

FireStix Parent & Player TEAM Rules

- **The TEAM** – **Softball is a TEAM sport.** Just as every player has committed to the coach of their TEAM, the coach is committed to every player (*and family*) to help them be their best and to assist them in the college recruiting process. Golf, Tennis, Track, etc. provide ample opportunity for those concerned only with individual progress, accolades and being the center of attention.
- **Exposure** - **FireStix 14u, 16u and 18u TEAM's are college exposure TEAMS.** This means every player will be given the opportunity to play in front of college coaches throughout the year. Winning is nice, but it is not the top priority. The top priority of the TEAM is to prepare the players to play college softball and to get their college degrees. It is the coach's responsibility to manage this process.
- **Playing Time & Positioning** - This is the coach's responsibility to manage. Upon accepting their offer, every player is informed about the coach's expectations for them as well as the positions they may play. Every player will have numerous opportunities to play in front of college coaches in positions they are best suited (most likely to be recruited for). Playing time and positioning will be fair, not equal and never negotiable.
- **Bracket vs Pool Play** - There are significant differences between the two types of games.
 - **Pool Play** - Typically, not always, the coach may bat the entire roster and do free defensive substitution. This is where most college recruiting is done.
 - **Bracket Play** – The coach may only bat 9 and make use of the DP/Flex rule. It may also be required per the tournament rules. Those not in the “*starting lineup*” will get into the game at some point as subs. While stats are a factor, they're not the only consideration when the coach makes a lineup for bracket games. Very little college recruiting is done in bracket play.
- **Competition** – The coach will emphasize competition to the players the entire year. Not only will they be competing with other TEAMS, but also with their TEAMMATES (*for example to be in the starting lineup for bracket play*). And throughout the year, (*genuinely*) supporting the very TEAMMATES a player is in direct competition with for a given position/time. College coaches want players who fight, want to be their best and a strong desire to win. College coaches who win get promoted and/or better pay. Those who lose get fired.
- **Pity Parties** – Failure is a big part of sports. Players who pout after making errors, missing pitches, striking out, are not playing their desired position or are not in the starting lineup will have a difficult time attracting positive attention from college coaches. Throwing bats, helmets or gloves, disrespecting coaches, TEAMMATES, parents or the umpires are examples. Others include creating drama, jealousy and getting quiet (*not supporting the TEAM*).
- **Player Conduct** – Players are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that would help them and their TEAMMATES to be recruited at all times (*See Pity Parties*). They are expected to control their focus, attitude and effort in pregame warmups and during the games. They are expected to have everything they need when we meet to carry the equipment into the park (*drinks, snacks, tampons, ibuprofen, etc.*) College coaches do not want to see players who are dependent upon their parents/families during pregame warmups or the games. This means when they meet with their TEAM and coaches, they say goodbye until after the post-game coach's talk. In the event of injuries or other issues, the player can approach a coach for

assistance and the coach will determine whether parental/family involvement is necessary. Players are also expected to show respect for the other TEAMS as well as the umpires.

- **Parental (Family) Conduct** – Parents/Families are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that will NOT HURT their daughters or her TEAMMATES chances of being recruited (*see Player Conduct including umpires and other TEAMS*). The only person who should communicate with umpires is the head coach. In the event you have an issue or concern, you can approach the coach almost anytime (*after games when equipment is put away or before the TEAM takes the equipment into the park*) so long as you're able to control your emotions and engage in a rational discussion. Please read the article on SoftballJourney.com, "**When Parents Wave Red Flags.**"
- **TEAM & Player Equipment** – Each coach will set rules for their TEAMS concerning TEAM equipment. Typically, it is carried by players to and from the main gate or parking lot of the park. Player equipment is carried by the player only, not a parent, friend or family member. Catchers are exempt from carrying TEAM equipment. Player's will be assigned to help catchers with their gear after games are over. College coaches do not want to see "coddled/babied" players.
- **Dugouts** – Players will not leave a dugout full of trash. It is their responsibility to keep it picked up before, during and after games. Coaches and Players are the only people who should be and or around the dugout. **Dugouts are a No Parent zone unless requested by a coach.**
- **Communications** – Coaches expect prompt replies to TEAM and individual player correspondence, whether via cell phone, text or email acknowledging that they received, understand and/or have performed the requested action. Communication during the pregame and games is also expected. Communication on the field is critical for a TEAM to be their best.
- **Sports Recruits** – This is our platform included in your player fee that makes the recruiting process significantly easier as well as increases a player's opportunities to be seen by colleges of her interest. Every player is expected to utilize the tool on a regular basis to help them be recruited. Coaches may also take into consideration every player's efforts with Sports Recruits concerning playing time and positioning.
- **College Recruiting** - When a player has been in communication with a college coach (*see Sports Recruits*) and that coach is planning to attend a game/day/tourney, the coaches need to know. If they show during a game, this is one of the only acceptable times a parent (or family member) is permitted to approach the coaches during the game. Players can do so at any time. Ask if you have any questions.
- **TEAM Practices** – TEAM practices are handled differently by each head coach. Players are expected to follow the coach's rules concerning practices for their TEAM.
- **Training** - Many players, especially from further away, receive training (*pitching/hitting instruction*) elsewhere. This is fine and often more reasonable logistically. However, if a player is struggling with performance in various ways, her coach may meet with the player and her parents/family to discuss their concerns.
- **Winter Workouts** - Our Winter Workouts (*typically 10 dates on Sundays for 3 hours*) are very important to the development of players. Here players will receive proper instruction for the fundamentals of the game as well as advanced skills. This is where players can really improve their game! Players will communicate with their coaches their availability for these workouts. It

is not unusual to see players who attend most of the workouts surpass the abilities of those who do not.

- **College Camps** – A valid excuse for missing a Winter Workout, but please talk with you coach before signing up for college camps. Some are simply “Cash Cows”, benefiting only the pocketbooks of the college coaches, not the player. Camps are necessary, but only attending the right ones for the player. Communicate with your coach concerning camps/clinics.

By signing below, you are acknowledging you have read, understand and agree to abide by the FireStix Club Rules.

Parent(s) or Guardian(s)

Name : _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Player

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Name: _____

Signature : _____

Date: _____