

A Message from the Director of Coaches



Greetings Players and Parents,

I want to thank everyone that participated in our Spring Clinics. They were a huge success, many players were able to work on their skills, meet new friends, and become a part of our growing program. Many new players have signed up to play for our Program this summer. We anticipate more players will sign up in the next few days prior to rosters being created. If you haven't signed up yet, and miss the online opportunity, make sure you call us.

This week, we start practices for all Pitchers and Catchers as well as Hitting Practices for U14 and U18 players, on Tuesday and Thursday at Lombard Field, 4:30-7:00pm. This week's practices are not mandatory; however, players are strongly encouraged to participate. Regular mandatory practices will start next week for all levels-see online calendars. A formatted practice plan has been created to help each team develop specific skills throughout the season, each week built on the other. There will always be practice before each game. We ask, that players are always at the field and ready to play at the start time each night so that coaches can maximize the time they have prior to games. Formal practices for U12, U12 Tourney, U14 and U18 Players start this Sunday. This Sunday will be run in an evaluation type format so that we may finalize rosters for our summer teams. We are trying to create evenly skilled teams this year and want to make sure we fairly evaluate all players. Rosters for teams will be posted Sunday night on our website. Coaches for all Rec Teams will call their players next week to get acquainted. Exception: U12 tourney players will be notified via phone call during this week to be ready for practice on Sunday.

Rosters for U14 and U18 Rec Program will close and must be submitted to the league on June 21. Rosters for the U12 Rec Program will remain open; however, new players may not be guaranteed slots once season starts. U10 Players will be able to join at any time during their season. U14 and U16 Tourney teams will be decided in two weeks, if you are interested in being evaluated for either, please notify us immediately.

Regular practices for U12, U14 and U18 Rec Teams will be next week and has been posted on the calendar. The link is on the front page of our website. The entire schedule for all teams has been posted. I urge you to check the calendar regularly during the season. Any cancellations due to weather will be posted there and on the Home page as soon as we are able to do so. U14 and U18 players should know that League rule is teams must cancel by 4:30PM. This means that on potentially inclement days, we might not be notified for an away game cancellation until just before we are leaving to go to the field. For this reason, we will also try to text and email everyone affected when cancellations do occur.

U14 and U18 Divisions have grown to include two teams at each level. The schedule for both is the same; locations of games are different for each. We do ask that all players

rostered on these teams recognize that the season ends with a Championship tournament on the weekend of August 1-2. We are hoping that all our players have committed to the entire schedule. If for some reason your summer schedule conflicts with some dates, please make sure your coach knows as soon as possible.

This month, we unveiled our online registration program. This has become a great tool for us and the organization of the program. If you have not already done so, please go online and register your player for the summer season. Fees are due now in order for us to be able to pay the bills for all the field fees, uniform costs, umpire fees, league fees, and insurance for the teams, most of which is due now. We appreciate your efforts to do this as soon as possible.

We will have new uniforms this season and due to rising costs, they will remain with the program at the end of the season. This will help us keep costs down again next year. The players will be able to keep their visors. Parents will be asked to give a check of \$25 as a uniform deposit. This check will be kept in an envelope returned to you at the end of the season when the uniform shirt is returned. Checks will only be deposited for unreturned uniforms for replacement. We will have sweatshirts and wind jackets and pants with the program logo available for purchase in the coming weeks. Continue to check out the website for that!

Potential tournament players need to make sure you are available for the tourney dates. They are posted on the calendar. We will need a copy of your birth certificate to submit for review at the tournaments.

Volunteers are needed in every division, for a variety of jobs. The program is entirely non-profit, volunteer-driven. Each year, as the program grows, more help is needed. When many show up, the work is light. We enjoy working with one another and have become a family. We ask you to join us, in whatever capacity you are capable, even if it is transporting the equipment to each game. Building community is at the core of our program. We have a Planning Meeting this Tuesday at Lombard Field-Community Building. Join us!

This season, all our coaches will be ACE Certified Coaches which includes a background check, through ASA (American Softball Association). All other adults having any involvement with our players will be required to have this certification as well. Additionally, there will be a coaches meeting prior to start of season (date to be determined) so that everyone is using the same playbook, set of guidelines and philosophy. We are very proud of the level of coaching our program has been able to provide over the years. We anticipate continuing to do so. We do not support yelling at players. All players on all teams will play in all games, with as equal opportunity as possible. Remember, player safety will always be priority.

Student coaches will be utilized on most teams to afford the opportunity of growth and development for them as well. We hope to foster future coaches to impart life lessons to future generations of players. Each will be certified as well. Additionally, if there are parents interested in learning more about the game, please let us know. We are always happy to have more hands on the field.

Teams are encouraged to support one another. Younger players are especially encouraged to attend the games of the older players, to cheer them on, to develop a better sense of the game and to really see what they can expect out of themselves and teammates in the coming years.

Our website is ever growing. If you have suggestions or are handy with website design, feel free to volunteer. If you take pictures during the season, email them to us to be added to the website.

Lastly, youth sports is a vehicle for children (of all ages) to build character, find their inner strengths, make lasting friendships, learn to work together with others, be a part of something bigger than themselves and to be active and healthy. Because community is so important to us, the Cape Cod Riptides strive to teach sportsmanship first. The following is a policy that is expected of parents and players on all our teams. It is applicable to all levels because it sets the tone for the program that we like to maintain. Youth sports has no place for negativity and we have zero tolerance for it in our program. We would like everyone to understand that we have a great amount of respect for your children. If at any time you have questions, concerns, or comments, please set up a time to discuss these away from all of the players, so that we can all be on the same playing field when it comes to the well-being of our children and the future of our community.

ZERO TOLERANCE POLICY

We pride ourselves on our sportsmanship and we take the responsibility you have given us to set good examples for your children very seriously. We hold sportsmanship to be the very key to the success of both our program and your children. Sportsmanship and proper positive representation of our program and girls' softball overall will always be of the utmost important to us. We will constantly teach through positive reinforcement and always encourage the players to stay focused and positive, regardless of how the games are going. We encourage the girls to compliment not just their teammates, but also players from other programs as well. We teach the players to always respect their own team and coaches, the Umpires and the coaches and players from other programs at ALL times. No player, parent or fan from the Cape Cod Riptides, at any time, should conduct themselves in any manner other than respectful towards anyone on or off the ball field, before during or after games or practices, or at any other time while representing the Program. Disagreements with umpire calls, decisions made by coaches or plays made by players should kindly be kept to yourself and perhaps discussed quietly at a future time, in private, away from players, where things can be explained. This means no yelling or audible negative comments directed at umpires, players or coaches during the game. A player not able to participate and conduct herself in this manner will be given only one warning, then upon second incident will be suspended from the program immediately for a period of two games. A third incident will result in the player being asked to leave the program immediately. Decision will remain with the coaching and management staff of the Program and will be considered final. Any parent or fan not able to conduct him/herself in a manner consistent with the supportive nature of positive youth sports will be asked to leave the game or practice immediately. Further discussion will then be required before that individual will be allowed to attend events.

In addition, the Cape Cod Riptides will always maintain the right to ask ANYONE to leave the premises of any game on any field that we are participating on should we consider that person's behavior negative, a risk to the players and fans, and/or not conducive to the positive learning experience we want for our Program. We would like to think this will never be necessary, but should a situation arise, please be aware that we will ask that person (s) to leave.

As always, this includes allowing the coaches to do their jobs. Please do not coach your children from the sidelines. It is disruptive to the team concept and disrespectful to the coaches on the field. Your children become our players when they arrive at field. The best suggestions we can give you are that on game day: let them be. Words of advice: don't coach them on game day. Just tell them to have fun before, and on the way home, ask them if they had a good time. They know what they did right and wrong, have already covered it with their coach and team and gone over it in their own heads enough. If anyone thinks hitting a ball coming at you at close to 50mph from 35 feet away and two feet off the ground is easy, we challenge you to get in the batter's box! Too much coaching has been shown to burn kids out. Summer softball is supposed to be fun and a place where they can push themselves to the next level and make mistakes while learning and developing. Let it be fun.

Please encourage your players to get to the fields early, before expected times, to help carry equipment, set up the fields, etc. For home games, we have to prep the fields. This includes raking and lining, prepping the mounds and batters boxes, setting the bases and getting the field safe and playable. After games, it means leaving the field and dugouts as we would like to have left for us. Coaches are sometimes the only ones available to do this, which cuts into the time they have to run practices before games. Parents and fans are all encouraged to help out. It would be good for one person from each team to step up and coordinate this effort. The more hands, the easier the work, the more we can all feel good about a job well done. This also counts for the end of the game. Additionally, coaches should not be carrying equipment. They should not be picking up trash in the dugouts. Players are old enough to pick up after themselves. This is a lesson in respect. Please encourage your players to step it up and get involved with the entire team concept. Please consider having read this as an acknowledgement that you understand, accept and will support our position. If you have questions, comments or concerns, please feel free to discuss them with us prior to the start of season.

As in the past, we expect to have a great season, players, parents, fans alike. We have always enjoyed a wonderful summer together. Our players continue to shine both on the field and off in efforts attitudes and achievements. This summer, we are so please with the growth of the program. We thank you for your patience through the growing pains, your commitment to a community effort and the privilege of coaching your special children.

As Coaching Director, and Founder of the Cape Cod Riptides, I am humbled by the development and growth of the program. I would like to personally thank all the individuals who have stepped up and made the growth a reality. It is with great pride that I watch the players develop over the years, becoming strong women, accomplishing so much in their high school years, and now college as well. I look forward to this season, of watching the players have awesome experiences, developing new levels of skill, making great new friends and seeing the families enjoy their time together. And, Let the games begin!

To our parents: Sit back, watch and enjoy!

To my players: Enjoy, play hard, play fair, be proud, be one. Go Riptides!

Sincerely,
Coach Michelle