

Homer Mariner Softball -2012

www.marinerssoftball.net

Welcome to the 2011 edition of Mariner Softball.

It is now the twelfth year of Mariner Softball. In that time we have had 11 trips to the State Tournament, one first place finish, two second place finishes, 3 academic awards and last year were undefeated in the Northern Lights conference. We have been so successful because of the dedication and drive of the players to control what they can control, work on process over outcomes and support each other unselfishly. I look for that again this year and will count it a success if we are able to continue that focus.

This year we will continue to work under the “Deep Practice” concept that was introduced by a local writer, Dan Coyle. Basically, we are going to do a lot of slow fundamental work to build up the nerve pathways so our muscle memory is strong, consistent and correct. We are going to expect to fail, but to continually fail better in our quest for perfection.

Softball is a very demanding sport that requires you to spend most of your time being still and then to suddenly explode in an aggressive mode with unconscious but well executed skills. In what other sport are you a success when you fail 60% of the time? To reach this physical readiness Mary Jo has planned a diverse but thorough conditioning program.

Finances-

Sorry to bring this up so early but it is a reality for our program. We receive a small subsidy from the school and must raise about \$15,000 a year for the program. Partly this comes from the up-front player fee of \$150 at the beginning of the season but the rest comes from our other fundraisers such as coffee sales, fuel oil raffles, Parking lot sweeps, car washes, car raffles, or whatever crazy schemes we can come up with. There may also be a contribution required when we hit the road to help cover the cost of housing and food. That is dependent on how well we have done with our team fundraising but generally each player can expect to pay a total of about \$400 in direct expenses to the program if you count in food, hotels, etc. Families with more than one player on the team will get a reduction for additional players. However, no one will be turned away for financial reasons, though

we will expect an in-kind donation of labor and time during fund raising. Please talk to me or Janet McNary privately if this is a concern or problem for you.

EXPECTATIONS AND PHILOSOPHY

We expect players to make a commitment of time and energy through the whole season. We are also expecting an intensity and focus in your softball. This means arriving at practice early, and being prepared to begin at the designated time. A willingness to improve your skills with a determined effort at practices is essential. I expect you to be 1% better today than you were in the practice the day before. We expect you to come to practice with a positive attitude, and treat everyone involved with your practice with respect and cordiality. There will be an emphasis on personal accountability. Quality of practice time will be a main determinant of playing time. Remember that ‘Practice makes Permanent’. You are welcome to talk with the coaches at any time if there is a problem. We will also have a ‘Team Time’ both before and after practice for any concerns or thoughts that you have and I intend to meet privately with every player on Varsity every week. We will also continue the “Soul Sisters” program this year and again plan on weekly individual meetings with the coaches.

The underlying philosophy is that this is your team and your season. As coaches we can assist you with practices, drills and challenges to your abilities. Unfortunately, because our time is so limited for practice you will have to do some personal work on your own time if you want to reach your potential. It is my expectation that our practices will be tougher than games so that when you get into game situations, you are comfortable, knowing you’ve been there already. Our goal is to build your personal and team confidence in dealing with tough situations. We can do that partly by creating frustrating (to a point) and demanding scenarios. Part of your growth in sports is to learn how to manage yourself, work with teammates and adapt to competitive situations without losing focus.

We will work together to define our Team Culture and what it means to be a part of the Mariner Softball Team. As a step in this direction you will all be given notebooks to chart your own progress and goals, we will have Practice Jerseys to be worn at all practices and we will develop two or three words that encapsulate who we are as a team. Excellence is a lifestyle that transcends just playing softball. We will expect you to treat everyone –

coaches, teammates, opposing players and officials – with courtesy and respect. We will be representing Homer High and the community of Homer in our travels and in our own community and assume nothing less from you. To be even clearer about this – there will not be any tolerance for undermining your own teammates or disrespecting opponents or officials or engaging in illegal behavior while a member of the team. The game of softball has been played since the 1870s and will be played long after all of us are gone. We are here to honor the game, the sport and the competition while we are a part of the worldwide community.

Information Dissemination

There are several ways that information will be passed out to the team. It is your responsibility to be aware of what is happening. The website will always be a source of TRUTH. (well, almost always). Announcements will be placed on the main page as much ahead of time as I can. There will be a collection of all emails sent to both parents and players so you can always review those. I will use texting to pass critical messages out to those with cell phones and if you do not have a cell phone that will accept text then glom on like a barnacle to a teammate that does who will keep you informed. You can always text me with questions, though during the day I may not get to them right away. You can email me at either of my emails, using the office during the day as I do not look at home email until after practice. I will also send out a large number of emails during the season to keep you up with the latest news. We also have a Facebook presence at Homer Mariner Softball and a twitter account at marinerssoftball.

Positive Coaching

We believe stongly in the concepts of positive coaching that are set forth by the Positive Coaching Alliance. Some of their philosophy papers have been included on the website. Others can be found on line at www.positivecoach.org. There are two parts to this philosophy. The first is the concept of ROOTS – meaning we will all have respect for Rules, Officials, Opponents, Teammates and Self. The other concept is the ELM philosophy or the Tree of Mastery. This stresses that true learning comes through Effort, Learning and Mistakes. There is no way that you can learn well without making mistakes, so do not be afraid to push yourself into

uncharted waters. We expect to make mistakes in coaching you and expect that you will forgive us. If you have confusion over drills, coaching decisions, playing rules- please come talk to us. During games mistakes will happen and part of our growth is to not let them affect us. We have a sign for brushing off mistakes. Of course, part of learning is not making the same mistake over and over....

Drugs and Alcohol

We follow the same rules as all other high school athletic programs. Not only are you not to use drugs or alcohol during the season, by KPBSD Policy, if you are at a party where drugs or alcohol are present you will be presumed guilty. If I am notified by either the high school administration or through some other official source such as the police blotter you **WILL** be removed from the team without any appeal process. If I hear unofficially that there is a concern about drugs or alcohol I will communicate with you **AND** your parents. In addition to health concerns, it is not fair to your teammates to work all season and then suddenly lose a colleague. You will also be asked to be a responsible peer to your teammates and help them avoid some of the temptations that road trips bring. This commitment will begin on February 28th, the first day of practice and I will be asking for your word-of-honor when you sign the pledge. **If this is not a commitment that you can make please talk to us about it now.**

The following is a quote from KPSAA Guidebook
*“Basic Training. In order to promote a positive co-curricular environment, basic training rules are established that require student-athletes to abide by school and district policies as well as civil laws of the community. Training rules are in effect **24 hours a day** and will be enforced from the first day of the season as set by the ASAA Calendar. A co-curricular participant will be suspended from participation and practice for that activity season or 30 consecutive days, whichever is longer (except as provided in paragraph 2) for items a, b & c:*
a. Alcohol –under the influence, in possession, in proximity
b. Illegal drugs or paraphernalia-influence, possession, delivery and proximity
c. Misuse and/or abuse of prescribed drugs or over-the-counter substances.

- d. *Tobacco use or possession in any form will result in a two-week suspension from competitive participation, not practice. A second offense will cause dismissal from participation and practice from that activity for the remainder of the season.*

PROXIMITY is defined as being in the same vehicle, house, location, party etc. where you know (or could assume) alcohol/drugs are in illegal possession by minors or you willingly remain in a location where you are aware alcohol/drugs are being illegally consumed.”

You must also watch the TAD video on Drugs and alcohol on the ASAA website, if you have not already done that for another sport. The first person to correctly identify the only Mariner in the video will win \$10.

LETTER Qualifications for Varsity (any one)

1. Playing in at least 30% of the innings in the season and being in good standing at the end of the season.
2. Being a Senior and having no unexcused absences from practice.
3. Being on the Varsity all season and playing at State.
4. Starting any game at State Tournament
5. Being All-Region, Player of the Game at State or on the State Tournament Team.

PRACTICES

We will move outdoors as soon as weather and field conditions permit. Practice times may be extended when we go outside.

- No** jewelry at practice or games-safety issue
- Hair must be tied back and out of your face
- Comfortable clothes that can get dirty (no jeans)
- Water bottle and appropriate snacks.
- Sweats, appropriate jacket for outdoor practice

Attendance at practice is mandatory. If you are going to miss practice due to an unavoidable conflict, you must contact one of the coaches

personally, and in advance. At the minimum you may leave a voice or text message on our cell phones. Passing on information through other players is not adequate. I understand that you have a lot of pressures on you for time, studying, musicals, tests, etc. Part of maturity and getting ready for college is to learn good time management and to accept responsibility for your decisions. Let us know what you are doing. Those in 'Into The Woods' have already made a commitment to the musical and I expect you to honor that commitment but practice with us every chance you can.

Two *unexcused* absences will make you ineligible to play in the next game – consistent unexcused absences will result in dismissal from the team after a team discussion.

Disciplinary problems will be dealt with on an individual basis and may involve removal from the team if the coaches decide, after discussion with the individual and with the team, that the individual is negatively affecting the cohesiveness of the team.

Grades

There are three grade checks during the season. The first occurs right around spring break and is an indicator of where you stand. You can still practice. The last grade check is just before competition starts and if you are not eligible at that time there is very little chance that you will be able to compete for the rest of the season. The last grade check could determine your eligibility for the State Tournament. Please let us know if there are eligibility concerns so we can help you remain on the team. One of the life-lessons of sport is being able to time-manage. This includes musicals, practices, studying, etc and we will gladly help you with some of these pressures. (I will not do your math tests for you though, and you do not want me to do your history exam....)

Team Rules

1. Support the Team Culture in Everything you do
2. Be considerate and kind
3. Follow League and KPBSD Rules
- 4. Give Everything you have on the field**
5. Enjoy playing ball

Unwritten Rules

The written rules are usually pretty clear but in any organization there are often a large collection of unwritten rules no one really knows about until they are broken. This is a partial list, but like many unwritten rules, we may discover more as the season goes along. I may even make them up as the season goes on but they will be based on the common thread of respect, attitude and support mentioned above. You may even have unwritten rules for the coaches. Share them with us.

1. Be five minutes early, mentally ready and physically loose
2. Say “Hello” – Attitude is a choice
3. Hustle everywhere-Run on and off the field at games.
4. Lend a hand in practice, set up and gear storage
5. Keep a ball in your glove and your glove in shape
6. Always have your uniform shirt tucked in.
7. During a game always stand and focus on the game. The dugout bench is only for storing equipment.
8. If you are not playing, cheer for those that are and help perform team functions.
9. Always tell the coaches and your teammates the truth
10. If you disagree with something, talk to the coaches, don’t snivel
11. If you make other people on the team unhappy you will be asked to leave
12. Treat equipment with respect
13. Always run when arriving late
14. Team rules about Ipods and Cell phones will be decided by the team. Especially this year with mandated bus travel
15. Non softball dramas do not have a place on the practice or game field.
16. Clean the dugout and locker rooms
17. Self impose a curfew on nights before games.
18. Support your body with quality nutrition
19. ?????

I am looking forward to a strong and challenging season. Please contact us if there is anything you have concerns or questions about. Contact information on the website. The website is the ultimate source of truth.

Bill Bell- 235-7739, 399-1042 –texting is ok, [wmbell51 at gmail.com](mailto:wmbell51@gmail.com) at night, [billbell at homermedical.org](http://billbell@homermedical.org) during the day, William Bell – Facebook

Mary Jo Campbell, 299-8505, [mjcmb1 at aol.com](mailto:mjcmb1@aol.com)

Suzie Parrish, Jen Liston, and a host of other dedicated supporters.
(including your parents)