

MARTINGROVE BASEBALL INC.

T-BALL PLAYING RULES

AS OF MAY 1, 2006

These Martingrove Baseball T-Ball Houseleague Rules apply to T-Ball unless noted otherwise.

T-ball is a game of baseball played in accordance with regular T-Ball rules with the incorporation of the rules contained herein.

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**

Bases are to be forty-eight feet (48') apart. Sixteen (16) large paces. Please do not short change the children for running the distance. A halfway point between all bases will be marked by the umpire.

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. No new innings to start after 8:00 p.m. 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 (blastball) only when coaches reasonably believe that the team will be unable to field a team of nine (9) players. Call-ups from Blastball must be five (5) years old by December 31st to be called up during the regular season. 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**

During the regular season each team will have a starting line-up of between seven (7) and fourteen (14) players, but if due to unavoidable circumstances either team has less than the other, but not less than seven (7), the game shall be played and the team with the less players will be allowed the same amount of bats by rotating the 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.

During play-offs the batting order must continue to be an equal number. Teams with even less than

seven (7) players are still allowed to play during the playoffs.

All players in attendance at a game in which their team is participating must be scheduled to play.

Before the game begins each team must present their batting order to each other, and advise the umpire when completed. (Before 6:30 p.m.) After the game begins, changes or additions to this line-up must be made before the umpire calls "Play Ball" for the first batter at the beginning of an inning, except in the case of an injury or sickness. All line-up changes must be reported to the umpire and the scorekeeper from the other team. NOTE: In the case of a player showing up too late to start the game, but before the start of an inning, he will be placed at the last batter position in the line-up. The other team will be allowed to readjust their line-up by one batter.

If batting out of order occurs, the batter that should have batted will bat next. COURTESY - The scorekeeper for each team should warn each other of this offence prior to the improper batter hitting the ball.

If at the time a game is scheduled to begin, a team does not have a minimum of seven (7) players, a maximum extension of fifteen minutes will be granted by the umpire before he/she declares the game forfeited to the non-offending team. A game declared forfeited will be recorded 5-0 for the non-offending team. In the event neither team can field seven (7) players, the game shall be re-scheduled.

8. **Regulation Game**

An official game will consist of two (2) complete innings. No innings will begin after 8:00 p.m. Curfew at 8:15 p.m. In regular season any two (2) or more completed innings where there is a tie shall be scored as such. In the event the umpire terminates the game before the end of at least two (2) complete innings, the game will not be considered a regulation game and will be re-played at the point it was left off with the score picking up from there. During playoffs, one (1) extra inning will be played if necessary until one (1) team has scored more runs at the end of a completed inning. If still tied and extra innings are still needed, after three (3) innings, each coach will pick five (5) players to hit. If after that inning is played, there is still a tie, each coach will pick another five (5) players to hit (not the same five (5) players, unless the team has run out of players) time and daylight permitting.

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. **Local Rules**

Each team shall have a catcher who shall play a position normally taken by the catcher behind home plate, far enough back so he/she does not interfere with the batter while batting. To ensure maximum learning for all positions, the coach must ensure that all players play an equal amount of innings in the outfield/infield or as catcher, no matter how strong/weak the player is at those positions.

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

The offensive team shall be allowed to have an adult (coach) at or near each base. Parents or coaches can not interfere with the game. They can not touch a ball or a player during a play. Parents have to stay behind the cage and the extended line from there.

The Tee has to be on home plate.

Once the ball is on the Tee, the coach has to be behind the fence. Only the batter, the catcher and the umpire are allowed to stand at home plate. The umpire will call "Play Ball" loud and clear. If the ball is hit off the Tee but is judged to be hit with insufficient force to go beyond the imaginary dead ball line (6 feet in front of the Tee), the umpire will call "Dead Ball" immediately. All runners will go back to their original base and the batter will try again. **THERE ARE NO LIMITS ON HOW MANY TIMES A PLAYER CAN TRY TO HIT THE BALL.** A ball must be beyond the Dead Ball line to be considered a fair ball.

11. **Stoppage of Play**

Once the ball is hit into the field 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. If the runners have cleared the half-way mark to the next base, they are advanced to that base; otherwise they have to return to the base they just passed.

If a player throws the ball to any base in an attempt to get the batter out and the ball is not caught, there will be no extra base given for an overthrow.

Two coaches will be allowed on the playing field on the grass (when their team is fielding) to instruct their own players. Parents are not allowed on the field at any time unless acting as an assistant coach at the request of a coach and/or assistant coach.

12. **Leadoffs**

Base runners cannot lead off (step off the bag) until the batter has hit the ball from the Tee. The umpire will tell the player and return him/her to the base. The coach and the player shall receive a reminder not to lead off.

13. **Last Batter**

In the case of the last batter, the out must be made at home plate to close the inning. Only the catcher must touch home plate with the ball in his/her possession and the ball must be thrown in from outside the dead ball line (No ball can be run in and handed off to the catcher). The inning is over once the last batter has been put out or made it to base and the play has been stopped.

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

On the last batter, if a parent behind the fence interferes with a play or with the ball rolling under the fence all runs 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.

14. **Infield Fly Rule**

The infield fly rule is not applicable.

15. **Contact Rule**

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

16. **Umpires**

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

The decisions of the umpire shall be final. However, the coaches of either team shall be entitled to ask permission to approach the umpire for an interpretation of the rules, at the end of an inning. The game will then proceed immediately with no further questioning. Parents are not allowed to ask an umpire for an interpretation of the rules.

The umpire is responsible for seeing that the Tee and bat gets moved after every hit, so any runner coming into home plate can touch the plate.

If a player running to a base gets hit by a batted ball the runner is out.

Only the umpire can call "Time".

It is the duty of the umpire, after he has been notified, to call out "Last Batter" (loud enough for both teams to hear). Failure to do so does not nullify the play.

17. **Completion of Defensive Team**

The umpire may terminate a game before completion for reasons of darkness, bad weather or dangerous field conditions, etc.

18. **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 team.

For games that are forfeited, see Rule 9.

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 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. THEY DON'T WANT TO SEE US ARGUE OVER RULES. WHAT LESSON WOULD THEY BE LEARNING TO SEE US ARGUING WITH THE OFFICIALS.