



Saratoga Miss Softball and Saratoga Thunder

Agreement and Code of Conduct Policy for 2014-2015

Participation on a team for Saratoga Miss Softball or Saratoga Thunder is a privilege that should cause great pride in both the players and their families. It also is a commitment to represent the organization well, at all times, not just while wearing a uniform. We expect the best behavior of our players at all times and expect them to abide by the league rules of Saratoga Miss Softball while playing.

Prior to making a commitment to the Saratoga Thunder Travel program, Saratoga Thunder would like you and your daughter to take the following information into consideration:

Travel team player rosters will carry 12-14 players per team with the possibility of alternates. The number of players on a roster is at the discretion of the coach. Alternates can be added when a roster is depleted due to injury or other conflicts.

Practice will vary depending on age level. Winter workouts typically begin in January (some teams may start as early as October) and practices run through the end of the season. Practicing includes indoor facility practices, softball facility instruction clinics, and outdoor field practices. Thunder players are expected to attend every practice. Carpooling is encouraged. Attendance conflicts must be communicated to the coaching staff prior to practices.

The travel-playing season may begin as early as Memorial weekend and continue into early August. Thunder travel teams may participate in the Hudson Mohawk (HM) travel league and numerous tournaments throughout the playing season. You can expect that HM games will begin in June with double-header day games the first two Sundays of June. After the school year ends, generally, travel teams play two nights per week beginning at 6:15PM. All players are expected to be at the game at a time determined by her coach. The HM season is about 12-14 games, half of which are played at Geyser Park. We may be participating in at least four tournaments from

May-August. Practices will be held during the playing season. Each player is expected to attend all tournament games and practices.

Saratoga Thunder is a very competitive softball program. Positions and playing time are earned. **There is no guarantee of playing time or that your daughter will play her favorite position. Playing time and positions are decided by the coaching staff and will be decided based on the needs of the team and the player's performance.** Make no mistake about it, we are here to win games and prepare our girls to play at the highest possible level.

Cost to participate on a Saratoga Thunder team for 2014 season will be \$500 plus a \$100 concession deposit. The first payment of \$200 is due upon completion of this form for all players including alternates participating in winter practices. The second payment of \$175 is due February 1, 2015. The final payment of \$175 is due March 31, 2015 for all roster players. The \$100 concessions deposit will be returned when you complete obligations (See Parent's Responsibilities section). Players who have not paid the required fee will be barred from playing until their account is paid in full. Teams are allowed to hold their own fundraising events; provided they do not conflict with any other Saratoga Miss Softball event and they have board approval for the event.

Uniforms are required to play on a Saratoga Thunder team. These may be ordered through the coach, and must be paid for in full at the time of the order. Approximate cost of uniform is \$125.00. No player may play without a proper uniform.

Vacations are a part of any family's summer, but should be scheduled accordingly. **Playing travel ball is a commitment to a team.** Players are expected to attend every practice and game. Family vacations should not be scheduled for the months of June and July.

Parents' Responsibilities are few, but important. First, commitment from both the player and parents is a big part of being on a Saratoga Thunder travel team. With your daughter's selection to the team you are also being selected to be part of the team. There is a lot of effort, time, and money that goes with being involved with a travel program. In addition to the costs, you will be obligated to work the concessions stand and/or help prepare fields before home games and tournaments. It is expected that all players will attend all practices and games. However, we realize that some occasions do arise (e.g., school functions, religious commitment, etc.,) and these are to be expected. Prior notice, well in advance, is required for any possible missed practice or game. It is not fair to the players who have dedicated all their time to the team to have a player not make practices and still participate in games and tournaments, so please consider this closely when deciding to commit to one of our teams.

Tournaments hosted by Saratoga Miss Softball for travel teams are perhaps the largest fundraiser for the travel program the league does. It requires a large commitment of time from the tournament director, coaches, board members **and parents**. Proceeds from this fundraiser are used to help fund winter workouts, equipment costs, tournament fees and other costs associated with running a travel team. If your team is hosting a tournament, it is the parent's requirement to provide help mainly in the concession stand and fund raising table. A typical tournament lasts about 24 hours – all of which requires coverage in the concession stand. Parents are asked to provide two to three shifts during this time. If completed – they will receive a refund of the \$100 concession deposit. If they choose not to work in the concession stand – the \$100 will be kept by the league and used to pay helpers brought in by the tournament director to cover those shifts.

Problems or Concerns do arise on occasion. If parents or players have an issue that needs to be discussed, please contact the coach directly and quickly. Problems that don't get addressed and get discussed everywhere but with the coach, result in bitter feelings and affects the team on and off the field. The players and coaches put a lot of time and energy into their team and this sort of thing can ruin an entire season. If there is a problem with a coach, please bring your concerns to the attention of the Coordinator of Saratoga Miss Travel Program.

Code of Conduct adherence for Saratoga Thunder players, their coaches, and their parents and families helps Saratoga Miss Softball portray a positive, welcoming image and atmosphere.

Peer pressure is something all athletes have to deal with in everyday life. Our goal at Saratoga Miss Softball and Saratoga Thunder is to deter our players from giving into peer pressure and using drugs or alcohol. We believe that sports can be a very positive thing in a girl's life, building confidence and self-esteem. We at Saratoga Miss Softball and Saratoga Thunder take great pride in the accomplishments of our players. They are the main reason these programs exist, and we encourage them to strive to be the best they can be.

We expect our players to never do anything that would cause embarrassment or an unfavorable opinion of the players, their teammates, coaches, families, or community. Because of this, Saratoga Miss Softball and Saratoga Thunder will not tolerate unsportsmanlike conduct, as well as drug or alcohol use of any kind. Athletes are prohibited from possessing or using drugs or alcohol at any time, on or off the field.

Consequences resulting from failure to follow any of these rules could affect your daughter's playing time, or even affect whether your daughter is selected for a team. In addition to any penalties put forth in the league rules, the guidelines for actions taken by the board of directors of Saratoga Miss Softball and Saratoga Thunder regarding an athlete found in violation of the Code of Conduct Policy shall be:

First Offense

1. Effective from the date the penalty is imposed, the athlete shall be placed on probation for one calendar year.
2. During the period of probation, the athlete will be expected to be at every practice.
3. The athlete will be at every game, in uniform, and support her team.

Second Offense

1. If the second offense occurs during the first calendar year of probation, an automatic suspension for the remainder of the calendar year will be imposed.
2. The board of directors will determine if the athlete forfeits her privilege to play in the next season.
3. The athlete and her parents/guardians will be notified in writing of the board's decision.

Appeals

An appeal may be filed within five business days to the board of directors of Saratoga Miss Softball and Saratoga Thunder, at Saratoga Miss Softball, P.O. Box 1269, Saratoga Springs, NY 12866. All decisions of the board of directors are final.

Saratoga Thunder players and parents/guardians, by signing this policy, you agree that you have read, understood, and will comply with this policy.

Player's signature	Date	Father's/Guardian's signature	Date
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Coach's signature	Date	Mother's/Guardian's signature	Date
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