



2024
4th Edition

AROUND THE BASES

AN UNFORGETTABLE SEASON

SCP 2024 SOFTBALL CLUB SPRING CELEBRATION

The 2024 Spring End-of-Season Banquet, Awards Ceremony, and Business Meeting was attended by 161 club members, spouses, and invited guests. While enjoying a variety of tunes provided by Silver Daddy Sounds (aka: Greg Russell), attendees engaged in post-game recall and competitive, yet friendly, banter. With anxious anticipation, recognition and awards were presented for team accomplishments and player statistics. Special recognition and appreciation were expressed to the numerous volunteers, working behind the scenes, for their commitment to making each softball season run smoothly. The 2024 SCP Softball Club Treasurer reported the club's positive financial stability.



As one of the larger SCP charter clubs, club members would like to thank our sponsors for their continued support. To our rain or shine fans, spectators, umpires, scorekeepers, and volunteer supporters, thank you for making the SCP softball community the best!



DJ — Greg Russell

CALENDAR REMINDER

- * Aug 3 - Registration Closes @ 6pm
- * Aug 11 - Men's A-League Draft
- * Aug 12 - Ladies Draft & Reveal Party
- * Aug 14 - Men's B-League Draft
- * Aug 24 - Opening Day
- * Nov 2 - Closing Day/All-Star Games

SPECIAL EVENTS:

- * Jul 27 - Try-It Sessions
- * Aug 3 & 10 - Men's New Player Evaluations
- * Aug 5 - Ladies New Player Evaluations
- * Aug 15 - New Umpire Training
- * Aug 16 - New Umpire Training
- * Aug 25 - Hometown Heroes Club Party
- * Aug 31 - Hometown Heroes Games
- * Aug 6 - Ladies Pre-Draft Meeting
- * Oct 21-23 - Sun City Tournament
- * Nov 4 - Banquet/General Meeting
- * Nov 9 - Veterans Games

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“FANS are the lifeblood of a sports organization.”

~ Unknown



Sponsor Highlight

LINDA HILLEY, REALTOR

The number of sponsorships in women’s professional sports continues to increase year-after-year and the SCP Softball Ladies League (LL) is no exception. Although the Softball Club is not a professional league, Associate Broker at RE/MAX Southern and Realtor, Linda Hilley has been a League Sponsor for over 10 years and currently sponsors one of the LL teams.

As a top-producing licensed broker with RE/MAX since 2005, Linda has achieved remarkable success, including membership in the Multi-Million Dollar Club and the RE/MAX Executive and Platinum Clubs. A licensed nurse, Linda’s journey to the #1 selling agent in Sun City Peachtree is a testament to her passion for real estate. Since receiving her realtors’ license in 2003, Linda has established a reputation described as being flexible, friendly, and trustworthy; values that resonate deeply within the SCP community. At RE/MAX Southern, Linda’s realty expertise spans across numerous counties to include Henry, Fayette, Pike, Lamar, and Spalding.

Linda states that although she has numerous memorable moments to share, she recalls helping a Sun City family find their perfect home, not once but five times, showcasing the deep trust clients place in her. Linda’s commitment to the Softball Club and several other clubs within the SCP community is a testament to her dedication to giving back to those who have supported her throughout her career. Linda shares this sentiment, “I would not be where I am today had I not taken that very first SCP listing in 2007 on Begonia Court. It has been the best decision I have ever made, and I always will be here for the residents of Sun City.”

While Linda enjoys being a full-time Realtor, she and husband Dan love hanging out in their backyard oasis by their pool enjoying life. Together they like to travel, dine out, and love the sport of college football – “Go Dawgs!” When asked what she would like SCP residents to know the most about her business, she says, “I would like all of you to know that I am still a 24/7 Realtor. I am never too busy nor too tired to work for you. When you think of selling or buying, I would appreciate the opportunity to work for you. God Bless you all and play ball!”



“Success is the sum of small efforts—repeated day in and day out.”

~ Robert Collier

SCP Softball Scorekeepers and Scoreboard Operators



The SCP Softball League is always looking for anyone interested in becoming a Scorekeeper and/or Scoreboard Operator. Either position can transform a players' game into a dynamic and real-time experience. **Scorekeepers** are an integral part of the softball game as they are responsible for the scorebook. The scorebook re-tells the complete story of the game. It's the official record of the game and must depict when and how each play was made. Score sheets are required to be recorded in a manner that allows managers to understand each play that happened in any game. Managers use the scorebook to study hitting trends by players and defensive trends by teams. The scorebook serves as a reference tool in the event of a protest over a game.

During the 2024 seasons, Al Deluca oversees the scheduling of scorekeepers for all the leagues. Al sends out the schedule to members of the scorekeepers' pool requesting that they select the games they would be available to commit to keeping score. Al recalls, "In the early years, managers recruited their own team scorekeeper. It was not unusual for a wife or neighbor to keep score." While this seemed unmanageable, we recall that there were only three teams.

Scorekeeping can be subjective; therefore, scorekeepers are trained so that everyone is scoring in a comparable way. When keeping score there is no time for discussion between batters, so it's up to the scorekeeper to make the most accurate determination quickly. A scorekeeper must focus and pay attention to the details of the game; therefore, focus on the entire field not just the batter. One scorekeeper stated that, "A scorekeeper must wait until the play is over before marking in the book."

When the league split into a Men's League and Ladies League, the scorekeeper pool was implemented. The pool system was maintained until this year when the Men's League-A decided to keep their own scorebooks. According to one source, a scorekeeper's job for Men's League-A games is more difficult due to the fast-paced nature of the game. As a result, a scorekeeper must be able to keep pace. In addition, Men's League-A players are always more interested in their statistics.

Scoreboard Operators are responsible for posting game information on the large scoreboard. Although these individuals may have a brief training session, instruction on operating the system is on the machine. The scoreboard operator should understand the basics of the game, such as the ability to differentiate between a "ball" and a "strike". Lastly, it's imperative that the operator knows which button to press on "the clicker." Any other event during the game is up to the umpires.

The scorekeeper works with the scoreboard operator to make sure the scorebook and the scoreboard agree. Fans, managers, umpires, and players rely on the scoreboard to display pertinent information - the score, ball and strike count, and innings. Scoreboard operators will hear from spectators if the scoreboard information is not correct; therefore, it is imperative that the operator pay attention to every pitch and hit for accurate display. According to the scoreboard operators, the biggest challenge occurs when the scoreboard system shuts down and the operator needs to determine steps to get it back up and running.



Per Tom Janecek, who schedules the scoreboard operators, the most rewarding part of his responsibility is being able to sit outside on a lovely day and enjoy the game. Tom says that he has been fortunate to find enough qualified volunteers to schedule 13 games a week. Several of the SCP Softball Association scoreboard operators have been volunteers for the last twelve and a half years!



Hey Coach, Pick Me!

Embarking on the journey of being a team's manager means stepping into a role that's more complex and nuanced than it may appear at first glance. Managing a team of players with varied capabilities and athletic or medical restrictions requires patience, strategic thinking, and the ability to adapt to a wide range of players' skill levels. Having knowledge of each player's skills and limitations will help the manager assemble a well-rounded team for the upcoming season.

As a player, you may be wondering what skillsets managers are looking for as they go through the selection process. While there are no specific educational requirements, having some softball knowledge is important; however, it's not required. What's most important is how the player can contribute to the team. To help managers better understand and appreciate a player's athleticism, they rely on information gathered, throughout the year, from unbiased evaluators. Players are evaluated and assessed on five key components: techniques (throwing, fielding, and hitting), character, and skill level (mobility and base running), ensuring equal opportunity for all. This process is used by managers of the Men's-A League, Men's-B League and the Ladies League (LL). While this article is written to explain the process used by the LL, there are some points worth keeping in mind for players in the men's leagues as well.

The SCP LL Softball Rubric is a scoring scale (grading guide) used to assess player performance that aligns with a task-specific set of criteria. The rubric documents/articulates the expectations of a player and lists the criteria and other factors required, while describing the level of quality from excellent (10) to poor (0). The rubric helps managers 1) identify a player's athletic capability, 2) evaluate a player's overall suitability for the team, and 3) identify which position on the team is a player's best fit.

Fielding, hitting, base running, throwing accuracy, and mobility are the key elements managers use to gauge, categorize, and identify players. Conducting a thorough self-evaluation of the five components of the rubric will help players assess their capabilities and identify areas for improvement. To reduce players' anxiety and promote performance improvement, let's look at a couple of the rubric's components as well as examples as stated on the evaluation rubric. Please note that they are not in any order; however, they are the areas that managers use to select players.

Base running is evaluated based on speed and knowledge; do you usually beat the throw to first base, run through first base, how often is a pinch runner needed/requested, and/or are you an aggressive runner? Relative to hitting, can your team rely on you to be a solid/power hitter, do your at-bats often advance the base runner, and/or do you mostly hit in the infield or frequently strike out?

Softball is a fast-moving sport that requires considerable perpetual motor abilities from players; therefore, it requires good movement in all directions, including bending. Although not heavily weighted on the rubric, mobility deserves one's attention. Range of motion (ROM) is evaluated to determine your ability to move forward, limited backward, lateral and bending movements. Lastly, although evaluated as separate components, we combine throwing and fielding. Fielding the ball from shortstop to first base and throwing to first accurately in the air is a top priority. The key to playing these positions is one's ability to commit few and/or occasional errors relative to distance in throwing and eliminating balls from going past you.

Softball is a team sport, yet it's a very individual sport. On defense, when a ground ball is hit near the second base, the second baseman must field and throw the ball cleanly (individually) and the first baseman must catch the ball cleanly (individually). The entire team depends on an individual to perform a particular skill. The better the individual, the better the team!

If you want to change your level of play, practicing can improve your abilities and increase your practical knowledge of the game of softball. There are numerous opportunities for you to develop and improve your softball skills. Take advantage of the scrimmages and various clinics being offered, select your personal improvement goal, and go for it. Don't let your age be a deterrent to your desire to play SCP softball this fall. The average age of the 2024 Spring season LL players was 66 years old. Remember, "Practice makes Progress!"