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# Huntington Beach Breeze

## Softball CLUB

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2008 Fall Season

**SUBJECT: PROGRAM INTRODUCTION and PARENT CONTRACT**

Dear Current or Perspective Softball Parents:

This document outlines the core values of our softball program for the upcoming season/year. It is important that you feel comfortable with our approach while participating in club softball and on our team.

As some of you may know, our program has been in existence the summer of 2007 and we had great success on and off the field in a very short period of time. Our major highlight was winning the 2008 Triple Crown National Championship this past July in Park City, Utah. This has qualified us for a possible tournament in New York and Utah for 2009.

For our upcoming Fall season, our goal is to continue to pursue our team goals of on and off the field teamwork, softball competitiveness, and skill improvement and be able to compete at higher level. Our 2009 goal is to play in an ASA National tournament. We do return a majority of the players from the 2008 season to go with some new additions, so this goal is reachable. We have qualified for the Triple Crown National Tournament in July 2009 as a 14U A team. Therefore, we have options as we move forward.

If you are new to us, you have inquired about the program and this document will give you the information that you may need to evaluate us. For returners, this will be a refresher!

To ensure an enjoyable and productive experience, we require that all parents abide by the principles covered in this document and each family will sign the contract at the end of the document.

**Objective of our Program:** Our program is designed to teach your daughter the fundamental skills and advanced strategy of a higher-level softball program. While we believe the competitive nature of our program accelerates a child's development; the competitive element can become destructive if our participants lose sight of the basic purpose of our program; to teach. Our basic belief is that "teaching inherently promotes on-field success" and we do not believe that "on-field success inherently promotes teaching." By participating in our program, your daughter will develop the physical and mental skills to play at a later higher-level travel or high school level program and to develop your skills of the game.

While we believe that winning is important, it is not the primary goal of our program. **Our basic premise is that it is more important to teach than to win.** This should not be misinterpreted as any less of a commitment to winning, however, we are much more concerned about your child's skill development than the number of tournaments we win. We will focus on skill development, and the importance of consistently putting forth a complete effort rather than the results from that effort. In turn, we will coach and teach at a higher level, allow the girls to grow to young adults and treat your child with respect and without the verbal berating that frequently occurs in youth sports.

**Commitment:** For our program to be successful, it is imperative that players and parents understand the level of commitment required. We can assure you that your daughter will receive the highest level of instruction, as we will utilize all avenues available to us (and within a budget) as we move through the season. This will include utilizing other coaches, speakers, and high school player participation.

This program is a stand-alone club team, thus, players will not supplement play with a community leagues. In the fall, players can play other season sports (which we encourage for your in season sport), but understand, that we do have carry many "softball-only" players and we will serve their needs. The fall will be of lower intensity, as to focus on individual skills and conditioning.

If you make the team and then decide to leave on your own, and the team continues, you will not be able to selected, again, unless there is a circumstances that is approved by myself. This only keeps the team intact and not having a revolving door. An exception to this is if you play in HS, the rules state that you must leave your travel team and return after the HS season is over. In turn, once the team is selected, we will not over recruit other players to take player spots, unless an injury occurs which dictates a new player joining.

We plan to play 1-2 tournaments a month and 1-2 weekends of friendly's a month. We will plan to take 1 weekend per month off. From now to mid Dec., we will play about 30-40 games. If a weekend does not work for you and you give me enough time, we will have the players to fill the spots. For friendly's, players can play in a game and leave, if needed but playing time is not guaranteed for that game that you are there. I will do my best to make it work. For the spring, everyone is required to be at game regardless of playing time.

**Participant Selection:** The program is designed to attract those players who have the greatest developmental potential and with the proper skill set. We look for aggressive players with above average physical, attitudinal and mental capabilities. Since our players are required to learn a high game, their learning ability is integral to their success. My focus on teaching these necessitates of discipline to promote maximum learning. We will carry 15-16 players for the fall to cover other sports and injuries. Not all players will play in every game. For the Spring, we plan to carry 14 players. Practices are open to all through out the season. Non-roster players that we invite may work out until a roster spot develops.

After tryouts, I will fill out the roster for the positions we need and notify each participant. Please understand that we have limited roster spots and there are many teams out there that you can achieve your goals. Not making this team does not mean you do not have the skills to play. We do have a returning roster.

If you find that this is not a fit or found a different team, please notify me so we can fill out the roster.

**Playing Time:** There is no guarantee of playing time for any participant as playing time is based on a player's skill set and effort during practice as well, as game success. A player demonstrating less effort in practice will have her playing time impacted. For some games, not all players will play. Note that "Playing" in the role of a Flex/DP, PR or EH is playing and in the line-up.

The manner in which playing time is distributed will largely depend on the skill level of the team that we are facing and the game situation. In situations, such as games with tough teams or tournament play, playing time will not be evenly distributed. While it is unreasonable to expect or assume equal playing time for all participants, we recognize that it is difficult for a player to develop her skills on the bench. I understand the importance of providing every player with adequate playing time to develop her skills, providing that she expends the necessary effort.

There is no discussion about playing time or positioning during the season among parents to the coaches. If this happens, you will be asked to leave the team.

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**Instruction:** We believe skill development is a function of repetition. Therefore, we utilize repetitive drills in all phases of our practices as we have found that this is the most effective means for teaching strong fundamentals. And the more you can practice with your daughter outside of our program, the better.

We encourage constant individual instruction with other skilled coaches. This type of instruction accelerates development, both physically and mentally which we can't provide on our limited meeting times. This opportunity is strictly your decision but is highly encouraged. Please be assured that these individual instruction periods shall have a higher priority than any our scheduled practices, if a time conflict exists.

For all practices, you must be at practice on time, with your equipment. I know there are times that things come up, but being late all the time or not hustling to a field will not be tolerated.

**Position Assignments:** Position assignments will be made based on each player's abilities and the line up that makes the team the most competitive. During competitive game situations, players will be placed in positions that make the team the most competitive. These decisions will be based on the judgment of the coaching staff. A limited number of players will play the pitcher and catcher positions, as these require a unique skill set. Batting lineups will be a function of trying to do the best for the team. Each child will be spoken too prior to the season and given clear directive on where we see the best position(s) to help the team.

**Pitching:** Pitching at this level is one of most scarcity and difficult to develop. Therefore, pitchers will play most of the games. Pitching instruction is highly recommended if you plan to pursue this position. For us to competitive, we need 3 advanced pitchers and catchers.

**Communication:** If you are concerned about any aspect of the program, we urge you to communicate your concerns directly to the manager and outside the presence of your daughter or other parents. If concerns arise during a game, please wait 24 hours until after the game to discuss the situation with the manager.

***Playing time or lineup issues will not be something we will talk about.*** I am committed to providing you a forum for your concerns provided that it is handled in a calm and respectful manner. I ask that you refrain from involving other parents in your disagreements, since this tends to lead to unwarranted dissension among program participants.

A primary goal of our program is to provide a unified environment that is enjoyable for the players, parents and coaches. If a recurring conflict with a player or parent cannot be solved, the family may be asked to discontinue participation with the program. From a coach's standpoint, conflict with players and parents takes the fun out of what we do and turns this into a chore. The coaches are human and will make mistakes.

Providing instruction from the stands is strictly prohibited as it undermines the coaching staff's role and it places your daughter in a compromising position. Allowing her to focus on the on-field instructions will maximize your daughter contributions. Your coaching from the stands will impact your daughter's playing time and if repeated, you will be asked to leave the team. In this type of program, it is imperative that everyone understands her role. We believe that **PLAYERS PLAY, COACHES COACH AND PARENTS WATCH.**

I am very easy to reach during the week by cell or email. Please make the effort to tell me if you cannot make a practice or game and for games, please give me at least 24 hours if you cannot make it.

**School:** Education is the most important activity in your daughter's life, not softball. Homework is very important to your daughter's middle school days. But, please, do not make homework to be an excuse to miss practice. Granted, there are exceptions, but time management is something no one teaches. If you daughter knows the report is due 4 weeks from now, and she has practice, she should do the work when

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away from the field so that she makes both activities. Again, there are exceptions and communication is just needed. Our goal is to field not only an athletic team but also a scholastic team.

**Travel:** One of the benefits of this type of team is the travel. We will try to keep it local, but we will have 1-2 tournaments (per year) that will require overnight stay. When that occurs, we will stay at the same hotel and the girls will eat together at least 1 meal together. We do this for your kids and for building the team off the field, as this is very important. Therefore, we would like to have one parent to assist with the planning when the time comes.

### **Parent Conduct**

We all want to see our daughter to achieve her goals and succeed on the field. But, this game is about teamwork, roles and team success. Therefore, your daughter will be placed in those roles for the best of the team. Positions from the spring may be different in the fall. The season is also quite long and every child will play over the length of the year. But, there will be games that she may not play or be in limited play. You need to understand that there is a zero tolerance for complaining to a coach and/or being detrimental to the team. Parents that complain or cause issues will have your child removed from the team.

I highly value my time with your child and understand the time it takes for the team to do well. I refuse to take payment for this time as other coaches may do. Therefore, we are all volunteers. I also understand that we have close friendships, and I would hate to lose a friendship over some meaningless game or position. Therefore, I ask all parents to be mature about the responsibility as we move forward. Your actions will seriously impact your daughter's involvement on the team.

My core rules are:

- There are no conversations about positions or playing time from anyone.
- Providing instruction from the stands is strictly prohibited.
- Please be on time and ready to go for each practice and game. If you are arriving at the time listed, you are late! Our girls cannot drive (yet!) so this is your responsibility.
- Please give all coaches 24 hours after your issue to speak to them about that issue.
- We can use your help in many areas. – Please be involved. This is your team, too.
- I will communicate with each and everyone, but would rather go through the girls, first, as they begin to gain the responsibilities of being a young adult.

**Game Conduct:** It is important that your behavior reinforces our values. The manager is responsible for your behavior. We have worked very diligently to build a reputation as one that promotes sportsmanship and mature behavior. Please understand that the officiating will nearly always be near substandard. Keep in mind that talented umpires may not be working at this level. You will be doing the team a real disservice by being critical of an umpire's performance as umpires at this level will generally take their frustrations out on our team. Accept the premise that the umpiring will be sub-standard and focus your comments elsewhere. Our players will be taught that it is unacceptable to argue an umpire's call, as there is nothing more bothersome to an umpire than a youngster challenging their decisions.

**Dugout Etiquette:** Only Water/Gatorade (and sunflower seeds) will be allowed in the dugout. We will not allow any other types of food. If we play back-to-back, please make sure your daughter has had something before the game to hold her over until we end. If we have a break between games, getting normal "healthy" food is encouraged. No other food will be allowed in the playing area.

No player will be allowed to throw equipment, yell or reprimand other team members or teams or be disrespectful to our teammates, opponents' adults or spectators. Players will be disciplined if this occurs but I doubt this will be an issue.

Players are to stay in the dugout at all times.

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Dugouts must be CLEAN after the game. Players will not be allowed to leave until this is completed. It's time for your daughter to be responsible for her equipment and apparel, as well.

We are fortunate to have Ocean View HS as a home field. Therefore, it is our responsibility to have the field cleaner then when we found it. This may mean staying a few minutes after cleaning trash and putting away equipment.

**Fees:** Club fees will be collected monthly (middle of the month). Fees are based # of tournaments, leagues, outside instruction time, umpires games, facilities, etc. A budget is developed and you can view that at any time. Every possible method of keeping the program affordable for all is maintained. Fundraising and sponsorships is a method of reducing fees and is expected for 2008. If interested, we need that person to chair this type of function(s). My goal for the 2009 season is all fundraising will be to that players account – the more you raise – the more your child benefits. Team activities (snack bar, car wash, etc) will be to the team general fund.

Fall fees will works out to \$50 per month. Please be assured, if we don't need the last payments, it will not be collected. We will collect \$100 for the first fee per player which covers Sept.

Not included in monthly fees is a uniform package. Some items you may have already have. Uniforms will consist:

Item	Color	Estimated Cost
Jersey Top	Navy	\$40
Softball pants	Navy	\$30
	White	\$30
Practice T-Shirt	Navy	\$10-15
Under Armour Sleeves	Light Blue	\$25-30
Under Armour Sleeves/Undershirt	White	\$25-30
Socks	Navy	\$5
Socks	LightBlue	\$5

We will be in the same color uniform per game. We carry two uniforms and there is no discussion on what we wear/purchase. We will look uniform and organized. No extra colors will be tolerated. Proper sport bras will be required – no straps will be allowed.

For 2009, we will get NEW uniforms.

We will have the opportunity to order sweatshirts, visors, shirts, etc.

If we receive sponsorship money, we will get other equipment. These will be the property of the team and thus, if you leave, those items will be required to be returned. For other equipment, we are working on a sponsorship with Mizuno for apparel (cleats, jackets, etc) that can be purchased at large savings through Sluggers Baseball/Softball.

**Spring 09' Season:** After completion of the fall session, we will move to full spring schedule (70-80 games), start in Jan and will hold additional team tryouts to fill our roster, if needed. We will plan to carry 13-14 players for the Spring season.

As I have said before, travel ball is not for everyone and there are other 100s of teams that could serve you better on organization, competition levels, daughter's playing time, etc. If you have other opportunities, I encourage you to investigate but be respectful to me. Please understand that I run this team for the best interest of the girls; to see the girls enjoy their teammates and the sport and to fill a quality team on the field and ask for the same respect from you that I give your girls.

In summary, the HB Breeze Club exists to provide players and families the tools they need to be successful in softball; be competitive, play as a team, understand individual roles and be a good person away from the field. We plan to participate in many opportunities to grow as a team on and off the field and to gain

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friendships. You will be always consulted when the issues come about and, actually, we appreciate your input.

I have repeatedly mentioned that I want this team to be different then what is currently playing out in the youth club softball community, and I believe we have higher standards. We will not win all of our games but we will compete. You as the parent will serve the critical role as a role model to the team; your daughter and you play an integral role in your daughter's development.

Your support, channeled in the appropriate direction, will help make this a memorable experience for both of you. Thank you for your interest and support.

Thank You.

HB Breeze Softball

Please review this document and if you understand the policies of this team and program, please sign and return to a coach.

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We understand and agree to the foregoing and understand that should we violate the terms of the program our daughter may be asked to leave the program without reimbursement of any fees paid to the program. Equipment will be returned to the team and you will be released from the ASA contract:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

.....  
I would like to volunteer for the following position: \_\_\_\_\_