

Cedar Rapids Blue Devils Softball Player/Parent Handbook

“Once a Blue Devil....ALWAYS a Blue Devil”

The mission of the Cedar Rapids Blue Devil Softball Organization is to teach the fundamentals of softball, hustle, work ethic, integrity, discipline, sportsmanship and team unity. By effectively teaching these qualities, we will produce better players and better teams, but also teach our players valuable life skills that can be applied in the real world.

A. Facts about the Cedar Rapids Blue Devils Girls Fast Pitch Organization:

*Dedicated solely to girls fast pitch softball continuously operational since 1990. Formerly Cedar Rapids Eby's.

*Registered Iowa nonprofit corporation-Corporate Name: CEDAR RAPIDS GIRLS FAST PITCH SOFTBALL ASSOCIATION – Iowa Corp. No. 239089

*Recognized by the IRS as a charitable organization.

*7 teams: 8U, 10U, 12U, 13U, 14U, 16U and 18U.

*Past or current players have played for or are currently playing for the following high schools: Alburnett, Benton Community, CR Jefferson, CR Kennedy, CR Prairie, CR Washington, Center Point-Urbana, Clear Creek-Amana, Dubuque Hempstead, Home Schooled, Huntsville High School(Alabama), Iowa City High, Iowa City Regina, Iowa City West, Jesup, Linn-Mar, Marion, Midland, North Cedar, North Linn, Olin, Omaha Burke(Nebraska), Oskaloosa, Pella Christian, Solon, South Tama, Springville, Union-La Porte City, Vinton-Shellsburg, Williamsburg and Xavier.

*Numerous former Blue Devil players have played or are playing in NCAA Division I, II and III programs, also NAIA, NJCAA divisions I, II and III.

*Dedicated softball diamond for girls-completely skinned infield with outfield fencing-185'.

*Dedicated Indoor Hitting Facility – Devils Den

*ASA Certified Softball Coaches, continuous membership in ASA since 1990, continuous membership in National Fast Pitch Coaches Association (NFCA) since 1995 (NFCA's senior most traveled ball coach in Iowa).

*Scholarship Program – no one is turned away from the Blue Devils' program due to inadequacy of family funds.

*Fundamental Training Stressed – focused on mechanical drills and performance while maintaining a winning program in the most competitive softball environment for girls.

B. Advisory Board

Cedar Rapids Blue Devils Board of Directors:

Glenn Johnson	President (319) 721-8053
Skeeter	Director (319) 551-5469 skeeter@crbluedevils.com
Brad Holub	Director (319) 721-8890 bradleyholub@msn.com
Cory Keeney	Associate Director (319) 310-2316 rockvalleyhawks@aol.com

C. Practice Facilities

Apache Park is located on D Ave. NW between 26th St NW and 28th St NW in Cedar Rapids. Apache was built by the Blue Devil coaches, parents and several sponsors including the Local Carpenters Union and Star Equipment. The Blue Devils lease this property from the City of Cedar Rapids as a dedicated softball diamond for the girls. The diamond has a skinned infield with outfield fencing set at 185'. We have covered dugouts, storage shed, bathroom facilities, covered pavilion, playground, water for the field and electricity.

The **Devils Den** is our indoor practice facility and is located at 818 Dows Road SE in Cedar Rapids. This facility gives players the opportunity to keep improving over the winter months with multiple batting cages, T work, room for pitchers and catchers and strength and conditioning. This facility was made possible by the generous support of Hybrid Transport, at no additional cost to the player or organization.

D. Committees

Committees are a very important part of the Blue Devil program. These are usually parents that volunteer to step up and help out in a leading, positive role. Some of these can cover the whole program and some are more team specific. Listed below are the committees that are currently available.

- *Fund-raising
- *Field maintenance
- *Apparel
- *Blue Devil Softball tournament
- *Hotel room scheduling
- *Devils Den
- *Website/Computers

E. Coaches

Our coaches are volunteers, and are primarily, but not always, parents of players. All (3) coaches in the dugout have been **ACE certified with a completed background check**. We are very appreciative of all the hours they invest into the program. If they ask of your help at a practice, at a game or any other way, please **SUPPORT** them!

F. Practices

Practices during the off-season (usually around the first part of January through the first part of March) are optional, but are valuable and highly recommended. Practices during softball season are mandatory. Winter practices will be held indoors at the “Devils Den” located at 818 Dows Road SE, Cedar Rapids. Depending on rotations with other Blue Devil teams, you may be practicing from 1 to 3 times per week. Once the weather permits and allows us to get outside, we will be practicing at Apache Park/Devils Den usually 3 to 4 days a week, depending on tournament schedules. Players should be properly outfitted for practices. This consists of athletic shorts or sweat pants, sports bra, sliding shorts, sliders, t-shirt (no tank tops) and the Blue Devil visor. Always bring your glove, bat, cleats and water jug. **Please note: If you are 5 minutes early to a practice, you are 5 minutes late! Arrive early and be ready to practice!**

G. Parents Participation – Expectations and Rules

The success of the Cedar Rapids Blue Devils Softball Organization depends on the commitment of everyone in our program. Parents are encouraged to attend practices, games and extracurricular activities. Parents may be called upon by the coaching staff to help with practice drills, score keeping and field preparation. Each team is responsible for maintaining Apache Park and the Devils Den. This includes field maintenance and preparation before practice and cleaning up after practice.

Rules for Parents:

1. The Cedar Rapids Blue Devils organization is staffed 100% by volunteers. Countless hours are put in throughout the year by our staff in order to teach good fundamental softball skills and prepare the kids for the high school level. Thus, leave the coaching to the coaches, officiating to the umpires, and the **positive encouragement and cheering to you.**
2. The coaches aren't perfect and will make mistakes. If at any time anyone has any questions, ideas, or concerns, please feel free to talk to any of the coaching staff. Appropriate times for these conversations are times that do not interfere with practices or games. Issues should first be tried to be resolved with the coaching staff. If a solution can not be reached, contact an advisory board member.
3. Parents, relatives and friends attending the games are expected to **act respectful towards umpires, opposing teams, coaches, players and each other at all times.** Please allow the players to play, the coaches to coach, and the umpires to officiate. **This rule will be strictly enforced.**
4. During games and practices, parents (including parent helpers), siblings, and friends are not allowed in the dugout or near the players' bench. **This area is reserved for the head coach, the two assistant coaches and the players.**
5. It is your responsibility to get your player to practices and games at the time the coaches have requested them to be there.
6. Use of alcohol or tobacco products during practices or games is prohibited.
7. Use of profanity and foul language is prohibited.
8. Keep a positive attitude. **Negativity is detrimental to everyone!**
9. **Use of the Cedar Rapids Girls Fastpitch Softball Association, DBA Cedar Rapids Blue Devils, 501C Tax ID Number, without written authorization is prohibited. All unauthorized offenders will be reported to the IRS as such.**

H. Players – Expectations and Rules

In order for everyone associated with the Blue Devil Organization to have the most positive experience possible, it's necessary for our players to have some rules to follow. The following expectations and rules are for the safety of the girls and overall satisfaction of the players, parents and coaches.

Rules for Players:

1. Players are not allowed to argue with or disrespect coaches, teammates, parents or umpires for any reason.
2. Foul language and profanity is not tolerated at any time.
3. Good sportsmanship is a quality that is exemplified by our players. Taunting of your own, as well as opposing players, fans and umpires will not be tolerated.
4. Self-indulgence by players, such as hanging one's head after an error or mental mistake, pouting over personal failure, tossing of helmets or bats, will not be tolerated.
5. Care of equipment: Each player is responsible for the care of the equipment issued. An individual's equipment is to be used only at Blue Devil functions-not for leisure use. Undershirts and jerseys are to be tucked into the pants at all times.
6. Games and practices during the season (roughly mid-March through the end of July) are not optional. All absences require notifying your coach in advance via whichever method (telephone, e-mail or text) the coach prefers.
7. Field, dugout and equipment should be clean and orderly after each use.
8. No jewelry is to be worn at practices or games. This includes necklaces, bracelets and earrings. Exposed body piercing is not permitted.
9. Players are to keep a positive attitude by respecting your coaches and encouraging your teammates!!
10. **All players must wear a sports bra and a Dri-Fit type undershirt.**

Enforcement of Rules and Violations:

Any parents, players or families in violation of these rules will be handled in the following manner.

1st offense: A formal written warning will be issued and documented. This may be issued by the coaches or a member of the executive board.

2nd offense: A suspension from participation in at least one (1) game but no more than two (2) weeks will be issued and documented. The suspension must be reported to and approved by the executive board.

3rd offense: A suspension from participation in the remaining games and practices for the current season (possible expulsion from the Blue Devil organization may bypass the prior consequences based on the severity of the violation) will be issued and documented. The suspension must be reported to and approved by the executive board. **Player fees will not be refunded!**

I. Dues **REVISED 8/24/2016**

8's \$300 + \$100 Loyalty Fee=\$400 (6 Tournaments Plus BD)
10's \$575 + \$100 Loyalty Fee=\$675 (12 Tournaments Plus BD)
12's \$575 + \$100 Loyalty Fee = \$675 (12 Tournaments Plus BD)
13's \$625 + \$100 Loyalty Fee = \$725 (12 Tournaments Plus BD)
14's \$475 (8 Tournaments Plus BD)
16's \$525 (8 Tournaments)
18's \$475 (6 Tournaments)

*****Number of tournaments entered may be affected by weather/cancellations*****

Loyalty Program: In addition to the annual dues, each player must pay a \$100.00 loyalty fee at the beginning of every season. In the event a player breaks from the program, fees will be forfeited. Exceptions include moving out of the area or a team is not available in the players age group. Additional reasons may be accepted pending Board approval. When a player reaches her final year of eligibility in the program, all loyalty fees collected will be put towards her dues for that season. If payment arrangements are required, talk to Brad or Skeeter to set-up a payment schedule.

Hy-Vee Booklets are available for each player, the first 10 booklets are free of charge that they can sell for \$10 each. Additional booklets are available for a small fee. You get to keep the funds as a way to offset the cost of dues.

The Blue Devil organization may offer additional fund raising activities which is intended to help fund the organization and help offset player dues. More the player sells, the more they benefit! This fund-raising activity could be voluntary or mandatory.

Bloomsbury Farm offers the Blue Devil players and parents an opportunity to help pick pumpkins, park cars and assist where needed. In exchange, Bloomsbury offers free admission into the farm and also the Haunt.

J. Paper Work

All players need to return the signed paperwork that is located under the parent resource tab on the website. Must be completed prior to participation in any Blue Devil activity.

Player Commitment Form

Publication/Website Consent Form

Player Contact Form

Medical Authorization/Treat Consent Form

Devils Den Release Form(Hybrid Transit) Must also be completed by all parents and anyone else who may enter the Devils Den.

****** New Blue Devils Will Also Need To Turn In:***

Copy of Birth Certificate

Recent picture that the player has signed the back of

The Blue Devil Picnic will be held on August 21st at Usher's Ferry from 3:30 to 5:30 at the Park/Pavilion. The Organization will supply the meat, your coach will communicate what dish you will be responsible to bring, along with your own table service & drinks. **WEAR A BLUE T SHIRT FOR A GROUP PICTURE!**

K. General Information and Policies

Changing Teams During the Season: After an athlete has been placed on a team, the Blue Devils reserve the right to move them to a different team at any time during the season to continue to improve the level of play for all considered. This means a player may be added to a team during the season, or that a player may be asked to move to another team to better match the player with the appropriate team. It may happen that a player is moved to another team that may not have the same schedule, we apologize in advance for any inconvenience that may bring.

Playing Time Policy: The Cedar Rapids Blue Devils does not guarantee playing time to any player. However, we do believe players are entitled to know what is affecting their playing time as well as be given instruction on how to increase their playing time.

- 1) Playing time is not guaranteed, is not equal and must be earned.
- 2) Playing time is based on the players performance at practice and in games.
- 3) Your coach will determine who plays and how much. They will take into account many factors in coming to that decision, but the decision is theirs.

Coach/Player/Parent Communication (24 Hour Rule): We have a communication plan (minimum 24 hour rule) between coach/player/parent that **must be strictly** adhered to. Please wait a minimum of 24 hours to contact the coach to address the issue. When issues arise please do not approach the coach at practice or an event. The order of communication until there is a resolution will be:

- 1) Player contacts the Coach
- 2) Player and Parent meet with Coach
- 3) Player and Parent meet with Coach and Board

Practice Attendance: Practice attendance will factor in determining a players role on the team. Attendance will be kept by the coach throughout the season. All absences will be considered unexcused with the following exceptions:

- 1) Family Emergency
- 2) Illness / Injury
- 3) School Sport / School Activity Sanctioned: Must be Verified by School Calendar
- 4) College Entrance Exam
- 5) Religious Events

Note: Missing practice for homework and studying (including finals) is not considered an excused absence. **Please contact your coach well in advance when you will be missing practice!**

Multiple unexcused practice absences will result in the following: **3 Strike Rule**

- 1) 1 unexcused = Reduced playing time in 1 game-up to entire game
- 2) 2 unexcused = Hold out 2 game minimum up to 4 game max
- 3) 3 unexcused = Player/parent dismissal from the Blue Devil Organization.

1st and 2nd offenses will be handled at the discretion of the Coach.

After 2nd offense – Mandatory meeting with Board member

Each offense will be documented with the Board.