



Player / Team Draft Procedures
As approved by the Board of Directors
Revised: August 19, 2024

Remember: This is Recreational Softball, and it is basically designed as an Instructional Program. All girls get to play. Long Beach Heartwell Fastpitch will make every effort to allow all girls who have registered the opportunity to play. A draft aims to maintain an even playing ability across all teams in each division.

Drafting of Teams:

I. General Organization

- A. All Teams in each division per season shall be formed by a Draft in compliance with the mandated USA Softball league requirements. Our league's Draft procedure is often called the Serpentine / Snake draft method, commonly used by most USA Softball girl's leagues.
 - 1. The only two exceptions where the Draft does NOT apply are:
 - i. When a division only has enough players to form a single team.
 - ii. The 6U Division is exempt from the Draft, where 6U Teams will be selected and drafted based on the recommendations made by the Board of Directors and individual requests.
- B. All Girls in each division (8U – 14U) must participate in the player assessment.
- C. All fees must be paid before a player is drafted or placed on a team.
- D. Three of the following League Board Positions must witness all division Drafts:
 - 1. President
 - 2. Vice President
 - 3. Head Player Agent
 - 4. Executive Board Member
 - 5. The respective divisional player agent

II. General Procedures

- A. The Draft for each division will be held on a date and at a location selected and predetermined by the Board of Directors. After assessing the player evaluations, the draft date shall be as close as possible.
- B. Only one representative from each Team will be allowed to be present to participate during the Draft.
- C. There are times when there may be conflicts between coaches, parents, and players. The Board will review all of these cases and decide on the final placement of a player. (Whenever possible, the board will make these conflicts known to the specific coach before the draft)
- D. Protected players will be placed on their respective teams in the proper draft round before the start of the draft.
 1. If a team does not have two (2) protected players at the start of the draft, that team will be allowed to draft when his/her turn comes up in the draft.

III. The draft order will be:

- A. Pitcher Draft
- B. Catcher Draft
- C. Regular Draft
- D. Blind Draft

IV. Pitcher Draft: The league intends to make each team equal by providing a pitcher's draft. Every Player who wants to pitch is required to participate in the pitcher evaluations.

A. Pitcher Draft Rules

1. Selections will start with the manager who drew the first pick.
2. Pitcher draft picks during the pitcher's draft will occupy the first and second draft positions.
3. The pitcher's draft will follow a serpentine route.
4. Teams may only retain the exclusive draft right to one pitcher. The rationale is that we are a premier league, and we need to ensure teams have pitching to play competitive ball.
5. Protected pitchers will be placed in the following draft order: "A" and "B" pitchers will occupy the first pitcher pick, and "C" pitchers will occupy the second pitcher pick. (Reference Section IV.B)
6. After two rounds at the pitching draft, the remaining players will be selected again in the regular draft and subject to the general draft rules.
7. If all teams in the division have adequate pitching, the board of directors may deem the pitcher's draft unnecessary, and we will move straight to the regular player draft.

B. Pitchers Placement Guidelines

1. The following guidelines will assign a letter ranking to all known pitchers in the league. A known pitcher will be defined as follows:
 - i. “Class A” Pitcher – A known pitcher who pitched more than 21 innings during the previous season, was on one of the teams finishing either 1st or 2nd in the standings, and will remain playing in the same division. If the player were an All-Star pitcher remaining in the same division who pitched more than 12 innings during All-Stars, that player would retain their “A” ranking. This pitcher will occupy the number 1 spot on the draft board.
 - ii. “Class B” Pitcher – A known pitcher who pitched more than 21 innings during the previous season and was NOT on one of the two teams finishing either 1st or 2nd in the standings and will remain playing in the same division or a known pitcher who pitched more than 21 innings during the previous season and IS moving up one division. If the player were an All-Star pitcher who pitched more than 12 innings during All-Stars and IS moving up one division, that player would have a “B” classification. This pitcher will occupy the number 2 position on the draft board.
 - iii. “Class C” Pitcher – A known pitcher who pitched more than ten innings during the previous season and was NOT on one of the two teams finishing either 1st or 2nd in the standings and IS moving up one division or a player who pitches and who pitched less than 21 innings in the previous Spring Season and was on one of the two teams finishing 1st or 2nd in the standings. This pitcher will occupy the number 2 position on the draft board.
 - iv. The Board will review the pitchers and make any adjustments regarding their classification as needed.

V. Regular Draft

- A. In alphabetical order (by last name), the designated Head Coach or Coach Representative shall draw a number for a position order in the Drafting Rotation. Selections will start with the manager drawing the first position, etc. Skip this step and continue with your pitcher’s draft order if held.
- B. Selections will continue, with the team drafting last in each round, making the first selection in the following round in a serpentine manner until all eligible players are drafted.
- C. No trades are allowed during or after the Draft.
 1. Unless deemed necessary by the LBHFP Executive Board (must be a vote).
- D. Family Combinations

1. Managers selecting a player (not a daughter) who has a family member player must draft the remaining family members two rounds later, providing the parents of these family members have requested that they play on the same team. (Example: The remaining family members of a fifth-round Draft choice must be taken as the seventh-round choice, ninth-round choice, etc.)
 - i. Under no condition, however, shall the second family member be considered higher than a fifth-round draft choice unless they meet the definition of a Pitcher, All-Star, or Travel Ball player.
 - ii. A family combination involving a Pitcher, All-Star, or Travel Ball player shall be placed in the draft normally but not count as a protected player.
2. All remaining sister combinations will be taken to start the tenth round.
 - i. All combinations will be offered to the manager during the draft rotation.
 - ii. If any combination remains, random selection will be instituted in draft order.
 - iii. Exception: Three family member combinations must be drafted starting in the eighth (8th) round. Selections (1) and (2) will apply here

E. Carpool / Coach / Friend Requests

1. Long Beach Heartwell Fastpitch is a premier and competitive league, so we cannot accommodate special coach or friend requests.
2. Carpool requests will only be honored for direct siblings living in the same household, for example, sisters or step-sisters.
3. The Long Beach Heartwell Executive Board will review any special circumstances and/or carpool requests and, if approved, notify the coaches prior to the draft.
4. No special circumstances and/or carpool requests will be allowed or reviewed after the teams have been drafted.

VI. Blind Draft

- A. Upon the completion of the eligible player's draft, any players who did not participate in the evaluation will be placed in a blind draw and assigned to teams continuing in the order of the draft.
- B. Pitchers who did not participate in the evaluation and who are returning players and known to all coaches and the board may be entered into the draft pool with board approval. They will be made known before the draft.

VII. Exclusive Draft Rights

- A. Head Coaches of record shall be granted exclusive Draft rights (protection) to their daughter(s)/granddaughter/relative, which shall be exercised per the Drafting Rules. The placement of Players in the Draft at the start is only used for the Protected Players. All other players, whether all-stars, travel ball, or any other players, will be treated equally in the draft pool. Designated Pitchers are placed in a separate draft pool unless

put in the general draft pool by the Board. Protected Players are intended to be used for guaranteeing an assistant coach's spot on your team.

1. The Head Coach's daughter(s)/granddaughter/relative shall be placed in the lowest draft position unless they meet the definition of a Pitcher, All-Star, or Travel Ball player.
2. The Head Coach's daughter(s)/granddaughter/relative who meets the definition of a Pitcher, All-Star, or Travel Ball player will occupy the draft position defined in the appropriate related section of the draft rules.
3. There may be up to two protected players per team, but there cannot be more than one protected pitcher and/or (1) protected catcher.
4. A player who is NOT a daughter of the respective Head Coach must have the approval of the respective protected player's parent(s) in order to be considered a protected player.
5. Only the Head Coach or designated representative of each team shall be officially recognized and approved by the Board of Directors to exercise these exclusive Draft rights.

B. An "All-Star player" shall be defined as one the Board of Directors has officially recognized as an "All-Star Player."

1. Head Coach's draft rights for an All-Star Player returning to the same division in which she was as an All-Star Player or a Travel Ball Player shall be exercised in the first round of the regular player draft.
2. Head Coach's draft rights for an All-Star player(s) advancing to the next higher age division shall be exercised in the first round of the regular player draft. If foregoing the pitcher's draft, this pick shall be exercised in the fifth round of the regular player draft.
3. Additional protected All-Star players will fill the highest available draft position(s).
4. All other drafts of girls will be exercised in the fifth or consecutive rounds.
5. If a protected player has one or more family members, then the family members will not count toward the protected player total.
6. If a Head Coach has two or more daughters protected on the same team, the player who would rank the lowest shall occupy the final draft position. All additional siblings shall occupy draft positions based on rankings defined above in sections VII.B.1 and VII.B.3.
7. Exceptions: A Travel Ball Player shall be defined as one who, in the previous Spring or Fall Seasons, has signed or participated for over 30 days on a USA Junior Olympic (J.O.) Travel ("A" Classification) Team as defined in the USA Softball Yellow Book. The Travel Ball Player shall be classified in the same draft positions as the Returning "All-Star Player."

VIII. Post Draft Procedures

A. Players Trades

1. No trades are allowed during or after the Draft.
 - i. Unless deemed necessary by LBHFP Executive Board (must be a vote).
2. All parties must agree upon any approved player trades.
3. Players being traded must be in fairness of equal talent according to evaluation rankings and/or knowledge of the player's playing ability.

B. Waiting List

1. Any girl registering after the divisional Draft, if room and availability permits, will be accepted as a tentative player upon payment of the registration fee and placed on a waiting list that will be activated after placement of all girls who participated during assessments.
 - i. The waiting list will be used to fill vacancies on the original rosters, which are due to:
 - a. An unequal number of players on the original list
 - b. Illness
 - c. Injuries
 - d. Resignations
2. If one girl is on the waiting list for a two-week period of time, the Board will have the option of placing one additional girl. No new girl will be placed on a team after the second week of play without board approval or unless the team roster is less than nine players with Board approval.
3. If a player cannot be placed on a team for any reason, her registration fee will be refunded. However, once a refund is made, the player cannot be placed on the tentative player list again during that playing season.

C. Adding / Removing / Resigning Players

1. After the original Draft, a team will not be permitted to add a player to its roster if any other team has fewer players unless approved by the board.
2. Once a player is placed on a team and she resigns from that team, she becomes ineligible to play on any other "Long Beach Heartwell Fastpitch" softball team during that season.

IX. Miscellaneous Draft Rules

- A. A mandatory Coaches' Meeting (of all prospected Coaches/Managers) will be held just prior to the Assessment of Player Evaluations and Draft Procedure to ensure an overall understanding of our league's process and intention.
- B. There will be a mandatory Cooling-off period after the draft. All coaches are not to contact players until 24 hours after the draft unless they are approved by the player's agent.

- C. A team will not be drafted without a Head Coach. If multiple teams can be drafted and there are not enough designated Head Coaches available, the Board will assist with the Draft.
- D. All managers and coaches must be approved by the Board.
- E. Team colors are chosen in reverse order from that of the drafting sequence.
- F. Any situation that may arise during the Draft procedures that appears to be “unclear” or “outside” the guidelines stated within this document shall be brought to the Executive Board’s attention, and the Executive Board will make a final decision to resolve the situation.