



Johnston Girls Softball Association (JGSA)

Dragon Select Softball

What is Dragon Select Softball?

Dragon Select is a competitive softball program lead by JGSA designed for girls of all skill levels ages 8U through 14U that play in weekend tournaments and/or fall and spring leagues. Competitive softball is **not** an extension of recreational softball.

Why participate in Dragon Select Softball?

JGSA encourages girls who want to continue to learn the game, build skill sets, and have fun to play Select softball. The program is designed to give girls exposure to both league play and tournament play in the fall and spring seasons. Our volunteer coaches are experienced and skilled in the game, focused on teamwork, and sportsmanship. Participating in competitive softball requires commitment, is a great way to make new and lasting memories, friendships, and develop as a person and a player. Through it all and no matter the level of competition, softball is a game and should be kept in that perspective by players and parents alike.

What to expect?

Tryouts – Girls will be expected to attend 2-3 evenings of tryouts based on her age group at the Jensen Quad Fields. Each age group will have two tryout nights and a player can tryout either one or both nights. If a player attends both tryout nights, her best score will be recorded. In addition, a separate tryout night is available for all pitchers and catchers. JGSA does everything they can to match up skill levels and place every girl on a team. However, number of team spots available is dependent on the number of girls signed up and the number of coaches available.

Generally, check in will start at 5:30 p.m. and tryouts will start at 5:45 p.m. Players should be dressed, warmed up, and ready to begin at 5:45 p.m. Dates for 2020 include:

- 8U – August 10; make-up date on August 18
- 9U & 10U – August 11 and August 19
- 11U & 12U – August 12 and August 17
- 13U and 14U – August 10 and August 18
- Pitchers/Catchers – August 13

Fall Season – Teams will participate in a fall season which could consist of league play, multiple tournaments, or both. Including practice, fall season typically starts in August and ends in October. The schedule of league play and tournaments is decided by the coaches as the season approaches. Practices will occur one or two times a week at Lew Clarkson. Most games and tournaments are on the weekends.

Winter – Throughout the winter, girls will practice one to two times a week indoors at a facility that JGSA rents located at 3217 NW Prairie Lane, Des Moines (across the river from the Johnston Soccer Fields).

Spring Season – Teams will participate in several weekend tournaments between March and June. The number of tournaments and which weekends will be decided by the coach as the season approaches. Girls will practice at Lew Clarkson 1-2 times a week and will also be expected to play on a Rec team in the spring.

Who is eligible to play?

Any girl who plays in the Johnston Girls Softball Association recreation league or Johnston School teams, who are under age 15 on January 1, of that year, are eligible to play. Please note: for the 2020 Dragon Select Tryouts only, the participating in JGSA Rec League requirement has been waived, but will be put back in place for 2021 Dragon Select Tryouts.

What age group would my daughter fit into?

A Dragon Select season includes a fall season and spring season. For the 2020-2021 season:

- 14U – must be 14 years old or younger as of January 1, 2021
- 13U – must be 13 years old or younger as of January 1, 2021
- 12U – must be 12 years old or younger as of January 1, 2021
- 11U – must be 11 years old or younger as of January 1, 2021
- 10U – must be 10 years old or younger as of January 1, 2021

- 9U – must be 9 years old or younger as of January 1, 2021
- 8U – must be 8 years old or younger as of January 1, 2021

Do pitchers and catchers try out separately?

Pitchers and catchers will go through the same tryout process as other players. In addition, they will have pitching and catching specific tryouts on a separate day. The JGSA Board believes that to have a strong Select program, there is a need to develop many pitchers and catchers at the younger age groups. Thus, the general practice is that trying out as a pitcher or catcher (at any age group) can only help a player during team selection and **cannot** have negative impacts. A couple possible examples of how this might apply include:

Example 1: A player's overall tryout is good enough to place her on the top team at her age group; however, her pitching tryout is scored that she is the third or fourth ranked pitcher. Since the selection committee places the top two pitchers on the top team, there may be concerns that this player would be placed on the second team. This is not what the selection committee will decide. In this example, since the player's overall skill level is determined to qualify her for the top team, the selection committee would contact the player's parents to ask whether the player would like to play for the top team (knowing she would be the third or fourth pitcher and therefore may not have as many opportunities to pitch in games), or if the player would prefer to be one of the top pitchers on the second team. (Note: this example also applies for catchers).

Example 2: A player's overall tryout score places her on the second team. However, her pitching tryout ranks her as the top pitcher at her age group. She would be placed on the top team since the general practice has been to put the top pitcher on the top team. (Note: this example also applies for catchers).

Who will select the teams?

A Dragon Select selection committee will be formed by the JGSA Board, prior to tryouts. The selection committee will include JGSA Board members who are not currently coaching a Dragon Select team.

How many teams will there be in each age division?

We will field as many teams as there are managers and players interested. Generally, there will be multiple teams in each age division.

Will all competitive team players be guaranteed equal playing time?

Playing on a Dragon Select team is earned and a commitment. It can be a rewarding and challenging experience as players are exposed to a higher level of competitive play. There is **no guarantee** of equal playing time for all girls on a Dragon Select team. All decisions in this regard will be at the sole discretion of the coaches. We ask parents to be supportive of coaches' decisions. If you have questions or concerns, please hold discussions with coaches in private and away from the players and other parents. If needed, parents may contact a member of the JGSA Board.

Will any player who wants to play on a Dragon Select team be cut?

JGSA will make a reasonable effort to form as many teams as it takes to allow everyone to play. One factor that will impact our effort is having enough qualified volunteers to coach. Another factor is the number of girls who sign up to play.

What does it cost to play on a Dragon Select team?

For the 2020-2021 season, there is a registration cost of \$100, a \$400 indoor facility rental fee, as well as the purchase of uniforms (if needed). Some discounts are provided for families that have three or more girls in the program. If teams choose to play away from the Des Moines area, there could be travel, lodging, and meal costs incurred as well. In addition, a family can expect to spend approximately \$300 to \$500 per player to cover tournament registration fees; however, part (or all) of this cost may be offset if the team can obtain a sponsor or perform fundraising. All registration fees must be paid in full before tryouts are completed. The majority of each player's registration fee (minus the amount for team registration, insurance and banner) will be forwarded to each approved coach once teams have been drafted for use toward tournament entry fees or other team costs.

How are coaches selected for Dragon Select teams?

Individuals interested in being a coach for a Dragon Select team must complete and submit an application to the JGSA Board and be approved.

How do I get started and what if I have more questions?

Visit the JGSA website to register: <https://www.johnstongirlssoftball.org/>. Please contact any member of the Board with additional questions. A list of board of directors and our contact information is available on the JGSA website.