

Hopedale Youth Baseball Association Coaches Guide - Major League

OBJECTIVES:

- To have fun.
- For everyone to participate.
- To learn fundamentals and improve skills in baseball.
- To learn good sportsmanship.
- To provide a safe learning environment for all players.

CONDUCT:

All adults, both **coaches and parents**, are expected to show good sportsmanship.

Be as supportive as possible, Praise them for making a good effort as well as when they do well.

Opponents should be treated respectfully. Do not allow your players to use abusive or discriminating language. Correct children who laugh, make fun, or make negative comments toward other children. At the end of the game both teams line up and shake hands. **'Good game'** or some other like praise should be used. Instruct players not to use negative comments such as 'bad game.'

SCHEDULE:

Major League games start **promptly** at 5:30. Games are typically scheduled Monday through Thursday and 12:00, 2:00 pm, on Sunday afternoons. Please refer to schedule for specific dates and times. For cancellations and other scheduling policies see scheduling guidelines.

ROSTERS:

Team rosters are determined by a draft of all eligible players. All new players will be rated at tryouts and players returning to league will be evaluated by coaches prior to draft, preferably at end of previous season. All coaches will participate in draft with League Coordinator as facilitator and two members of the board who have no affiliation with particular league. The coordinator and two members of the board will vote to resolve any conflict that coaches cannot agree upon. See draft guide.doc.

PARTICIPATION:

As stated above a primary objective is to provide all players with an opportunity to participate as much as possible. Coaches should make every effort to allot playing time as equally as possible. In the Major League, position play is more restricted than lower leagues. Ball players begin to develop specific skills associated with certain positions and moving players around is not as prevalent as in the lower Leagues. Players should be given the opportunity however, to try different positions if they are willing and able. **Players must play a minimum of four innings per any one game and everyone must sit out an equal amount of time.**

COACHING:

Coaches in Major League must keep the objectives of the league in mind. First and foremost kids should be having fun. Please be as positive as possible and refrain from negative reinforcement. No yelling or berating players for mistakes, rather instruct players on what they can do to improve! Secondly we want our coaches to teach the fundamentals of baseball. Coaching does not mean carrying around a clipboard and keeping track of the score. Enlist the help of another parent to keep track of who is playing and where. We want the coaches teaching during games as well as practices. There are many situations that occur during games that are hard to duplicate in practice. Explain to your players what to do in these situations. In every play in baseball, players should be made to think ahead; what to do if the ball is hit to them, how many outs, whether to tag up, etc. It is up to the coaches to keep the players on their toes! Remember be **active and positive!!**

GENERAL RULES:

In addition to the following, the Major League follows the general rules of Little League Baseball.

- Pitchers can pitch a maximum of 6 innings per week. The week begins on each Sunday and ends on the following Saturday.
- If a pitcher throws one pitch it is considered an inning.
- Anything over 3 innings requires a minimum of three days rest.
- No pitcher can pitch on consecutive days (No Back to Back), even if the days fall in different weeks.
- Only the starting pitcher is allowed to return to pitch after being removed and this pitcher can only return to pitch once in a game.
- A coach must remove the pitcher on the second visit to the pitcher in one inning. A coach must remove the pitcher on the third visit to the pitcher in a game.
- Players should avoid contact into 2nd, 3rd and Home whenever there is a play at the base. Failure to avoid contact will be an Umpire decision to call the base runner out. The Umpire's call is not subject to protest. Head first slides into an advancing base are not allowed. The player will be called out. A player may slide head first when returning to a base.

EQUIPMENT:

- It is the responsibility of each coach to keep the equipment for the entire season. Please do not lend out equipment for any purpose. Equipment is to be used for your teams games and practices only. Each coach will be provided with a checklist at the beginning of season which indicates what they have received for equipment. Please check this list to insure it's accuracy. At the end of the season this list will be checked to make sure that all equipment has been returned.
- Please regard equipment as if it were your own. It is the single largest expense of running the league and we count on the coaches to help keep it in good condition. If you have equipment which is showing wear and tear please notify the League Coordinator. If necessary the League Coordinator will repair or replace.
- Baseballs should not be passed out after games. Please retain the game balls to use for practice. Please turn in all baseballs you have left at the end of season. These are then used to begin the next seasons practices.

SAFETY:

- **Helmets with cages will be provided by HYBA and available for all players. Players and parents who provide their own baseball helmet will have the option to play without the cage. Souvenir helmets are not allowed.**
- The League maintains complete First Aid essentials at the Concession Stand as well as ice and ice packs. The League also has a cellular phone available at all games in case of emergency.

TRAVEL TEAMS:

One of the responsibilities of a coach is to select players for summer travel teams. Coaches have an obligation to watch as many games as possible in order to evaluate players at each age level. Please review the Travel Team Selection guidelines for details of selection process.

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