

Marshfield Fastpitch Softball Association
Team Handbook

- I. **History** - Started in 2011, Marshfield Fastpitch (MFP) is a competitive fastpitch softball club. Teams range in age from 7 years old to 18 years old (8u – 18u) and consist of players from central Wisconsin and headquartered in Marshfield, WI. Throughout the year, teams compete in tournaments in Wisconsin, the surrounding states and some nationally. During the winter, practices, lessons, & clinics are held at our indoor facility, called the “Orbital”.
- II. **Mission** - MFP empowers players to realize their full potential in the sport of fastpitch softball while building self-confidence, integrity and lifelong friendships. We promote teamwork and sportsmanship through dedicated coaches, active parents and a committed governing board.
- III. **Goals** (1) Introduce the sport of softball at an early age (2) Have fun and develop lifelong friendships (3) Teamwork, sportsmanship and hard work (4) Skill & personal improvement
- IV. **Board of Directors** - The Board of Directors (BOD) is responsible for the overall direction and purpose of MFP. The board is governed by their by-laws. Meetings are typically held monthly or as needed and open to all paid members. The Board of Directors comprises of seven (7) voting members: President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, and Members-at-Large (3).

Standing Positions/Committees - MFP has various ways parents, players and families can get involved. There are several positions and committees that need volunteers:

Home Tournament	Fundraising/Sponsorships	Scholarships	High School League
Golf Outing	Uniform/Apparel	Camps/Clinics	Coach Development

- V. **Try-outs/Registration/Fees** - Our year is based on a September 1 – August 31 year. “In-season” is June – August. “Off-season” is September – May. Tryouts are held in August for all players interested in the following season. Players are asked to participate in tryouts to help determine proper placement. However, it is understood that players may not be available for tryouts or they come to the program after tryouts. Contact a coach or a BOD member prior to or directly following tryouts to ensure possible placement on a team. Every attempt will be made to place a player on the proper team, but it is not guaranteed. Players must tryout based on their age of September 1 of the preceding year.

Families are asked to make a **non-refundable deposit** which is called a ‘team fee’ and complete the on-line registration form following their ‘official notice of acceptance’ on a team. The deposit reflects a commitment from the family to MFP and helps the club prepare for the upcoming season. Families are encouraged to share their intentions with their coach as soon as possible. MFP may withdraw their ‘official notice of acceptance’, if no communication or no deposit is made after the waiting period. The deposit is due within the waiting period. A 2nd payment is due sometime after the 1st of the year, when all teams have selected their tournaments. This is called a ‘tournament fee’. All checks are made payable to “Marshfield Fastpitch”.

Team Fee - The team fee can vary from year to year based on the club’s need and fundraising efforts. The fee encompasses many things including but not limited to: USA Insurance, Indoor Facility Rent, New Equipment & Supplies, League Fees, Board Insurance, Website Hosting, Credit Card Transaction Fees, Indoor Facility Insurance, Field Rentals, Umpires, Office Supplies, Scholarships, Facility Repairs, etc... Typically, the team fee is estimated at \$150/player.

Tournament Fee - The tournament fee varies from team to team (8u – 18u). The fee depends on the number and cost of tournaments each team plans to attend. The entire team pays for the tournaments in advance, no matter if the player attends the tournament or not. The final actual

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amount of the fee will be determined after teams select their tournaments. ***Typically***, this fee is ***estimated*** at: 8u = \$75/player; 10u = \$125/player; 12u-18u= \$200/player.

Fundraiser Opt-Out Fee - It is expected that families and players help at our home tournament called the “Cow Pie Classic” which is typically held on the 2nd weekend in June or the Golf Outing which is typically held on the 3rd weekend in September. We also understand that availability and schedules don’t always work out. As a result, MFP has a \$150 one-time opt-out fee. If families are unable to assist with tournament or the golf outing, then they might be required to pay the \$150 fundraiser opt-out fee. The \$150 fundraiser opt-out fee is applied with 2nd payment associated with the tournament fee in spring. This fee can still be applied at the conclusion on the year (August).

	<u>Team Fee</u>	<u>Tournament Fee (Estimate)</u>	<u>Total Fees</u>	<u>Opt-Out Fee</u>
8u	\$150	\$75	\$225+	\$150
10u	\$150	\$125	\$275+	\$150
12u-18u	\$150	\$200	\$350+	\$150

Multi-Player Family Discount - The multi-player family discount is a way to provide some financial relief for families who have multi children playing in the program. 2 players - minus \$25 off second payment. 3 players - minus \$50 off second payment. 4 players - minus \$75 off second payment.

Uniform costs vary based on a player’s need. These costs are paid outside MFP to a separate business. Equipment and uniform details are below. Typically, an entire new uniform may cost up to \$250, based on the brand selected.

Fees do not include transportation, lodging, meals and personal equipment (glove, facemask, batting gloves, bat bag, etc...). Families that are unable to make a full payment, may contact the MFP treasurer about payment options and alternatives, no player is refused participation because they are unable to make payment.

- VI. Teams** - The travel team season is based on a September 1 – August 31 year. A player’s age as of September 1st determines their age division. Ideally, travel teams can carry no more than 12 players and no less than 10 players. All attempts are made to include each player, however in certain situations, cuts are made. The goal is to have 1 team at each age division: 8u, 10u, 12u, 14, 16u & 18u. Players might be asked to move up or down to help accommodate the needs of the club. A player’s position and playing time is determined by both the player and the coach. Playing time is determined by skill, effort, attitude and availability. Any player in good standing, at a game, shall play a minimum of 2 innings on defense for each game in pool play. The team may use their best line-up to ensure the greatest chances of success during bracket play. There is a chance, a player may not play in a game during bracket play.
- VII. Practices, clinics, open gyms & indoor facility** - Practices, clinics, open gyms and the indoor facility are available and open to all players registered and in good standing with the club. Teams may start practicing outside when weather permits. Fields are made available to teams in the spring through various location in the City of Marshfield. During the off-season, teams are restricted to practice no more than 4 hours per week (September-April). During the in-season, teams are restricted to practice no more than 6 hours per week (May-August).
- VIII. Tournaments** - Summer tournaments are required and determined by coaches and approved by the BOD. Teams may participate in 5-6 tournaments during the ‘in-season’ and 2-3 in the ‘off-season’. Off-season tournaments are not required. Ideally teams play in 2-4 summer tournaments

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of local distance (<1.5 hours), and 1-2 tournaments of overnight distance (2< hours) per team per year, plus if the team desires, USA State and Nationals.

- IX. Participation & Commitment** - There is no doubt “many hands make light work”. It is no more evident than with a volunteer athletic club who strongly depend on volunteers. Players and families are asked to participate in fundraising efforts to help reduce the costs. Fundraising events may include: Golf Outing, Home Tournament, Sponsorships, etc. It is expected to have all teams and families volunteer at Marshfield home tournament (1st full weekend in June) and at various fundraisers.

Practices and weekend tournaments are required and part of the program. It is understood and agreed upon that a player's school sport and their school academics must come first and they will not be penalized for missing practices during the off-season. During the MFP ‘in-season’ period, if a player misses a practice or game, they might be penalized with limited playing time or suspension. During the MFP ‘in-season’ period, a player is only allowed to miss one (1) tournament. If they miss more than one (1) tournament, they might be penalized with suspension or removal team.

- X. Equipment & Uniforms** - MFP will provide a year-round indoor training facility, fields, umpires, teaching aids & tools, balls, bats, helmets, and other non-personal. Players must purchase their uniforms, cleats, helmets, gloves, and facemasks. A typical uniform package may include: 2-customized jerseys, 2-pair of pants (solid black or solid white), 2-sets of socks (orange & black), and 2-belts (black & orange). Jerseys are only purchased through our vendor. All others items can be purchased at any location desired by the family.

- XI. Merchandise & Apparel** - MFP merchandise and apparel are available to all families through an on-line store. Orders are processed 2 times per year usually in the Fall & Spring. Players and their families have the option to purchase additional products including: sweatshirts, sweatpants, jackets, shirts, hats, headbands, visors, towels, etc.

- XII. Coaches** - MFP relies on great coaches to fulfill their mission and goals. If you are interested coaching, or just want to help out more, please contact the President or your Head Coach. We are more than happy to work with interested adults in developing young athletes. Coaches are volunteers and not paid for their time. All teams depend on parent coaches to help lead their team. They dedicate many hours to the development of the children. As coaches they have a responsibility to develop the fundamental skills of each player. Their main objective is to develop, train, and teach players to maximize their ability as athletes. The success of the player is as much dependent on the coach but as the players’ attitude and effort. Players are given equal opportunity for training and development during practices and games. At tournaments, the team is to play to its strengths and each player has a role that contributes to the success of the team. Coaches will understand, agree and abide to the ‘Coaches’ Pledge’ found later in this document. It is agreed upon and understood, that if coaches do not live up to the standards in the ‘Coaches’ Pledge’ that they can be suspended or banned from coaching for a period of at least one year. After one year, they may petition the BOD for reinstatement.

- XIII. Players** - As a team and as individual athletes, each player will get out of the season what they put into it! Growth and development is a continuing challenge. Each year, players will face stronger, faster, and tougher opponents. Players are measured by how they prepare as individuals and as a team in practice and outside practice. Coaches have high expectations, and place an emphasis on the details of the game. At times, players may be asked to make a change, or approach the game differently. Learning new mechanics may feel awkward or uncomfortable at first, but trust that the coaches’ intention is to make the players better. Allow the coaches to help players become

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stronger. Players should: (1) Arrive early and be prepared; (2) Have a positive attitude; (3) Do their best, providing 100% effort; (4) Put the team's goals, welfare and success before their own; (5) Be receptive to coaching and instruction; (6) Be responsible for their uniform and equipment; (7) Work on improving skills outside practice; (8) Work on physical conditioning when not at practice; (9) Understand that players represent their team and Marshfield Fastpitch.

XIV. Parents - MFP is made up of players, coaches, and parents. Parents need to support their player by allowing them to experience failures and successes on and off the field. MFP has best interest of your child in mind. MFP's intention is to get the best out of the players collectively as a team and help them to grow individually. This is a process, and by the end of the season players should improve tremendously. How much they improve depends upon their openness to instruction, effort, and attitude. All parents play a significant role in the development of all players and team. MFP asks parents to do the following: (1) Coordinate schedules and transportation for your child to attend all practices, games and tournaments on-time; (2) Encourage your child to be receptive to coaching; (3) Keep your child focused on her goals, assist with their skill work, and to be positive at all times so that your player stays positive; (4) Support and assist the coaches before, during and after practices, games and tournaments; (5) Report all injuries to coaches immediately; (6) Do not slander any player, coach, manager, parent and the opposing team; (7) Provide a birth certificate when required.

24 Hour Rule - Any comments or concerns that a parent may have regarding coaching decisions may be discussed with the coaching staff, after a 24-hour time period. In other words, if you have a complaint, it is mandated that you wait 24 hours after the incident (concern) to give you time to think about your concern and to facilitate a calm discussion. If you still want to address the issue with the coaching staff, you may then contact one of the coaches regarding your concern. This rule is designed to help prevent all parties involved from saying something out of moment that may be regretted later. Should a parent have a problem with the coach; please arrange to meet with the coach outside of regular team activities. Coaches should not entertain any discussion before, during or directly following practices or games. Parents must understand that being a member of the team in no way guarantees your child's position or playing time. While we would like to maximize playing time for all players while meeting team objectives, positions and playing time can be affected by: (1) The players ability and skill demonstrated; (2) The players attendance and punctuality; (3) The players level of cooperation and effort; (4) The players attitude and positive participation. Players are encouraged to talk to their coaches if they have a concern about positions or playing time. Teaching players to ask questions is an important part of character building. Players need to learn speak for themselves, and understand that positions and playing time are earned through attitude and effort.

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10 Reminders for Parents of Student-Athletes

- 1. Patience!** Players develop at different rates. Your child will day dream, get distracted, goof around, not pay attention and laugh. This is normal acceptable behavior for children...even in sports. Don't yell from the sideline..."Pay Attention!". Believe it or not, it doesn't help. Coaches will handle them.
- 2. Perspective!** Everyone wants to win. The coaches want to win as much as the players, parents and spectators, if not more, however winning is not more important than life's lessons, teammates or team goals. The success of the team is measured more than by wins & loses, but continued skill improvement and character development.
- 3. Adversity!** Your child will fail and fall down. How they respond is not up to you, but it is up to them. Adversity instills appreciation. Your child is expected to struggle in sports. Life is tough, sports help them prepare for life's challenges.
- 4. Communication!** Your concerns and opinions should be directed toward coaches. Complaining about coaches, players in front of others does not accomplish anything. Concerns can only be resolved through effective communication.
- 5. Experience!** Relish in the moment. This is your child's experience, not yours. Your child will decide on her own successes or failures. Let them win and lose.
- 6. Positivity!** Do not speak negatively of your child's teammates. Stay positive with your child's progress and performance. Our children are awkward goofy little humans. Enjoy them and their victories and laugh at their mistakes.
- 7. Honesty!** A child's interpretation is not always reality. Children tend to exaggerate stories, both with praise and criticism. Talk to coaches before making a judgement.
- 8. Emotion!** Try to reduce your emotion during stressful situations. Take a moment and ask what you would have wanted your parents to do in this situation.
- 9. Accountability!** It is your responsibility to get your children to and from all practices and games on time and ensure your child has the proper sleep, nutrition and the right attitude. If you need help with transportation, please let the coaches know. Notify coaches of all absences for practices and tournaments as soon as possible.
- 10. Sideline Coaching!** Our children put a tremendous amount pressure on themselves. They do not want to fail themselves, or their parents, or their coaches or their teammates. Coaches put a lot of time and effort into teaching them. Do not coach from the sidelines. Let the coaches do the coaching. If you want to coach, you are always welcome at practice.

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Coaches' Promise

- As a coach I promise to put the needs of my players ahead of my desires to win.
- As a coach I promise to be a positive role model to my players by showing fairness and good sportsmanship.
- As a coach I promise to treat each of my players as individuals, keeping in mind that the maturity and ability of each child is different even within the same age group.
- As a coach I promise to do my best to ensure a safe and healthy atmosphere for my players.
- As a coach I promise to be a positive role model for my players by refraining from using drugs and alcohol during practices and games.
- As a coach I promise to know the rules and teach them to my players.
- As a coach I promise to do my best to prepare for practices that teach skills and are fun for my players.
- As a coach I promise to not scream, ridicule, degrade, belittle or any way emotionally or physically intimidate a player.
- As a coach I promise to remember that I am a coach of youth sports and that the game is for the kids...not the adults!
- As a coach I promise to respect the difficulties and the challenges that every umpire experiences and will not argue, repeatedly challenge, yell at, or demonstrate outbursts of anger or any other behavior that serves as a poor role model for kids and makes spectators uncomfortable.
- As a coach I promise to commit to the best of my ability the teaching and reinforcing of character as opportunities are presented to me over the duration of the season.
- As a coach I promise that I understand, agree and will abide to the above COACHES' PLEDGE. If I do not live up to the standards set in this COACHES' PLEDGE, I understand I can be suspended or banned from coaching in MFP for a period of at least one year, at which time I can petition the BOD for reinstatement.

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Agreement Form

Typically, this form is completed via our on-line registration process. This is just a visual aide.

Team/Age Division: _____ Player Name: _____

Player

I have read, understand and agree to the MFP Team Handbook & the type of conduct expected of me. I agree to do my best to uphold these promises.

Player Name (Print)

Player Signature

Date

Parent/Guardian

As the above player's parent/guardian I have read, understand and agree to the MFP Team Handbook and the type of conduct expected of me. I agree to do my best to uphold these promises.

Parent/Guardian Name (Print)

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

Coach

As a coach I have read, understand and agree to the MFP Team Handbook, the Coach Pledge and the type of conduct expected of me. I agree to do my best to uphold these promises.

Coach Name (Print)

Coach Signature

Date