

## **SOUTH COUNTY SOFTBALL** **TEAM POLICY 2009**

### **VARSITY PURPOSE**

It is the purpose of the Varsity program to compete at the highest level possible in order to bring recognition to the school and the program by winning games and obtaining Championship status. Each player will have a role on the team in order to gain that success. Playing time will always be decided by the coaching staff with this purpose in mind. While all players contribute to the success of the team by their hard work and team preparation, not all players will be able to play in all games. Playing time will be determined by performance as obtained during the pre-season and ensuing games. Age and grade level are not considerations in selecting Varsity team members. Performance is the primary consideration.

### **JUNIOR VARSITY PURPOSE**

The Junior Varsity program is less competitive than the Varsity Program. Player development is considered at the Junior Varsity level and most players will play most games in order to meet this purpose. Participation in the Junior Varsity program will not guarantee a player of eventually being selected for the Varsity Program. Seniors are not permitted by FCPS regulation to participate at the Junior Varsity level. Many players that participate at this level may never successfully compete for a Varsity position. Some players may raise their performance level enough to eventually be selected by the Varsity Program.

### **Team Goals**

It is our goal to be successful. Winning is an important aspect of being successful. But success is much more than just winning games. Success is mastering new skills, enjoying competing with others, feeling good about ourselves, enjoying the team spirit, and displaying class and integrity at all times.

This goal will be attained by combining sound softball fundamentals with excellent physical conditioning while possessing an unselfish team attitude.

This team will provide you with a valuable lifelong experience to look back on. If you work hard at your game and your relationships with your fellow players and coaches then the results will be with you for your entire life.

### **Coaching Philosophy**

The coaching philosophy of the South County Stallions Softball program is to help young athletes develop physically by learning softball skills, improve physical conditioning, develop good health habits, and avoid injuries. Develop psychologically by learning to control emotions and developing feelings of self-worth. Develop socially by learning cooperation in a competitive context with appropriate standards of behavior. If this philosophy is followed then the team goals as stated above will be met.

## **Team Responsibility**

Teamwork and team spirit are essential parts of what this team is all about. Treat your teammates, coaches, and managers with respect and be considerate at all times. Being tolerant of individuals is part of being a team member.

## **Individual Responsibilities**

Accepting a position on the Varsity or Junior Varsity Softball team is a commitment. Please take it seriously. The team cannot function without all the members being present. Be prepared to sacrifice other activities as you place Softball at the top of your priority list.

Spring offers many opportunities to students. With the exception of school activities that are required by your teachers as a part of your academic grade, you are expected to attend all practices and games. You will often find yourself conflicted when special opportunities arise that you must miss in order to honor your commitment to the team.

If you are not willing to make this sacrifice, please do not accept your team position so that others may have the opportunity. Likewise, once you have made the commitment, have the fortitude to honor it. Leaving mid-season hurts the team and is unfair to the other students that competed for your position, but were not successful.

You must always conduct yourself with exemplary behavior both on and off the field and in or out of school. Everything you do, in or out of class, in school as well as out of school reflect not only on yourself, but South County Secondary School, our softball program and your teammates. Absences and lateness from class, inappropriate language, smoking, drinking and substance abuse will not be tolerated.

While it is the duty of coaches to treat all players fairly, all players are not identical and the staff will react to each player as an individual. The coaching staff expects you to try your best, maintain a positive attitude, and do your very best to improve as players and team members. Should you feel that too much pressure is being placed on you, you should confer with a coach or your team captains.

Maintain a positive attitude and high academic standards at all times, even when things may not be going as well as you would like. Do not hold problems in. Discuss them with your Coaches or Captains so they do not linger.

Always be honest, not only with your teammates and coaches but most importantly with yourself. It is always easier to tell the truth. Dishonesty is grounds for dismissal from the team.

Managers, if selected, should be treated with respect and not demeaned in any manner.

## **Sportsmanship**

Encouragement of your teammates before, during, and after games and practices is essential to our success and helpful to all in good as well as during bad times, both on and off the field. Name calling, abusive remarks to the others is forbidden and is grounds for dismissal from the team.

Be courteous to visiting teams and umpires. Be modest when successful and gracious in defeat. Respect the integrity and judgment of the umpires and accept their decisions without question. Under no circumstances will you dispute any call with an umpire. Leave any discussion with umpires to your coaches.

Any softball equipment belonging to the team must be handled and maintained properly as if it were your own. Abused equipment (helmets, bats, etc.) will be paid for by the offender.

Profanity will not be tolerated.

Unsportsmanlike conduct will not be accepted in any form. Offenders will be subject to disciplinary measures determined by the coaching staff.

## **Practice / Game and Team Activity Attendance**

Attendance at practices, games, and team meetings is mandatory unless excused by the coach, prior to the absence. Conflicting activities must be presented to the coach in advance. Please realize we depend on everyone, as everyone plays an important role on our Team. It is critical you be at every practice and team function. Unexcused absences will have consequences as determined by the coaching staff.

Team members arriving late to practices or games as a result of after school visits to teachers for academic assistance must be pre-approved and must have the teacher provide either a note or a notation in the student's planner indicating the **date and time the student left the teacher to report to practice**. This requirement is very important and will have consequences as determined by the coaching staff if it is not adhered to.

In accordance with the South County Student Activity Participation Policy students must be in school the entire day to be eligible to participate in their scheduled activity of that day. (The Director of Student Activities will determine the need for any personal exceptions.) Players are required to notify the coaching staff if they have missed any or all portions of the school day.

If you are not in school due to illness, you should not be at practice; however, you, or a parent, are required to personally contact the Coach with an explanation as to why you are not at practice / game.

## **Lettering Requirements**

All players selected to the Varsity Team who complete the entire regular season and play in at least 1 game will be awarded a varsity letter. (NOTE: ONLY Varsity players are eligible to letter). Any player displaying unsportsmanlike conduct as indicated by an umpire may lose their eligibility to letter. Managers in High School may letter if they complete the entire season. Middle School managers are not eligible for a letter. Junior Varsity Players that are pulled up to play with the Varsity team are not eligible to letter or attend the Varsity Letterman's ceremony, unless they are formally removed from the JV program and added to the Varsity program. This includes post-season play.

## **Bench Decorum**

The team bench and immediate area, at home and away games, is for team members only! Please advise family and friends to remain in the spectators areas. There will be no socializing during a game. You should not leave the dugout to visit with spectators or parents. You may not leave the dugout without permission from the coaching staff. You are expected to be "in the zone" at all times.

Eating on the bench during games should be avoided as it detracts from focusing on the game. Remember, you may be called upon to substitute, courtesy run, or pinch hit, at any time. You are expected to anticipate such situations and be ready to go.

## **Scholastic Requirements**

Schoolwork and studies are the responsibility of each softball player. You are expected to maintain a proper perspective in achieving satisfactory grades. Poor grades and poor school conduct / attendance can effect your participation in games and practices and consequently have an adverse impact on the entire team.

Players are responsible for notifying the coaches of any need for special attention from the teaching staff that may require them to miss practices. This will be acceptable as grades supersede athletic participation.

## **Substance Abuse Policy**

Fairfax County Public Schools Policy will be strictly adhered to in instances of substance abuse; drugs, alcohol, tobacco and weapons. Members of this team who violate this policy will be subject to dismissal from the team.

Any use of these controlled substances is detrimental to you as an individual and our coaching staff is opposed to any and all use of these substances by any team members at any time!

Violation of these policies, whether on or off school property will result in consequences as determined by the coaching staff or school administrators.

## **Game Days**

For away games all players will report to the bus at the announced departure time. All players are required to ride on the bus with their teammates to and from away games. . This is an important time for pre and post game discussions. **Exceptions will be made on a case by case basis, but not routinely.**

For Home Games all players should be dressed and on the field for the game at the announced time

## **Outside Teams / Leagues (Independent Team Rule 28-11-1)**

The VHSL policy allows players during their sports season to become a member of or participate with an organized team in the same sport which is independent of the school's control, so long as such participation does not conflict with the scheduled activities of the school team.

## **Jewelry**

Wearing jewelry (watches, rings, earrings, etc.) is prohibited during games and practices. Do not obtain new jewelry piercing during the season. VHSL Rules prohibit the wearing of jewelry during competition. Jewelry must be removed, it cannot be taped over. Violations discovered by the umpire will result in the offender being restricted to the bench for the remainder of the game.

## **Food**

Fairfax County Public Schools emphasize the "no eating" policy on all buses. Therefore, all players will comply with this policy unless permission is obtained from the bus driver and the coaching staff.

## **Cellular Telephones**

Cellular phones **SHALL BE** turned off prior to entering the South County Softball complex for practice and any complex for games. They shall not be turned back on until practice has officially ended or a game has concluded and the team has been dismissed by the coaching staff. Cellular phones shall also be turned off prior to loading the bus for an away game. Exceptions to this rule may be allowed on a case by case basis by the coaching staff. (Primarily to allow team members to contact their families)

## **Injuries**

Players should immediately inform the coaches of any injury. Players requiring treatment for an injury and/or taping by the Trainer should do so prior to practice after notifying the coaching staff. "I was with the trainer" is not an appropriate excuse for being late to practice. Prior approval is required. Any injury, which results in blood flow, will be handled by a coach or school trainer ONLY!

### **Locker room / Lockers**

Care and maintenance of the locker room and lockers is your responsibility. Ensure they are properly cared for, maintained, and that the areas are kept cleaned.

### **Violation of Rules and Policies**

Team members are expected to adhere to the team, school, and county rules and regulations. Violations of any of the rules and policies stated herein could result in suspension from the team. Be assured however, that you will be counseled first and your parent(s) / guardian(s) have the right to appeal, through the Coach, Director of Student Activities, and the Principal.

**XVI. ACKNOWLEDGMENT:**

**To be signed by parent / guardian and player and returned to the coach.**

*As a member of the South County High School Softball Program, I recognize my responsibility to my team, my school, and my community. I have read and will abide by the South County Softball Program Philosophy and regulations. I know that failure to comply with these rules could result in disciplinary action such as reduced playing time, no playing time, suspension, or even dismissal from the team (except violation of the FCPS Substance Abuse Policy -- which may result in immediate removal from the team).*

**PRINT PLAYER NAME:**

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LAST NAME, FIRST NAME

**SIGNATURES:**

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DATE

PLAYER

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DATE

PARENT/GUARDIAN