

# SOFTBALL

## Hastings High School Softball Program Handbook

This handbook is to be your guide and help answer many of your questions. We are looking forward to this new season. We hope to be the best we can be which will require hard work, leadership and, most importantly, working together as a team.

All girls interested in playing softball this season will have an equal chance to make a team. Keep in mind that being a member on one of these teams is a privilege and players must recognize the responsibilities, expectations, and behaviors that go along with their membership.

We want to thank the administration, teachers, fellow coaches, officials, players, parents, and everyone who will be involved. We hope to make this season one to remember.

### Philosophy

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The primary goal of the Hastings High School Fastpitch Softball Program is to develop student athletes of character and integrity who will serve as positive members of the school community and the greater society. As a program, our goal is to create an environment where student athletes are able to grow as leaders, competitors and teammates. Our mission is to establish a softball program with a tradition of sustained excellence, both academically and athletically. The Hastings coaching staff will be dedicated to maximizing an athlete's performance and to prepare them to play collegiate athletics, if they so choose.

#### **Program core values:**

- *Respect and Integrity - always acting with poise and class*
- *Enthusiasm - playing with passion and pride*
- *Commitment - dedication to the sport, to our team and to our academics*
- *Hard Working - competing at the highest levels everyday*

#### **We will strive to be:**

- *Focused and determined*
- *Mentally prepared and mentally tough*
- *Perfect in our fundamentals*
- *Relentless in our pursuit of greatness*

To further emphasize these beliefs, the varsity team will be handing out the A.C.E. Award weekly to the member of the team who best exemplifies these qualities:

**Attitude:** Our attitude is defined by our strength of character and our constant pursuit of greatness on the field, in the classroom and in our community.

**Commitment:** Our commitment is evident through our actions; making decisions that reflect our pursuit of excellence in all areas of life.

**Excellence:** Our excellence is defined not by wins and losses, but in the moral fiber of the person we are in pursuit of perfection.

## Tryouts

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Any girl who tries out will be given ***an opportunity*** to be a member on a team at their level of readiness.

- Choosing the members of each team is the responsibility of the coaching staff.
- All coaches will participate in the evaluation of players.
- All players will be provided an equal opportunity to demonstrate their proficiency in a skill in as fair and objective setting as possible.
- Players will be evaluated on their skills in both offensive and defensive situations: base running, fielding, throwing, catching, pitching and hitting (bunting/slapping). Non-physical skills will also be taken into consideration: attitude, teamwork, leadership, coachability, focus and discipline.
- Students will be notified of teams on the final day of tryouts. Each player will meet with a coach, or coaches, individually.

## Teams - Skills, Objectives & Expectations For Each Level

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### 9th Grade:

- The major focus for our 9th grade team will be on participation and creating opportunities for each student/participant to become involved in practice and games. This program is designed to allow for individual differences in growth patterns.
- The priority at this level will be on fundamental skill development with an emphasis on team concepts.
- At this level girls are expected to be able to: Make consistent contact with the ball, sacrifice bunt, catch a fly ball, throw accurately, field a ball cleanly and understand basic strategies.
- The most important thing we would like for our student athletes to gain from playing softball in 9th grade is to have fun and build relationships while playing a team sport.

### B-Squad/JV:

- This level is designed with a balance between participation and competitiveness. The program will allow each participant the opportunity to participate in practice with the objective of improving performance and gaining an opportunity to participate in games.
- The major focus at this level is on developing deeper fundamental and positional skills and to increase knowledge and execution of strategies.
- Emphasis is put on increased competitiveness so that the athlete will be better prepared for the possibility of participating in varsity level athletics.

### Varsity:

- Varsity participation puts greater emphasis on competitiveness. The expectation will be higher, practices more intense, and there will be more emphasis on winning. Playing time isn't guaranteed at this level.
- Emphasis will be put on intermediate and advanced skills and strategies, along with team building and team chemistry.
- At this level girls are expected to be able to master the fundamental skills and have a good understanding of individual and team concepts.
- Participation at the varsity level requires a much larger commitment to the team and the program.

## Teams - Skills, Objectives & Expectations For Each Level (continued)

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### Expectations of all Hastings Softball Players:

- Players will be respectful to all students, players, coaches, umpires, teachers and staff.
- Players will exemplify good behavior. You are a representative of this team and your school. Your behaviors reflect on all those involved.
- Players will be accountable, responsible and committed.
- Players will be cooperative and help each other in and out of softball. They will be a team through and through.

## Team Policies

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### MSHSL Violations:

Students must not use or possess tobacco, alcohol or drugs. They also must not violate the racial/religious/sexual harassment/violence/hazing bylaws of the MSHSL.

**1st Violation:** The student shall lose eligibility for the next two consecutive interscholastic contests or two weeks, 14 calendar days, of a season in which the student is a participant, whichever is greater.

**2nd Violation:** The student shall lose eligibility for the next six consecutive interscholastic contests or six weeks, whichever is greater, in which the student is a participant.

**3rd Violation:** The student shall lose eligibility for the next calendar year.

Any student in violation of the MSHSL bylaws regarding student eligibility (chemical, sexual, religious, or racial harassment) will be ineligible for captaincy for 1 calendar year. An athlete CANNOT be named to an All-Conference team if she misses any part of the season due to suspension for violation of MSHSL bylaws. Furthermore, an athlete will not be allowed to win any of the team awards if she has a MSHSL violation.

### School Attendance:

Players are required to be in attendance at school per Hastings ISD #200 policy unless properly excused. Excused absences include:

- School related activities
- Medical appointments
- One period or less in the school health office
- Funeral or family medical/legal emergencies
- Student safety issues

If the absence is due to any other reason, the student will be declared ineligible for that day's events. Also, students must not have any unexcused absences the day after an event if the day is the next consecutive school day of the same week. If an unexcused absence is earned for the next school day, the student will not participate in the next scheduled game.

### Academics:

MSHSL states that students must be making satisfactory progress towards the school's requirements for graduation. The school where the student is fully enrolled and regularly attends shall determine satisfactory progress.

You are a student first and an athlete second. Your academics are priority. All students must maintain passing marks in all classes. Students who receive a failing mark will be put on a 2 week team probation until grades return to passing. A player on probation will be eligible to participate with the team; however the student must provide progress reports from the teacher of the failing class every 2 days. If the failing mark does not return to passing after the 2 week probationary period, the student will then be ineligible to participate in games.

## Lettering Framework

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Students looking to receive a varsity letter in softball must meet a minimum requirement of 100 points based off a combination of the framework below.

### Competition Points:

- **30 points** – , varsity games played or 8 games of bench assignments (scouting, charting, etc)

- **20 points** – Perfect attendance at practices and games

- **20 points** – All-Conference, All-Section nominations or team award winner

### Non-Competition Points:

- **10 points** – Act of sportsmanship, character, or class witnessed by coaching staff or brought to the attention of coaching staff by an external witness (teacher, staff member, administrator, parent, official, etc). Up to 3 acts/30 points.
- **10 points** – Participation in Team Events (community service, fundraising, etc). Up to 3 events/30 points.
- **10 points** – A.C.E. Award winner. Up to 2 instances/20 points.
- **20 points** – GPA of 3.5 or higher

### Point Deductions:

- **-50 points** – MSHSL violation during the season
- **-10 points** – Act witnessed by coaching staff or brought to the attention of coaching staff by external witness (teacher, staff member, administrator, parent, official, etc) in which an athlete has demonstrated a lack of sportsmanship, character or class.

### 200 points possible

## Practice Policies

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- Practice times may vary day to day – plan accordingly. All practices are mandatory.
- Practices are for players only.
- Practices begin on time – show up prepared. If you have to be late, hustle.
- Unexcused absences from practice can result in loss of playing time. Illness, family emergencies and school related issues are excused. Each practice missed will result in sitting two (2) innings of the next game. This does NOT apply to spring break for the 2020 season.
- If you are unable to attend practice you must tell your coach before noon of that day. This is your responsibility, not another player.
- ALWAYS be prepared for indoor and outdoor practices. Weather is unpredictable.
- EVERYONE takes care of equipment. NO ONE leaves practice until everything is cleaned up and put away.
- Bags should be lined up outside of the dugout – gloves/helmets/bats should be readily available.
- Dugout and gymnasium will be kept clean.
- NO CELL PHONES.
- Bats, helmets and gloves will NEVER be thrown.
- No swearing, complaining or excuses. No negative talk and no bad attitudes. We will not dwell on mistakes or problems. We will work toward getting better and finding solutions.
- Hustle does not mean jog. Hustle means sprint and we sprint EVERYWHERE.



## Game Day Policies

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- Fully dressed coming out of the locker room or bus.
- The bench should be focused. Steal signs from the other team, watch for tendencies and support your teammates.
- Players will not argue with coaches, teammates or umpires. Bad sportsmanship will not be tolerated. Win and lose with class.



## Bus Policies

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- Players are required to ride the bus to and from all games unless there are extenuating circumstances.
- Bus is to remain clean. All garbage must be picked-up and disposed of.
- Always respect the bus rules and bus driver. Thank them after each trip.



## Coaches Contact Information

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- Varsity Head Coach - Jenn Thesing - [hastingsfastpitch@gmail.com](mailto:hastingsfastpitch@gmail.com) - 507-459-6233
- Varsity Assistant Coach - Chad Feikema
- JV Head Coach - Emily Chandler
- 9th/B Head Coach - Kristina Massey
- General Assistant - Katie Donohue

# **Hastings High School - Raiders**

## **Important Dates**

- March 9 – Season begins
- March 16 - 20 – Spring Break
- March 23 - 24 – Tryouts
- March 26 – Varsity/JV Scrimmage
- March 31 – First Games
- May 2 – Varsity Tournament (Shakopee)
- May 9 – JV Tournament (SSP)
- May 19 – Varsity Sections begin
- June 4 - 5 – Varsity State Tournament