary for safety.
- **Fielder's Face Mask:** Metal or plastic options are ok.
 - ****14u + Only**** If a player chooses not to wear a field mask in outfield, a **WAVER MUST BE SIGNED PRIOR TO PRACTICE OR GAME(S). NO EXCEPTIONS**
- **Water Bottle:** Hydration is important. Bring a filled water bottle to each practice & every game.

5. Team Rules and Expectations

- **Attendance:** Players are expected to attend all practices and games. If you cannot make it or are running late, please inform the coaching staff ASAP or 24 hours in advance if able.
- **Sportsmanship:** Show respect for teammates, coaches, opponents, and umpires; always! We encourage good sportsmanship whether teams win or lose.
- **Games/ Tournaments:** Players are to stay in the dugout or with the team while games are in play.
- **Effort:** Give your best effort every time you step onto the field. We value improvement over perfection.
- **Teamwork:** Softball is a team sport and supporting each other is crucial to success.
- **Responsibility:** Take care of your equipment and clean up after yourself.

General rule of thumb is to arrive 15 minutes early for all practices and 45 minutes early for games (or unless stated otherwise by coaching staff).

PLAYERS – NO PHONES DURING PRACTICES OR GAMES

6. Parent Information

- **MN USA**
 - **New Player(s)** - Create account / upload birth certificate to website.
 - **Returning Player(s)** – Ensure your account is still active – update if needed.
- **NBFA Website** – Resource to refer to throughout the season
 - **“How To” videos**
 - Videos for Scoring/books are kept during games.
 - Videos for Prep/Chalk Fields (Home game(s) only).
 - Locations of local fields (Elementary “Sunrise,” Middle School, High School – Junior Varsity/Varsity Fields)
 - General information about NBFA

- **Crossbar App** – Communication for practices, games, updates from coaching staff & team managers.
- **Emails**- Throughout the season, emails will be sent from the NBFA Board with pertinent information. **PLEASE READ THEM (THIS CAN NOT BE STRESSED ENOUGH).**
- **Volunteer Hours: Each family must complete at least 7 volunteer hours per player. Max of 10 hours per family (subject to change).**
 - Members of the NBFA Board, Coaching Staff & Team Managers have volunteer hours waived for the season.
 - Volunteer hours can be completed by preparing fields (chalking or raking at home games), running the book during games, Gamechanger (if team utilizes the app during season), assisting with Gerten's flower delivery & sorting or even umpiring games (depending on experience). There are plenty of options to complete these hours!

*** If volunteer hours for season are met, there is opportunity for paid umpiring based on experience ***

- **Volunteer Buyout** – You can buyout of volunteer hours for \$300 at the time of registration. **If volunteer hours are not met at the end of the season and you did not buy them out at the time of registration then your account will be charged the \$300.**

****PLEASE HELP US BY COMPLETING VOLUNTEER HOURS – WE DO NOT WANT TO CHARGE YOU LATER UNLESS NECESSARY****

- **Coaching Staff – (Head Coach & 1- 2 Assistant Coaches per Team)**
 - Head Coach
 - Coordinate Practices/ Games
 - Primary communication with the NBFA Board & Coaching Coordinator
 - Assistant Coach
 - Assists Head Coach, players & team in practices and games

If concerns arise during the season, please discuss them with coach(es) first (*24 hr. no contact rule applied after practices/games*). If further issues arise or help is needed, please **contact the Parent Liaison.**

If an emergent concern arises and you are unable to wait the 24-hr. time, please reach out to the **Director** or **Assistant Director.**

Any **formal complaint** will need to be submitted through the **NBFA website or emailed to the Parent Liaison.**

- **Team Manager (1 per Team)**
 - Relay information from coaching staff to team/families
 - Update Crossbar App, games & practice times & locations, etc.
 - Log / track volunteer hours for parent

7.NBFA Board Members

Officers

Director—*Katherine Pell*

Assistant Director—*Tashina Good*

Treasurer—*Erin Jenson*

Secretary—*Amy Alarcon*

Equipment/ Field Manager—*Wes Eisenschenk*

Members At Large

Social Media/ Uniforms—*Casey Olson*

Coach Coordinator—*Alexa Brett*

Fundraising—*Estelle Zondlo*

8u Point of Contact—*Maggie Roy*

Parent Liaison—*Open Position*

Umpire Coordinator—*Open Position*

Technology—*Open Position*

If you have any questions or concerns, please reach out. We're here to help! We are excited to have you join the NBFA and look forward to a fun and successful softball season.