

MARTINGROVE BASEBALL INC.
BASEBALL PLAYING RULES
AS OF MAY 1, 2006

These Martingrove Baseball Houseleague Rules apply to Junior and Senior Baseball unless noted otherwise.

Whether you are a coach, an umpire, a parent or player with Martingrove, you have certain rights and responsibilities that come with the role you play in our organization. For the most part these are laid down in the "Official Baseball Rules" handbook published by the Sporting News. We operate a Houseleague minor program at Martingrove so where these rules are considered inappropriate to our circumstances we have implemented "local rules".

We are governed by **one major rule...fair play**. Most times this is amply demonstrated, but occasionally we need to reinforce the principle of a "level playing field" for all participants. Enjoyment of any sport is highly contingent on the assumption that what happens on the field decides the outcome of the game. For this reason we ask for your co-operation and enthusiasm in seeing that fair play is paramount in our decisions and that we all set a good example to the youth of Etobicoke.

A copy of the Martingrove By-laws, Constitution, Coaches Manual, Umpires Manual and all Rules for each division are on the Martingrove Baseball website - www.martingrove.ca

As a volunteer you may have been asked to oversee a number of functions. To our coaching core of volunteers often comes the job of team parent, convener, teacher, scheduler, scorekeeper, etc. This is not an ideal situation by any means and raises concerns over the degree of effectiveness and impartiality. Should you be placed in a situation where you may be seen to be in a conflict of interest situation you should declare yourself ineligible from ruling on the matter and refer it to the Rules Committee. For Baseball, this committee will consist of the VP-Baseball, the Conveners and the Umpire-In-Chief.

The actions of players, coaches, umpires and league officials must be above reproach. Players, parents or coaches, while participating in a scheduled game are not permitted to deliberately harass, or direct any discourteous remarks at the officials or other members of the opposing team. Coaches, assistants, parents or players engaging or participating in conduct inimical to the spirit, principles and objectives of good sportsmanship in Martingrove, shall receive a single warning from the umpire. If the offence or offences continue, the offender or offenders will be removed from the game. Anyone removed from the game must leave the playing field and spectator area. Failure to do so could result in a forfeiture of the game. A game declared ended by the umpire for violation of the rules will be recorded 5-0 for the offended team.

All coaches are responsible for their conduct and those of their players while on the playing

field. Failure to control any team member may result in forfeiture of the game. Coaches are expected to follow the Martingrove Baseball Code of Conduct.

Coaches should not display, encourage or accept unsportsmanlike behavior. Obviously, disappointments do occur but prolonged outbursts or overly aggressive demonstrations **will not be tolerated**. Specifically, **helmet or bat throwing** is unacceptable as is the use of coarse and improper language. The coach is advised to deal sternly with repeated behavior of this sort. Angry outbursts directed at umpires will not be condoned and the umpire should follow laid down rules in dealing with same.

Smoking is not permitted on the playing field and dugout. Alcohol consumption is strictly forbidden at all Ball Parks by all personnel and fans.

Players are expected to give their best effort and to come to all practices and games. Timely notice to coaches of absences is more than a courtesy; it is essential to proper planning of team effectiveness.

1. **Field Dimensions**

Field dimensions vary according to the local field layout, but pitching distances and base paths are standard, based on the division, as follows:

Series	Mound	Bases
Mosquito	44' 0"	65' 0"
Peeewe	50' 0"	75' 0"
Bantam	60' 6"	90' 0"
Midget/Junior	60' 6"	90' 0"

2. **Field Conditions**

The umpire is the person in authority to suspend play in case of weather once the game begins. Prior to the game commencing, the assessment is made by the home team. Obviously, this is an area that can be subject to abuse and calls for an unbiased approach. Should the umpire be in attendance, he/she should be consulted; however umpires cost the league money and we do not want to call out an umpire unnecessarily. Please ensure sound judgment and get agreement whenever possible from the visiting team. With respect to doubleheaders, the umpires shall decide on the start of the second game. At playoff time, this decision is transferred to the Vice-President, or League President.

When umpires are not in attendance for a game the Umpire-In-Chief and the Vice-President of the division you coach must be notified **within twenty-four (24) hours**.

3. **Game Times**

Unlit Diamonds

- a. All games shall start at their scheduled start time with fifteen (15) minutes grace time granted before game is called and forfeited.
- b. During May and June games start at 6:30, forfeit at 6:45. Games to last two (2) hours and drop-dead two hours and fifteen minutes (2 1/4) (135 minutes). No inning to start after 8:00 p.m. with the curfew set at 8:15 p.m.
- c. Remainder of season, light permitting, two and a half hours (2 1/2) (150 minutes) or drop dead two and three-quarters (2 3/4) hours (165 minutes).
- d. Curfew is to be established in the ground rules, prior to the start of the game.

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- c. Remainder of season, at Carmen Bush, curfew is set at 10:30 p.m. No new inning to start after 10:45 p.m.
- d. Remainder of season, at Centennial, there is no curfew.

Doubleheaders

- a. Doubleheaders start at 6:00 p.m. and 8:30 p.m. with no grace period given for the second game of the double header.

Playoffs

- a. During playoffs all games are to start at 6:00 p.m. with forfeiture by 6:15 p.m.

4. **Warm-Ups**

Infield warm-ups shall be five (5) minutes maximum for each team and shall occur in the fifteen (15) minutes prior to game time, with visitors receiving the field first.

Should field set up put this schedule in jeopardy due to lack of home team preparedness, infield warm-up is awarded to the **visiting team only**.

5. **Equality of Playing Time**

All players must be rotated equally in a game. Players must play all positions.

No player will sit out a second time before every player has sat out once and no one will sit out a third time before everyone has sat out twice, etc.

No player sitting out at the beginning of an inning may re-enter until the completion of that inning. (Unless replacing an injured player)

6. **Call-Ups**

Call-ups from a lower level of play may be allowed to play. Call-ups are permitted only when coaches can reasonably believe the team will be unable to field a team of nine (9) players.

Call-ups are permitted during the regular season from lower level rep and select teams. But those rep players called up are permitted to play **outfield positions only**.

Called up Houseleague players may be permitted to play infield. No call-up may pitch in a game.

If after calling up a player, the team has enough players on their own team and no longer need the call-up to field a team of nine (9) players, the call-up must play.

There are no call-ups permitted during playoffs.

7. **Lineups**

Batting line-ups are exchanged prior to the start of the game and must have a minimum of seven (7) players and must remain the same for the rest of the game. All player names and numbers shall be listed by on the line-up. The starting lineup will be listed in order of their batting order. It will consist of a minimum of seven (7) players.

Batting rotation will remain the same throughout the game regardless of defensive rotations. All players assigned to the team who are in attendance at the game must be in the batting rotation.

Batting out of order, if brought to the attention of the umpire, will be an automatic out. Players arriving after the game starts, may only play if the game has yet to progress to the second inning. Such players will be placed at the bottom of the batting lineup.

8. **Regulation Game**

Seven (7) innings unless stopped by curfew, lack of light, weather conditions and four (4) innings are complete with the home team in the lead (or 3 ½ if the home team has the lead). Games played on unlit facilities are considered complete after four (4) innings (or 3½ if the home team has the lead) or when one hour and forty-five minutes (1 3/4) (105 minutes) were played. Any games falling outside of these situations are considered “no game” and shall be rescheduled. The game will be replayed at the point it was left off with the game picking up from there, with the exception of balls and strikes on the current batter.

Regular season games where the last completed inning resulted in a tie score, shall be cause for the awarding of one (1) point to each team. A win constitutes two (2) points and a loss, no (0) points.

During regular season there are no extra innings.

During the playoffs, complete games that are tied will be decided by playing extra innings. If extra innings cannot decide the issue before the curfew, weather, insufficient lighting call for suspended play the game will be replayed at the point it was left off with the game picking up from there with the exception of balls and strikes on the current batter.

During the playoffs, incomplete regulation tie games will use the last inning to decide the matter and if the last inning resulted in a tie score, then a suspended game will be called. In that case the two (2) teams will meet to play the game from exactly where it left off with lineups and batting orders the same, subject to rules of substitution. The suspended game will be completed before beginning any other games between the two (2) teams.

9. **Forfeiture**

A team with fewer than seven (7) players will forfeit the game. Even during the playoffs.

A double forfeiture will occur should both teams fail to field a minimum of seven (7) players.

10. **Pitchers**

At Mosquito a pitcher is allowed two (2) innings or six (6) outs, at all other levels, pitchers may pitch a maximum of three (3) innings or nine (9) outs.

One (1) pitch constitutes an inning.

Pitchers are allowed eight (8) pitches at the start of a game to warm up on the field and five (5) pitches at the beginning of a new inning. Relief pitchers are given eight (8) pitches.

Umpires have discretion to limit pitching warm-ups if he/she feels the intent is to delay the game.

The umpires may also award more warm-up pitches if in their opinion the situation warrants it.

If the pitcher is injured a player from the field must then pitch for a minimum of one (1) batter. The new defensive player must be substituted from the bench.

11. **Balks**

The balk rule is in force except at Mosquito. During regular season games, one (1) warning shall be issued per pitcher before calling a balk. During the playoffs no warning will be given.

In all cases, a noted balk will be explained to the pitcher and the coach prior to the next pitch.

12. **Visits to the Mound**

The coach may visit the mound a maximum of two (2) times per inning for each pitcher used in that inning.

A third (3rd) trip will result in a change of pitchers with no return to the pitching position for the balance of the game.

13. **Dropped Third Strikes**

At Mosquito only, an automatic out is recorded on a dropped third strike call with the batter not permitted to run.

At other levels the batter is permitted to run subject to occupied base rules.

14. **Leadoffs**

In all but Mosquito, leadoffs are allowed.

At Mosquito, a player may steal only once the ball crosses home plate.

At Mosquito, a base runner at third base cannot steal home.

In Mosquito, if a player leaves a base prior to the ball crossing the plate, the team receives one (1) warning per game. Subsequent violations will result in the runner being called out. During the playoffs, no warnings will be issued.

15. **Infield Fly Rule**

The infield fly rule applies to all levels.

Infield fly is completely at the discretion of the umpire when there are runners on first and second or bases loaded, with less than two (2) outs. The batter is out automatically if the ball stays fair. Runners may advance at will.

16. **Sliding**

Martingrove requires runners to slide or attempt to avoid making contact with a fielder, in an effort to reduce injuries. A player who maliciously runs into another player is to be declared out. The umpire shall determine whether contact was avoidable or unavoidable - whether the runner was trying to reach the base/plate or was attempting to dislodge the ball from the fielder. If a collision is flagrant, the runner is called out and ejected. The ball is declared dead. The fielder must have possession of the ball or obstruction must be called.

17. **Mercy Rule**

A team may score a maximum of five (5) runs for each inning it is at bat.

A mercy rule is in effect after three and a half (3-½) innings if the home team is winning or four (4) complete if the visiting team is winning. A fifteen (15) run lead will terminate the game. No coach shall push a coach of a losing team to continue on, when they are fifteen (15) runs behind and wish to stop.

18. **Protests and Reporting**

Protests can be made only based upon the incorrect interpretation of a rule not on questioning of umpired judgment.

Protest procedures are spelled out in the Martingrove By-laws which is on the Martingrove Baseball website - www.martingrove.ca

Notification, in writing, within forty-eight (48) hours, must be accompanied by a non-refundable Twenty-Five Dollar (\$25.00) Cheque.

A Protest Committee will be formed to hear the protest within forty-eight (48) hours of receipt of notification.

19. **Reporting**

At the end of the game, the home team coach has to sign the umpires pay stub. If the home team coach has left the field the visiting coach can sign the umpires pay stub.

It is the home team coaches' responsibility to call the scores in to the Conveners no later than the end of the week that the game is played.

19. **Midget Rules**

Midget is covered under Baseball Canada Rules.