

# **ADDENDUM # 1**

## **Blacksheep Athletics**

### **Code of Conduct**

## **Introduction and Purpose**

This Code of Conduct outlines the expected standards of behavior for all individuals associated with **Blacksheep Athletics**, including **players, parents/guardians, and coaches**. The purpose of this document is to ensure a safe, positive, and supportive environment that promotes sportsmanship, teamwork, respect, and the development of athletic skills and character. Adherence to this Code is mandatory for all participants and is essential for the integrity and reputation of the Blacksheep Athletics program.

## **I. Code of Conduct for Players**

Players are the most visible representatives of the Blacksheep Athletics organization. Their conduct should reflect the core values of the organization at all times.

### **A. Commitment and Effort**

1. **Attendance:** Be on time and prepared for all practices, games, and team meetings. If you cannot attend, notify a coach as far in advance as possible.
2. **Effort:** Give 100% effort in practices and games, demonstrating a commitment to improving individual and team skills.
3. **Preparation:** Come to all team events with the required equipment (e.g., glove, helmet, bat, proper attire) and a positive, focused attitude.

### **B. Respect**

1. **Respect Authority:** Show respect for all coaches, officials, opposing coaches, and league administrators. Do not argue with or disrespect officials' calls.

2. **Respect Teammates:** Treat all teammates with respect, regardless of skill level or background. Be supportive, encouraging, and avoid bullying, hazing, or making derogatory remarks.
3. **Respect Opponents:** Show respect for the opposing team and their fans before, during, and after games. Win with humility and lose with grace.
4. **Language and Behavior:** Refrain from using profane, vulgar, or abusive language, gestures, or actions. This includes all forms of communication, including player walk-ups songs.

### C. Team Environment

1. **Communication:** Communicate openly and honestly with coaches regarding any issues (e.g., injury, conflicts, academic concerns) that may affect performance or attendance.
2. **Equipment and Facilities:** Treat all equipment, facilities, and fields (home and away) with care and respect.

## II. Code of Conduct for Parents/Guardians

Parents/Guardians play a crucial role in shaping their player's experience and the overall team environment. Their behavior must model good sportsmanship and support the coaches and players.

### A. Role and Support

1. **Positive Support:** Cheer and encourage the Blacksheep players and the team in a positive manner. Focus on effort and performance, not solely on winning.
2. **Respect Coaches' Decisions:** Respect the professional judgment and decisions of the coaches regarding playing time, positions, strategies, and training methods. Do not attempt to coach or give instructions to players during games or practices.
3. **Time Commitment:** Ensure your player attends all practices and games on time and has the necessary equipment.

4. **Volunteering:** Offer to assist with team duties (e.g., scorekeeping, field setup/take-down, team snacks) as requested by the team manager or coaches.

## **B. Sportsmanship and Conduct**

1. **Respect Officials:** Do not argue with, openly question, or verbally abuse game officials (umpires). This behavior is unacceptable and reflects poorly on the entire organization.
2. **Respect Opponents and Fans:** Treat opposing teams, coaches, and their parents/fans with respect. Harassment or intimidation is strictly prohibited.
3. **Conflict Resolution:** If there is an issue or concern:
  - Observe the **"24-Hour Rule"**: Do not approach a coach with a concern immediately before, during, or after a game or practice. Wait at least 24 hours.
  - Schedule a private meeting with the coach at a mutually agreed-upon time and location to discuss the concern respectfully.
  - If the issue is unresolved, schedule a meeting with the Head Coach and/or a designated member of the Blacksheep Athletics Board.

## **C. Communication**

1. **Coach as Primary Contact:** Direct all player-related questions (e.g., schedules, equipment) to the designated team manager or head coach first.
2. **Do Not Gossip:** Refrain from gossiping, spreading rumors, or engaging in negative conversations about players, coaches, or parents.

## **III. Code of Conduct for Coaches**

Coaches are leaders and educators. They are responsible for the physical, emotional, and social well-being and development of the players.

## **A. Leadership and Responsibility**

1. **Safety First:** Prioritize the safety and welfare of all players above all else. Ensure proper techniques and conditioning are taught to minimize the risk of injury.
2. **Fairness and Impartiality:** Treat all players fairly and with respect. Decisions regarding playing time, positions, and roles must be based on observable criteria such as skill, effort, attitude, and team needs.
3. **Professional Development:** Continually seek to improve coaching knowledge and techniques. Be knowledgeable of the league rules and the game of softball.
4. **Positive Role Model:** Maintain a high standard of personal conduct. Refrain from the use of tobacco, drugs, and alcohol while with players. Never use profane or abusive language.

## **B. Relationship with Players**

1. **Encouragement:** Offer constructive criticism and praise in a balanced manner. Encourage players to be confident, respectful, and mentally tough.
2. **Development Focus:** Emphasize skill development, teamwork, and good sportsmanship over winning. Teach players life lessons that extend beyond the softball field.
3. **No Bullying/Harassment:** Strictly prohibit and immediately address all forms of verbal, emotional, or physical abuse, bullying, or harassment by players, parents, or other coaches.

## **C. Relationship with Parents/Guardians and Officials**

1. **Communication:** Establish clear lines of communication with parents regarding team philosophy, schedules, expectations, and any player concerns.
2. **Respect Officials:** Support the officials and their decisions. Teach players to do the same. Never engage in disrespectful or confrontational behavior with officials.
3. **Parent Meetings:** Conduct an initial meeting with parents/guardians to clearly communicate the season's goals, player expectations, and this Code of Conduct.

## **IV. Enforcement and Disciplinary Action**

### **A. Reporting Violations**

Any violation of this Code of Conduct should be reported promptly to the Head Coach (for player/parent issues) or directly to the Blacksheep Athletics Board (for coach or Head Coach issues).

### **B. Disciplinary Process**

The Blacksheep Athletics Board, or a designated committee, holds the authority to investigate all reported violations and determine appropriate disciplinary action. The process may include:

1. **Verbal Warning:** Issued for minor or first-time offenses.
2. **Suspension:** Temporary removal from practices, games, or team activities.
3. **Dismissal:** Permanent removal from the Blacksheep Athletics organization for the remainder of the season or permanently.

*Note: The severity of the disciplinary action will be commensurate with the nature and frequency of the violation. Actions involving physical or verbal abuse, threats, illegal acts, or gross misconduct may result in immediate dismissal.*

### **C. Acknowledgment**

By participating as a player, coach, or parent/guardian with the Blacksheep Athletics organization, all parties acknowledge that they have read, understand, and agree to abide by this Code of Conduct. Failure to comply will result in disciplinary action as determined by the Blacksheep Athletics Board.

**This document was formally approved and adopted by the  
Blacksheep Softball Board on Date.**