

The Rules for playing T-Ball in the Bloordale House League shall be the rules of the Ontario Baseball Association, except as where amended by the BBL.

SETTING UP

A regulation game will consist of 3 complete innings. If darkness prevents the completion of three innings the game shall be considered complete provided two innings have been completed.

Each team will need a minimum of eight (8) players. All players are in the field (there are no sit-outs). No changing of field positions during an inning except in the case of injury or for safety concerns if an infielder is unable to pay adequate attention.

The Manager must give a copy of his/her batting line-up to the opposing team prior to the game. The batting order must be followed for each inning. Any player refusing to bat is considered "out" and any player arriving late is to be added to the end of the line-up.

Rotate the line-up so that every child has a chance to play every position. No player shall play the same infield position twice in the same game and every player shall play the outfield at least once in each game. In the event that a team fields fewer than 12 players, it will be necessary to allow one or more players to remain in the infield on consecutive innings. Under no circumstances should any player play the same infield position twice in the same game.

Base distance is approximately 45 feet between each base. The pitcher's rubber is as laid on the field or on the "encroachment line" (see below for definition).

Each team shall keep score. The home team's score sheet will be the official score sheet of that game, however, the respective scorekeepers are encouraged to check with each other after every half inning to ensure agreement and have any issues resolved at that time by the umpire. Both coaches from each game are to e-mail the convenor with the game results as soon as possible.

Convenor: Brent Niedbala 416-207-0456 bniedbala@sympatico.ca

GETTING STARTED

The home team will set up and take the field first. All infielders must be behind the "encroachment line" until the ball is hit. The "encroachment line" is the imaginary line from 1st base to 3rd base.

All outfielders must be on the grass until the ball is hit.

A maximum of 3 adults may be on the grass to assist the defensive team. They may call time out and come into the infield to position a player but must return to the outfield before the umpire puts the ball in play.

The home plate umpire (a coach of the batting team) starts each play by shouting, "Play ball."

If the batted ball does not cross the "dead ball line", the umpire shall call "dead ball" and the batter will be given another chance. The "dead ball line" runs in an arc from the 1st base line to the 3rd base line approximately 20 feet from home plate. After a reasonable number of "dead balls", the umpire will announce that, "The next ball is in play," and the fielders must make a play on the ball.

In T-Ball there shall be no pitching to the batter, therefore there will be no "base on balls" awarded. There is no bunting and the "infield fly" rule does not apply. If a fielder intentionally drops a fly ball or line drive, when 1st base, or 1st and 2nd base are occupied, the "force" is removed and the base runner must be tagged. The batter is not declared out.

ENDING PLAY

A base runner is "out" when:

- a) He or she is tagged;
- b) The base is tagged on a force play;
- c) The ball is caught in the air (fly-ball – applies to batter only);
- d) He or she runs off of the base-line to avoid a tag; or
- e) He or she interferes with a batted ball.

Given there are no extra bases awarded for overthrows (details further on), all hits in the infield are singles for the batter. All runners act as they would in regular baseball but may only advance a maximum of one base on an infield hit. Defensive players should be encouraged to complete the play even if the runner has already been declared safe to help foster baseball knowledge/skill. Following the completion of the play at the chosen base, the baseperson throws the ball to the catcher to end the play.

If the hit travels to the outfield (the grass), the ball is live and the batter and runners may continue to advance until the ball is returned to the infield. Once the ball is in the infield (it does not have to be under the control of a defensive player), the play is dead. Runners may continue to advance to the next base (in peril) if they are already more than half way, otherwise the umpire will return them to the base from which they left (no peril).

LAST BATTER

The offensive team's turn at bat ends when:

- a) The last batter has hit the ball and all runners have scored;
- b) The catcher touches home plate with the last batter's fair hit ball in his/her possession;
- c) The last batter's fly ball is legally caught and there are no runners on the bases.

After the last batter hits successfully, the play is to home plate. No play can be made on the base runners. The runners have to score prior to the ball being legally returned to home plate. The ball must be thrown over the "dead ball line". If a defensive player carries the ball over this line, he/she must go back outside the line and throw the ball to the catcher. Only the catcher can step on the plate with the ball in his/her possession to end the inning. If the ball is not thrown in this way or the play completed by anyone other than the catcher stepping on the plate, then all the runners score. If the ball hit by the last batter is caught as a fly-ball, the batter is out but the base runners can still score (without "tagging up") so the defensive team must still play the ball to home plate.

In the event that the last batter or any base runner during the last batter play is obstructed by any defensive player while running the bases, it shall be the discretion of the umpire as to how far he/she would have advanced had there been no such obstruction.

A run does not count on the last batter play when a runner:

- a) Reaches home plate after it has been legally touched by the catcher;
- b) Has led off – regardless of whether he/she reaches home plate safely;
- c) Interferes with the catcher making a legal play.

OTHER RULES AND PRACTICES

In the event of an over-throw, the base runners will be given the base that they were approaching. No extra bases will be awarded for an over-thrown ball. This is so the fielders will not be penalized for attempting a throw, which is the baseball skill we are trying to teach them. So please, encourage your players to always try and make a play.

On last batter, if a ball is thrown past the front of the backstop and out of the playing field this shall result in an automatic home-run and all base runners will score. The ball will be considered to have gone out of bounds if it crosses an imaginary line extending out from the posts of the backstop fence parallel to the 1st and 3rd base lines or enters a dug-out. This is to keep the children from retrieving a ball that is close to the benches and all the players and equipment. The same rule applies if the ball travels under the backstop so we don't have children cutting themselves by reaching under the fence. We want to try and avoid accidents.

The players are to be strongly encouraged to throw the ball to make a play as this is the skill they will need as they progress through the baseball ranks. There should be no running down of players (unless the ball is fielded close to the runner) and no players tagging bases when a defensive player is on the base ready to receive a throw. There should be no rolling the ball to a player and no underhand throwing. A runner shall be declared "safe" following an "out" resulting from an underhand throw or a rolled ball beyond a reasonable, say, six foot distance, where one would expect an underhand throw in real baseball.

The situation arises each year with the better players not trusting their team-mates to field the ball. One player taking over the whole infield will not work in the older divisions so please discourage this type of play. Again, where the ball is played well outside a fielder's normal position (i.e. stolen from another player), the runner will be declared "safe" regardless of the outcome of the play.

A base runner hit by a batted ball is declared "out". All other runners (including the batter) complete the play as normal.

No base runner shall take a lead-off from the base he/she is on. When any runner has taken a lead-off, the umpire shall indicate same. Play is permitted to continue and all runners are in jeopardy. At the end of the play any "outs" will stand and the runner who led-off will also be declared "out".

SEASON STANDINGS

Points will be awarded as follows: 2 points for a win, 1 point each for a tie, and 0 points for a loss. Standings can be followed on the website: bloordalebaseball.org which will be maintained by the webmaster and the convenor.

BALL PARK ETIQUETTE

Keep the score to yourself so that there will be no teasing of opposing players. No one should climb the fences into someone's backyard to retrieve a stray ball. Clean up after the game (i.e. garbage on ground, rake the gravel if needed). Players should sit on the bench while waiting for their turn to bat.

Players should cheer for their teammates. Mocking an opponent, a teammate, a coach, an umpire or fans will not be tolerated. Encourage good sportsmanship! All comments from coaches, parents, and other teammates should be positive at the T-Ball level.

OTHER SAFETY ISSUES

Have the fielders hold their positions on last batter until all the runners arrive at home - even if the out has already been made. Encourage runners to round the bases even if the play has been made.

Keep an eye on the bats. Players shouldn't be swinging them wildly and must only have a bat in hand if they are "at bat" or if they are well away from others and accompanied by a coach or parent. There are sometimes tiny siblings running around and we don't want anyone to get hurt.

Each team receives one warning per game on the first thrown bat. Following that, any player on that team throwing a bat is automatically declared out. Coaches must take the child aside and clearly explain the safety risk of a thrown bat.

Lock the equipment box after all the equipment is out so the lid cannot be lifted. It is heavy and does not always stay open by itself.

During the regular season, the coach of the team at bat will be the umpire (exception in Mississauga where there may be a paid umpire). After the ball is hit, the umpire shall pick up the bat and remove the tee from home plate to allow the runners and the catcher to step on the plate safely. The umpire shall ensure that before the ball is hit, the catcher is standing well away and facing the batter and all infielders are focused on the batter.

For T-Ball a "safety base" is used at first base (exception in Mississauga). This bag is two bases in one: a regular white base with an orange "safety base" beside. The bag is set out on first base line about 45 feet from home plate with the orange "safety base" on the foul side of the line and the white base on the fair side of the line. Runners must tag the orange "safety base" when there is a play made at first base. The defensive player at first base must tag the white base. This is to prevent collisions at the base. Note that if the runner will be continuing to second base, he/she may tag the white base. Once the player has tagged the "safety base" he/she may now move to the white base for the next batter. On infield hits (i.e. singles) teach the players to run through the orange base as in real baseball.