

Hopedale Youth Baseball Association

Coaches Guide - Senior 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:

Senior League games start **promptly** at 5:30pm on weeknights. Games are scheduled Monday through Thursday and 1:00, 3:00 or 5:00 on Sunday. Fridays are reserved for make up games. 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.

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 Senior League, position play is more restricted than in Junior League. Ball players begin to develop specific skills associated with certain positions and moving players around is not as prevalent as in the younger age groups. 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.** In the event a player does not play his or her four scheduled innings because of time or weather, the coach will start that player in the team's next game.

COACHING:

Hopedale Youth Baseball Association Coaches Guide - Senior League

Coaches in Senior 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 how to correctly perform the skill. 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 Senior League follows the general rules of Little League Baseball.
- Pitchers can pitch a maximum of 2 innings per game and 6 innings per week..
- If a pitcher throws one pitch it is considered an inning.
- Pitchers will be replaced after four consecutive walks or a total of 6 walks per inning.
- No pitcher can pitch on consecutive days.
- Pitchers will be replaced after hitting 3 batters.
- Stealing: First half of the season, runners can advance if the ball passes *away* from the catcher and remains in play. The runners may advance up to ONE BASE ONLY, but not to HOME PLATE. The second half of the season Little League Rules will be in effect.
- Umpires: League coaches and assistant coaches will be scheduled to umpire either behind the *mound or plate* (Ump's discretion) without receiving compensation.
- Runners must avoid contact on all plays. At the umpire's discretion a player may be called out for making contact with a defensive player.
- No head first sliding unless going back to a base.
- A maximum of six runs per ½ inning is allowed. The only exception is the 6th inning during which there is no run limit.
- Tied games: Games can end in a tie. If extra innings interfere with the next game on a Sunday, the game will be stopped.
- No standings will be kept.
- Playoffs: A playoff round will be scheduled at the close of the season. Coaches are expected to maintain an atmosphere that is fun for the children and are cautioned to curtail competitiveness which is not congruent with the league's objectives.

EQUIPMENT:

- It is the responsibility of each coach to help maintain 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. Damaged equipment that may not serve it's designed safety function should not be used. Damaged equipment should be promptly reported to a Hopedale Youth Baseball Board member so that necessary equipment replacement can be made as soon as possible. The equipment will be stored in a lock box behind the tee-ball field during the season. For safety reason, this box must remained closed and locked at all times except when removing or storing equipment.
- 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 see 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 season's practices.

Hopedale Youth Baseball Association Coaches Guide - Senior League

SAFETY:

- Safety: The league makes available at every game a safety jacket if players wish to wear them. Please instruct parents that the coaches will not force players to wear them; that is up to the parents.
- 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.
- Caged Batting Helmets: It is mandatory that every batter will wear a batting helmet with a cage. If any player refuses to wear a caged (masked) helmet, they will not be permitted to play or practice.

TRAVEL TEAMS:

One of the coach's responsibilities 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.