

Hello Bloomington Blast Families!

Welcome everyone to the 2019 Bloomington Blast Fastpitch season! I can't tell you how excited I am for this upcoming season. We are already in full swing for pre-season player development with our Sunday evening clinics as well as our pitcher/catcher clinics held throughout the week. We are thrilled to take our organization to the next level of competitive play this year with an emphasis on developing ALL players no matter what skill level they are at. The board has been enthusiastically preparing our players to have a productive and exciting season ahead. It has been especially fun seeing many of our players working diligently on their fastpitch skills during our clinics and open gym times. What a sight it will be when they can step on to the dirt for the first time and put their skills to the test come opening day.

We have some exciting changes and enhancements to our program this year so that we can continue to be a leading organization in community fastpitch. As you could probably gather from recent emails and social media posts we are doing everything we can to get the word out about BFA, particularly for our In-House program. Our goal is to get as many Bloomington girls exposed to fastpitch and joining the Blast family. One of the ways we are getting girls who are curious to check us out is through our Try Softball for Free Events. We are hosting 4 of these events over the next few months. If you know anyone who might be interested or should check us out I would encourage you to share the information with them. We need your help at these events. If you are free and able to attend please sign up for one or more of these events and help us introduce these girls to the basics of the game. Click here to share more information on the free clinics or to help volunteer.

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/70a0b4baba629a2fd0-tryfastpitch>

New this year is our approach to fundraising. We are replacing the Catch the Fire Fundraiser with the **Bloomington Blast Breakfast**. We want to create an opportunity to raise money for our organization but to also do so in an environment that brings our members together to celebrate what we love: Playing Ball! **The Bloomington Blast Breakfast will be held on Sunday, March 17th from 8am-12pm at the Bloomington Event Center (Knights of Columbus).** *ALL TRAVELING (not In-House) families are required to participate in this fundraiser and sell 14 tickets at \$7 each.* This requirement is per family NOT per player. While the In-House players are not required to sell the minimum number of tickets we sure hope they attend because it's going to be a BLAST! Any player who sells a minimum of 20 tickets will receive a signature spirit ware item. The top 3 sellers will receive an extra special prize WELL worth working hard to earn, along with a pizza party for their team. Those prizes will be revealed soon. Additionally, our traveling players will be required to help run this event. Each team will be given a shift to cover to help make the event run smoothly. From bussing tables, to resetting them and serving the food to our guests, the girls will be able to give back to the organization that has done so much for them. We will have chance drawings, BLAST Bingo, a Treasure Tree of Gift Cards as well as a Silent Auction for some premium items. If you have anything you want to donate to the Blast Breakfast Fundraiser, like sporting event tickets, new sports equipment, a basket of goodies, movie passes, etc. please contact Jennifer Rosas, our Corporate Sponsorship Director, at jrosas@comcast.net. A letter detailing more information for the event will be coming in the next few weeks. However, feel free to get a jump start on the invites and ask your friends and family to save the date!

Another important change that will help immensely with the development of our girls is how we form our teams. *We will have skills split teams at all traveling levels.* The board feels strongly that players learn best when placed with others of similar skill set, that will play teams of similar skills. Our goal is for all girls to reach their full potential, to not be left behind or not challenged. Our Sunday clinics are a great place for our players to improve their skills, preparing them for our evaluations. Evaluations held 2/23-2/24 will help the team selection committee place our players on the appropriate team that matches their skill set. As we approach our evaluations we will release a "Try Out" manual so you and your player can be prepared for what to expect.

Our updated Parent Handbook is also available on our website. Please make sure to review. <https://www.bloomingtonfastpitchmn.org/page/show/39098-parent-handbook>

Lastly, please mark the following important dates in your calendar.

January 16th- February 13th Travel Player Registration

January 16th March 20th In-House Registration

February 10th-4-8pm- Uniform Try On- Jefferson

\$250(Traveling) \$50(In House) Volunteer Deposit Checks Due &

\$98 Blast Breakfast Money due (Cash/Check-checks will not be cashed until 4/1/19).

February 18th-*Unifrom Try On Make Up Date*- 6-8pm Jefferson Cafeteria

\$250(Traveling) \$50(In House) Volunteer Deposit Checks Due &

\$98 Blast Breakfast Money due (Cash/Check-checks will not be cashed until 4/1/19).

February 23rd Travel Evaluations-Jefferson Activity Center (12-3pm Pitchers/Catchers 10u-14u ONLY).

February 24th Travel Evaluations- Jefferson Activity Center (12-5pm 10u-14u ALL players).

March 3rd 8u Traveling Evaluations- Kennedy Activity Center (2-4pm)

March 6th All Traveling Coaches Clinic- 6-8pm OLM Gym

March 12th Mandatory Parent Meeting- Jefferson Cafeteria 7pm (Traveling only 8u-14u)

March 17th Bloomington Blast Breakfast- 8am-12pm Knights of Columbus Bloomington Event Center

April 1st All In-House Coaches Clinic

April 2nd Mandatory In-House Parent Meeting- 7pm Jefferson Cafeteria

April 27th Bloomington Blast Off- Season Kick Off Event- Dred Scott 8am-1pm Traveling & In House

May 1st Teams officially begin league play

June 8-10th Bloomington Bash Tournament (8u-14u)- Dred Scott-NEW this year 8u is 2-Days

June 25-27th State Qualifiers for 10u-14u- Location TBD

July 12-14 State Tournament – 8u (Dred Scott), 10u-14u Location TBD

MOA Championships- More information to come soon!

Well I think that about covers it! There is no doubt in my mind that our players will have a rewarding experience this season. Thank you parents for putting trust in our vision for our players and our program as we move ahead. Always know that your feedback (positive and constructive advice) is welcome at our monthly board meetings. You can find those on our website.

Stay Warm!

Molly Belmont

BFA President