

## **2.0 Rules: Tee-Ball & Coach Pitch**

### **2.1 Eligibility**

All home-schooled, boys and girls between the ages of 5 and 12 (as of January 1) are eligible to participate in Family Homeschool baseball (FHB). The League Director may make exceptions to this rule at his discretion. Players become eligible on a first-come, first-served basis when registration materials and fees are submitted by the deadline designated each year by the League Director.

### **2.2 Code of Conduct**

Parents, coaches and players are encouraged to conduct themselves at all times in a manner glorifying to our Lord Jesus Christ. At least one parent is required to remain at the park during the entire practice/game session. In other words, parents may not drop off their children and then leave the park. All players shall wear their uniform, with shirts tucked in, at all times. The League Director has the authority to appoint and dismiss coaches and to implement and enforce regulations concerning player attire and conduct.

### **2.3 Rules of Play**

This section is not intended to give a comprehensive review of all the rules of baseball. Instead, some basic rules specific to T-ball and Coach Pitch will be presented. These rules are designed to help the games progress smoothly. Managers of opposing teams are allowed to modify the rules if both managers are in agreement.

**2.3.1 Teams** - A team consists of a minimum of 9 players. No team shall forfeit a game. In the event one team is short of players, the coach of that team may omit a position or may elect to borrow a player from the opposing team for defense only. This would not effect the borrowed player's status in his own team's batting lineup. The first position to be omitted is the catcher position. The second position to be omitted is the pitcher. A coach can only be used for playing the pitcher and catcher positions.

**2.3.2 Coaches** - Defensive coaches will be allowed between each base or wherever in the field necessary to help instruct his team. Offensive coaches should be used at first base, third base and at home plate to help with batting. Parents, not normally coaches, may be used for T-ball instruction in the field.

#### **2.3.3 Common Rules for T-Ball & Coach Pitch**

1. There is no penalty for batting out of turn.
2. There is no infield fly rule.
3. Base runners must stay in contact with the base until the ball is hit.
4. If a base runner passes a runner in front of him, he will be called out.
5. The base runner is out when:
  - a) an opposing player in possession of the ball tags the base (forced play) or the runner before the runner reaches the base. (Coaches should instruct players to tag runners below the shoulders.)

- b) A defensive player catches a fly ball in fair or foul territory before it touches another object or the ground.
  - c) The base runner is hit by the batted ball.
  - d) A base runner runs out of the running lane to avoid a tag by a defensive player.
  - e) Two players end up on the same base and one is tagged before going to either the next base or previous base without passing other runners.
6. Runners may tag up on a caught fly ball and advance one base.
  7. The game duration will be 1 hour, after about 30 minutes of practice/warm-up.
  8. Coaches or parents will act as umpires.
  9. A scorekeeper should be appointed to keep track of runs and number of hitters and outs for each inning.
  10. Bunting is not allowed.
  11. Thou shalt not steal - bases.

### **2.3.4 Special T-Ball Rules**

1. To be considered a fair ball, in play, a hit ball should go at least half-way to the pitcher's mound. A line using either chalk or a rope could be used for delineating this foul line. Alternatively, the umpire will rule whether or not the ball has traveled sufficient distance.
2. A player cannot strike out. If the child is having difficulty and taking an inordinately long time, the coach will help him to hit the ball.
3. Players should run only one base at a time and not advance on an overthrow.
4. A half-inning will be over when nine batters have batted or three outs have occurred, whichever comes first.
5. All players shall play the entire game, in the field and at bat.

### **2.3.5 Special Coach Pitch Rules**

1. Any fair ball is in play. Coaches filling in the catcher or pitcher positions may play the ball.
2. Players may advance only one base at a time, regardless of the distance the ball is hit, for the first 3 games, after that the player may advance as far as desired.
3. Runners may advance only one base on an overthrow.
4. Each coach will pitch to his own players. The manager may elect to pitch underhand or overhand based on the skill of the individual player.
5. There are no called strikes and balls. A player who swings and misses on the third strike is out. A player who hits three foul balls after his second strike is out. When the ball hits the coach pitcher, it will be a dead ball and not counted as a strike.
6. A half-inning will be over when nine batters have batted or three outs have occurred, whichever comes first.
7. Up to 12 players shall play in the field at one time. All players shall bat throughout the entire game. Each player shall play a minimum of 2 innings. (The games are time-limited to one hour so this may not always be possible. Keep track in order to adjust the playing time for the following week).

### **2.3.6 General Suggestions**

Each coach should implement a batting order system which is equitable and ensures that each player gets to bat an equal number of times. Perhaps the best way to do this would be to keep the same batting order all season and just make sure that the batter who was due up next when the game ended is the first batter up in the following week's game. In addition, managers should try to ensure that fielding positions are assigned equitably and that each player gets a turn at each position. Managers may wish to implement a rotation system, changing positions each inning, once per game or every game as the coach thinks best.

## **2.4 Scoring**

Coaches are encouraged to appoint a scorekeeper (involve parents) for each game. Alternatively, the coaches from both teams can keep track of runs and verify the correct score after each half-inning. In the event that time is called in the middle of an inning, the score at the last completed inning will be the final score of the game.

## **2.5 Safety Considerations**

Make sure catchers have all necessary protective gear and have donned it properly (coach pitch only). Only players with advanced skills should be allowed to play the catcher position. A catcher must be wearing a protective cup. The League does not supply cups.

Batters, batters on-deck, and runners shall all wear helmets if there is enough equipment.

Check the field for broken bottles, cans, etc., before play begins.

Have players remove jewelry and other items which might be dangerous.

Sliding is not to be encouraged. Head first sliding is not allowed.

Involve parents to help monitor safety issues.

The biggest danger for this age group is being hit by a ball or a bat. Instruct players to only throw to another player who is looking directly at him. Thrown bats are common after the ball is hit - caused by the excitement of actually hitting the ball. Instruct players to drop the bat after hitting the ball. Keep players "on-deck" sufficient distance away from home plate.