

Don't Miss Your Chance to Get Involved with Tualatin Youth Softball!

Registration for the 2017 Softball Season is underway. Tualatin is a member of Oregon District 4, the host for the 11-12 Little League Softball World Series played at Alpenrose Dairy in SW Portland (Aug. 9-16th in 2017). It is one of the truly special events in our area, hosting teams from around the world.

BY SCOTT HUNSDON AND HOWARD HOYLE

Registrations are flowing in, the Tualatin Softball Board is working hard to kick off the 2017 Season. Until sign-ups are complete, we don't know the number of teams at each level, and can be a scramble to form them and run tryouts (for levels that do), have enough equipment, uniforms, fields, coaches, etc.

Speaking of Coaches, some years we have enough, others we have sit down with the parents on the team and divide up roles and responsibilities. Balancing work, family and all their activities is tough, but please don't miss out on the chance to get involved, it may be one of the best things you ever do. Not everyone is cut out for it, of course, we're not trying to make Pac-12 players out of 6 & 7 year olds, nor do we want practices that aren't teaching the skills kids need to master this level and the next. So who should coach? You're not born knowing

how, and even if you played in college it doesn't mean you know how to teach 4-12 year old girls (but you should have a leg up!). IMO it's the person that thinks maybe they can, knows there is a lot to learn, asks questions, and understands the importance of organization, communication, relationships, & team culture.

Want to coach? Here are some quick tips on making it a successful season:

Learning:

Coaches & Players should learn something every day. Ask Players after practice what they learned to help reinforce. Ask other coaches about drills, strategy, rules, and handling problems. Use online resources like Little League University, videos on YouTube, etc.



Parents, and you can never try enough different ways to communicate with Players. Use Team Snap, a Team Facebook page, group texts, put it in writing what you expect from players & parents

- make sure anyone picking them up or dropping them off is in the loop.

Relationships:

Trust is built making the effort to get to know them and show you care. Learn their names, ask how they're doing, how school is going. Understand different learning styles; show me, tell me, reading it, or even need extra help

before or after practice.

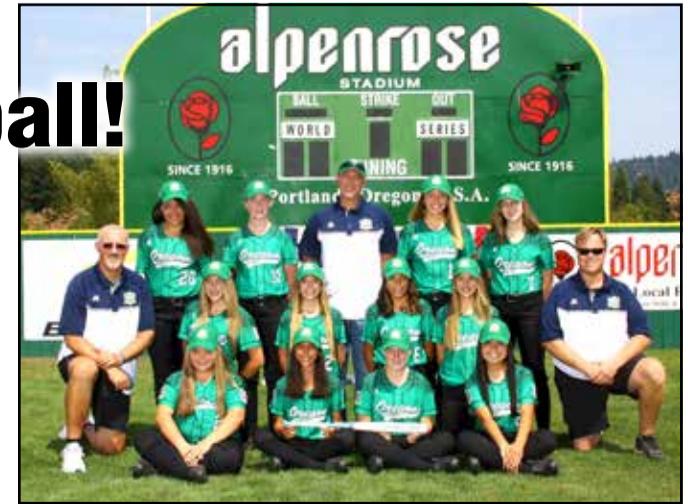
Team Culture:

Is key to creating an environment where kids feel free to go for it and make the play, versus hesitating because they worry about making a mistake. Three approaches;

- **Mistakes** - Learn from them, flush them, and move on. Softball is a game of failure, they need to learn to be ok with it and so do you.

- **Desire to improve comes from inside** - On great teams the players almost coach themselves and take responsibility for their own success or failure. Look for opportunities to transfer ownership to the players.

- **Attitude & Effort** - Many things you can't



control but you can always control your attitude and your effort. Instilling this will help them become the team that plays through adversity and doesn't get down on themselves.

Lastly would encourage everyone to get involved. Whether helping out when you can, volunteering to coach, or joining the Board. Whether your interest is just making sure there is a positive & challenging place to play, or, building competitive All Star and Tournament teams when they're older, it starts with building the relationships with kids & families when they're young. Get Involved. The years go fast and in no time at all they are in high school and off to college.



Organization:

Make sure everyone knows the schedule. Plan practices and game line-ups. Besides the other coaches, have 2-3 others regularly helping to run stations, prep the fields, scorekeeper, umpire, Team Mom, First Aide, and so on. Don't try to do it all yourself.

Communication:

You can never communicate enough with

Scott Hunsdon has been involved in softball in Tualatin since his daughter Caitlyn started Tball at the age of 6 years old. Caitlyn is now 25. Scott has been an involved parent, coach and President of Tualatin Youth Softball for the past 8 years.



Howard Hoyle has been involved in Tualatin Softball for about 12 years, coaching his 4 daughters (ages 8-to-18) and holding various board positions with Tualatin City Little League. Currently is the Vice President.