



**TOGETHER WE RIDE**



## **MISSION**

MVI Softball's mission is to unite two proud softball traditions into one powerful, connected program built on loyalty, discipline, and resilience. We strive to develop exceptional athletes and outstanding individuals by teaching life lessons that extend far beyond the field.

Together, we commit to upholding our shared values in the classroom, in competition, and in our community. We celebrate academic and athletic excellence, foster meaningful relationships, and create an environment where every athlete feels inspired. As one program, one family, and one future **Together We Ride!** We aim to build lasting memories while preparing our athletes to lead with integrity, compete with purpose, and elevate the standard for all who follow.

# **TOGETHER WE RIDE**



## **PROGRAM OVERVIEW**

We will run a high school softball program that:

- Our student-athletes take **significant pride** in.
- Allows every athlete to **reach their full potential**.
- Is worthy of their **commitment, effort, and belief**.

### **Our Three Goals for the Season:**

For **every individual** in our program, our goal is that they:

- 1. Become a better competitor and softball player**
- 2. Become a better teammate**
- 3. Become a better person**

We will remember that our #1 priority and focus is to fulfill our purpose - help develop better people through competing in the game of softball. We want to help build championship kids through striving to win games and championships. We want to give them learning experiences they can use for the rest of their lives. We're developing a person first, an athlete second. We are not defined by championships and wins or losses, we are defined by our culture and our purpose. If we win a championship, great; it will be very exciting, and we will celebrate! But, if we do not help our players become better competitors and players, better teammates and better people in the process, then it will not be very meaningful. Winning is clearly a goal; it is not our purpose.

We will coach within the framework of the overall high school experience and priorities, and we support and encourage multiple sport athletes.

We will work with and support the Mounds View Softball Association (MVSA) and Club Teams our players participate with.

We encourage parents to be involved as they are able and willing to help provide a positive and enriching experience for the players.

# **TOGETHER WE RIDE**



Providing a quality high school softball program requires a strong partnership of community softball, parents and the Mounds View School District.

We will support and promote players that want to play at the collegiate level.

We will uphold high expectations and standards for everyone involved in our program coaches, players, and parents. Everything we do will be rooted in an environment of commitment, effort, and belief. These values will be consistently emphasized, and we will intentionally discuss what they look like both on the field and in everyday life off the field.

We will focus on process, not on the outcome - we get better results when we focus on those things that we control, especially in an adversity-oriented game like softball. We will talk in terms of being "not satisfied" versus "disappointed" if things don't go well - viewing it as a "learning opportunity" not "failure." We hold ourselves accountable, we don't make excuses, and we don't focus on past events that have already happened. The environment will be positive and enthusiastic.

We will emphasize and pursue excellence in **three controllable areas**. These standards define how we prepare, how we compete, and how we evaluate our performance each game:

**1. Execute with Fundamentals**

We value sound mechanics, attention to detail, and disciplined execution in all phases of the game.

**2. Be Mentally Tough**

We respond to adversity with composure, resilience, and focus—staying present regardless of the situation.

**3. Always Compete & Leave No Doubt| (Attitude, Effort, and Purpose)**

We play with relentless effort, positive body language, and clear intent in everything we do—every pitch, every rep, every moment.

We will emphasize **pitching and defense**, understanding that if we throw strikes and make plays, we always give ourselves a chance to win.

**Defensively**, we will play conservative and disciplined softball by making the routine plays, turning outs into outs, and living by the mindset of “no play, no throw.”

**Offensively**, we will be aggressive under control, applying constant pressure to the opponent’s defense with a green-light mentality built on smart, intentional decisions.

We will dedicate time in practice to the **mental side of the game** by learning how to handle adversity and developing routines that can be trusted under pressure.

**Above all**, we will have fun because fun is winning, working hard, getting better, and truly enjoying the game, whether it’s hitting a double, running the bases, or simply playing catch.

# TOGETHER WE RIDE



## **PLAYER EXPECTATIONS**

Understand and comply with all rules and regulations of Mounds View/Irondale High School and the MSHSL regarding academic progress, substance abuse, and personal conduct. Live the **MVI Pillars** at all times – 24 hours/day, 365 days/year – in school and out of school.

### **THE MVI PILLARS**

#### **1. MINDSET – How we show up**

#### **2. VISION – How we grow**

#### **3. INSPIRE – How we support**

- Have HIGH EXPECTATIONS – Strive to excel; expect and accept nothing less. BE ACCOUNTABLE - NO EXCUSES
- Take PRIDE in yourself, your school, your team, and your community.
- Focus on TEAM goals ahead of your personal goals
  - For any individual to receive recognition, the team must succeed.
  - The goal of being a great player can NEVER be greater than your goal of playing on a great team.
  - Check your personal interests at the door. For 2 hours each day, it's 100% MVI Softball.
  - Definition of Positive Team Chemistry: When each team member clearly understands their role, accepts that role, works hard to excel in that role, and roots for all other team members in their roles. **MUDITA!**
  - What type of teammate do you want? Be that type of teammate yourself.
  - Equal playing time is not a goal.
- Seek a REWARDING (as well as FUN) Experience:
  - Through hard work, competing, and improvement – rewarding experiences occur when you are willing to persevere through adversity.
  - Through simply **enjoying the game itself!**

# **TOGETHER WE RIDE**



- **FOCUS ON WHAT YOU CAN CONTROL** - your preparation and performance; not on results or outcomes outside your control.
  - MVI PILLARS: MINDSET, VISION, INSPIRE
  - Be “not satisfied” versus “disappointed” if things don’t go well. View it as a **“learning opportunity”** not “failure.”
  - You can’t control the talent your teammates have.
  - **No Talent Rule:** It takes no talent to work hard, to be a good teammate, to be coachable, to hustle, to be on time. You always control your attitude, effort and discipline.
  
- Understand the 3 Goals the coaches have for the season. **EACH PLAYER BECOMES:**
  - 1. A BETTER COMPETITOR AND SOFTBALL PLAYER**
  - 2. A BETTER TEAMMATE**
  - 3. A BETTER PERSON**
- Focus on excelling at the three areas of softball emphasis:
  - EXECUTE WITH FUNDAMENTALS
  - BE MENTALLY TOUGH
  - COMPETE AGGRESSIVELY (“WITH A PURPOSE”) – CONSTANT PRESSURE!
- COMMUNICATE!
  - Be honest and **ask questions** if you are unsure, and address issues/concerns with coaches – don’t allow them to fester or talk to others.
  - Accept coaching (coach or player) feedback as **instruction**, not **criticism**.
  
- Substance Abuse
  - In season... NO TOLERANCE!!
  - Out of season will be followed by the MSHSL rules Any player who fails to abide by the expectations will face consequences deemed reasonable by the coaching staff. This may include extra conditioning, sitting games, being removed from competition, and being removed from the team.

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- CHERISH THE OPPORTUNITY!...
  - TO REPRESENT YOUR COMMUNITY BY WEARING A JERSEY
  - TO DEVELOP LIFE SKILLS - for a lifetime.
  - TO DEVELOP RELATIONSHIPS - for a lifetime.
  - TO PLAY THE GREAT GAME OF SOFTBALL & TO ALWAYS COMPETE

If you don't invest very much, then defeat doesn't hurt very much, and winning is not very exciting.

- Don't do anything that is detrimental to you, your family, your team, or your school. Even when you've played the game of your life, it's the feeling of teamwork that you'll remember. You'll forget the plays and the scores, but you'll never forget your teammates.
- "It is what it is. But it will be what you make it." – Pat Summit
- "You can't always be the strongest or most talented or most gifted person in the room, but you can be the most competitive," – Pat Summit

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## **PLAYER ATTENDANCE EXPECTATIONS**

Players are expected to demonstrate commitment to their teammates and their own personal development by attending all practices, games, and team functions throughout the entire softball season.

If a player will be missing a practice, game, or team function, they are expected to communicate with their coach prior to the missed event. Players are required to communicate with their **team level head coach** prior to the missed event.

Any missed practice or games may result in reduced or missed participation in the next game, at the discretion of the coaching staff.

Mounds View / Irondale High School requires that players be in school for all six class periods in order to be eligible to participate in practice or competition that day.

### **Priorities & Accountability**

The following always come before softball:

- Health
- Family
- Academics

That said, we do not make excuses to miss team commitments. Statements such as “I had a lot of homework or a test to prepare for” are not considered valid reasons. Players are expected to manage their time effectively, prioritize responsibilities, and plan ahead.

### **Team Travel Expectations**

When traveling by school bus, players are expected to ride the bus to and from games.

1. As a school-sponsored event, the school and coaching staff are responsible for students during travel.
2. Part of the high school sports experience is the discipline of the team emphasis; of being with your teammates to the games, during the games, and after the games back to school.
3. All school and team code of conduct expectations apply on the bus.

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Valid exceptions do exist. Parents may transport their player to or from a game; however, the coaching staff must be notified ahead (1 day prior) of time.

### **PARENT EXPECTATIONS**

#### **Mindset • Vision • Inspiration**

Parents are an essential part of the MVI Softball community. Together, we are committed to developing strong competitors, great teammates, and confident young women. We ask all parents to partner with us in creating an environment rooted in respect, growth, and accountability.

#### **MINDSET – How We Show Up**

- Understand and support all program expectations for players.
- Reinforce standards of class, respect, and sportsmanship, these apply equally to Parents, Coaches, and Players.
- Model positive behavior at practices, games, and team events.

#### **VISION – How We Grow**

- Engage your daughter in positive, supportive conversations about her experience.
- Encourage resilience, accountability, and growth through both success and adversity.
- Promote self-advocacy by encouraging your daughter to communicate directly with her peers and coaches.
- We value clear, respectful, and solution-focused communication.

#### **INSPIRATION – How We Support**

- Volunteer your time and energy, when possible, to support the softball program and enhance the athlete experience.
- Build relationships with other parents and athletes. This program is strongest when we are connected.
- Trust the coaching staff and the process, even when things are challenging. Reinforce effort, growth, and resilience over results.

#### **GAME AND PRACTICE BOUNDARIES**

- Parents may not talk to athletes during practices or games.
- Coaching from the sidelines is not permitted.

# **TOGETHER WE RIDE**



- Parents may not approach the bench, dugout, or field of play at any time.
- This behavior will not be tolerated.

If these boundaries are violated, the athlete may receive a consequence as outlined by the coaching staff. This is not fair to the athlete, as they are not responsible for a parent's actions. For that reason, a strict agreement to these expectations is essential.

Parents are asked to allow each athlete the opportunity to be fully present with her teammates and coaching staff during all games and practices.

### **COMMUNICATION EXPECTATIONS – 24-HOUR RULE**

To support thoughtful and productive conversations, MVI Softball follows a 24-hour communication rule:

- There will be no parent-coach conversations during or immediately after a practice or game.
- Parents should allow 24 hours after a game or emotional situation before requesting a meeting.
- Before any parent-coach conversation occurs, an athlete-to-coach conversation must have already taken place.
- If a concern remains, parents may request a scheduled, in-person meeting. All meetings will include the **athlete**, the **coaches**, and the **parent** present.
- Meetings must be scheduled in advance. No drop-ins.

Concerns regarding a player's well-being should always be communicated immediately.

All conflicts will be addressed and resolved by the Varsity coaching staff, and all discussions must be constructive, and about your child only.

### **PERSPECTIVE THAT MATTERS**

- Approximately 1 in 300 high school softball players will receive a Division I scholarship.
- Only 3% of high school athletes compete beyond high school. For most athletes, high school is the pinnacle of their athletic journey.
- As parents, it is natural to want to remove adversity from our children's lives. Those moments are often what develop resilience, confidence, and character.
- Research shows the most powerful message a child can hear from a parent is a simple, "I love you!"

# **TOGETHER WE RIDE**



**Prepare your child for the path ahead. Do not prepare the path for the child. You never know when you're making a memory. Make them all count!**

## **WHY WE COACH**

**We coach you because** we care about you.

**We challenge you because** we believe in you.

**We expect your commitment because** we know your family and job will.

**We hold you accountable because** life will hold you accountable.

**We push you out of your comfort zone because** it's the only place where real growth occurs.

**We want you to do it right the first time because** life doesn't always give second chances.

**We ask you to sacrifice for the team because** true success means being part of something far greater than yourself.

**We implore you to give your best because** we don't want you to look back on this season, your career, or life with regrets.

**We discipline you because** we want you to learn there is a right way and a wrong way to do things and treat people.

**We challenge you to compete because** you'll face moments in life where losing is not an option.

**We insist you pay attention to detail because** you'll soon realize the little things are the big things.

**We put you through adversity because** you'll need persistence to overcome far greater challenges in life.

**We make you earn a spot because** you'll take more pride in and ownership of what you work hard for.

**We insist you do the right thing because** we want you to look in the mirror and be proud of who you are and what you stand for.

**We require you to represent yourself with class because** you'll carry your reputation with you for the rest of your life.

**We push you to face your fears because** breaking through them builds the confidence to take on any challenge life throws your way.

**We do everything we do because** we want you to become the best version of yourself and grow into a responsible, respected adult your family, friends, coworkers, community, and the world need you to be.

# **TOGETHER WE RIDE**



This is WHY we coach!

## **COACHING EXPECTATIONS – PHILOSOPHY**

### **MINDSET**

How we think, prepare, and respond:

We model, teach, and demand **Mindset, Vision and Inspiration** every day. Leadership and respect are earned through consistent actions, effort, and accountability. We hold ourselves and our players to high standards and address the little things early to prevent bigger issues later.

We coach with a growth mindset. We emphasize fundamentals, mental toughness, and competing with purpose. We focus on controllables, preparation, and response to adversity. Temporary setbacks are part of growth; effort, attitude, and resilience are non-negotiable.

We simplify whenever possible. Common sense leads to clarity, and clarity allows players to play fast and confident.

### **VISION**

Who/what we are building and where we are going:

We provide clear **Expectations, a Plan, and shared Values** so everyone understands what MVI Softball stands for. Our philosophy and approach are communicated consistently, repeated, reinforced, and lived daily. Everyone in the program shares a common vision.

Our number one priority is developing people. We build championship kids while pursuing championships. We use the game of softball to teach life lessons, self-discipline, accountability, and integrity.

We will run a high school softball program that:

- Our student-athletes take significant pride in.
- Allows every athlete to reach their full potential.
- Is worthy of their commitment, effort, and belief.

### **Our Three Goals for the Season**

For every individual in our program, our goal is that they:

- 1. Become a better competitor and softball player**
- 2. Become a better teammate**
- 3. Become a better person**

# **TOGETHER WE RIDE**



For most athletes, this is the pinnacle of their athletic career. We are committed to creating an environment they take pride in. A program that allows them to reach their full potential through commitment and hard work.

## **INSPIRATION**

*How we lead, connect, and impact lives*

We coach for the benefit of the players and keep their best interests at the forefront. We provide a safe, organized, and prepared environment where players feel valued, supported, and challenged.

We build relationships. We get to know players as people, what motivates them, what they value, and what they are navigating outside the field. We are approachable, honest, and consistent. Players should always know where they stand.

We inspire confidence by focusing on strengths, using positive language, and reinforcing belief. Motivation comes from within the player, our role is to nurture it, protect it, and help it grow.

We welcome newcomers quickly and intentionally, while never negotiating standards. We strive to positively impact every student and teach lessons that they can take with them long after their softball careers end.

## **TEAM FIRST CULTURE**

*Together We Ride*

The team always comes first.

We coach individual strengths within a team framework and help players see the bigger picture. We value chemistry, connection, and selflessness — **Mudita**, the genuine joy found in the success of others. Mudita means celebrating a teammate's growth, opportunity, and achievement as if it were your own. It is choosing encouragement over comparison and support over selfishness.

**Mudita**: The feeling of delight in the happiness and success of others. It is a selfless, positive mental state that is the opposite of jealousy and envy. The practice of Mudita involves taking joy in others' good fortune and cultivating an open, compassionate attitude. It is the art of being a great teammate.

# **TOGETHER WE RIDE**



Team chemistry is a competitive advantage and is often more valuable than individual talent. When players take pride in each other's success, trust grows, effort increases, and the team becomes stronger. We encourage participation in all sports, understanding that competition, transferable skills, shared roles, and diverse team experiences enhance the overall high school journey and help develop more complete athletes and teammates.

### **PRACTICE & COMPETITION STANDARDS**

Practice time belongs to coaches. Game time belongs to players.

- We emphasize repetition of game-like situations.
- We balance fundamentals with competitive pressure.
- We plan, practice, execute, and reflect.
- If we haven't taught it, we don't expect it to be executed.

We do not over-coach during games and never take away aggressiveness. We guide, focus, and trust.

### **COMMUNICATION & LEADERSHIP**

Communication is intentional and respectful.

- "Four at the Door": Eye contact, name, hand, heart.
- We explain the "why," not just the "how."
- We provide instruction, not criticism.
- Feedback is appropriate, honest, and timely.

We lead by example. What we allow, we encourage. What we reward, we reinforce.

We take responsibility when things go wrong and give credit when things go right.

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### **THE MVI STANDARD**

We remember that we are working with the most important person in someone's life.

Every coach should continually reflect on:

1. Why do I coach?
2. Why do I coach the way I do?
3. How does it feel to be coached by me?
4. How do I define success?
5. How do I want to impact players long term?

Players ask their coaches three questions every day:

- Can I trust you?
- Are you committed?
- Do you care about me?

# **TOGETHER WE RIDE**



## **CAPTAIN COMMITMENTS**

As a Team Captain, I agree to:

### 1. Lead by Example

- Be early, prepared, and fully engaged at all practices, games, and team functions
- Compete with consistent effort, focus, and purpose
- Demonstrate composure, toughness, and resilience in all situations

### 2. Uphold Program Values

- Represent MVI Softball with class, commitment, and respect
- Make positive choices on and off the field, including in school and on social media
- Take pride in wearing the uniform and honor what it represents

### 3. Be a Voice and a Bridge

- Communicate respectfully and honestly with coaches and teammates
- Help ensure clear communication throughout the team
- Be approachable, supportive, and willing to listen

### 4. Hold the Standard

- Address effort, attitude, and accountability issues when they arise
- Encourage teammates to do the right thing, even when it is uncomfortable
- Help maintain team discipline and focus

### 5. Support and Include All Teammates

- Promote unity, positivity, and trust within the team
- Support teammates in both success and adversity
- Help new players from all levels feel welcomed and valued

### 6. Lead in Competition

- Remain calm and confident in high-pressure moments
- Encourage and support teammates after mistakes and setbacks
- Help keep the team focused and connected during games

### 7. Serve the Program

- Put others before myself – even when it's hard
- Support team initiatives, community service, and leadership efforts
- Leave the program better than I found it

# **TOGETHER WE RIDE**



### **Captain Acknowledgment**

I understand that being a Team Captain is a daily commitment, and that this role may be reviewed at any time. Failure to uphold these expectations may result in removal of captaincy at the coaches' discretion.

I accept this responsibility and commit to leading MVI Softball with integrity, effort, and pride.

**Captain Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Coach Signatures:** \_\_\_\_\_

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The "title" of Captain is granted. Respect and Leadership can never be granted, they must be earned. Captains must earn the role of leader. This applies to all others as well. There is no limit on the number of leaders on a team; the team needs many to step up and provide significant leadership.

Titles don't lead; actions do!

If you believe you are the sole reason for your success, you can't be a leader. Keep your own talent in perspective. (Dick Vermeil)

# **TOGETHER WE RIDE**



## **VARSITY LETTERING REQUIREMENTS**

To earn a Varsity letter, a student-athlete must meet all the following criteria:

1. Eligibility & Conduct
  - Adhere to all MVI and MSHSL eligibility rules.
  - Meet all expectations set forth for players within the MVI Softball program.
2. Attendance
  - Attend at least 95% of all team functions, including practices, games, and meetings.
3. Varsity Participation (minimum of one required)
  - Appear in at least one-half of Varsity games (12 games)
  - Travel with the Varsity team for at least (15 games)

**Note: Coaches' discretion may be used in determining lettering eligibility.**

### **Special Circumstances**

- Seniors who have participated in the program for ALL FOUR years will receive a Varsity letter.
- Senior Student Managers will receive a Varsity letter provided they are reliable, dependable, and meeting expectations as outlined by the coaching staff.

### **Community Service Requirement 2026 season**

Each player wishing to letter is required to complete 20 hours of community service. The Mounds View Softball Association (MVSA) provides many opportunities, including:

- Assisting youth coaches during practices
- Helping during tournaments
  - Community service hours cannot be signed off by a parent or guardian.

*\*\*If you need help finding an approved contact or opportunity, please see Coach Pearson.*

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## Mindset – Vision – Inspire

### **ZERO-EFFORT WAYS TO BE A GREAT TEAMMATE**

- **Show up on time**, that's early.
- **Give eye contact/listen** to coaches and teammates.
- **Bring positive energy** – a smile, a nod, good body language.
- **Encourage others** – "You got this," "Nice rep," "Keep going."
- **Celebrate teammates' wins** even when you're struggling. **MUDITA**
- **Hustle** on/off the field, between drills.
- **Be coachable** – take feedback without attitude.
- **Control the controllables** – effort, attitude, focus.
- **Carry yourself with pride** in the program and in the community.
- **Do the small things** without being asked.
- **Own your mistakes** and move on quickly.
- **Pick up equipment** – one cone, one ball, anything.
- **Be respectful** to coaches, refs, opponents, and facilities.
- **Stay present** – mind on the moment, don't check out mentally.
- **Be reliable/accountable** – we should never guess which version of you is showing up.
- **Use every rep to get better**, not to get through it.
- **Treat everyone the same**, regardless of grade, school, team, or playing time.
- **Choose WE over ME** in every situation. **TOGETHER WE RIDE!**

# **TOGETHER WE RIDE**



**TOGETHER WE RIDE**