

# T-Ball League Rules

## A. Objective of T-Ball

The objective of the Wentworth Ball Program T-Ball Baseball League is to teach basic baseball skills and introduce players to the game of baseball in a manner that promotes an appreciation of good sportsmanship and fair play. This T-Ball league is intended to be an introduction to the game of baseball for young players with limited or no baseball experience. Players are instructed in the basic skills of batting, fielding and base running in this non-competitive league while learning rules that resemble those of baseball. Players are taught to bat at a ball that is safely pitched to them by their own coach and to use a tee if this is not achieved. Emphasis is always placed on having fun, player safety, and sportsmanship! Safety has the highest priority in this program.

## B. Coaches

- It is the responsibility of the coaches to provide leadership and organization, to teach fundamental baseball skills, to encourage voluntary cooperation and develop good rapport with players and their parents, to model good sportsmanship, and to observe all league policies and rules.
- Because of the instructional objectives of the program, every player will play in the field and bat at all times, regardless of how many players are present for the game.
- Typically, a team at bat will have coaches near 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> base to coach runners when the ball is hit, plus a coach to pitch to the batter. The team playing the field typically has 1 or 2 coaches standing in the short outfield to help position the defensive alignment.

## C. Umpires

Wentworth Ball Program will not provide an umpire for this league as scores are not kept. The coaches in the field will be responsible for making safe-out calls at the bases, for fly balls, tagging of base runners, foul balls, etc.

## D. Scorekeepers

- Since no scores are kept in T-Ball, there will be no scorekeepers.

## E. The Playing Field

- The playing field is set up to Little League official standards.

## F. The Game

- All games are to be three innings or 55-minutes whichever comes first. Because we do not have lights, games will be called at the end of the home team at-bat closest to the end of the time limit. Coaches must move their players on and off the field in a timely manner.
- There are no minimum numbers of players required for each game. Teams are allowed to play with any number of players who show up for games, except in extreme circumstances where there are not enough players to realistically field a team. This determination will be left to the coaches.
- All players will bat each inning and all players will play in the field each inning. Coaches in the field will assign players to the appropriate defensive positions with an attempt to have players at each base.
- Coaches will pitch to players underhand for three (3) pitches. If a player fails to hit one of those pitches, a coach will set up a tee for the player to hit from.
- Once a player hits a ball into play, they will run to first base only and stop there. Players will not advance to additional bases until the next player hits a ball into play. Players already on base will advance one base ONLY. The last batter will advance all the way around the bases and all base runners in front of this player will advance home on this play.
- Defensive players will be instructed on the proper way to get hitters and base runners out and will make every attempt to get outs each play. Overthrows are inevitable at this age and so base runners are not allowed

to advance on overthrows.

## **G. Safe Play**

- In order to assure safety of the players, the batter and all base runners must wear a batting helmet. A batter may not remove his helmet at any time after beginning his turn at bat, until he returns to the dugout. If a player removes his helmet while running to a base, the nearest coach should help them put it back on and instruct them to leave the helmet on at all times.
- Both T-ball and Little League bats may be used in this league. All bats, wooden, composite or aluminum must be clearly labeled by the manufacturer as a t-ball or little league bat. A “soft” or t-ball baseball will be used for each game.
- Coaches are strongly urged to maintain, with the help of parents, order on the bench. Players should remain behind the fences unless preparing to bat. No practice swings or “on-deck” batters are allowed.
- Should an injury occur, or appear to occur, the first coach who sees it should call an immediate time-out to attend to the player. Play will stop immediately. All players should sit on the ground where they were standing when the time-out is called. When play resumes, the coaches should determine where any base runners and/or batter should be fairly placed.

## **H. Scoring**

- There are no scores kept in T-Ball games.

## **I. Defensive Play: The Positions / Substitutions**

- All members of a team will play in the field on defense during games. There are six infield positions where coaches should try to position players: pitcher, 1<sup>st</sup> base, 2<sup>nd</sup> base, shortstop, 3<sup>rd</sup> base and catcher. Outfield positions are not as important as players rarely hit balls out of the infield, however coaches should assign players to positions as needed to fill gaps in the infield. Coaches are allowed to move or reposition players as needed throughout the game.
- Since young children are likely to become bored with play or have their attention focused elsewhere, coaches should pay particular attention to players at all times while in the field. Parents and assistants should help coaches maintain order in the field and encourage children to stay in the field and not leave during play. Should a child need to leave the playing field, a coach, parent or assistant should help the player off between plays if possible. Teams will not be penalized should a player leave the field.

## **J. Coach Pitcher**

- Each team must provide a pitcher from one of their coaches. This person will be designated the coach-pitcher for their team. In the event that a team’s coach cannot pitch, a team may designate the parent or guardian of one of their own players as a pitcher. Should no one from the parents/guardians be available to pitch, a coach from the opposing team may pitch.
- The coach-pitcher will take their position in front of batters between the pitching mound and home plate. Coach-pitchers may step back or forward as necessary to provide a quality pitch to his batter.
- The coach-pitcher should pitch underhand from either a standing or crouched position.
- The coach-pitcher must present the ball above his head to signify to the defense the ball is going to be pitched while looking to confirm that the defense is ready. Anyone from either team may call “Time Out” if they determine the defense not ready.
- Once a coach starts pitching an inning as the pitcher, he/she must attempt to finish the inning pitching unless injured or otherwise incapacitated.

## **K. Defensive Play: Ending the Play**

The defensive team should make every effort to make an out whenever possible, thus teaching baseball situations and skills.

- Once a batter reaches a base, play stops, regardless of where a defensive player throws a ball.

- All runners are allowed only one base, so defensive teams are not penalized for overthrows or missed balls.
- Defensive players should attempt to get hitters and base runners out each play by throwing to a base or tagging a runner, however, all base runners will remain on their respective base.

#### **L. Offensive Play: Batting**

- Batting orders are not critical, but coaches should assign an order and make all attempts to maintain this order.
- Each batter will be thrown three pitches. If a batter fails to hit on the third pitch, a coach will place a tee on home plate and set it to the appropriate height for a player to hit. Players are allowed as many swings as necessary to hit, but if a player has trouble making contact after several attempts, a coach should assist them in hitting a ball into play.
- Any player that catches a fly ball hit into the air will be congratulated but the runner will remain on first base. There is no infield fly rule. If a batted ball accidentally hits the coach-pitcher, play will continue, unless the coach or another player is injured on the play.
- Players should be instructed to lay a bat down and not throw it or carry it with them. Teams are not penalized if players fail to do this, but coaches should take these opportunities to instruct players.

#### **M. Offensive Play: Base Running**

- Base runners are allowed to advance to one base only for each play. Players may not advance to additional bases on overthrows or missed catches.

#### **N. Game Procedures and League Policies**

- Team jerseys should be worn for each game.
- Lightning requires immediate removal of all participants from the field. A rainstorm may interrupt or cause the postponement of a game. Games will not be postponed because of the threat of bad weather. If weather or field conditions are questionable, the Wentworth Ball Program officials will determine when a game is to be called and will notify the coaches who will notify their players. Rainouts will be rescheduled by the Wentworth Baseball Coordinator.
- Each team should line up on the base line in front of their dugout immediately following the game to shake hands with the opposing team. Good sportsmanship will be encouraged at all times.
- Profanity, abusive language, or any taunting, abusive bantering or baiting will not be tolerated from players, coaches or anyone on the Wentworth premises. Arguments over rules and especially judgment calls by umpires should be avoided at all times. In the event of a controversy, coaches should continue the game in a sportsmanlike manner and discuss the problem with the Wentworth Ball Program official after the game so that all rules can be clarified. Should a coach feel a call cost them the game, they may file a formal complaint with the Wentworth Ball Program Baseball director. A review of the game will be made and a final determination of the outcome will follow any investigation. The Wentworth Ball Program Baseball director will have the final say in any dispute.
- The safety of the players is the foremost concern of the Wentworth Ball program. As such, should there be any instance of a coach, parent or other adult physically or verbally abusing a player, that person will be asked to leave the premises immediately.