

MOFA



The Manhattan Optimist Fastpitch Association

Our Mission: The Manhattan Optimist Fastpitch Association (MOFA) has taken the lead in promoting women's fastpitch softball in the greater Manhattan area for the past thirty-five years. The Association's goal is to help young women to develop fully their softball talents and to experience the game of fastpitch at a highly competitive and advanced level. Many of our teams are among the very best in the state of Kansas and are well-known throughout the state and region. Older players from our Association form the nucleus for many of the high school teams in our area. Alumni of our program routinely go on to play at the collegiate level.

Our Sponsor: The Association has developed and prospered in large part as a result of its support by the *Manhattan Breakfast Optimist Club*. This support began at a time in the 1970's when athletic opportunities for females generally and for fastpitch softball in particular were very scarce. Most notably, the Optimist Club's commitment includes building and supporting Optimist Park which is dedicated primarily to women's fastpitch.

Our Park: Optimist Park's fastpitch facilities include four diamonds, two are best suited for older age groups and the other two are built with younger age groups in mind. All of the infields have an all-weather surface that allows us to practice in wet weather. In addition, the Park has three batting cages, several pitching machines and a specially tailored practice pitching area. The Manhattan Breakfast Optimist Club also supports rental of an inside facility for practice during the winter months. Member teams have virtually unlimited access to all these practice facilities.

Our Teams: The Association typically has teams that range from beginning teams at the eight year old level to advanced eighteen year old teams. We usually field at least one team in each of the age groups.

Besides ranging in age, our teams also vary in terms of the competitive level at which they play. Our older teams are among the best in the state. They play between 40 and 50 games per summer. These teams typically "travel" every weekend between Memorial Day and late July playing in weekend tournaments in Kansas and the surrounding states.

Our younger teams are usually in the developmental stage and play 30 to 40 games each summer. They will normally play most of their games within a one hour drive of Manhattan. Regardless of where our teams begin, the ultimate goal for all of them is to be as competitive as they can be.

To determine the appropriate age group for an interested athlete, we observe the January 1 rule. That is, the athlete will qualify for the age group (8 and under, 10 and under, 12 and under, 14 and under, 16 and under and 18 and under) corresponding to their age on January 1.

The Association's teams typically will form in the fall and usually consist of eleven or twelve players. The numbers are kept small in order to assure maximum playing time for all team members. In most cases, the nucleus of a team will

carry over from one season to the next. However, most seasons some roster openings occur on almost all of our teams. Tryouts for these openings are announced in local newspapers.

As our veteran teams exhaust their eligibility, each year we look to form entirely new teams, usually in the younger age groups. However, wherever we have an age gap we typically try to fill it with a new team. Also, we support having more than one team in a particular age group if there are interested players and qualified coaches available. We likewise accept already formed teams into the Association.

Our Coaches: We insist that our coaches meet the very highest standards in terms of character, background, temperament, ability to work with young women and softball knowledge.

The Association also offers specialized and individualized coaching, focusing on such skills as pitching and hitting.

Our Funding: The Manhattan Breakfast Optimist Club's substantial yearly contribution goes towards the operation, maintenance, and improvement of Optimist Park, and to the rental of our inside winter practice facility.

Additional Association support for our teams includes, fund-raising suggestions, scheduling and insurance assistance, contacts for tournament entries and coach mentoring.

Beyond this, our teams are self-supporting. They typically initiate fund raisers themselves to support everything from the costs of uniforms and equipment, to the entry fees associated with their league or tournament play, to motel costs.

Each year several weekend tournaments are held in Manhattan. These tournaments serve as the primary fund raiser for many of our teams as the players sell program advertisements to local merchants.



If you want more information about:

- Joining one of our teams
- Helping to coach one of our teams
- Starting a new team
- Bringing an existing team into our Association
- Specialized coaching instruction
- Contributing to our Association

Please contact one of these MOFA officials

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