



BASEBALL HANDBOOK

2023-2024 Season

All Teams

“Follow the Stampede”

The A-Z guide of policies, procedures, and expectations for all players and parents of the Midland Titans Select Baseball team.

Dear Players and Parents,

Congratulations and welcome to the 2023-2024 Midland Titans select baseball Program! We are extremely excited to be continuing our program this year with 14u, 13u, 11u, 10u, 09u, and our Junior Titans (coach pitch) 08u and 07u.

As a program, the Midland Titans will incorporate a development towards sports *and* society. The student-athletes we develop will carry discipline, dedicate to hard work, integrity, and team mentalities beyond just winning baseball games. Our goal is to provide players a life-long positive experience with others and bridge them to the next stage within their lives.

We have high standards and while having fun, we are firm with our kids to apply their own high standards. Our coaching staff is fair as no single player is above the program. Every individual on the team has potential. We do not favor talent, but rather hard work. We encourage: academics, positive-character and conditioning. We promote a team first philosophy within our training tactics, focusing on the fundamentals of the sport before the highly attractive play. We ask not for them to be great at everything, we only ask that they apply their very best as the rest tends to take care of itself. To that end, this program will develop players into amateur and over time, professional athletes and grown men and women into our society.

In order to ensure both on and off the field success to the program, please read, understand, and adhere to the following information. If you have any questions or concerns throughout the year, please contact us at your earliest convenience. It is our sincerest gratification you all have a positive and memorable experience.

Nick Brown

Owner – Midland Titans Baseball, LLC.

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Alcohol & Drugs

The Midland Titans and tournament governing bodies policy on alcohol, tobacco and drug use will be followed.

In any case a child is under medication, it is important coaches are aware in order to assist in any potential matter while on and/or off the field of play during the season. Medications such as pain killer, muscle relaxers, inhalers and/or antibiotics may generate additional fatigue which players tend to overcompensate and create a separate injury.

Fundraising Events, Sponsorships and Donations

All of your time and dedication is greatly appreciated. To that end, we encourage the families to participate and organize as many fundraising events as possible within their teams to offset payment of membership fees, travel and tournament costs.

Corporate player donations and sponsorships are available. Please check the Midland Titans website or request information.

Area Scouts

Coach Nick Brown is a certified Area Scout. Midland Titans will incorporate the scouting network with the Program. This will include online player profiles and social media. General mechanics, kinetics, areas of improvement, maintaining statistics and eventual recruiting tool. Throughout the process, players may be exposed to and receive direct feedback from other scouts, college coaches and former Major League Baseball players to assess and/or contribute to the platform for growth of the player.

Coaching Staff

All Titans coaches are unique and have their own style that will allow players to gain as much knowledge and perspective as possible. All coaches should be respected equally for the time and commitment they provide the players and the program. All coaches are here to help you and our doors are always open.

Throughout the season, coaches may involve hired private instructors. It is important to have an open mind towards philosophies.

Contacting the Coach

In contacting the coach with an issue or concern, please adhere to the following procedures:

- 1) The **player** must contact Head Coach to explain and discuss the issue.
- 2) If the challenge is not resolved, the parent(s) may contact Nick Brown

By respecting and following this process, concerns have a much greater chance of being resolved amicably. Challenges will likely worsen if other solutions are first attempted. In some cases, the coach may not even be aware a problem exists. Please give coaches the opportunity to address your concern.

Playing time issues are the ultimate decision of the Team Head Coach and are based upon the interests of the entire program, not the individual player. No individual player, no matter the talent level, is above the program. Please be aware that coaches routinely forecast player development and analyze information for the best interest of the program – its players.

Players are encouraged to talk to coaches about any concerns right away. *Our door is always open for them.* To encourage open dialogue and communication with parents, Coaches will be available **after each practice** to discuss issues of playing time, areas for player improvement and/or other relevant issues. Any parent(s) who would like to discuss any concerns related to playing time are



invited to stop by and meet with Head Coach, and their son, in a private and candid conversation (as long as the player has first made contact with the coach).

Equipment

All equipment should be treated with care and respect. Equipment may be a program expense or individual expense, and subject to routine inspection. Program equipment specifically are inventoried and assessed to ensure our players have the best tools needed to succeed. It is inappropriate to mistreat any equipment, including throwing bats, helmets, etc. It is a pleasure to be on the field with the equipment, please honor them. Any individuals who disobey these rules will be asked to sit in the dugout or leave a game or practice immediately.

Game Days (Also See “Transportation” and “Season Length”)

Generally, two tournament Pool Play games will be on Saturdays and each tournament generally guarantees three (3) games of play. Depending on how far we play into the tournament (how many games we win) we may play as many as ten games over a weekend. As we win games, we accumulate points that can be accessed to qualify us for future exclusive tournaments.

Each player/parent will agree to play in a tournament generally one month prior to. All advanced membership fees do not include tournament fees which will be pay-to-play or team fundraised. Individuals will not be prorated based on quantity of games or time played. All payments and eligibility forms must be made in advance to be eligible to play.

Attendance: Players are expected to be appropriately dressed (see “Uniform”) and beginning their stretching circle one hour before game time, unless otherwise noted. *This is a deadline time, and can be done earlier.*

Players should be ready to enter the game at any time, which includes staying stretched and warm. This also means keeping mentally aware of what is happening in the game by anticipating what may happen, especially role players such as relief pitchers, pinch hitters/runners, etc.

Players will remain in the dugout and should avoid socializing with friends or family during the game. This includes accepting food or drinks during the game. You may ask a coach or coach designated individual to transfer any items to the players. All players are currently involved in the game as they have duties and assignments, such as: charting pitches, warming up outfielders, retrieving foul balls, viewing opponent’s signs, etc. *There are no bench players; rather everyone plays specific roles for the benefit of the team.* Therefore, any uncharacteristic approach to the dugout is a distraction.

Playing Time: Other than inning/pitch counts for pitchers and specific tournament rules, there are no playing time limitations within select-travel baseball. Coaches do their best to offer appropriate playing time. However, the program will focus on team depth charts for specific position(s) that create a continuous familiarity and players to advance their comprehension. Each team and player situation may be different. Keep in mind, there may be cases when a player does not enter a game.

All players will be supportive of their teammates. *We all will carry a positive mantra.*

Hard-90’s

Players throughout the program are expected to display “Hard-90’s” in every game. A Hard-90 is simply running to each base at a sprinting pace. This includes AT ALL TIMES. If you reach base on balls or line out and are even one step out of the batters box, you are required to run your “hard-90.” *Not doing so is an easy way to reduce your playing role and get replaced in a game.*



Holidays

Most larger tournaments do align into holidays. If we choose to avoid a tournament in favor of a holiday, the break is an appropriate time to get caught up with other priorities and relax! A practice date will likely not be scheduled.

Injuries

Regardless if the injury occurred during a baseball game, practice, or is not baseball related, players should report all injuries to Coach immediately. This is important to ensure the player can receive the proper injury diagnosis and treatment for a healthy recovery. Mid-season injuries will not be credited against the membership costs. The program will encourage rest, physical therapy and recovery. Injured players are encouraged to attend practices and games in the capacity they are cleared to participate. It is important to retain mental progression and team building during these times.

As a program, we are deeply concerned in the growing presence of arm/elbow injuries, most notably "Tommy-John." Our opinion is the growing presence of year-round baseball that contributes to this. With that in mind, we may take weeks at a time off from throwing or baseball activities all together on an individual case by case basis. We provide an age-appropriate arm care routine and adjust specifically for your child.

In-Season Practice

Players are expected to attend practice on a consistent basis. Like academic classes and areas of employment, three unexcused absences may occur before being cut from the team. **When an unexcused absence occurs, the following rules apply:** For designated starting players, a missing practice results in a non-start for that player on the next game day. For specific role players, missing a practice may result in no playing time for the next available game day.

Practices are "open" to parents, providing they remain in the stands and avoid involvement with players and/or coaches. Players will be dismissed as a team after the field is cleaned up.

Generally, we will practice multiple times leading up to a tournament weekend and take a break thereafter. We may have multiple age groups practice together, meanwhile also focus on smaller groups.

Excused Absences: Players should notify Coach in advance if they need to miss any part of practice. Players must notify the Coach as soon as possible and have a deadline of the day before *to qualify for an excused absence.* Text messaging is appropriate.

As each player is a student first athlete, we will exercise caution in allowing players to miss practice for academic reasons.

Leagues:

Rules and regulations are defined and may vary depending on the league and sub-region of the league. For example, Midland Titans may participate in multiple leagues such as USSSA, NCS, Perfect Game, etc. Rosters and rules may vary. For clarification, please contact your Team Head Coach regarding decisions based on the league event.

Parents: Please try to avoid scheduling doctor/dentist appointments, driving lessons, etc. during practice time. If it is impossible to avoid such scheduling conflicts, please contact Coach so arrangements can be discussed. If you must schedule such an appointment, Batting Practice days are a more flexible day as those practices are generally less comprehensive than full squad workouts.



Outside Teams and Sports

As per participating league recommendations, a member of a select travel baseball team may compete for an outside team in the sport of baseball during the official season.

Multiple sport athletes are encouraged. To that end, we will strategically have a lower profile or development focus during the fall and winter. During the Spring, Little League is also recommended for ages twelve (12) and under to take priority during the week, however the weekends, tournaments for Midland Titans should take priority. Strategically, we will avoid tournaments and practices during All-Stars.

It is the stance of the program that ages thirteen and over (13-18u) should not be participating in MJBA/Pony/Senior League as this is not as a competitive environment during a critical time within the baseball season.

Parents

Attendance and demonstrating good sportsmanship at our games and functions is greatly appreciated. Our *positive mantra* is highly influenced by our parents in the sport parks and even more dramatically at home. Please remember to keep comments positive, whether they are to your own child, another player or parent, a coach, an umpire, or any other opposing player, parent, or coach. The Midland Titans should be always looked to as the class of the town or league.

Philosophy

Baseball is about being part of a team, a unit greater than any individual, and accepting all the challenges, successes, and failures that come with that responsibility. It is not about winning and losing; rather, baseball is about incorporating the lessons learned through victory and defeat into our daily lives. Baseball is a game that allows us to learn about ourselves, our teammates and ultimately, life.

We feel very committed to this philosophy as our job consists of a focused responsibility to develop student-athletes towards the next level. Winning tournaments is our goal each year. However, winning baseball games does not measure our athlete's development.

Playbook (Plays and Signs)

All players will receive a playbook. Players are expected to be familiar with these plays and signs before we approach them in practice and/or games. The playbook will evolve as we advance within the program.

Player Appearance

Players should be well-groomed and maintain a neat and orderly appearance. Uniforms and equipment should also be well-maintained. *When you look good, you feel good, and when you feel good you play great.* Players are encouraged to style their personal belongings (helmet, pants, etc.) in different forms such as tapered pants. Eye black may also be worn. Individual style is important in developing character. However, there are requirements (Please see "Uniform"). Remember, you are always representing Midland Titans baseball!

Player Conduct

Players should play the game with honor and class when they step onto the baseball field. All coaches, players, fans, umpires, and other personnel should be respected. The reputation of



Midland/Odessa and the State of Texas and our program is very important. It only takes a single moment to negate what it has taken years to build.

As per league rules, “any individual who is ejected for any reason shall be disqualified from participating in the remainder of the game and will be ineligible for the team’s next contest. After the suspension from play, the individual may only return after certification by the league.”

The use of profanity, throwing equipment, arguing or questioning an umpire and/or any other negative behavior is strictly prohibited by both player and parent. The privilege of being on the field may be dismissed at the player’s expense.

Playing Time

The concept of “equal playing time” does not exist at this level. However, positions will continuously be earned, and starting line-ups may change from game to game or week to week. A player’s positive attitude and work ethic will also contribute to opportunities.

As the season progresses, the coaches utilize players who fit well within specific situations. Players will be asked to fulfill roles, such as: starters, pinch hitting/running, playing defense late in the game, or charting the opponent.

It is the stance of the program that each player will be assigned to their 12th grade graduating year class team. Players may also be asked to play up into the higher age group in a smaller role or option down into their travel ball age to help develop their skill in a prime position. There are no bench players. Every role is an important one and is crucial to the overall success of the team.

Private Coaches

Working out with a private coach is a great idea. It is virtually impossible for players to reach their full potential in the few hours we have any given day.

Sundays

Depending on the tournament entered, tournament regulations state that it is likely to engage in multiple games on a Sunday. Please keep this in mind as we may travel and be required to play games on Sundays.

Stampede Stickers / Batting Helmet

As Titans, it is important to understand the story of our name. The term, “titan” is referenced to as a powerful mythical creature directly descendants of the almighty. The elephant stands out amongst historically powerful creatures. The action of a *stampede* makes these Elephants unique. As a herd, certain elephants may be cast out from the group when they are not contributing positively to the herd. Within the herd, elephants most always work together and continue to systematically run together in a single file line during a stampede. It is this concept of a system of working together that allows the group in itself to succeed beyond the ability of one.

What we learn from this definition is that not one, nor a couple of players determine our success. Instead, the entire team contributes. *We are only as strong as each player standing beside us. We must work together as a team all the while be aggressive, or “stampede”, towards our goals.*

To continue efforts of the team first philosophy, the program will utilize the “stampede sticker.” Stampede Stickers will be evaluated and distributed on a routine basis within the assigned team. If that player is not present during distribution, he forfeits his stickers towards a live competition event. *Practice is important as we implement the things we need to work on from the previous games.*



Stampede Stickers are to be placed on your own individual batting helmet which can be bought within the Uniform Package. The same equipment rules apply to these batting helmets (Please see "Equipment"). This includes that the helmet becomes the responsibility of the player.

Team Concept

Players will be part of the Midland Titan baseball family throughout their lives. Your actions should be for the benefit of the team. Please always demonstrate respect and support of your teammates. The quickest way to begin losing is to create unnecessary dissention on or off the field. Further, what happens on the field should stay on the field. Please respect the privacy and confidentiality of your teammates, parents and coaching staff. We are a family and should support each other through both good and difficult times.

Team Party

Periodically, all players from the program will be honored and recognized for their efforts and achievements. Invitations will be sent out in advance with more details and information about venues to be determined. All players, parents, relatives, and friends are encouraged to participate in the annual celebration.

Teams are encouraged to maintain their own more periodic parties or team building events. This is an important event for the players.

Team Website and Social Media

See MidlandTitans.com for all related items to the program. The website is free, but will require registration to access updates, live stats, etc. Players and parents may register and benefit from the network. Some items on the website will include: our schedule; directions to our away games, view upcoming practice plans, electronic playbook and testing, as well as fundraising information. Players and parents may also communicate with one another, including coaches in addition to viewing our playbook in animation form. This website is not mandatory, however if you have access to the internet, I strongly encourage you to register as it will give you a greater chance at success this season and in the future.

We also utilize Facebook, LinkedIn, GameChanger and our participating League's platforms.

Transportation

It is expected that all parents arrange their own travel. To that end, parents may work together to carpool, etc. Remember the concept of the program is a positive experience together amongst our families.

Uniforms

Players must always wear appropriate assigned baseball pants, hat and belt always with shirts to be tucked in, hat worn forward, and no jewelry. Please take honor in wearing your uniform. *Players may also be required to wear a specific uniform/color during specific days.* Remember, you must be properly dressed to be "present" at any game or practice.



Program Fees

Membership: Covers all team training, facility access, program specific clinics and general equipment needs for the team assigned through the six-month season. Membership fees are to be paid in advance of the season. Seasons are August 1st – January 31st and February 1st – July 31st.

- STANDARD PLAYER MEMBERSHIP	\$1,000
- SIBLING PLAYER MEMBERSHIP	\$300
- HEAD COACH PLAYER MEMBERSHIP	\$450
- ASSISTANT COACH PLAYER MEMBERSHIP	\$600

\$600 Startup Uniform Fees are separate from Membership Fees.

Please see the cost breakdown for the 2023-2024 Uniform Selections:

- TEAM BAG (7-12U ROLLING, 13-18U BACKPACK)	\$140
- PRACTICE JERSEYS (TWO)	\$25 (EACH)
- GAME JERSEY (MIDLAND GRAY)	\$50
- GAME JERSEY (PINSTRIPE)	\$50
- GAME JERSEY (ORANGE UNDER ARMOUR)	\$60
- GAME PANTS (MIDLAND GRAY)	\$50
- GAME PANTS (PINSTRIPE)	\$50
- TEAM GAME HAT (7-8U FLEXFIT 9-18U FITTED)	\$40
- TEAM HELMET	\$60
- TEAM HOODIE	\$50

**Prices are package pricing for new players. Individual garment pricing available on team store.*

***Socks and belts are not provided. May wear team designated colors.*

