



## Fastball St. Albert Player Evaluation / Team Selection Policy

### **Purpose and Philosophy**

Fastball St. Albert aims to evaluate player softball skills in a consistent and fair manner resulting in teams at various levels who will all focus on sportsmanship, fundamentals and fun. This policy will outline the standard way in which players are evaluated and teams selected while providing clarity for how some of the more common situations that arise will be navigated. Any situation not specifically outlined in this policy will be reviewed and assessed at the board level with the goal being a fair review and outcome.

### **General**

Fastball St. Albert (FSA) Teams will be formed based on the number of registrants and skill level in the respective groups. The age groups this policy applies to include U11, U13, U15, U17, U19

The level at which each team competes will be determined by the FSA coaches with the approval of the FSA executive and ultimately by the results of the tiering rounds implemented by Softball Alberta. The intent is to place the teams in the level of league play that will correlate to the level of provincial play that will be determined throughout the season (as per changes to Softball Alberta policies) to offer the players the most positive season experience. Any team, at the discretion of coaches and parents, may decide to participate in tournaments that are hosted by other associations/leagues.

The following is a summary of the tiering classifications:

- "A" This is the highest level of competition available in Softball. These teams require a higher level of commitment from the players, parents and coaches. It is the expectation that all "A" level teams will participate in the Alberta Provincial Championships and may advance to Western or National championships. Players will be required to indicate if they would like to be evaluated for an "A" team at the time of registration or by attending the minimum and specific tryouts held for these teams (which will be communicated to the membership via social media and email as well as posted on our website).
- "B" This is an intermediate level of competition. It is encouraged that all "B" level teams will participate in the Alberta Provincial Championships in early July and may advance to post provincial play.
- "C" This is competition at a recreational level. These teams will participate in GEMSA and are encouraged to attend "C" or "D" Alberta Provincial Championships in early July.

If a player wishes to be evaluated for a competitive level of ball (A/B) and is successful, they are obligated to play on that team for the duration of that season. Only in special circumstances, as reviewed and approved by the FSA board, will players be allowed to change teams. We will aim to complete all competitive teams from the same evaluation to avoid players having to attend multiple tryouts if they are not selected for the 'top' team.

### **Eligibility (U7,U9,U13,U15)**

Players eligible to be selected for FSA teams must meet the following criteria:

- Be a resident of St. Albert; or reside within 100km of St. Albert with no equivalent (same level and



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age e.g., U19A) active program in their community

- If the above does not apply, the player may be eligible under the import player policy if they are in compliance with Softball Alberta Zone transfer policy
- Have paid all applicable fees – past and current
- Have filled out all required forms, including registration and/or waivers

### **Player Evaluation Process – Competitive teams (U15,U17,U19)**

Player evaluations for Competitive teams (A/B) at the U15, U17, U19 level will be held outdoors in the fall (typically the 3<sup>rd</sup> weekend of September). This may occur indoors at a later date, if necessary.

- Talent Identification and Testing
  - Player attendance is mandatory.
  - All players will be evaluated by a combination of their overall skills and abilities, metric session scores and in some cases game situation simulations to assess game sense.
  - Pitchers and Catchers will be required to attend a metric session specific to that skill in addition to the other session(s).
  - Players that choose to be evaluated for a Pitcher and/or Catcher position will receive separate scores with respect to these positions.
  - Evaluation Scores (Player and Pitcher/Catcher) will be compiled by the FSA Evaluations Director which will also be used by the Director of Player and Coach Development to aid in the selection of any parent coaches at specific levels.
  - Evaluation scores will be confidential; however, players and parents may request to see their scores through the Evaluations Director.
- Evaluators
  - External Evaluators will be hired by FSA, when possible.
    - When external evaluators are unable to be utilized, evaluators must be individuals who have extensive experience as a player and/or as a coach in competitive softball or baseball.
      - Where possible, evaluators must be objective and cannot have any familial or personal ties to the level they are evaluating.
      - Evaluators must provide fair and consistent evaluations of players within the group.
      - Evaluators must sign confidentiality form provided by FSA
  - Eligible coach applicants will be invited to observe these evaluations.



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- Selected Coaches may request a “call back” evaluation to finalize their team once selected, assisted by FSA volunteers. Attendance is mandatory.
- Team Placement
  - Players selected for a Competitive (‘A’, ‘B’) team will receive notification of an offer from the team head coach. Offers must be accepted or declined at the time of contact.
  - In situations where the ‘A’ team is formed first (coach is preselected- non parent), any athlete that attends this evaluation is not required to attend another tryout for the next competitive team, unless requested for a “call back” from the next coach selected.
  - **Team selection requires the top three (3) ranked players, top ranked pitcher, top ranked catcher, with the remaining of the roster chosen from the next 15 ranked players from the evaluated players, applying only to parent coaches, or non-parent coaches with personal conflicts (any conflict of interest will be determined by the Director of Coach and Player Development (‘A’) and the team selection committee.**
    - In instances where the coach wishes to go outside of these parameters, rationale must be provided and accepted by all Board Members in attendance at the selection meeting.
    - Where ties exist, the discretion of which player(s) to select will be left up to the coach with input from the board members in attendance at the selection meeting.
  - Players who ultimately do not place on a competitive team will not be required to attend the ID camp in the spring and will be placed accordingly using their score received.

### **Player Evaluation Process – Competitive teams (U13, U11 Advanced)**

Player evaluations for Competitive teams at the U13 A/B and U11 Advanced level will be held indoors in January. (normally the 3<sup>rd</sup> week of January). The later date for younger age groups supports recognition of growth and development of younger athletes over the off season.

- Talent Identification and Testing
  - Player attendance is mandatory.
  - All players will be evaluated by a combination of their overall skills and abilities, metric session scores and in some cases game situation simulations to assess game sense.
  - Pitchers and Catchers will be required to attend a metric session specific to that skill in addition to the other session(s).
  - Players that choose to be evaluated for a Pitcher and/or Catcher position will receive separate scores with respect to these positions.
  - Evaluation Scores (Player and Pitcher/Catcher) will be compiled by the FSA Evaluations Director which will also be used by the Director of Player and Coach Development to aid in the selection of any parent coaches at specific levels.
  - Evaluation scores will be confidential; however, players and parents may request to see their scores through the Evaluations Director.
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    - Where possible, evaluators must be objective and cannot have any familial or personal ties to the level they are evaluating.
    - Evaluators must provide fair and consistent evaluations of players within the group.
    - Evaluators must sign confidentiality form provided by FSA
- Eligible coach applicants will be invited to observe these evaluations.
- Selected Coaches may request a “call back” evaluation to finalize their team and may utilize FSA volunteers to help facilitate where attendance is mandatory.
- Team Placement
  - Players selected for a Competitive (U13 ‘A’, ‘B’ or U11 Advanced) team will receive notification of an offer from the team head coach. Offers must be accepted or declined at the time of contact.
  - In situations where the ‘A’ team is formed first (coach is preselected- non parent), any athlete that attends this evaluation is not required to attend another tryout for the next competitive team, unless requested for a “call back” from the next coach selected.
  - **Team selection requires the top three (3) ranked players, top ranked pitcher, top ranked catcher, with the remaining of the roster chosen from the next 15 ranked players from the evaluated players, applying only to parent coaches, or non-parent coaches with personal conflicts (any conflict of interest will be determined by the Director of Coach and Player Development (‘A’) and the team selection committee.**
    - In instances where the coach wishes to go outside of these parameters, rationale must be provided and accepted by all Board Members in attendance at the selection meeting.
    - Where ties exist, the discretion of which player(s) to select will be left up to the coach with input from the board members in attendance at the selection meeting.
  - Players who ultimately do not place on a competitive team will not be required to attend the ID camp in the spring and will be placed accordingly using their score received.

### **Player Evaluation Process – All Recreational teams (U11,U13,U15,U17,U19)**

Player Evaluations will be held at the beginning of each season (normally early March) based on the registrations received.

- Evaluation of Players
  - ID camps will be run by FSA volunteers



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- Players that are not interested in competing at the competitive level are strongly encouraged to attend an ID camp to help the team formation committee form parity teams when possible.

### NOTES:

- A player who evaluates as a pitcher or catcher but evaluates higher as a player will be approached by the coach and given the choice to play on the higher-level team as a player with little to no pitching/catching time or to play on a lower-level team in order to have the opportunity to develop those skills further.
- Best efforts will be made to ensure that all registered players will be placed on a team. This may include joining with other communities or programs to ensure a team is viable.
- If changes need to be made to teams based on an unwillingness of the player or family to commit to the team, the coach should inform the Evaluation Director and/or the President of FSA so players can be re-assigned/the situation assessed.
- When the team formation process is complete, the list of teams along with head coach contact information will be posted on the Fastball St. Albert Association web page and our FSA social media pages (Instagram and Facebook).

### **Late Registrations, Excused Absences and Injured Players**

1. If a potential player has missed registration, the following guidelines will be used to determine the appropriate action:
  - 1.1. If evaluations have not yet occurred, the late registrant can proceed with scheduled evaluations and be placed on the appropriate team. The late registrant will also be asked to pay the late registration fee plus all other fees due at that point in time.
  - 1.2. If evaluations have occurred, it is at the discretion of the Board as to if the late registrant will be allowed to be evaluated and/or placed on a team. The number of registrants at that age level and team size will be the primary consideration in making a decision.
2. For a player wishing to be evaluated for a competitive team that was unable to attend scheduled evaluations (due to injury or received an excused absence approved by the board), the following guideline will be used to determine the appropriate action:
  - 2.1. The head coach of the desired team has the option of evaluating the player that has missed scheduled evaluations but is not required to do so except where the player previously played on a competitive (formerly "A" or "B") team and/or attended 1 evaluation where they scored at a level indicating they would have had a strong chance of making a competitive team.
  - 2.2. Players that have gone through the evaluation process and have been placed on the desired team will not be displaced.
  - 2.3. If the new player is evaluated by the coach of the desired team, meets the requirements for



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the team, and has approval of the Board then they will be added to the team and the team roster will be increased by one.

**NOTE:** Team roster size limits and the Import Player Policy still apply.

3. For other players (recreational) who missed schedule evaluations and teams have been formed. The player may be placed on a team at the discretion of the Board subject to the following:
  - 3.1. The player will not be granted an evaluation.
  - 3.2. The player will be placed on a team that does not have a full roster.
  - 3.3. The player will be asked to pay the late registration fee, plus all other fees due at that time.

### **FSA Team Overview by age group:**

General information on the formation of teams:

The formation of teams will be based upon the number of eligible players, skill level, competitiveness, and player/parent commitment level using the following guidelines. The Team Selection Committee will review evaluation results and make recommendations of how many teams at each level will be formed.

The intent is to only have a single “A” team (White) at each level; however, the FSA board recognizes the impact of Softball Alberta Tiering system ultimately affects the level of provincial play.

| Age Group | “A” Teams                        | “B” Teams                                                                                           | “C” Teams                |
|-----------|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| U11       | Advanced. Target 1-2 equal teams | Development. No limit, Parity Teams                                                                 |                          |
| U13       | 1                                | 1-2 Parity Teams                                                                                    | No limit<br>Parity Teams |
| U15       | 1                                | 1-2<br><small>Parity Teams when deemed appropriate based on athlete numbers and scores</small>      | No limit<br>Parity Teams |
| U17       | 1                                | 1-2<br><small>Parity Teams only when deemed appropriate based on athlete numbers and scores</small> | No limit<br>Parity Teams |
| U19       | 1                                | 1-2<br><small>Parity Teams only when deemed appropriate based on athlete numbers and scores</small> | No limit<br>Parity Teams |

**NOTE:** Teams may be formed with “Import Players” from outside of St. Albert who may or may not displace St. Albert residents. Please refer to “Import Player Policy” for the definition and policy regarding Import Players.



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### Resolving or Addressing Concerns:

Fastball St. Albert Association and all of its evaluators, coaches and volunteers spend considerable time and effort into making the evaluation and selection process as professional and unbiased as possible.

Often problems are the result of a misunderstanding or failure to identify expectations. We expect that coaches, players and parents can be reasonable and considerate in approaching problems and work with the understanding that no one intends any ill will.

With respect to the evaluation process the following should be noted:

- Any decision made by or with support from the President of FSA is final.
- Individuals should strive to support the evaluation process to allow for balanced and competitive teams that will allow athletes to enjoy a successful ball season.
- Issues with the evaluation and team selection process should be presented with suggestions for improvement to the Evaluations Director and/or an executive level board member.
- If further clarification is required, a discussion can be scheduled with one of these individuals.
- As the Evaluation and Team Selection Process is a Policy with FSA, any changes must be reviewed and approved by the FSA Executive.

The objective of the evaluation process is to ensure that all players are correctly placed on the appropriate team. Special circumstances, which fall outside the normal process, can be brought forward to the FSA Executive for their review.

Example of Metrics that may be used in Evaluations. External Evaluators will develop their own program.

| Metric                   | Details                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
|--------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                          |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| <b>Home to First</b>     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Player begins at home plate</li><li>• Timer starts upon player's first move</li><li>• Timer stops upon player touching first base</li><li>• Player will complete twice and fastest score recorded</li></ul>  |
| <b>Second to Home</b>    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Player begins at second base</li><li>• Timer starts upon player's first move</li><li>• Timer stops upon player touching home plate</li><li>• Player will complete twice and fastest score recorded</li></ul> |
| <b>Exit Velocity</b>     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Velocity of ball batted off of tee</li><li>• Recorded with radar gun</li><li>• Player hits 4 balls with top velocity recorded</li></ul>                                                                      |
| <b>Throwing Velocity</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Velocity of ball thrown from stretch (like a baseball pitcher)</li><li>• Recorded with radar gun</li><li>• Player throws 4 balls with top velocity recorded</li></ul>                                        |
| <b>Hitting</b>           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Player will be assessed on contact from live pitching or machine when possible.</li></ul>                                                                                                                    |



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|-------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Each player will receive 10 pitches</li><li>○ 1 point for Hard Hit, 3 points for Line drive, 5 points for back wall. Total points will be recorded.</li><li>○ Score will also be given for swing mechanics</li></ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| <b>Fly Balls</b>        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Player will receive a variety of fly balls<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Fielding success will be evaluated and</li><li>○ Transfer of ball from glove to hand will be observed</li><li>○ Successful throw to cut off will be recorded</li><li>○ Each player will have 3 rounds</li></ul></li></ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| <b>Ground Balls</b>     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Player will receive a variety of ground balls and will need to turn and throw to target.<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Fielding success will be evaluated</li><li>○ Throwing accuracy will be recorded</li><li>○ Each player will have 3 rounds</li></ul></li></ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| <b>Pitching Metrics</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Pitchers will throw 8 Fastballs that will be recorded and averaged for accuracy and velocity.</li><li>● Pitchers will throw 3 additional pitches of their choice to showcase their variety<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Velocity will be recorded but focus here is accuracy</li></ul></li></ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| <b>Catching Metrics</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Home to second ‘pop’ time<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Catcher behind home plate is thrown a pitch</li><li>○ Timer starts as ball contacts catchers glove</li><li>○ Timer stops as ball contacts receivers glove at second base</li></ul></li><li>● Blocking<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Catchers will have 6 pitches to demonstrate their blocking skills.</li></ul></li><li>● Passed Ball<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Catchers will be timed from their crouched position at the plate to retrieving the ball at the “backstop”.</li><li>○ Timer stops when the ball is received by the pitcher at home plate</li><li>○ Catchers will get 3 attempts and the times will be averaged to receive their score.</li></ul></li></ul> |