



FASTBALL ASSOCIATION OF
ST. ALBERT

COACHES HANDBOOK

2009

2008/2009 Executive

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Spring is here and *Fastball* season is upon us!

My name is Dani Beaubien, I am the president. I have been a member of Fastball St. Albert for many years and I am committed to this organization, coaches and players. I love the game!!

I, plus several of the Executive will be keeping in close contact with all coaches and teams throughout the season. We will be your main contact for any challenges or successes that you experience throughout the season.

We would like to welcome back all of the coaches from last year and extend a welcome to the new coaches. We are all looking forward to working with you in providing a fun filled season of fastball for the kids, parents and of course – ourselves.

Umpires have been a challenge again this year. It is getting harder and harder to find umpires. Umpires will not be supplied for the Coach Pitch regular season games. We will provide umpires as best as we can starting with the older divisions and then working our way down to Mites.

On behalf of myself and the Executive – thank you for volunteering as a coach. Have a great season! I look forward to seeing you and your team on the diamonds and at the season ender tournament!!

Feel free to contact me if you have any questions.

PS> We use our website for communicating!

We encourage you to view it often. Please let the parents know as well!

Important Dates for this Season

Equipment Pickup:	April 27 & 29, (5pm – 8pm)	
City League First Game*:	May 4	*Dependent on the weather
Photos**:	May 18, 19, 21 or 25	**See your package for info
Rainmaker Rodeo Parade:	May 23	
Rain-out Make Up Weekend:	June 5-7	
Rep Invitational Tournament:	June 12-14	
City League Tournament:	June 19-21	
Equipment Return:	June 25 (6pm – 9pm) & June 27 (1pm – 5pm)	

Please read the following notes:

1. We encourage you to have at least one practice prior to the start of the season as it gives the players and coaches a chance to meet before the first game.
2. **Do not schedule rain-out games.** The City League Representatives will endeavor to re-schedule rain-out games for the City League. A *Game Make-Up* weekend is tentatively scheduled for the weekend of June 5th. If we need to handle some make-up games, then we will schedule them.
3. Coaches **must ensure** that all parents read and are aware of the Parent and Player Rules of Conduct.
4. Encourage parents to participate in the warm-up/practice time prior to games.
5. Our umpires undergo a training clinic and testing before assignment to the City League, however please remember they are youths who deserve the utmost respect from all coaches, players, parents and spectators.
Inappropriate conduct toward umpires will not be tolerated.
6. The *City League* tournament is scheduled for June 19th to 21st. Information contained in this handbook will be available on our website.
7. The *Rainmaker's Parade* is scheduled for May 23rd. We have a spot reserved for our league to walk and hand out treats. Please encourage your team to attend.
8. Check out "<http://www.softball.ca/LearnToPlay/>". This is a program that has been published by Softball Canada and is a free download. It is very useful to get some great drills and skill building games to use with your players.
9. There will be no umpires for the Coach Pitch regular season games. We will do our best to have umpires for the other divisions.
10. Any deviations from the league rules must receive agreement from both teams and the umpire prior to game start. If one of the parties, a coach or the umpire, doesn't agree then the league rules apply fully.

It is the intention of Fastball St. Albert to let the children have **FUN**, to help them learn the basic rules of the game and to develop good **SPORTSMANSHIP**. If you feel an injustice has been done, calmly request a time-out and discuss the matter in question with the umpire and the opposition coach. Accept the umpire's decision as final. We will not, nor is it intended to achieve perfection in play by the children, the umpires or the coaches. By these acceptances and by showing **SPORTSMANSHIP**, we can all have fun, and the biggest winners will be the CHILDREN.

This participation is for **FUN**.

It is not a highly competitive league.

General Information

City Facility Line (459-1568)

The City of St. Albert maintains a telephone service (Facility Line), which provides the status of the ball diamonds in the city. If the weather has been uncooperative, the City will **NOT** allow the use of the ball diamonds. Please call this service after 4:00 p.m. to ensure that the ball diamonds are in playable condition. **NO EXCEPTIONS to the City directive!**

The URL is: <http://www.stalbert.ca/sport-field-closures-conditions>

Game Start Time

Players are to be at the ball diamond by 6:00 p.m. for warm up. Games will start at 6:30 p.m. sharp.

Ball Diamond Set Up

Home team is responsible for setting up the ball diamond prior to the game.

Game Scores

Winning coach has the responsibility to email the Coach Liaison of the game score within 24 hours (dani@fastballstalbert.com).

Team Name

Each team is required to choose a team name. Coaches are responsible for notifying the Coach Liaison within the first week of league play. An email address should be provided as well for the main contact for team information.

Pitching Machine

There are pitching machines that are available for use by all teams. Please contact the Equipment Director for bookings (tara@fastballstalbert.com).

Team Pictures

SDI Digital located at 29 Rayborn Crescent, St. Albert, produces a superior product at competitive rates. You will be receiving your packages soon.

Rainmaker Rodeo Parade – (If you would like to assist with organizing please contact Dani Beaubien)

Each year, we have an entry in the Rainmaker Rodeo Parade. All players are welcome to participate and walk in the parade. Each team is responsible for their players and must provide a parent volunteer to walk with their team. Additional information will be provided prior to the parade.

Corporate Sponsors

Please contact the Fundraising Director if you are aware of any interest in corporate sponsorship.

City League Tournament

The City League Tournament will be held on the weekend of June 19th to 21st at Meadowview Diamonds. All City League teams will participate in this tournament. The City League Representative will provide the schedules and rules prior to the end of the season. Remember to check our website.

NOTE: Each team is required to provide one volunteer for to help out during the City League Tournament.

Injuries

All injuries must be reported to the City League Representative to ensure proper insurance forms are completed in a timely manner. All insurance claims must be reported within 24 hours.

A PDF of the insurance claim form can be obtained from Softball Alberta' website at the following web address: <http://www.softballalberta.ca/forms/>

Equipment & Uniforms

1. Keep your copy of the Equipment Sign-out Sheet, as it will be required when you return gear at the end of the season.
2. If any changes are needed to your equipment, contact the Equipment Director.
3. The Association strongly suggests you recommend all players wear a ball cap when using the batter's helmet.
4. **All** catchers are required to wear an athletic support with protective cup, which is not supplied by Association. Umpires will do periodic checks to ensure compliance.
5. Helmet cages are mandatory.
6. Each team will receive a base bag, equipment bag and helmet bag.
7. All players will receive a ball shirt.

Equipment Return

Equipment return procedures will be announced at a later date. Please ensure that you return the equipment cleaned and in the equipment bags.

Equipment Failure

From time to time, the equipment might need to be repaired or replaced due to the normal wear and tear that happens during the season. Contact the Equipment Director immediately if you have equipment that needs attention.

Thank you for your cooperation and assistance!

Ball Diamond Dimensions

Coach Pitch

Base Lines	40 feet
Pitching	26 feet
Diagonal	56 feet 6 inches
Pylons	25 feet beyond the baseline

Mites

Base Lines	45 feet
Pitching	30 feet
Diagonal	63 feet 8 inches
Pylons	25 feet beyond the baseline

Squirts

Base Lines	55 feet
Pitching	35 feet
Diagonal	77 feet 9 inches

Pee Wee

Base Lines	60 feet
Pitching	38 feet
Diagonal	84 feet 10 inches

Bantam/Midget

Base Lines	60 feet
Pitching	43 feet
Diagonal	84 feet 10 inches

Diamond set-up is the responsibility of the home team.

City League Rules

Equipment

1. Players may NOT wear jewelry or watches during a game (except medic alert).
2. Protective equipment issued by the Association must be worn (batter's helmets, catcher's chest pad and shin protectors).
3. Proper footwear (runners) required. No metal cleats or spikes are allowed. (Rubber cleats may be worn in Squirt, Pee Wee and Bantam/Midget Divisions.) Bare feet are NOT allowed.
4. Short pants are NOT allowed. Players MUST wear long pants for safety reasons (most in-fields are shale).
5. Players must wear supplied ball shirts.
6. All catchers (male and female) must wear athletic support with protective cup.
7. Players may use their own bat providing the umpire has approved it.
8. Only the Association purchases team equipment.

Player, Parent, Coach and Spectator Code of Conduct

Attached to this handbook is the Code of Conduct. This document gives some insight into how the various participants should be approaching this league and the players that participate within it.

It is important to review and to ensure that all parents receive a copy of this at the beginning of league play. You will receive printed copies, for the parents, when you pick up your equipment.

Game Rules – Mites, Squirts, Pee Wee, Bantam/Midget

All rules are current per the Softball Canada Rule Book with the following exceptions:

1. Player rotation – All Divisions

In the City League, it is the intention to provide an environment that promotes learning and encourages the players to grow. The coaches should rotate the team players throughout all the positions and give everyone a chance to play regardless of skill. In other words, highly skilled players should not be dominating key positions.

2. Passed Ball Rule – Mite Only

A base-runner on third base may not advance home on a passed ball by the catcher or pitcher.

3. Defensive Players – Mite Only

Six (6) players may play defense. There are no fielders; pylons are setup 25 feet beyond the baseline. All batted ball passing the pylons are considered a home run. See the attached revised rules for more complete information.

4. Walks – Mite Only

There are no walks in Mites. Once a batter has reached the count of 4 balls, the, the batter will have a count against him/her. It will either be 4 balls, 0 strikes (4-0), 4-1 or 4-2. The coach, or designated pitcher for the offensive team, will now come in to pitch to his/her own batter. The number of pitches that the batter will receive from the coach/parent is the number of remaining strikes that are left to the batter. The batter should be encouraged to swing at every one of the pitches since every missed ball will be a strike regardless. Otherwise, all batters continue using the same rules. See the attached revised rules for more complete information.

5. Dropped Third Strike – Pee Wee, Bantam/Midget

In effect.

6. Infield Fly Rule – Pee Wee, Bantam/Midget

In effect.

7. Innings/Runs – All Divisions

An inning shall be considered over when three (3) outs are made or when:

Coach Pitch – See Coach Pitch Rules section of this Handbook.

Mites and Squirts – five (5) runs are scored by the offensive team. This shall be known as the “five run rule”.

Pee Wee and Bantam/Midget - seven (7) runs are scored by the offensive team. This shall be known as the “seven run rule”. This can be changed to “five run rule” if both coaches agree before the game starts.

8. Games

No inning will start after 8:00 p.m. – Mite

No inning will start after 8:30 p.m. – Squirt

Seven innings, but no inning will start after 9:15p.m. – Pee Wee, Bantam/Midget

The Umpire is the official timekeeper for timed games.

Five (5) complete innings shall constitute a game in the event of inclement weather. (Rain or cold)

9. Forfeits – All Divisions

A forfeited game shall be called by the Umpire if a team fails to have a minimum of seven (7) rostered players to begin a game. The 8th and 9th batter's positions are **not an automatic out**.

A forfeited game shall be called by the Umpire if, because of injury, removal of players from the game by the Umpire, or, for any other reason there are fewer than six (6) players to continue the game.

10. Pitching – All Divisions

A pitcher shall pitch no more than four (4) innings per game and a pitcher shall pitch no more than two (2) innings in a row. If one (1) pitch is thrown, it will be considered and constituted as an inning.

The umpires have been instructed to pull a pitcher if there are too many pitches that are hitting players. This will be a judgment call made by the umpire and their decision is final and only affects the current game.

11. Batting – All Divisions

All rostered players shall be listed in the batting order and bat as their turn comes up in the order.

12. Substitutions – All Divisions

Unlimited substitutions.

13. Conference Rule – All Divisions

The conference rule is waived.

14. Rule Book – All Divisions

No player, coach, manager, parent or umpire will be allowed to bring a rule book onto the playing field. The penalty will be automatic ejection from the playing field and the area adjacent to the playing field.

Game Rules – Coach Pitch

Objectives:

- To provide organized participation of children in fastball.
- To promote interest in the game and to develop sportsmanship.
- To develop knowledge and understanding of the rules and regulations of fastball.

It is not the intention to subject the children to fierce competition but to prepare them for the next level of fastball.

Game Rules:

1. Ball

Regulation size - 11 inches.

2. Diamond Dimensions

A. Distance between bases: ----- 40 feet.

B. Distance between Home base and Second base: ----- 56.5 feet

C. Distance from Home base to Pitcher: ----- 26 feet

3. Pitching Circle

The pitching circle is 8 feet in circumference.

4. Defensive Players

Seven (7) players may play defense. There are no fielders; pylons are setup 25 feet beyond the baseline. All batted ball passing the pylons are considered a home run. See the attached revised rules for more complete information.

Positions consist of 1 pitcher, 1 catcher, 1st baseman, 2nd baseman, 3rd baseman, shortstop positions between 1st and 2nd bases, and 2nd and 3rd bases. If a team is short, then consider sharing a player for the game so that both teams can have full representation on the field.

5. Adult Defensive Players

There are no adult defensive players. However, two adults (Coach(es) and/or parents) will be positioned in the outfield. The adults will be responsible for ensuring that the players are attentive to avoid injury and to coach the players regarding defensive plays. The adults will not touch, field or throw the ball at anytime unless protecting a player from being injured. The adults must wear gloves in the field.

6. Offensive Players

All players on a team are to be listed, in their batting order (in the sequence they will bat) prior to the start of the games. If a player arrives late for a game, his/her name is added to the bottom of the batting order and may bat when that turn comes up only. If a player is not present to take their turn at bat, (due to bathroom break, playing, emotional upset, behavior problems or illness) they will not be counted as "out". They will be classed as "missed" and will be able to take their turn at bat when their turn comes up next time through the batting order.

7. Game Play

A game shall consist of 5 innings or maximum time duration of 1½ hours. Games shall commence at 6:30 p.m. and a new inning shall not commence after 7:45 p.m. Completion of 3 full innings shall constitute a game. Players are encouraged to be at the playing field ½ hour before the start of the game for practice.

A game shall be considered defaulted if a team has less than 6 players to begin the game, and the game will be awarded to the other team. If 6 or more players are present, the team will play the game with the number of players available. If both teams are in default, the game shall be recorded as a tie.

As the game is played for the players' enjoyment, it is suggested that if a team cannot field enough players, an exhibition game be played. Players from the other team or spectators can make up players on the team that is "short" players.

8. Substitute Players

Only players registered with a particular team may play with that team, with the exception of the note on Rule 8 for an exhibition game.

9. Inning

An inning shall be completed when 5 runs have been scored or there are 3 "outs".

10. Fair Ball

Same as regulation softball.

11. Strikeout

A batter is declared out when five (only five) hittable pitches have been thrown and the batter has not hit a fair ball. The official Umpire or a volunteer Umpire will rule fair strikes.

12. Pitcher and Fielders

A fielding pitcher must be on the pitching mound when the ball is hit. The pitcher may move off the pitching mound to field a ball or cover bases after the ball is hit. No other players of the defensive team shall be closer to the batter than 26 feet. The Pitching Coach must move to allow the fielding pitcher to play the ball. A violation of this rule on a fair hit will entitle the batter to either:

- A. Advance to 1st base, if they were put out on their hit, which allows all other base runners to advance one base regardless of which base they occupy.
- B. Advance to any base beyond 1st base, which they may choose to attempt on the hit under liability of being put out at any time after they pass 1st base.

13. Overthrow

All overthrows which result in the ball ending outside of the playing area will entitle the runners to advance **one** extra base in addition to the base that they were attempting. Any overthrown ball which ends inside the playing area, including foul territory, is alive and the base runners may advance any number of bases under the liability of being put out in their attempted advance.

14. Dead Ball

When the ball has been declared dead, no runner may advance until a fair hit is made. A runner cannot leave the base till the ball is hit - no "lead off".

When a ball is thrown or rolled to the pitcher after a play, the ball is dead when it enters the 8-foot radius Pitching Circle. Runners are not to advance to the next base.

15. Base Runners

There is no stealing of bases. A runner is out if they leave their base before a ball is hit, unless there is an overthrow as outlined in Rule 13.

16. Coach Pitchers

The batting team's Coach will pitch to their team at bat. All Coach Pitchers are required to wear a glove. They will be allowed to move forward from the pitching distance (26 feet) towards home plate however, no closer than 12 feet to help the batter hit the ball. Coach Pitchers must not interfere with batted balls. However, common sense prevails when a player's (in the pitching circle) safety is at risk. Therefore, the Coach Pitcher must protect the Pitcher (player) from a batted ball.

17. Batting Helmets

Batting helmets are mandatory with a minimum of five per team. Helmets must be worn when batting and while base running. The chin strap must be securely fastened. A protective batting helmet is one that is fully enclosed, with 2 earflaps, a foam liner and a peak. The helmet must not be cracked.

18. Catchers' Helmets and Equipment

Catcher's helmets are mandatory. The catcher should wear the proper catchers' equipment (mask, chest protector, shin guards, helmet and cup) for protection from inadvertently thrown bats and as preparation for later categories.

19. Dress Code

Cut-offs or shorts are not to be worn. Players must wear long pants. Running shoes must be worn, as any type of cleat is not allowed.

20. Bunting

Bunting is not allowed.

21. Fair Hit Line

When the ball is hit by a batter, it is not considered fair until it passes the "fair ball line". The fair ball line is 8 feet forward from the pitcher's plate between 3rd baseline and 1st baseline.

General Rules of Play

- All rules and general concepts of the game, other than those specifically mentioned herein, shall comply with the Official Rules of Softball, as adopted by the Canadian Softball Association.
- A batter will not be called out for inadvertently throwing a bat. Coaches will be required to keep players together, well back of the base-lines, and well back of the batter to avoid injuries or confusion.
- Fastball St. Albert will attempt to have an Umpire for most Mites, Squirts, Pee Wee, and Bantam/Midget games. Due to a shortage of Umpires, the association is not able to provide Umpires for Coach Pitch games. The Umpires are trained to the Official Rules of Softball and are instructed to follow the Rules of Play in this document for the Coach Pitch Division.

Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act & Personal Information Protection Act – FOIP/PIPA

The Fastball St. Albert Association takes every measure to not disclose any personal or private information unless it is required for the person to perform their duties. Information is shared on a as-needed basis.

Can photographs be taken at public events?

Yes. When players participate in a public event on a public field there is no expectation of privacy. It is not, therefore, considered to be an unreasonable invasion of an individual's privacy to publish photographs that provide evidence of individual participation at a public event. Nevertheless, the association will conduct itself in a professional manner.

Where can I go for more information?

The Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act website is located at <http://foip.alberta.ca>.

The Personal Information Protection Act website is located at <http://pipa.alberta.ca>.