



COACH HANDBOOK

Updated March 2026

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Welcome to HGSL Softball!

Enclosed you will find all of the up-to-date information you'll need for this season! When game schedules are released, we recommend you to put them in this binder, so all of your information will be in one safe place, along with a copy of your roster with team contact info and medical information about each player. You'll also be able to find copies of the following documents on our [website](#).

- **Division Playing Rules**: HGSL follows USA Softball rules and regulations. This document outlines all exceptions, clarifications, or modifications that we have implemented as a League. This is very important for you and all your Coaches to be familiar with, and keep it with you always!
- **Coach Sportsmanship Agreement**: This is something you should already be familiar with! Live by it!
- **Player/Parent Agreement**: Every player/parent is required to review and accept this agreement during the online registration process. Please see No Tolerance Policy for more information.
- *****IMPORTANT***** *Should a coach observe a player or parent that is not adhering to the Player/Parent Agreement, please notify the Board of Directors immediately. Coaches reserve the right to reprimand players who are not adhering to the Agreement in an appropriate manner and provide a reasonable consequence (i.e. loss of playing time). Coaches also reserve the right to make an attempt to calmly and safely request a spectator to leave the premises.*

If you have any questions/concerns about anything this season, including any of these documents, please reach out to any Board member – our contact information can be found on the website!

www.HGSLNH.com

HAVE A GREAT SOFTBALL SEASON!

CURRENT BOARD MEMBERS

Board Position	Term	Name	E-Mail	Member Since
Director	2024-2026	Becky Radziewicz	hgsl.becky@gmail.com	2014
Assistant Director	2025-2027	Mandy Powers	hgsl.mandy@gmail.com	2019
Treasurer	2024-2026	Mike MacDonald	hgsltreasurer603@gmail.com	2022
Secretary	2025-2027	Tricia Jette-Gonthier	hgsl.tricia@gmail.com	2019
Equipment Manager	2025-2027	Adam Faulkner	adamfaulkner930@gmail.com	2025
Coach Coordinator	2025-2027	Angela Lamothe	hgsl.angela@gmail.com	2025
Fundraising Coordinator	2024-2026	Megan Odziejewicz	hgsl.fundraising@gmail.com	2015
Umpire-in-Chief	2025-2027	Stacy Freitas-Ducharme	hgsl.uic@gmail.com	2022
Travel Team Coordinator	2025-2027	Lori Bowen	coachloribowen@yahoo.com	2023
Field Maintenance Coordinator	2024-2026	Pete Radziewicz	hudsonheatsoftball@gmail.com	2014
Player Development Coordinator	2025-2027	Keith Bowen	kbowen17@yahoo.com	2025
Communications Coordinator	2026 (Appointed 2025)	Sammie Fay	hgsl.sammie@gmail.com	2023

Who to call if...

It's raining- Becky Radziewicz or Mandy Powers

The other team doesn't show up- Becky Radziewicz or Mandy Powers

The umpire doesn't show up- Stacy Ducharme or Mandy Powers

ZERO TOLERANCE POLICY

HGSL has a no tolerance policy for unsportsmanlike/poor behavior from both spectators and players. Coaches are to be reminded that their role is to coach the athletes and provide a safe environment for them to play softball. If a parent/spectator becomes an issue, the coach may address the immediate situation in a calm and respectful manner, however, they must notify the Board of Directors of the incident. HGSL will not tolerate such behavior towards/from players, coaches, other spectators and/or officials.

COACH DRESS CODE

Coaches are provided a uniform shirt to be worn for games and/or practices. If a coach chooses an alternative shirt to wear, it must be 'school' appropriate and without profanity, crude words or images. Coaches should be dressed in appropriate attire that represents the league and the Town of Hudson with dignity and respect. Should a coach wear a shirt deemed to not fit the dress code, they will be required to turn it inside out.

HGSL COACHING EXPECTATIONS

HGSL expects...

- ...all coaches (head/assistant/volunteer) to maintain an appropriate level of respect with players and their families.
- ...players to be treated fairly regardless of their relationship to the coaching staff.
- ...all coaches will familiarize themselves with Concussion, Emergency Protocols and Abuse Reporting Policies listed in this handbook.
- ...all coaches will communicate needs and concerns to the Coach Representative or appropriate Board Member(s) via email, phone or in person.
- ...all coaches ensure that Kiwanis Field is raked after each practice and home game. (parents may be asked to assist).
- ...all coaches ensure that Kiwanis Field dugouts (home & away) are cleared of trash and debris upon leaving. This includes the team's dugout when visiting another town.
- ...all coaches ensure that equipment is properly stored upon leaving.
- ...all coaches will ensure that bins and sheds are secured and locked upon leaving.
- ...all coaches will communicate clearly and regularly with player's families with regard to practices, games, progress etc. This may be done via email, website or GameChanger app. For your protection, a coach should never communicate with a player via phone, email or text without including a parent directly in the conversation.
- ...all coaches should refrain from personal cell phone use while coaching.

OBJECTIVES BY DIVISION

Program Philosophy

HGSL is committed to developing athletes through a consistent, age-appropriate progression of softball skills. Each division builds upon the previous one, ensuring players are prepared for the next level of play.

While drills and structure may look similar across divisions, expectations, execution, and game understanding should increase with age and experience.

Athletes develop at different rates. The goal is not perfection—it's progression, confidence, and a love for the game.

4U – Introduction to Movement & Play

Focus: Fun, movement, and basic coordination

This level is a structured playgroup introducing the very first building blocks of softball.

Key Objectives:

- Comfort being on the field
- Listening to simple instructions
- Learning through play and repetition
- Building excitement for the game

Skills Introduced:

Movement & Coordination

- Running in the correct direction
- Stopping and starting
- Basic balance and body control

Throwing

- One-hand push/throw motion
- Throwing toward a target (no accuracy expectation)

Fielding

- Stopping the ball with body or glove
- Basic “alligator” concept
- Rolling balls vs. true grounders

Hitting

- Holding a bat safely
- Hitting off a tee
- Understanding “hit the ball and run”

Game Concepts

- Run to first base
- What a base is
- Taking turns

Structure:

- Station-based play
- High energy, minimal standing
- No lines, constant movement

6U – Introduction to Fundamentals

Focus: Basic mechanics + FUN

Skills:

Throwing

- Grip (basic)
- Step and throw
- Direction toward a target

Fielding

- Alligator technique
- Ready position
- Fielding through the ball

Hitting

- Proper grip
- Basic stance
- Tee work → introduction to coach pitch

Base Running

- Run to first base
- Stay in foul territory after contact
- Introduction to running multiple bases

Game Awareness

- Where to throw the ball
- Basic defensive positioning

8U – Building Confidence & Game Awareness

Focus: Reinforcement + introduction to decision-making

Skills:

Throwing

- Improved mechanics and accuracy
- Introduction to throwing on the move

Fielding

- Clean glove work
- Introduction to:
 - Fly balls
 - Basic forehand/backhand

Hitting

- Transition to live pitching
- Tee + soft toss remain key
- Focus on contact and confidence

Base Running

- Running through first base
- Rounding bases
- Introduction to:
 - Leading (basic concept)
 - Sliding (controlled setting)

Game Awareness

- What to do with the ball (basic situations)
- Understanding outs and innings
- Beginning to anticipate the next play

10U – Transition to Real Game Play

Focus: Live play + situational understanding

Skills:

Throwing

- Stronger mechanics
- Throwing through a target
- Introduction to cutoffs/relays

Fielding

- Consistent glove work
- Bunt defense (intro)
- Position responsibilities
- Fly balls and situational play

Hitting

- Approach at the plate (not just swinging)
- Strike zone awareness
- Tee work, soft toss, and live reps
- **Introduction to bunting (mechanics and purpose):**
 - Hand positioning and bat angle
 - Proper stance
 - Deadening the ball
 - Understanding *when* to bunt (basic situations)

Base Running

- Leading and stealing
- Reading the ball
- Sliding with intent

Pitcher/Catcher Development

- Basic pitching mechanics
- Live reps
- Catchers:
 - Receiving
 - Intro to throw-downs

Game IQ

- Force vs. tag plays
- Where to go with the ball
- Beginning situational thinking

12U – Refinement & Competitive Play

Focus: Execution + consistency + mental game

Skills:

Throwing

- Quick release
- Accuracy under pressure
- Continued mechanical refinement

Fielding

- Faster pace of play
- Clean transfers
- Advanced situational defense

Hitting

- Consistent approach
- Pitch recognition
- Situational hitting
- **Bunting development and application:**
 - Consistent mechanics at game speed
 - Sacrifice bunting
 - Introduction to bunting for a hit
 - Placement awareness (1B/3B side)
 - Understanding when bunting benefits the team

Base Running

- Aggressive but controlled decisions
- Reading pitchers and defenses
- Advanced sliding techniques

Pitcher/Catcher Development

- Pitchers:
 - Control and consistency
 - Secondary pitch development (if appropriate)
- Catchers:
 - Blocking
 - Game awareness
 - Field leadership

Game IQ

- Situational awareness
- Communication across positions
- Understanding game flow

Mental Game

- Reset routines
- Confidence and composure
- Responding to adversity

14U – Preparation for Middle/High School Ball

Focus: Performance + independence. This level prepares players for middle school, high school, and/or travel softball.

Skills:

- All fundamentals performed at game speed
- Position-specific development
- Advanced situational awareness

Key Emphases:

Hitting

- Advanced approach and adjustments
- **Bunting as a strategic tool:**
 - Situational execution
 - Reading defenses
 - Decision-making within game context

Game IQ

- Anticipation and adjustments
- Reading hitters, pitchers, and game situations

Mental Game

- Competing under pressure
- Consistency and resilience
- Leadership

Player Responsibility

- Ownership of development

- Communication on and off the field
- Understanding team roles

SEASON EXPECTATIONS

PRACTICES/GAMES

(subject to change based on number of teams per division and field availability during any given season)

- 4U Division will have one (1) activity per week.
- 6U Division will have one (1) activity per week, with a maximum of two (2) activities if the previous week's activity was canceled due to weather.
- 8U Division will have two (2) activities per week, with a maximum of three (3) activities if the prior week's activity was canceled due to weather.
- 10U, 12U & 14U Division will have two (2) activities per week, with a maximum of three (3) activities if the prior week's activity was canceled due to weather.
- Season begins with all practices. As the season progresses, some practices become games. Towards the end of the season, most practices may be replaced with games.
- Pitching/catching clinics available throughout the season with Coach Meg Odziejewicz. Anyone interested in pitching should attend. A parent/family member is expected to catch for or at least stay with the player to observe proper technique to enable practice at home.

Meg Odziejewicz- hgsl.fundraising@gmail.com

SEASON EVENTS

- Field Clean Up Day
 - Traditionally held at the beginning of April. Coaches and registered families are encouraged to help rake, clean and prep the field for season play.
- HGSL Photo Day
 - Traditionally held toward the middle of the season.
- End of Season Celebration
 - Traditionally held during the last weekend of games. All coaches, players and families are encouraged to attend this celebratory event.
 - Trophies and medals are presented at this time.

AVAILABLE FIELDS

- Kiwanis Field (behind SoHo) is our main field. Parking is NOT allowed at SoHo Restaurant or St. Mary's Bank. These establishments have requested their lots **not** be used for softball parking. Ample parking is provided at the field on Cross Street. Please remind your team families.
- Center Field (behind HMS) and Alvirne softball fields may be utilized with permission from schools. Permission must be requested through HGSL who will contact the schools. Coaches should **not** contact schools directly for permission.

LOCK BOX & GATE CODES (emailed to coaches)

LEAGUE PROVIDED EQUIPMENT

- Bases
- GameChanger App (scorebook available upon request)
- Equipment bag containing:
 - 2 sets catcher's gear
 - 1 extra bat
 - 1 bucket of balls
 - 1 case game balls
 - First aid kit and ice packs
 - Emergency medical information for each player to stay with coach at home and away games

PLAYER RESPONSIBILITY

- Glove
- Cleats (recommended)
- Batting helmet with cage
- Fielder's Facemask (10U and up) required for all pitchers and 1st base (helmets may be worn as alternative)
- Softball pants (recommended) especially 10U and up
- Water

****PLAYERS SHOULD CLEARLY LABEL ALL GEAR including water bottles****

THUNDER AND LIGHTNING

- Lightning is the most consistent and significant weather hazard that may affect outdoor athletics. Within the United States, the National Severe Storm Laboratory (NSSL) estimates that 100 fatalities and 400-500 injuries requiring medical treatment occur from lightning strikes every year. The existence of blue sky and the absence of rain are not protection from lightning. Lightning can, and does, strike as far as 10 miles away from the rain shaft. It does not have to be raining for lightning to strike. Additionally, thunder always accompanies lightning, even though its audible range can be diminished due to background noise in the immediate environment, and its distance from the observer.

WHEN YOU FIRST HEAR THUNDER OR SEE LIGHTNING, SUSPEND ACTIVITIES AND REMAIN IN A VEHICLE UNTIL COACH TELLS YOU OTHERWISE. "IF YOU CAN SEE IT (LIGHTNING), FLEE IT (TAKE SHELTER). IF YOU CAN HEAR IT (THUNDER) CLEAR IT (SUSPEND ACTIVITIES)." WAIT UNTIL 30 MINUTES AFTER THE LAST OBSERVED LIGHTNING OR THUNDER BEFORE RESUMING ACTIVITIES.

[Click here for National Federation of State High School Association Guidelines](#)

FIRST AID AND EMERGENCIES

- All 6U, 8U, 10U, 12U and 14U Coaches will have First Aid kits available in their team equipment bag. Coaches are required to take First Aid kits with them to all away games as well as players' Medical Consent Forms.
- A separate First Aid kit is available inside the green bin at Kiwanis Field (code 1991). 4U coaches may utilize this First Aid kit.
- When items are used (especially ice packs), coaches must notify the league equipment manager for replenishment.
- Coaches are permitted to provide essential and emergent first aid ONLY until a parent/guardian or emergency services arrive. (i.e. ice packs, band-aid etc.) Coaches are not permitted to splint, wrap, tape or provide non-emergent medical care to players.
- If 911 must be called, be aware of your location (address on fences) and designate another adult to meet the ambulance and direct medics to the scene.
- **If there is a suspected head, neck, or back injury, DO NOT MOVE THE PLAYER! Do not remove a player's helmet or other gear.**

CONCUSSION ACTION PLAN

****This action plan attempts to provide guidance to ensure all athletes a safe return to play, however, is under no circumstances a plan to diagnose and/or treat a suspected head injury. HGSL takes no responsibility in the diagnosis or treatment of any injury to a player. ****

Concussion Evaluation:

The diagnosis of an acute concussion typically involves the assessment of clinical symptoms, physical signs, behavioral changes, balance and coordination, sleep, and cognition. An athlete may experience some or all of the following symptoms (reported by athlete).

1. Headache
2. Fatigue
3. Nausea or vomiting
4. Double vision or blurry vision
5. Sensitivity to light (photophobia) or noise
6. Feels sluggish
7. Feels "foggy"
8. Problems concentrating and remembering

Common signs (observed by evaluator or others) found with concussion include:

1. Athlete appears dazed or stunned
2. Confusion
3. Unsure about game, score, opponent
4. Altered coordination
5. Balance problems
6. Personality change (aggressive behavior)
7. Responds slowly to questions asked
8. Forgets events prior to trauma
9. Forgets events after trauma has taken place
10. Loss of consciousness (any duration)

Any player suspected of a head injury must be pulled from play immediately. The player may either be released to parent/guardian or emergency services (if necessary). Any player being evaluated by qualified personnel (i.e. EMT/paramedic, physician etc.) for a suspected concussion or head injury will not be eligible to return to play until the league receives documentation from the evaluating physician clearing the player to return. Documentation of medical clearance may be emailed to playhgsl@gmail.com.

ABUSE REPORTING REQUIREMENTS FOR COACHES/VOLUNTEERS

CHILD ABUSE AND/OR NEGLECT

All coaches/volunteers must be aware that they are required by law, RSA 169-C:29, to report any suspected cases of child abuse and neglect. Coaches/volunteers who report suspected cases are also protected by the law, which provides them with immunity from civil prosecution. Coaches/volunteers must follow the referral procedures described herein to facilitate the reporting of suspected child abuse or neglect.

RSA 169-C:3 II defines an abused child as any child under the age of 18 years who has been

- sexually abused; or
- intentionally physically injured; or
- psychologically injured such that the child exhibits symptoms of emotional problems generally recognized to result from consistent mistreatment or neglect; or
- physically injured by other than accidental means.

RSA 169-C:3 XIX defines a neglected child as a child under the age of 18 years

- who has been abandoned by their parents, guardians, or custodian; or
- who is without proper parental care or control, subsistence, education as required by law, or other care or control necessary for their physical, mental, or emotional health when it is established that their health has suffered or is very likely to suffer serious impairment; and deprivation is not due primarily to the lack of financial means of the parents, guardian, or custodian; or
- whose parents, guardians, or custodians are unable to discharge their responsibilities to and for the child because of incarceration, hospitalization, or other physical or mental incapacity.
- However, no child who, in good faith, under treatment solely by spiritual means through prayer in accordance with the tenets and practices of a recognized church or religious denomination by a duly accredited practitioner thereof shall, for that reason alone, be considered a neglected child.

Referral Procedures

Coaches/volunteers will report suspected child abuse and/or neglect to the HGSL Board Director and/or Assistant Director, who will be responsible in assisting coach/volunteer for notifying the Hudson Police Department immediately.

BULLYING

Bullying may be physical, verbal, emotional or sexual in nature. It is defined as insults, taunts, or challenges, whether verbal or physical in nature, which are likely to intimidate or provoke a violent or disorderly response from the athlete being treated in this manner. Bullying may rise to the level of harassment or child abuse if severe or pervasive.

In accordance with RSA 193-F, HGSL will not condone athlete bullying, will take all reasonable measures to prevent bullying, and will report incidents of bullying to the appropriate law enforcement agency if necessary. It is the obligation of the coach/volunteer who is present at or otherwise has knowledge of any athlete bullying to report such acts immediately to the HGSL Board Director and/or Assistant Director.

HAZING

Athlete hazing is any act directed toward an athlete or any coercion or intimidation of an athlete to act or to participate in or to submit to any act when

- such an act is likely or would be perceived by a reasonable person as likely to cause physical or psychological injury to any person; and
- such an act is a condition of initiation into, admission into, continued membership in, or association with any organization.

In accordance with New Hampshire law, RSA 631:7, HGSL will not condone athlete hazing, will take all reasonable measures to prevent athlete hazing, and will report all instances of such misconduct to law enforcement authorities. It is the obligation of the coach/volunteer who is present at or otherwise has knowledge of any athlete hazing to report such acts immediately to the HGSL Board Director and/or Assistant Director.

PRACTICE DRILL IDEAS

Coaches are strongly encouraged to review these drills. Many techniques have changed in the last 15-20 years and often coaches will teach older techniques that may have been learned previously. Please feel free to reach out to Player Development Coordinator, Keith Bowen @ kbowen17@yahoo.com at any time with questions.

- Proper throwing techniques
 - [Austin Wasserman Bow & Arrow Drill](#)
 - [Top Softball Throwing Drills](#)
- Hitting drills [Softball Hitting Circuit w/Meg Rembielak](#)
- Fielding drills
 - [Softball Workout 10 Drills w/Meg Rembielak](#)
 - [Team Infield Drills w/Meg Rembielak](#)
- Quick feet/hands [Infield Drill w/Meg Rembielak](#)
- Outfield "Crow Hop" Throw [Crow Hop Drill w/Meg Rembielak](#)
- Baserunning [How to take a lead off...](#)
- Sliding [How to Slide w/Meg Rembielak](#)

Watch dozens of instructional videos with trusted softball instructor Meg Rembielak at [Meg Rem Softball](#)

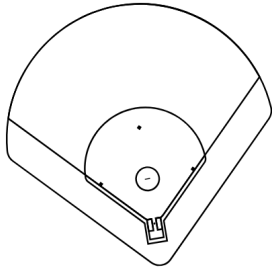
Instructional throwing videos with Austin Wasserman at [FloSoftball.com](#)

- [Pregame Stretches To Prepare To Throw - YouTube](#)
- [How To Catch A Softball/Baseball For Beginners - YouTube](#)
- [2 Backhand Drills - YouTube](#)
- [Hitting Drill To Work On Hand Path/Barrel Control - YouTube](#)
- [How To Hit A Softball - YouTube](#)
- [Softball Workout #2 - 5 Drills - YouTube](#)
- [Softball Infield Drill- Quick Hands with Flat Glove - YouTube](#)
- [2-Day Infield Camp with Coach Steinman - YouTube](#)
- [RHYTHM, TIMING, & POSTURE DRILLS - YouTube](#)
- [Drill For Youth Players - YouTube](#)

PITCHING RUBBER DISTANCES

PITCHING RUBBER & BASE DISTANCE GUIDELINES

DIVISION	PITCHING RUBBER	BASES
6U	N/A	55'
8U	30'	60'
10U	35'	60'
12U	40'	60'
14U	43'	60'



Pitching distance is measured from the **back POINT** of home plate to the **FRONT** of the pitching rubber. *The 43' pitching rubber should be permanently left in the mound and additional pitching rubber added in front.* Bases with ground anchors are at 60'. Plugs should be left in place when that distance is not in use.

8/2025

LINING A SOFTBALL FIELD

Lining A Softball Field

Field Measurements By Division

6U- N/A

8U- 30' to pitching rubber; 60' to 1st/3rd bases

10U- 35' to pitching rubber; 60' to 1st/3rd bases

12U- 40' to pitching rubber; 60' to 1st/3rd bases

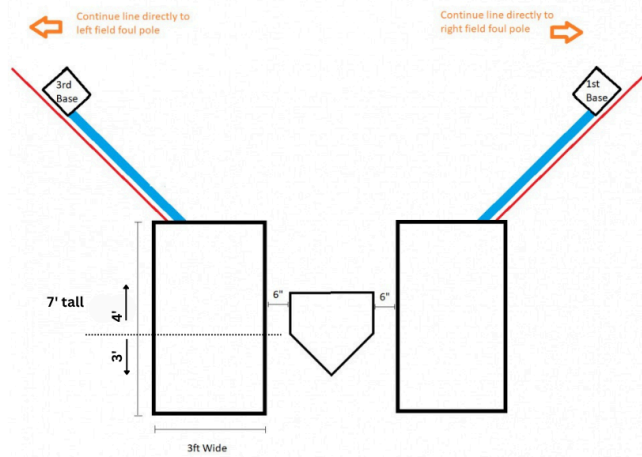
14U- 43' to pitching rubber; 60' to 1st/3rd bases

Baseline

1. Insert anchor at the point of home plate.
2. Pull the string line out straight at least 60' past 1st and 3rd bases. (ideally to the fence)
3. Use the liner to drop chalk on the **inside** of the string line passing 1st & 3rd bases with the string on the outside edge of the base.
4. This will establish your fair ball line.

Batter's Box

1. Batter's box is a 3'x7' box beginning 6" from the side of home plate.
2. Make sure the box is square to the plate.



Pitching Circle

1. Pitching circle is an 8' radius from the center of the pitching rubber.
2. Easiest way to draw this line- holding the rake from the raking end; stand in the center of the rubber and using the end of the rake handle draw a circle around the pitching rubber.
3. This is approximately 8'.
4. Trace over this line with the chalk liner.