

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

These Martingrove Baseball Rookieball Houseleague Rules apply to Rookieball 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, convenor, 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 Convenors 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

Mound - 44' Bases - 65'

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**

Starting Time - 6:15 p.m. Forfeit - 6:30 p.m. All warm-ups must be completed by 6:15 p.m. No new innings to start after 8:00 p.m. unless agreed to by the coaches prior to the first pitch. All players should arrive at the park no later than 6:00 p.m. The official time, upon which all decisions are made

regarding starting, stopping, setting of curfews, and any other time related issues, is based on the umpire's watch.

4. **Uniforms**

Uniforms consist of a team sweater, long pants and a cap. These should be worn by all players and coaches while participating in a game. **LONG PANTS MUST BE WORN - INCLUDING PRACTICES.**

Running shoes or shoes with molded rubber or plastic cleats may be worn. Shoes with metal cleats are prohibited.

The on deck batter, the batter and base runners must wear a prescribed protective helmet with flaps covering both ears. Chin straps are mandatory and will be worn as designed by the manufacturer. All catchers are required to wear a mask with throat protector, helmet, chest protector and shin guards. The pitcher is required to wear the prescribed helmet with the mask attachment.

5. **Equality of Playing Time**

During each game, all players must be rotated between the infield and outfield as equally as possible. No player can play the infield for a second time until all players have played the infield at least once. Throughout the course of the season players should have been given the opportunity to play all positions. No player will sit out.

6. **Call-ups**

Call-ups are permitted from a lower level of play (t-ball) only when coaches reasonably believe that the team will be unable to field a team of nine (9) players. If, after calling up a player, the team is able to field a team of nine (9) of its own players, the call-up must still play the game (for either team).

No call-ups are permitted during playoffs.

7. **Lineups**

A batting lineup must contain a minimum of seven (7) players in order to avoid a forfeited game (See Rule 9, Forfeiture).

Batting lineups are exchanged prior to the start of the game. All players eligible to play shall be listed by name and number. The starting lineup will be listed in order of the players batting order.

The batting lineup will be based on the team in the division having the most players assigned to their team and will remain the same throughout the game regardless of defensive rotations.

All players of each team who are in attendance at the game must be in the batting lineup. Only players listed in the batting lineup can play.

Players arriving after the game starts are placed as last batter in the lineup.

A player is considered to have batted out of order when they have gone to the plate instead of the correct player as indicated in the batting lineup, and the batting machine operator has made the first throw to that player.

If batting out of order is brought to the attention of the umpire after the first pitch it will result in that player being ruled an automatic out. The correct batter will enter the game with a count of 0 balls and 0 strikes.

8. **Regulation Game**

A regular season game has three (3) innings unless stopped by curfew, lack of light, weather conditions. Two and a half innings (2 ½) innings if the home team has the lead.

Any game 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 any current batter.

During the playoffs, complete games that are tied will be decided by playing another regulation game if extra innings cannot decide the issue before the curfew, weather, or insufficient lighting call for suspended play.

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**

Games that do not start within the allotted time (See Rule 3), will be forfeited subject to the discretion of the umpire.

A team with fewer than seven (7) players will forfeit the game. This rule does not apply during the playoffs. The team that forfeited gets zero (0) points; the other team gets two (2) points. The score is recorded as 6-0.

A double forfeiture will occur should both teams fail to field a minimum of seven (7) players each. Both teams get zero (0) points. The score is recorded as zero (0) to zero (0).

If an umpire rules that a coach is deliberately delaying a game, a warning is given to the offending coach. The warning is to inform the offending coach that the game is being unnecessarily delayed, and that any further unnecessary delay, at any time during the game, will result in forfeiture of the game.

10. **Pitching Machine**

The umpires, prior to the game starting, shall set up the pitching machine. Each coach can verify that

the machine has been set properly prior to the first pitch of each inning.

The machine speed shall be 40 Miles Per Hour.

In the event the machine is hit during the game, the umpire may readjust the machine.

The machine can be adjusted during the inning, if in the opinion of the umpire, it has gone out of adjustment. A coach may request the machine be reset after three (3) no pitches.

Strikes and no pitches will be called and the hitter may only proceed to the first base when the ball is put into play fairly.

If a ball that is hit dribbles to the pitching machine, outside of the circle, the pitcher is allowed to go in front of the machine to get the ball. Coaches are asked to discourage their players from picking up the ball within the playing circle too close to the machine as an injury may result.

If a ball goes through the pitching circle and does not touch the machine or the machine operator, it is a live ball.

If a ball lands in the pitching circle or hits the machine, the ball bucket or any adult in the playing field, then the ball is declared dead and the batter is awarded first base with the corresponding move of any base runners who may be forced to move. If this occurs on last batter, then the batter is out and all runs score from second base.

11. **Stoppage of Play**

Once the ball is hit the player will then run towards first base. Once a player picks up the ball he/she throws it to either a base player or back to the pitcher to stop the play.

12. **Local Rules**

At any point in the game if a player throws the ball out of play, all runners will advance one (1) base from the base they were at when the ball was thrown out of play.

In the case of the last batter, if the ball is thrown out of play, all runners score.

On the last batter, if the ball is thrown in and goes under or gets caught on the fence, all runs from second score.

In the event that the last batter of the offensive team is out on a fly ball, base runners must tag-up before leaving the base and are then permitted to score, subject to having to score prior to the ball being returned to the home plate. The ball must be returned to home plate on last batter to complete the inning, regardless if it is a fly ball.

The offensive team is allowed a coach on first and third base and one to operate the pitching machine. No coaches and/or parents are allowed on the field for the defensive team.

Once the batting line-ups have been exchanged the umpire takes charge of the game.

13. **Contact Rule**

In an effort to reduce injuries, Martingrove requires runners to slide or attempt to avoid making contact with a fielder. A player who, in the opinion of the umpire, could have avoided running into another player is to be declared out.

Infield players are not allowed to stand on the base line, thereby blocking players from running from base to base.

14. **Completion of Defensive Team**

The league wants effective use of time. All team members should hustle to get off the field at all times; again, umpires have discretion to deal with intentional delay of game situations.

15. **Points and Standings**

For the purposes of establishing team standings and playoff match-ups, points are awarded based on the outcome of each regular season game. The awarding of points in the rules that follow is based on regular season results.

The winning team is awarded two (2) points, and a losing team gets zero (0) points.

Where the last completed inning resulted in a tie score, one (1) point shall be awarded to each time.

For games that are forfeited, see Rule 9.

16. **Scoring**

The umpire will be calling strikes and no pitches. There will be no walks awarded. Each batter will receive five (5) strikes.

The entire team bats.

17. **Mercy Rule**

Intentionally Deleted.

18. **Leadoffs and Stealing**

Leadoffs and stealing are not allowed.

19. **Infield Fly Rule**

The infield fly rule is not applicable.

20. **Playoffs**

All teams play in the playoffs.

21. **Protests**

Protests, during the regular season, can be made only based upon the incorrect interpretation of a rule not on questioning of umpire's judgment.

Protest procedures are spelled out in the Martingrove by-laws, which are on the Martingrove Baseball website.

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 a protest within forty-eight (48) hours of receipt of notification of protest.

Protests, during playoffs, must be handled by a Playoff Rules Committee before the next game.

22. **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 Conveynor no later than the end of the week that the game is played.

JUST REMEMBER THESE ARE YOUNG CHILDREN AND THEY ARE HERE TO LEARN ABOUT BASEBALL AND HAVE FUN. THE DON'T WANT TO SEE US ARGUE OVER RULES. WHAT LESSON WOULD THEY BE LEARNING TO SEE US ARGUING WITH THE OFFICIALS.