

# T.E.A.M.



## LEADERSHIP

### PLAYERS' MANUAL

“LEARNING TO LIVE & LEAD A LIFE OF **VICTORY**”

# T.E.A.M. OWNER INFO

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

SPORT: \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE #: \_\_\_\_\_

*“You are never really playing an opponent. You are playing yourself, your own highest standards, and when you reach your limits, that is real joy.” – Arthur Ashe*



## INTRODUCTION:

You are holding this manual because someone believes you are capable of more than you have shown yet. That is not an insult. It is one of the greatest things a coach can say about a player.

**T.E.A.M.** Leadership is a program built for student-athletes of any age, gender, or sport. **T.E.A.M.** stands for Team Expectations and Mindset. At its core, this is about creating a oneness on your team – an alignment of expectations, mindset, and player leadership that does not depend on a coach being in the room. The goal is simple: when it is just the players, the standards are still being lived out. When that happens, something special is being built.

How do we know when a team has reached that level? The answer is simple: when the players are modeling the behaviors and communicating the expectations among themselves, without being told. Whether your team is there yet or not, the response is the same. We have to get better. And getting better starts with a plan that creates real ownership.

As you go through each lesson, your one job is to take one drop. When a single drop hits still water, it creates a ripple. When you apply one thing from each lesson to your life, it affects everything around you. When an entire team does that together, the ripple becomes a tidal wave.

This manual belongs to you. Write in it. Be honest in it. Come back to it. The goals you set on these pages, the reflections you write after each lesson, and the commitments you make in these sessions will become a record of who you were becoming during this season.

*We are all born to be special. This program is designed to help you live like it.*

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*“You Are Born To Be Special”*



## PURPOSE:

### TEAM EXPECTATIONS AND MINDSET

*The greatest achieving teams have a direct correlation between expectations and mindset. These teams are known as the “overachievers”, they have the “it” factor, they are referred to as being the “special group.” These teams will perform at their highest level based on their ability level. They inspire your community by playing with unique hustle, attitude, and teamwork.*

*They display these characteristics:*

- 1) **STUDENT-ATHLETES:** There is a direct correlation between academic accountability and athletic performance. Great teams have responsible and respectful students.
- 2) **COMMITTED TO THE EXTRA:** The best teams are the best at doing the extra.... You can tell a lot about a team by how fast they leave the arena and leave the locker room. The best teams cannot get enough of the work and time together.
- 3) **COACHES CONCERNS:** Are tied to team execution, but never competitive spirit or effort. There is never a doubt that they will be ready to play with relentless effort.
- 4) **STANDARD OF BEHAVIOR:** Was taught by the staff but enforced through social acceptance within the team. Respect was earned by effort and commitment to standards.
- 5) **CREDIBLE LEADERS:** Top 10% are credible performers and teammates.
- 6) **COACHABLE NOT COMPLIANT:** Players apply instruction in front of coaches and away from coaches. There is a behavior change off the field and the players become an extension of the coaching staff.
- 7) **TEAM COHESION:** The team is made up of different friend groups rather than different clicks. They put aside differences and commit to a larger purpose. They have different personalities but are committed to one mindset.
- 8) **CONSISTENT IMPROVEMENT:** They can improve in success and failure. They can adapt in small (bad weather, etc.) to big change (injury, etc.). They respond with a spirit of improvement and toughness in adversity.
- 9) **ALL ARE VALUED:** A hierarchy is needed for decisions and responsibilities... But a hierarchy does not determine respect, caring, or worth of anyone. People feel valued at all levels regardless of their status on the team.
- 10) **HONEST AND CONSTRUCTIVE DIALOGUE:** It is about getting better... point blank

*"Be more concerned with your character than your reputation, because your character is what you really are, while your reputation is merely what others think you are."*

*- John Wooden*

# **T.E.A.M. LEADERSHIP CURRICULUM**

*"To Guide Each Player to Live & Lead a Life of Victory"*

## **T.E.A.M. EXPECTATIONS**

### LESSONS 1-4

- 1) **STUDENT ATHLETE**  
*Breeding Ground for Habits of Excellence*
- 2) **COACHABLE PLAYER**  
*Follow the Blueprint of Success*
- 3) **GREAT TEAMMATE**  
*The Most Valuable Asset & Experience*
- 4) **LARGER PURPOSE**  
*Commit to the Mission*

## **T.E.A.M. MINDSET**

### LESSONS 5-8

- 5) **SACRIFICE**  
*The Greatest do the Most*
- 6) **DISCIPLINE**  
*The Greatest are Consistent*
- 7) **TOUGHNESS**  
*The Greatest Face Adversity*
- 8) **RELENTLESS EFFORT**  
*The Greatest are Elite Competitors*

**BONUS SECTION FOR  
PLAYER QUESTIONS & REFLECTION**

*"A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step." - Chinese Proverb*

# PLAYER GOALS

A goal without an action step is a wish. Write something specific enough that you can look at it tomorrow and know exactly what to do. Not “do better in school” – but exactly what you can do consistently.

<b>STUDENT ATHLETE</b>	
ACADEMIC GOALS	ACTION STEPS
1)	1)
2)	2)
<b>COACHABLE PLAYER</b>	
ATHLETIC GOALS	ACTION STEPS
1)	1)
2)	2)
<b>GREAT TEAMMATE</b>	
CHARACTER GOALS	ACTION STEPS
1)	1)
2)	2)
<b>LARGER PURPOSE</b>	
TEAM GOALS	ACTION STEPS
1)	1)
2)	2)

**“THE KEY TO A GOAL IS TAKING THE NEXT STEP”**



**T.E.A.M. EXPECTATION  
LESSONS**

## **A MOMENT TO CONSIDER**

*I have never had a player struggle through the school day and then suddenly have a great day on the field. Not once in over twenty-five years. The habits you build in the classroom – showing up, doing the work, treating people well – are the exact same habits that make a trusted athlete.*

*“Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world.” -Nelson Mandela*



## LESSON 1

# STUDENT ATHLETE

### **KEY THOUGHT & DISCUSSION**

Players are expected to give their “Best Effort” and compete in all areas of their daily lives. Attendance, Assignments, & Attitude are what you control every day as a student. This is a life skill; you will always have somewhere to be, something to do, and people to deal with. The school day is the breeding ground for habits of excellence. You reinforce great habits every time you show up, do the work, and treat people well. A great day in school helps you have a great day on the athletic field. There is a direct correlation between a responsible student and a trusted athlete.

### **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

- 1) What do you prove with attendance, turning in assignments, and having a great attitude?
- 2) What education are you gaining from sports?
- 3) Go to the Player Goal Page and list 2 Academic Goals and an Action Step (what you can do consistently) for each goal.

### **MY ONE DROP FROM THIS LESSON:**

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## **A MOMENT TO CONSIDER**

*The most coachable player I ever coached was not the most talented person on the roster. He was the one who took every correction, applied it immediately, and never needed to hear it twice. Within two seasons he was the most trusted player on the team and every younger player followed his example. Coachability is not a personality trait. It is a daily decision.*

*“My best skill was that I was coachable, I was a sponge and aggressive to learn.” -Michael Jordan*



## LESSON 2

# COACHABLE PLAYER

### KEY THOUGHT & DISCUSSION

A willing learner is the primary component to a great learning environment. We must be able to accept team expectations, discipline, and instruction. An athletic program has a blueprint for your success, is a privilege, and must be earned.

Your success and development will greatly depend on your ability to be coachable. A coach's primary purpose is to help you, and the team become its best version. The faster a player can learn a concept, the quicker they can be taught a new concept. Applying a coaches' instruction is the foundation of improvement. Not being coachable is the fastest way to not reach your goals.

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- 1) How would you define being Coachable?
- 2) How does Coachability make you a Better Player and us a Better Team?
- 3) Go to the Player Goal Page and list 2 Athletic Goals and an Action Step (what you can do consistently) for each goal.

### MY ONE DROP FROM THIS LESSON:

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## **A MOMENT TO CONSIDER**

*Years ago, I had a player who sat on the bench for an entire season. He was not our best athlete. But every single day he was the first one to encourage someone who had a bad practice, the first one to pick up equipment without being asked, the first one to clap for a teammate who took his spot. When that player graduated, more players talked about him at our banquet than anyone else on the roster.*

*That is the legacy of a great teammate.*

*“A player who makes a team great is more valuable than a great player. Losing yourself in the group, for the good of the group, that’s teamwork.” – John Wooden*



## LESSON 3

# GREAT TEAMMATE

### **KEY THOUGHT & DISCUSSION**

Players will respect, support, and encourage all on the team. Working against a team culture should not be tolerated. The TEAM will be the most valuable experience within any program. People may not always remember how you play, but they will remember how they are treated. Alone we can do so little, but together we can do so much. Encouragement, help, time, and accountability are the greatest gifts we can give to others. Teamwork is the fuel that common people use to achieve uncommon results. This will be your greatest legacy.

### **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

- 1) How would you describe a Great Teammate?
- 2) P.A.T. (Praise A Teammate) is when one compliments, high fives, or recognizes another teammate. Why is this important?
- 3) Go to the Player Goal Page and list 2 Character Goals and an Action Step (what you can do consistently) for each goal.

### **MY ONE DROP FROM THIS LESSON:**

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## **A MOMENT TO CONSIDER**

*The best teams I have ever coached were not always the most talented.*

*They were the ones where every player had answered one question honestly: "Why am I here?" Not the easy answer. The real one. When a team is built from players who can each answer that question, something forms that is very hard to beat.*

*"I firmly believe that any man's finest hour, the greatest fulfillment of all that he holds dear, is that moment when he has worked his heart out in a good cause and lies exhausted on the field of battle... victorious."* -

*Vince Lombardi*



## LESSON 4

# LARGER PURPOSE

### KEY THOUGHT & DISCUSSION

What drives each person is relevant to that individual. However, when it is just about yourself, most plans will fail. Great teams are comprised of individuals committed to a unified mission. Every player is unique, has value, and is “Born to be Special”. Together we work to create a better version of ourselves and in service of others. A team can have different personalities but must have one mindset. Choose to prepare and compete for a common goal or cause. Heroes are not defined by their individual action but for the cause in which they act.

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- 1) What do you enjoy about being on a Team?
- 2) What motivates or drives you to do your very best?
- 3) Go to the Player Goal Page and list 2 Team Goals and an Action Step (what you can do consistently) for each goal.

### MY ONE DROP FROM THIS LESSON:

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## HALFWAY THERE

### *From Expectations to Mindset*

The first four lessons were about what this team expects. You defined what it means to be a student-athlete, a coachable player, a great teammate, and someone committed to a larger purpose. You set goals. You had real conversations. That was the foundation.

The next four lessons go deeper.

They are not about what is expected. They are about the internal qualities that make it possible to meet those expectations when it is hard. When the season gets long, when results do not match effort, when you are frustrated or someone around you is struggling — it is not the rules that hold a team together. It is the mindset.

Sacrifice, Discipline, Toughness, and Relentless Effort are not things you do. They are things you become.

**Before you turn the page, answer this honestly:**

*“What kind of teammate, competitor, and person do you want to be by the end of this program?”*

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*Now hold yourself to that answer for the next four lessons.*

## **A MOMENT TO CONSIDER**

*I once had a player who stayed after practice every single day for an entire offseason. No one asked him to. No one was grading it. By the time the season started, he had put in more reps than anyone else on the roster. When the team needed a big play late in the year, he made it. Sacrifice does not show up on game day by accident. It is built quietly, over time, in the moments nobody is watching.*

*“He who would accomplish little need sacrifice little; he who would achieve much must sacrifice much. He who would attain highly must sacrifice greatly.” -James Allen*



## LESSON 5

# SACRIFICE

### **KEY THOUGHT & DISCUSSION**

Great players and teams go beyond the normal, they do the extra work to be great. Doing what the team requires is not sacrifice, sacrifice is going beyond what is expected. It is when one gives up something of personal value (time, feelings, resources) for the sake of improvement, service, or team success. Do not be afraid to stand out in the crowd and do the extra. The harder we work makes it harder for us to surrender. The more we invest, the more we protect the investment. Sacrifice is the proof that you have passion to improve. The difference between the good and the great, is their ability to sacrifice.

### **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

- 1) What does Sacrifice mean to you?
- 2) What is one way a player can Sacrifice for the Team?
- 3) What is something I need to start or do more of to improve?

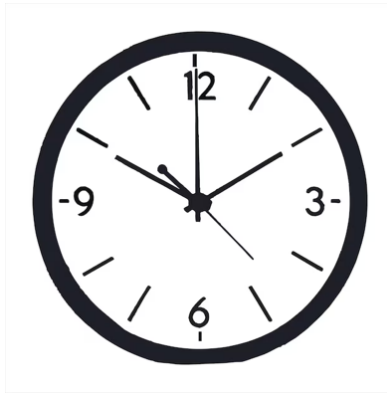
**MY ONE DROP FROM THIS LESSON:**

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## **A MOMENT TO CONSIDER**

*Discipline is not what you do when a coach is watching. It is what you do at midnight on a Tuesday when no one would ever know. I have coached players who were disciplined on the field and completely undisciplined everywhere else. The ones who became truly great were the ones who figured out that those two things are the same person.*

*“We Are What We Repeatedly Do. Excellence Therefore, Is Not An Act  
But A Habit.” – Aristotle*



## LESSON 6

# DISCIPLINE

### **KEY THOUGHT & DISCUSSION**

Discipline is about CHOICES... NOT FEELINGS. The key to any improvement is consistency in action. If you want to achieve success, then there has to be a commitment to the right process. Disciplined players are where they are supposed to be, doing what they are supposed to do, and when they are supposed to it on a consistent basis. There is always something we should do but don't want to do... The right answer to this problem separates you from the competition. Successful athletics will always require the trust in each person.

Trust is gained through consistent action in every part of a player's life.

Discipline is the highway to becoming a player led team.

### **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

- 1) What does Discipline mean to you?
- 2) How would you describe a Disciplined Player?
- 3) What do you need to do consistently to be your best?

### **MY ONE DROP FROM THIS LESSON:**

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## **A MOMENT TO CONSIDER**

*Toughness is pre-made or it is not there when you need it. The players I have watched make the most important plays in the most important moments were not always the strongest or the fastest. They were the ones who had decided long before the moment arrived that they were not going to quit. You cannot make that decision in the fourth quarter.*

*You make it now.*

*“Champions are made from something they have deep inside them – a desire, a dream, a vision. They have to have the skill, and the will. But the will must be stronger than the skill.” -Muhammed Ali*



## LESSON 7

# TOUGHNESS

### **KEY THOUGHT & DISCUSSION**

Toughness is the WINNING EDGE... It is built anytime someone does the right thing over feelings, fear, or the easy way. Toughness is a choice and is more mental than physical. This choice is pre-determined and needs to be made before the moment. The choice is to not quit, stay committed, and keep pushing forward. Toughness is a trained skill and will get better or worse. This is a life-skill because adversity is unavoidable. Athletics is the greatest way to practice life before we live it. Successful teams can overcome adversity and difficult situations. Those that can display this quality will surpass others quickly. This is the #1 indicator of highly successful people and will define you as a competitor.

### **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

- 1) What does Toughness mean to you?
- 2) How does a Player demonstrate Toughness?
- 3) How does a Team demonstrate Toughness?

**MY ONE DROP FROM THIS LESSON:**

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## **A MOMENT TO CONSIDER**

*The Mirror Test is simple. When practice is over and you are alone, you ask yourself one question: "Did I give everything I had today?" You will know the answer before you finish the question. The players who can look in that mirror with genuine peace – not arrogance, but real peace – are the ones who understand what relentless effort produces. Not just results. A standard of self. A proof that you can be counted on.*

*"Continuous effort – not strength or intelligence – is the key to unlocking our potential." - Winston Churchill*



## LESSON 8

# RELENTLESS EFFORT

### **KEY THOUGHT & DISCUSSION**

This is about your “WARRIOR SPIRIT.” Effort has nothing to do with talent, ability, social status, or physical appearance. Effort has everything to do with your will to compete and give your all in everything. This quality should never be questioned as a great competitor. Effort must be a non-negotiable in your team mindset. When a player is relentless, their effort is undeniable. Effort will give an individual and a team its best chance to be successful. Many times, the winner will be the one that simply keeps playing with their best effort. Teams must be able to play with a Warrior Spirit from the beginning to the end of competition. Your best effort is the only way to pass the “Mirror Test.” Nothing is given, everything is earned.

### **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

- 1) What does Relentless Effort mean to you?
- 2) Describe someone you know that gives Relentless Effort?
- 3) What can hold you back from giving Relentless Effort?

**MY ONE DROP FROM THIS LESSON:**

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# EXTRA QUESTIONS & SELF-REFLECTION

*These questions are for you. Answer them honestly. Come back to them. The most valuable insights you will have about yourself as a competitor often come from sitting quietly with a hard question.*

## **MENTAL TOUGHNESS & MOTIVATION**

- Describe a moment when you felt like quitting. What kept you going?
- How do you handle performing when you're having an off day, but your team needs you to show up?
- Why did you start playing your sport, and why do you continue to play?
- What is the biggest sacrifice you've made to succeed in your sport?
- What is your strongest asset, and what is your weakest?

## **LEADERSHIP & TEAM DYNAMICS**

- Tell me about a time when you had to step up as a leader, even if you didn't feel ready.
- Does your motivation come more from self-focus or team focus?
- How do you deal with, or help, a teammate who is struggling?

## **REFLECTIVE & GROWTH-ORIENTED**

- What is your proudest achievement as an athlete?
- How do you deal with injuries or setbacks?
- What do you believe to be one of your weaknesses, and what are you doing to improve it?
- What's a piece of advice you'd give your younger self?

## **PRE-GAME & PERFORMANCE PREP**

- What does your pre-game routine include to prepare your mind and body?
- What does your "best game" look and feel like?
- How do you manage your emotions before and during a game?
- What can I control in my environment, and what is "noise" I should ignore?
- What do others see when I play with confidence?
- What is my ideal intensity level, and how can I achieve it?

## **PERSONAL NOTES**

*Use these pages for anything – what stood out in a session, a goal update, something a teammate said that hit you, a verse or quote you want to remember. This manual is yours.*

# PERSONAL NOTES

# PERSONAL NOTES

# A FINAL WORD

*To Every Player Who Carries This Manual*

You made it through eight lessons. That means something.

It means you sat in rooms where honesty was required and you did not walk away. You set goals that mattered. You heard things about sacrifice, discipline, toughness, and effort that were not easy to hear — and you stayed. That is not nothing. Most people spend their whole lives avoiding exactly that kind of honest self-examination.

Here is what I need you to understand before this manual goes on a shelf: the conversations you had in these sessions were not the point. The point is what you do with them. The goal you wrote down on page one is still there. The reflection you wrote after each lesson is still there. The commitment you made out loud in front of your teammates is still there. What you do with those things in the next thirty, sixty, ninety days will tell you more about who you are than anything that happened in this program.

Do not put this manual down and walk away the same as when you picked it up.

Pick one chapter that hit you the hardest. Go back and read it again. Find the one drop that belongs to you and do something about it today. Not ten things. One. Because one thing, done consistently and with conviction, changes everything.

You were born to be special.

**Now go be it.**

**Coach Adam Winegarden**  
lessonsfromthegoalpost.com

“WHAT LIES BEHIND US AND  
WHAT LIES BEFORE US ARE  
SMALL MATTERS COMPARED TO  
WHAT LIES WITHIN US”