

Herndon Optimist Youth Cal Ripken Baseball League

Rules of Play

Revised March 4, 2002

Tee-Ball League

1 General

- 1.1 The league is non-competitive. Game scores and league standings are not kept.
- 1.2 In an effort to encourage defensive skill development and teamwork, it is encouraged that the Manager keep track of the number of outs recorded each inning by his own defense. This tracking need not be overemphasized with the Players, but should be used as an incentive to promote teamwork, and as a tracking tool for development through the season.
- 1.3 There are no benchwarmers in T-Ball. All team members present play each inning.
- 1.4 All the players on a team will bat to complete an offensive half-inning.

2 Field of Play

- 2.1 The home team Manager is responsible for ensuring that the field is prepared for play. The first and third base foul lines shall be marked, using 2" lines only. ***Bases shall be forty five (45) feet apart (existing permanent bases at most fields are sixty (60) feet apart).*** In addition, two arcs shall be lined on the field between the base lines, one at nine (9) feet and another at thirty five (35) feet from home plate.

3 Umpiring

The visiting team manager will designate a volunteer parent Umpire. Umpire volunteers should be provided with a copy of the rules, and a conference should be held before the start of the game with both team managers and the Umpire to review the rules.

- 3.1 The Umpire shall be positioned in foul territory behind the home plate area. After the ball is batted, the Umpire should move to a position on the field best suited to make the call.
- 3.2 The Umpires call on the field shall be final. In the event of any question on any call, time out may be called (only by a team Manager) and a conference shall be held with the Umpire and both team Managers. This conference shall be quiet and out of earshot of any Player or parent. The call must then be confirmed or reversed based upon the results of the conference. Managers, Coaches (and parents) are not allowed to comment on any call by the Umpire except in a properly held conference.

4 Offense

- 4.1 One offensive coach will be required to assist each batter on his/her team in adjusting the tee, assist in the batting process, and remove the tee and the bat from the home plate area immediately after the batter bats the ball.
- 4.2 The hitting coach and base coaches advise runners on the offensive team.

- 4.3 To start play, the hitting coach will check that the defense is ready, and then place the ball on the tee. The batter will swing until he/she hits a fair ball.
- 4.4 There are no strike outs or walks.
- 4.5 A hit ball must travel beyond the nine foot arc in fair territory before it is considered a ball in play.
- 4.6 A batter who intentionally or unintentionally throws a bat is automatically out. A batter who carries the bat nine feet or more from home plate is out and base runners may not advance.
- 4.7 Base runners may not advance on caught fly balls.
- 4.8 Players are not allowed to slide at any base.
- 4.9 Stealing bases and leading off base are not allowed.
- 4.10 Each member of each team batting one time constitutes a half-inning.
- 4.11 The "last batter" in the inning must be announced to the Umpire (by the Manager of team at bat) who in turn will announce it to the opposing team. Failure to announce "last batter" causes the inning to be ended at that moment.

5 Defense

- 5.1 Two coaches are permitted in the outfield area to assist while the game is in progress. Defensive coaches will not be allowed in the infield area.
- 5.2 Players take regular baseball positions with extra players filling in as needed.
- 5.3 The pitcher in T-Ball, located in the same general area of the diamond as the pitcher in regular baseball, does not pitch.
- 5.4 Players on defense shall not be allowed inside the 35' arc line until contact with the ball has been made. Umpires will be instructed not to begin play until each child is behind that line.
- 5.5 After a ball is hit into the field of play, a play is made by the defense. In all cases except "Last Batter" the play ends when:
 - A) A fly ball is caught,
 - B) A base runner or the batter is tagged or forced out at any base, and "Dead Ball" is called (see below). Double and triple plays are allowed, including retiring runners who attempt to advance on a caught fly ball, or
 - C) A defensive Player maintains control of the ball inside the four base paths, holds the ball above his/her head, and the Umpire calls "Dead Ball". When "Dead Ball" is called, runners on base may not advance further. If a baserunner is more than half way to the next base at the instant of the "Dead Ball" call, he/she may advance to the next base. If the runner was less than half way to the next base at the instant of the "Dead Ball" call, he/she shall return to the last base tagged. The "Dead Ball" call is not to be made automatically when the ball is returned to the infield, rather, it shall only be made the defensive player is no longer attempting to retire runners, and holds the ball up to stop play. (Players should be encouraged to attempt all possible plays prior to stopping play with the "Dead Ball" call.)

5.6 “Last Batter” play:

When a team's Last Batter bats a ball past the 35-foot arc, and the ball is not caught on a fly, the defense must make an assisted play to home plate for the last out. The throw to home plate must come from behind the 35-foot arc. The defensive player designated as the “pitcher” shall move to home plate to catch the throw in, and then must tag home plate to end the inning. Runners may continue to advance around the bases and score until home plate is tagged, even in the event that the batter is retired. If the ball does not advance beyond the 35foot arc, an unassisted play may be made at home.

5.7 A team's half inning ends under any one of the following conditions: (1) The last batter flies out (2) If the last batter is out as a result of being tagged or a play at first base, play continues until the remaining runners score or are tagged out, or the defensive team tags home plate, or (3) Without further play if the "last batter" throws his bat.

5.8 If a ball is overthrown (in bounds or out), after the runner has already passed the base, a player may advance to the next base when the runner clearly indicates his intention to advance. Only runners in motion will be awarded the next base.

5.9 If a ball is overthrown (in bounds or out), before the runner reaches the base, the runner must stay at that base. He/she will not be awarded the next base.

5.10 Collisions and physical interference between players are to be avoided at all times. The base runner is normally responsible for the degree of contact. Any collision judged intentional by the umpires will cause the guilty runner to be called out, and may result in his expulsion from the game.

5.11 A fielder who intentionally collides or physically interferes with a runner is subject to ejection from the game. In addition, the umpire may award an advance of bases as required to offset the effects of the fielder's interference. An ejected player is an out in the lineup.

6 Game Play

6.1 Each game will be three innings in length with a one hour and fifteen minute time limit.. At one hour and ten minutes after the scheduled start time, the Umpire shall call time out and announce to all that the game will end in five (5) minutes. In no case can play extend beyond the time limit.

6.2 In the case of a game in progress being rained out, two full innings constitute a complete game.

6.3 No game should start with less than eight (8) registered players on either team. A five minute grace period will be allowed before a forfeit is called. If a forfeit is called, the managers are to organize a scrub game with all players present so the youngsters may still participate.

7 Conduct and Sportsmanship

7.1 The team Manager is responsible for exemplifying and maintaining good sportsmanship at practices and games.

7.2 The team Manager is responsible for the conduct of his coaches, his players, and their parents.

7.3 A player, coach or parent guilty of misconduct in the judgment of the Manager is subject to disciplinary action.