

We are MtB. We are … pursuing excellence…on the field…off the field…everywhere. I Cor. 10:31.

**ABOUT US:**

The Montgomery County Mustangs formed in 2002 to address the desire of home-schooled young
men in the Montgomery County and surrounding areas to participate in high school and junior high level competitive baseball. In 2005 the Mustangs incorporated as non-profit 501(c)(3) association.

Guided by a volunteer Board of Directors, the Mustangs is both an athletic organization and a ministry to homeschool families. To reflect this "More than Baseball" vision, the Mustangs were renamed the "MtB Mustangs" in 2007. The program is divided into two divisions -- high school and junior high. The priority for the high school division is to field a single competitive varsity squad. Should enough players (and coaching staff) be available, a junior varsity squad consisting of younger high school players will be formed.

The junior high team will consist of a competitive team and may also have a "farm team" (or "scrimmage squad") of players within the eligibility guidelines (see "Eligibility" section under Policies and Procedures). In the event of an opening on the junior high squad, the coach may elect to "call up" a player from the farm team to suit up and fill the opening as needed.

All teams will be chosen at the sole discretion of the coaches based on tryouts and personal knowledge of players' abilities. Tryouts are held during the winter off-season, usually during the month of November.

**Our Purpose**

The MtB Mustangs exist to provide home-schooled young men with the benefits of participation in organized baseball in a setting that honors the God who created them. We desire to provide our players with excellent instruction in the skills required for baseball, and to also with opportunities to use those skills at appropriate competitive levels, up to and including the highest level of secondary school competition. We are committed to modeling and teaching Christian character traits, including self-discipline, self-respect, respect for authority and good sportsmanship.

This MtB Mustangs are organized as a Not-for-Profit Texas organization and operated exclusively for exempt purposes within the meaning of Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 as amended, including the following purposes:

A. Honoring Jesus Christ through the organization, promotion, Christian instruction and physical training of home-schooled boys for participation in baseball;

B. Providing educational services;

C. Engaging in any lawful business or activities related thereto: and to engage in any lawful act or activity for which associations may be organized under the Texas Non-Profit Organization Act;

D. Carrying out any other charitable, religious, educational, or scientific purposes within the meaning of Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended (the "Code").

**Statement of Faith**

1. There is only one living and true God. He is one Being who eternally exists in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

2. The Bible is the inspired and inerrant word of God.

3. Jesus Christ is the Son of God, the second person of the Trinity. Fully God and fully man, by His death on the cross and physical resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ provided a means for us to be reconciled to God and receive the gift of eternal life.

4. All of us are affected by sin and are in need of God's forgiveness. The good news is that each individual is forgiven of his or her sins upon trusting alone in Jesus Christ's finished work on the cross for salvation. Salvation is by God's grace, through faith, apart from good works.

**Policies and Procedures**

The following policies and procedures are promulgated to enable the MtB Mustangs to achieve our goal of representing ourselves in a Christ-like manner. Please note that policies and procedures may be modified and/or added to at any time at the sole discretion of the board of directors.
 **Eligibility**

The MtB Mustangs are open to junior high and high school level players. All home-schooled young men who are 18 years of age or under on September 1st of the academic year are eligible and invited to try out for one of our teams that plays in the spring of the same academic year. In addition:

* Players who are 19 or older on September 1st of the academic year are ineligible to play on the Varsity squad in the spring of that academic year
* Players who are 15 or older on September 1st of the academic year are ineligible to play on the junior high team in the spring of that academic year.
* No player who is under the age of 11 or older than 15 as of September 1st of the academic year is allowed to try out or play on that year's junior high team, unless an exception is granted by the Board of Directors.

**Participation Requirements**

To participate in any Mustang activity of any kind (i.e., games, practices, banquets, and fund raisers), a player must meet the following requirements:

* Submit a sign the participation form (one per family)
* Provide a copy of the player's birth certificate Submit a signed Medical Release / Waiver of
* Liability Form
* Comply with Code of Conduct
* Cooperate with other players, coaches, umpires and others in authority
* Participate in all applicable fund-raisers (or pay the corresponding opt-out fees)
* Be current on all fees (season fee, opt-out fees, etc.)

**Code of Conduct**

All Mustangs, parents, families, and coaches are to abide by this Code of Conduct. The letter of our Code of Conduct is minimal, and the spirit is foundational. The spirit of our MtB Mustangs Code of Conduct is: We are to love and show respect to those within and outside our organization. The spirit of our Mustangs' Code of Conduct is that it applies to our conduct both on and off the field.

Parents set the example for their children. Accordingly, we will guard our speech at all times and speak well of our Mustangs' leadership, coaching staffs, players, and families. We encourage parents and players to communicate legitimate concerns respectfully, in person and privately to the involved party first, and then to Mustangs' leadership only if the matter remains unresolved. Failure to take a concern to the offending party first violates both the letter and spirit of the Code of Conduct.

Our fans have developed a great reputation as being knowledgeable, energetic, and positive. We want to uphold and build upon this tradition. As such, we will refrain from belittling and booing players, opponents, coaches, umpires, or anyone else. In general, we will avoid speech or conduct that could cause a fellow believer to stumble or cause someone outside the program to hold either Christ or our organization in lower esteem. We will observe the general rule of building others up and believing the best.

In light of the spirit of our Code of Conduct, the usage of alcohol and tobacco at Mustangs functions is prohibited. The head coach of each team has the authority to set additional rules of conduct for that team.

If there is an issue with any attitude or action, please address comments and/or suggestions to the coach (no earlier than 24 hours after the game or practice at issue, if at all possible) or to the board of directors. Please do so in person, or at a minimum, via a phone call. Violations of the Code of Conduct can result in sanctions as set by the Board of Directors, up to and including prohibiting further participation of an individual in Mustang functions.

In the end, we will be guided by grace in our dealings with each other.

**Uniform and Dress**

All players will dress in such a manner to bring honor to Christ and to uphold the reputation of the Mustangs. Our uniform is to be worn correctly at all times, with the jersey/shirt tucked in; the bills of our caps are to face directly forward. We do so out of respect for the Mustangs organization, our teammates, opponents, officials, and the game of baseball itself.

Players are advised to refrain from wearing or displaying the following at all Mustangs functions: visible tattoos, dyed and/or eccentric hair, droopy drawers, and advertising/clothing that depicts messages that could bring either Christ or the Mustangs into disrepute.

The head coach of each team has the authority to enforce these standards and set additional standards as he sees fit.

Finally, players will wear appropriate protective gear and clothing to practice, including cleats, baseball hat and pants in which the player can run and slide (preferably baseball pants).

**Competitive Baseball**

Rather than being a select or club team, this is our school team, like the public and private schools we compete against. The difference is that our players are educated at home under the direction of their parents.

This is competitive baseball, and as such, instruction, training, and coaching of players at Mustangs practices and games will be done solely by the coaching staff. Furthermore, coaches are responsible for all on-field decisions. Only players, coaches, and staff members are to be on the field immediately before, during or after both games and practices.

Coaches at the high school and junior high levels are neither required nor encouraged to get every player into any game. On the contrary, the coach's job is to help his team play their best in each game. Accordingly, we want the coach to play those players that he thinks will get the job done, given the circumstances of the game at hand and the point of the season involved. This is one of the reasons why we limit the number of players on a team.

However, we also encourage our coaches to seek to develop players and look out for the welfare of the program as a whole in deciding playing time issues. This is especially so on the Junior High and Junior Varsity teams, where we are seeking to mold the teams of the future while developing quality players and young men of character to play on our Varsity team.

Coaches are encouraged (though still not required) to play all players in scrimmages, and in actual games where either team has a significant lead. There will be opportunities for all players to play during the season. Players can, of course, improve with diligent practice to earn more playing time in the future.

We believe that playing time is based on hard work, attitude, and merit. Rather than being a right, we believe that playing time, positions, batting order and such are fundamentally based on the needs of the team as per the judgment of the coaching staff.

**Tryouts**

Tryouts are held during the off-season each year, normally in November. Players who have played for a Mustangs team in the past or have attended one of our camps will be contacted in advance of the tryout date(s).

**The Season**

The season will run from February through early May; also, the Homeschool World Series for the HS Varsity team is in late-April to early-May of each year. Our season typically consists of playing other homeschool teams, as well as private and public schools in the greater Houston/Southeast Texas area. For both high school and junior high the season is typically no more than 35 games, excluding tournaments and rainouts.

**Practices**

Both the high school and junior high teams will confine their practices to no more than three times per week, unless an exception has been approved by the Board of Directors. Individual practice periods will last no more than three hours.

**Attendance**

Every player who makes the team is an important part of the team and we rely on consistent attendance and diligence from all players for the team to reach its potential. Accordingly, players are encouraged to attend all practices and coaches are also encouraged to consider faithful attendance as a factor when deciding a particular player's playing time.

Coaches depend on reliable attendance information in order to prepare organized practices. Accordingly, we request that players/parents to notify the coach at the earliest possible time if the player will be unable to make a game or practice, or if he will be late. Punctuality at all Mustangs' games and practices is important. Absent unusual circumstances, players will notify the coaching staff of a game absence before game day.

**Game Rules**

Unless otherwise noted, all games will be governed by high school rules according to the National Federation of High School Associations (NFHS).

**Fees and Fundraising**

Our season fees are among the most affordable in Texas competitive baseball. Our players also participate in a simple and fun fundraising program that keeps our fees low and also allows our players to share a sense of ownership in the Mustangs. Our policy on fees will be driven by two key considerations: (1) We will, by God's grace, acquire the funds necessary to make this one of the very best homeschool baseball programs in the nation, and (2) no player will be unable to play because of financial considerations.

**Suggestions/Complaints**

If you have a suggestion, seek an exception to a particular policy, please address your issue to the General Manager via email.

If you have an issue with the attitudes or actions of a coach, player, board member, or any one associated wth the Mustangs, please speak to that individual either in person or via phone. If the issue or suggestion is specifically play-related, you may address your comments to the coach, but only privately and in person or by phone -- no emails or texts -- and after the game or practice at issue (and no earlier than 24 hours after the game or practice at issue, if at all possible). Please contact the General Manager if any issues remain unresolved after meeting in person or via telephone.