



STMA Girls Fast Pitch Softball Association

The Round Table

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www.stmagirlsfastpitch.com

Greetings as we wrap up the 2011 summer!

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Season Summary:

2011 was a successful summer for our program. We had 285 kids involved – a 25% increase over last year's high.

House League:

We had record numbers with eight K/1 teams and five 2nd/3rd grade teams.

Our K/1 league again played only local games and much fun was had by all!

At the 2nd/3rd grade level, we again partnered with two teams from Rockford. Teams had 1-2 games in Rockford and an optional tournament in Anoka.

STMA sent three teams to the Anoka tourney with excellent results – one team won the Silver bracket, another won the Bronze bracket.

Some 2nd/3rd parents had questions about why all teams did not attend the Anoka tournament. In January of this year, the Board registered three teams for the Anoka tourney, based on the 2010 participation level of three teams. As registration concluded for this age level in March, with four-five teams, the Board contacted the Anoka tournament director for additional spots. Unfortunately the field was already full by that time.

For 2012, the board is considering several options, including hosting our own STMA 8U tourney or traveling further to find an additional 8U tournament. Hosting our own tournament would require parent help.

The board would like to thank all the parents and coaches for offering these 13 teams a chance to play this summer.

Travel League:

We had a great summer for our Travel teams. Several of our teams won tournaments and placed in the top 3 at State. We had three teams compete at Nationals this summer.

The success on the field this summer was a direct result of the time spent in the gym during the off-season. We had an 11-week pitching clinic and two hitting clinics run by the STMA varsity coach. In addition, we offered more open gym opportunities, with the last few open gyms running the same drills used in tryouts.

Our 3rd annual Annette Leuer Tournament was truly outstanding. There were four STMA teams playing in the finals at three age levels on three fields simultaneously. The 10U age was an all-STMA affair, with the 10U Heat team winning a great game. The 12U Heat team completed a great tourney by finishing second, and the 14U Heat team won their age level.

The funds raised at the tourney through concessions, T-shirt sales, and team registrations exceeded our expectations. Thanks to all of you who volunteered and helped out.

Thank you to our travel coaches and parents for another successful summer!

Looking ahead to 2012:

2012 Tryouts

We will continue to hold one day tryouts in 2012. More info to come soon on tryout dates.

Off-season Clinics:

We will again host offseason hitting and pitching clinics. Dates and times for the pitching and hitting clinics are still being finalized. Check the website soon for more details.

Registration:

Registration for the 2012 season will open in mid-January. This year we will be strictly on-line registration.

Fundraising:

2011 was a banner year for fundraising. Several local companies sponsored the association. We formed a relationship with Dairy Queen to have a "softball night" once a month, from which the STMA league received a portion of that night's profits. We extended our coverage of Hilltop Bar Bingo through April this year. Great work by the fundraising team!

For 2012, we are looking to drive sales of STMA Girls Fastpitch gear from our website. They make great gifts and are beautifully made. Please contact the Board with ideas for types of gear you'd like to have available for purchase.

Key Topics:

Growth and Player retention

The association has grown by over 100 players in the last four years. Our future growth and success depends on player retention and opportunities for player

development and growth. Players have the most fun when they are well coached, play the right level of competition, and improve during the season.

At the House age levels, we must continue to provide training and support for new coaches. Training includes teaching the basic skills to players properly and running a practice with multiple stations and parent involvement. In addition, we must provide experts who can teach interested players the basics of the fast pitch pitching motion. Ideas for 2012 include partnering current or former high school players with parental volunteers to provide help, support, and a visible role model for younger players.

At the Travel level, our on-field success has attracted regional attention. When STMA plays at a location now, we are known for the quality of our teams, our sportsmanship, and our respectful and supportive fans. In addition, however, our players are garnering attention from elite and club level teams based on our league performance at State and National tournaments. As a community based organization, we balance the needs of the whole versus the few, but are also working on new strategies to keep STMA talent wearing an STMA uniform. Ideas for 2012 include a possible increase in the number of paid coaches. In 2011, the Board paid for the 16U coach. In addition, the top level teams at the 14U and 16U age levels may be formatted differently.

Open Board Positions:

As we look ahead to 2012, we need to pause and thank outgoing Board member Jen Stecker. She has been the engine behind our tryouts and tournament planning for years.

We also need to be mindful of several key challenges facing the Board. First, of the eight remaining full time members, only two will have daughters playing at the In House level. Several have helped out for the last 3-4 years and are ready to plan for their successor. For the organization to continue to grow and thrive, we need more parents, especially those from the House level, to take an active role.

Those active roles include:

1. Being on the committee to plan and execute the Annette Leuer tournament. It is a huge asset for our association and our players, but we need additional volunteers to own this effort. Without tourney committee ownership for 2012, the tournament will likely not happen.
2. Becoming a board member and learning the Board's functions and roles. In the first year, the existing Board would guide you through your role.

Our current openings:

SECRETARY: (Voting Member/Registration fee waived for 1 child/Volunteer credits waived)

- Prepares, distributes and maintains meeting agenda, minutes, and other necessary publications
- Ensures procedure manual and handbook are updated annually
- Albertville Friendly City Days liaison
- Manages P.O. Box

TOURNAMENT DIRECTOR: (Voting Member/Registration fee waived for 1 child/Volunteer credits waived)

- Responsible for management, registration and promotion of the STMA GFA home tournament
- Organizes and chairs tournament committee
- Work with the Volunteer Coordinator for home tournament

TRAVEL DIRECTOR: (Voting Member/Registration fee waived for 1 child/Volunteer credits waived)

- Oversee Travel team league (liaison for school and league schedules)
- Manage coach selection with President and Vice President
- Responsible for organizing the tryout process (evaluators, process, time) with President and Vice President
- Coordinates and manages team selection for Travel teams with board members
- Attend all Suburban and CML League Meetings as needed
- Coordinates tournament participation as needed

- Work with player and coaches on development activities

FUND-RAISING COORDINATOR: (Non-voting member/50% off registration fee for 1 child/volunteer credits waived)

- Identify and implement fund-raising opportunities during the year (headbands, t-shirts etc.)
- Work to ensure there are sponsors on the website sponsor tab
- Identify and implement community fund-raising opportunities
- Bar Bingo liaison / coordinator

CONCESSIONS COORDINATOR: (Non-voting member/50% off registration fee for 1 child/volunteer credits waived)

- Plan and coordinate concession for STMA Home tournament
- Plan and coordinate concession for STMA Varsity home games
- Assist fund-raising coordinator as needed

TOURNAMENT COMMITTEE MEMBERS: (Non-voting members/50% off registration fee for 1 child/volunteer credits waived)

- Assist Tournament Director in management, registration and promotion of the STMA GFA home tournament
- Assist Volunteer Coordinator with volunteer coordination for home tournament
- Other duties as needed

Open Gym Dates:

Open gyms will begin in January. The full list of open gym dates will be posted on the site Calendar soon.

In closing, we had a great 2011 and look forward to an even better 2012 season! Look for open gym info, season registration notices, and clinic sign-ups shortly.

Visit us at our website:

www.stmagirlsfastpitch.com

STMA Girls Fastpitch Board