

June 20, 2019

Dear Field Hockey players and parents,

The 2019 field hockey season is just a few short weeks away and I am very excited to be back and working with this amazing group of field hockey players! We had a tremendous amount of success last season winning the WPIAL championship and a returning to the state playoffs after a 4-year layoff but we cannot rest on those laurels! This is a new season and we will once again be a team that other teams will be looking to beat! This season our team will once again be relatively young with just 3 seniors but I have no doubt they will provide strong leadership in addition to the large number of returning players. What is even more exciting is that with a large group of incoming freshmen and new players, our preliminary team numbers MAY allow us to have a JV team as well as offer a JV schedule, which will get players even more playing time and game experience! I am already asking around to see what teams in the area have a JV team to play, so stay tuned. Coach Ali and Coach Jenna are on board to return to the team! We cannot wait to set team goals and to help you set individual goals on our way to another awesome season.

ADDITIONAL FIELD HOCKEY TRAINING INFO: Planning to attend a team camp proved a rather difficult undertaking this year. Families all have busy schedules and it is hard to locate a few days to get many players together, let alone planning the details of transportation to and from a camp. DO NOT DISPAIR! I am excited to let everyone know of a number of opportunities this summer to keep you preparing for the upcoming season:

1. Coach Dinardo has been offering training sessions in the new SSA Fitness center and I want to encourage as many of you to take part in his training as much as you can. He is offering sessions on Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays from 2 – 3:30pm. He spends about 45 minutes to work strength and then 45 minutes on the turf to work on agility/conditioning. I hope that you will take advantage of this opportunity if you are in town this summer! I would encourage you to get to at least 2 of the sessions each week and then if you go away for a family vacation at some point you will be able to continue some of the work you have been doing. Take advantage of this chance to build strength and stamina going into the season!
2. I would also like to include some open turf time after Coach Dinardo's sessions. For anyone wanting to work on skills, maybe some play small games (depending on how many team members show) and start to refine your basic skills, we will begin NEXT WEEK – Monday, June 24 and Monday, July 1 from 4 – 5:30pm. The plan is to shift the turf dates to THURSDAY, July 11, July 18 and July 25 from 4 – 5:30pm but stay tuned on those details.
3. If you are still looking to attend a field hockey camp that is close by, I will be on the coaching staff at Allegheny College's field hockey camp from July 15th – 18th and the camp still has spots available. The camp is purposely kept small for solid camper feedback and it is relatively close to SSA so it is an easy commute (1 ½ hour drive!). Find the registration link here:
https://alleghenygators.com/documents/2018/9/27//2019_field_hockey_camp.pdf?id=1760
4. I also just found out from the USA Field Hockey website that spots are still available if you would like to participate in the PA Keystone State games beginning on July 26th. For more information, check out the following link <https://www.teamusa.org/USA-Field-Hockey/Features/2019/June/20/Keystone-State-Games-Field-Hockey-Championship-Begins->

[July-](#)

[26?fbclid=IwAR0wp69R7D7aMA64BmX0JPwq0pmY07BElOXHyqkxqBmLaLONmq4W_M3pSCg](#)

5. Our captains, Zoe and Bella will be having some “captain practices” throughout the summer and they will be contacting team members through the Group Me app so be on the lookout for these additional opportunities for the team to get together.

I hope that everyone has started to get out and condition for the upcoming season as well as getting out with a stick & ball. Now is the time to pick it up a notch to get ready for the season. Over these next 2 weeks (June 23rd and June 30th), I would recommend getting out 4 times a week for 20-30 minute runs – track, trails, beach -- anywhere! I would recommend increasing the run times by 5 minutes each week. Getting into July, if you have been doing the 2 weeks of running, you should up your running to 5 days a week between 30 – 40 minutes. You need to have at least one day off of running each week but you can still work on stick skills on that off day! Remember to start with a dynamic warm up before and a cool down after running, with careful attention to stretching and flexibility to help decrease chance of injury. Vary your speed throughout the run to include short sprint work (20 – 40 yard distances).

As far as stick work goes, get at least 20 minutes of daily work now: dribbling, drives, push passes, dodges – anything that deals with movement and control of the ball and keep your feet moving (do not just stand and hit). Find a teammate to work with or adjust as necessary with an older/younger sibling (or parent) to dribble around if necessary! We are going to be spending A LOT of time on fundamentals in the first week of preseason. The fancy skills are great to work on but 80% of game of field hockey is pure fundamentals! If you need suggestions of what to work on, please email me. If you are not able to join Coach Dinardo, do not forget about strength work too: various core exercises, including push-ups and planks. I will send out more specific training shortly.

JUST A FEW REMINDERS PRIOR TO PRESEASON BEGINNING ON MONDAY, AUGUST 12th:

1. All of your medical forms **MUST** be turned in/submitted electronically through the Magnus portal. You should have received information about downloading all of the necessary forms (PIAA sections 1 through 7) – you cannot practice without this information submitted electronically. **PLEASE MAKE YOUR PHYSICAL APPOINTMENTS NOW as the availability of those appointments becomes much harder to schedule later in the summer!!**
2. Rising Freshmen and Juniors and anyone new to SSA must also complete the imPact (concussion) test before you can practice. Many of you took this before the end of the school year but in case you did not, there are 3 dates in August to sign up and take this test on campus. Please look for that information in a separate email. Again, you cannot practice until this is also completed. **PLEASE make sure all of the necessary work is in so that you can start on the first day of practice.**
3. **WHAT TO BRING FOR EVERY PRACTICE:**
 - a. A molded mouth guard (it cannot white or clear). I am currently working with an Opro vendor about specific molded mouthguards that not only help to protect the teeth but also allow for better communication on the field because these are actually molded to your mouth. Stay tuned!
 - b. Goggles (they need to be field hockey approved eyewear - basically the perpendicular bar in the peripheral eye area **MUST** be present),
 - c. Water bottle
 - d. Sunscreen

- e. Stick (if you are looking to get a new one, check in with me first – do not get one locally).
 - f. Shin guards-- I would strongly recommend the style with hard cover -- the smaller soccer style shinguards are not legal. If you need suggestions, please contact me.
 - g. Sneakers AND cleats (broken in before camp if you are getting new ones in order to prevent blisters) as well as extra socks and extra practice gear.
 - h. Pack of lots snacks/lunch/drinks for the middle segment when we will eat.
 - i. We also will be doing some pool work when available, so bring a bathing suit and towel every day ☺
- 4. DATES & TIMES OF PRESEASON: see below**
- 5. REGULAR PRACTICES & REGULAR SEASON GAMES:**
- a. Our regular practice time will begin on Wednesday, August 21st, which is 3:45 – 5:35pm.
 - b. Please check the schedule on the SSA website for all scrimmages and games for the 2019 season.

I want everyone coming to preseason with a positive attitude and a willingness to work to the best of your ability. Your attendance at preseason is expected but I also understand that last minute family vacations also sometimes are planned before the start of school. What I can tell you is that preseason is where the coaches start to evaluate players: we use these opportunities to watch you play and see how you adjust both in drills. It also gives us the chance to watch your field sense in scrimmages and then watch how players work with each other. We are also looking to evaluate your level of conditioning when you arrive and see how much time and effort you put into preparing for the season! Please let me know sooner than later if you will be missing some of these early practices. Preseason will be hard but it will be a great team building experience! There are plans to have some fun along the way and it is a great way for the new players to get to know team members and the general campus. If you have conflicts with any of the preseason practice sessions (listed below) or will be late to a practice or need to leave early from a practice, please contact me. My cell phone is 412-728-1818 to either call or leave a text message and please make sure to leave your name if you text.

If you have ANY other questions, please do not hesitate to get in touch with me. Also, keep an eye on your email as information on team gear will be coming shortly and will require a quick turnaround time in order to have the gear at the start of school.

We cannot wait to see you on August 12th!

Coach Gorse

Betsy Gorse
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SSA Middle School PE/Health Teacher
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2019 FIELD HOCKEY PRESEASON SCHEDULE

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| Monday, Aug. 12 | practice from 7am – 1pm |
| Tuesday, Aug. 13 | practice from 7am – 1pm |
| Wednesday, Aug. 14 | practice from 7am – 1pm |
| Thursday, Aug. 15 | practice from 7am – 1pm |
| Friday, Aug. 16 | practice from 7am – 1pm |
| Saturday, Aug. 17 | WRA Play Day – details coming soon once we find out if we play in the morning or afternoon session. |
| Monday, Aug. 19 | practice from 7am – 1pm |
| Tuesday, Aug. 20 | practice from 7am – 1pm (last preseason session) |
| Wednesday, Aug. 21 | afternoon practice <u>probably</u> 3:45 – 5:35 (faculty meetings begin) |
| Thursday, Aug. 22 | Scrimmage @ Fox Chapel, 5pm. Team meeting at 2:30 in the team room and then depart around 3:45pm for FC. |
| Friday, Aug. 23 | afternoon practice <u>probably</u> 3:45 – 5:35 |
| Saturday, Aug. 24 | possibly - TBA |
| Monday, Aug. 26 | First day of school/ orientation Regular afternoon practices begin, 3:45 – 5:35pm |

NOTES:

- The 7am – 1pm practices during each week will be broken into 3 parts: approximately 7-9am practice on turf or field; approximately 9 – 10am will be team chalk talk, refueling (EATING) and swim/conditioning or yoga (or something similar) and some down time. Approximately 11am – 1pm will be practice on either the turf or field.
- Everyone should be prepared every day with practice gear for both practices and a swim suit and towel & bring a change of clothes and change of socks for a second practice.
- Pack a lunch or good snacks to eat during the middle segment between the turf/field practices.
- We will meet on the turf on August 12th, ready to start practice at 7AM (not arriving at 7am)

Other dates to be aware of:

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| Monday, Sept. 2 | Labor day – practice time TBA |
| Sunday, Sept. 8 | Practice time TBA – we have a Monday game (9/9) with Fox Chapel |