

BENSON BRAVES



Benson Softball Players:

- School comes first.
- Believe in your teammates, Believe in yourself.
- No hanging your head.
- Effort and attitude- give 110%
- Expect a hit every at bat.
- Take the field running.
- Three outs- get off the field.
- Work hard in practice.
- Root for your teammates while on the bench.
- Be a role model off the field.
- Never Never Quit.
- Listen and ask questions.
- Set goals for yourself.
- Attitude of gratitude.
- Communicate with your teammates.
- Keep the bench clean.
- Have fun and enjoy yourself.

West Central Conference: Bold, Benson, Melrose, MInnewaska, Montevideo, Morris, Sauk Centre

Section 6A: Ashby, Belgrade Brooten-Elrosa, Benson, Brandon Evansville, Browerville, Clinton-Graceville-Beardsley, Hancock, Hillcrest Lutheran Academy, New York Mills, Ortonville, Parkers Prairie, Pelican Rapids, Rothsay, Swanville, Upsala, West Central Area, Wheaton-Herman-Norcross.

School Athletic Mission Statement: The Mission of the Benson Public Schools Activities Program is to provide an opportunity for all students to develop and use skills in a structured environment, which provides meaningful competition, enhances physical and mental well-being, and teaches positive values. Our primary objective is to provide wholesome opportunities to promote the physical, mental, social, emotional, and moral well-being of the students. It is hoped that extra and co-curricular activities in our school will be a positive force in preparing youth for an enriching and vital role in American society.

The primary goal of the **Benson 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 Benson coaching staff will be dedicated to maximizing an athlete's performance.

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*

Why do you play?

Follow Rules put forth by the Benson Public Schools Athletic Policy.

Highlights:

- **Attendance is required.** Communication with coaches is required if you are going to miss practice or games. We prefer to be told the day before the absence if possible.
- **Riding the bus to and from games is required** unless you live closer to the opponents fields or are leaving town for some other commitment from the fields.
- Cell phones: **No cell phones** during practice, or in the dugout before or during games. Cell Phones should be put away ten minutes from game destinations on away trips. There is a right time and a right place for cell phones. Put them away so that you can mentally prepare to play your game. Limited use of cell phones is allowed to communicate with parents about return times. We are not your babysitter when it comes to cell phones... if you're on it before or during the game without permission you simply are not ready to play. You will force our hand to sit you out to give you time to think about softball and your role on our team and get focused to play.
- **Communication** with coaching staff "24 HOUR COOLING OFF"
- **Playing Time** is earned through following the rules, hard work and skill.
 - ☐ Players are required to be ready to begin practice at the designated start time. Practice will start at 3:30PM. Suggested practice time for JH is until 5:15PM, for JV and Varsity is until 5:30PM. There may be a few exceptions to the rule as needed.
 - ☐ If a player must miss a practice or be late, a telephone call, email or text to the coach is required before practice begins. Penalty for missing or being late will meet the absence or delay with each case handled on an individual basis.
 - ☐ Each practice session is very important to the development of athletes. Players need to make every effort to be at every practice so coaches can prepare practices according to who and how many will be attending.
 - ☐ Players will be required to bring their own: water jugs, practice attire and equipment.
 - ☐ Only players who are current in their dues and physical and have taken the concussion test will be allowed to take part in practices or games.

End of Season Potential

Awards (Varsity):

All Conference

All Conference Honorable
Mention

All Section

Most Improved Player

Offensive Player of the
Year

Defensive Player of the
Year

TRUE GRIT Award which
goes to your hardest
worker (voted on by
teammates).

Senior Awards

Six year participant
Awards

Highest Batting Average

RBI Leader

Top Pitcher

Home Run Leader

Scoring Leader

Stolen Base Leader

Walks Leader

Most Valuable Player

(Voted on by teammates)

Rookie of the Year (voted
on by teammates)

Hitting: A Mental Game within the Game

Good hitters possess a natural ability to swing the bat; great hitters use their natural abilities to the utmost by thinking positive before, during, and after their time at bat.

Here are some “mental” batting tips to consider in aiding the good hitter.

IN THE HOLE MENTALITY: This occurs when the hitter is the third one up in the inning. Start preparing on your way in from the field. Your main objective is to relax completely. Deliberately tighten and relax certain muscles in your body- fist, wrists, forearms, biceps, thighs, calves, and back and chest muscles. Take two or three deep breaths and exhale which slowly helps a person relax.

ON DECK MENTALITY: This is the start of the hitters concentration period, where talking with others is avoided unless talking about the pitcher. The player takes mental batting practice against each pitch thrown by the pitcher concentrating on watching the ball and meeting it out in front of the plate. Be mentally viewing a hit on each swing, the batter builds up confidence before stepping into the batters’ box.

GREEN LIGHT MENTALITY: Be thinking “hit every pitch”. As the pitcher reaches the delivery point, the batter begins forward movement of hips and hands. For a fraction of a second after the delivery, the batters’ mind thinks- complete the swing (Green Light), or hold up (Red Light). While this may seem difficult, it simply tells the batter to approach each pitch with the idea of hitting it. Don’t think green light in practice and save red light for games. Use your mind to help your confidence by thinking green light all of the time.

PERFECT PITCH MENTALITY: When the count is 2-0, or 3-1, the advantage is highly in favor of the batter. The pitcher wants and needs to throw a strike; the batter should expect a strike and think green light all the way. Occasionally the batter looks for the first pitch to be perfect- thinking the pitcher always wants to get ahead of the count; thus, the batter can be thinking green light again.

TWO STRIKE MENTALITY: The batter uses extra concentration when she is one strike away from being retired. Thus the green light mentality really takes over even to the point of swinging at pitches just outside the strike zone. On a close corner pitch, the umpires generally give the advantage to the pitcher. Therefore, by guarding the plate and getting the bat on the ball the batter stays alive hoping the pitcher will make a mistake on the next pitch. With two strikes the big swing is forgotten; rather the batter chokes up on the bat and takes a shorter stride when swinging the bat. A great hitter never thinks, “Don’t strike out”; instead she thinks, “Make contact somehow”. This positive attitude will cut down on strikeouts and raise batting averages!

Varsity Team Manager/Statisticians Responsibilities

My not be limited to the following:

- Bulletin board at the park.
- Senior brochure for last home game.
- Upkeep/restock of first aid kit.
- Set up and help manage the speaker system for pregame music.
- Locker signs.
- Video-taping
- Online scorebook (game days)
- Help w/ arranging service project
- Help w/ organizing team building
 - Guest speaker and pizza
- Picture taking
- Assist with practice as needed.

Benson High School Fastpitch Softball

Varsity Lettering Guidelines

Any member of the VARSITY softball team may earn a varsity letter through hard work, dedication and meeting various criteria established by the head coach. All players must adhere to all MSHSL rules, school, and team rules and regulations, including academic requirements, local athletic rules and policies, training rules, practice requirements, and any other requirement established by the head coach. In order to earn a varsity letter for softball in the Benson Hancock program, a player must meet **AT LEAST ONE** of the following categories:

- Seniors who have contributed to the program as determined by the coach will letter.
- Appear in at least 25% of all Varsity games played (participation in softball will include activities such as pinch-runner, courtesy-runner, pinch-hitter, bullpen catcher and/or other contributions as defined by the head coach.)
- Have at least 12 total plate appearances in Varsity level games (this would include walks, hit by pitch, etc.)
- Play 20 innings defensively in Varsity level games
- Have four pitching appearances in Varsity level games
- Pitch at least 15 innings in Varsity level games
- Any pitcher with three or more decisions in Varsity level games
- Varsity managers may letter after one season if they perform their duties
- Varsity statisticians may letter after two seasons if they perform their duties

Certificate of Participation

- (JV and/or Varsity) Student-athletes may earn a Certificate of Participation for either JV and/or Varsity if they participated in at least 1 game during the season for that level of play that the certificate signifies. They must adhere to all team rules and regulations including academic requirements, MSHSL rules and policies, training rules, practice requirements, and any other requirements established by the head coach of Benson Softball.

Loss of Lettering Eligibility

- Any student that is removed from eligible participation in softball as a result of discipline, academic, legal or parental measures may lose his/her privilege to letter and/or captainship in Benson Softball if they do not stay in good standing with the team and/or head coach.

Student-athlete signature

Date