

WINTER PARK OPTIMIST CLUB BASEBALL PROGRAM

Ground Rules for Major League

Effective March 1, 2015

THE DIVISIONS

Should the Major League field more than ten teams in the spring season, then the League will be divided into two divisions. The divisions will be divided so that each division has the same number of teams if there is an even number of teams in the League. If there are an odd number of teams in the League, then one division will have one more team than the other division. Assignment of teams to a division is made by and at the sole discretion of the Baseball Commissioner.

PRE-GAME

Managers are to exchange line-ups at the pre-game meeting with the umpire. Each team's line-up should include all players who are present and provide each player's first and last names as well as each player's number. See the TEAM OFFENSE rules below regarding the continuous batting order. Infield may only be taken when there is sufficient time for both teams to take infield. Both teams are to be allotted the same amount of time (not to exceed ten [10] minutes each) for infield with the visiting team taking infield first. When possible, managers should get permission and instructions from the umpire prior to taking infield.

UMPIRES

Two (2) umpires per game.

REGULATION GAMES

Regulation games will be two (1) hours and forty-five minutes or six (6) innings, whichever occurs first. No new inning will begin if the final out of the preceding inning is recorded after two (1.5) hours. All games must end by 9:45 P.M. as the lights shut off at 10:00. If at the absolute end time (9:45), the game is not complete, then the results at the end of the last completed inning are recorded as the results of the game.

THE HOME TEAM KEEPS THE OFFICIAL BOOK

The home team is responsible for keeping the official book and pitching ledger reflecting the number of innings each pitcher pitched in the game. A pitcher who throws one pitch in an inning is considered to have pitched one inning. The scorekeeper for the visiting team should firm both the score and the pitching ledger with the scorekeeper for the home team after each game.

PLAYER MINIMUM PLAY RULE

All players must play at least 2 full innings in the field. Continuous batting order. A violation of the rule will result in a forfeit by the violating team as well as a one (1) game suspension for the manager. A second violation will result in the suspension of the manager for the remainder of the season including the post-season tournament.

Managers should be cognizant that the PLAYER MINIMUM PLAY RULE is enforced regardless of the number of innings played.

PLAYER SUBSTITUTION RULE

The league uses free and unlimited substitution for defensive positions other than pitcher.

Once a pitcher leaves the position of pitcher, he cannot re-enter the game as pitcher.

TEAM DEFENSE

The rules of Babe Ruth Baseball control.

PITCHING LIMITATIONS

The tournament rules of Babe Ruth Baseball apply whereby a player may not pitch more than 6 innings every two games. A player is considered to have pitched an inning if at least 1 pitch is thrown. Once a pitcher leaves the position of pitcher, he may not return to the position of pitcher.

TEAM OFFENSE

The rules of Babe Ruth Baseball control.

50/70 RULE MODIFICATIONS

Stealing and leading off is allowed.

Dropped third strikes are live balls and the runner is permitted to advance to first base if the base is unoccupied. For an out to be recorded, the runner must be tagged out or the ball must be thrown to the base in advance of the runner.

Balks by the pitcher shall be called at the judgment of the umpire. In the case of a balk by the pitcher in which no harm to a runner has occurred, the umpire will give the pitcher a warning. Each pitcher will receive one such warning per game. In the event a pitcher commits a balk while making a defensive play against an advancing runner, the umpire shall call "dead ball" and award the runner the next base. The pitcher's mound shall be moved back so that the rubber is 50' from home plate.

TEN RUN MERCY RULE

Any team leading by 10 runs at the end of 4 or 5 innings of play or 3 % or 4 % innings if the home team is ahead, will be declared the winning team and the game will end.

TIE GAMES

Tie games stopped because of the time limit will be continued on the first available make-up day. The rules of Babe Ruth Baseball control.

PROTESTS

Managers may protest a game by notifying the umpire that the game is being protested prior to the next pitch after the call that is being disputed. A Protest Committee comprised of three (3) members of the Baseball Committee will rule protests on at the time of the protest. The Protest Committee may consult with both managers as well as the umpire in order to gain an understanding of the event(s) that lead to the disputed call. The ruling of the Protest Committee is final. Judgment calls may not be protested. If a Protest Committee consisting of three (3) members of the Baseball Committee cannot be assembled at the time of a protest, then the game will continue from the point of protest. If the protesting team loses the game then the manager of the protesting team is to notify the Minor League Commissioner within twenty-four (24) hours after the protest that a protest has been made. As soon as possible after receiving notice of a protest, the Minor League Commissioner will convene a Protest Committee to hear the protest. The Protest Committee may consult with both managers as well as the umpire in order to gain an understanding of the event(s) that lead to the disputed call. If the protest is upheld then the game will resume from the point of protest with the rules of Babe Ruth Baseball controlling play. All protests must be submitted to the Protest Committee along with a protest fee of fifty dollars (\$50.00). If the protesting team prevails then the protest fee is returned. If the protesting team loses the protest then the protest fee becomes the property of the Winter Park Optimist Club.

FORFEITS

Each team must have at least eight players in order to have an official game. If one team is unable to field a team with at least eight players then the other team wins the game by forfeit. If both teams are unable to field a team with at least eight players then both teams are given a loss in the league standings. If both teams are unable to field a team with at least eight players in the post-season tournament then both teams are eliminated from the post-season tournament.

TRYOUTS

Administration of the Major League player tryouts is the responsibility of the Major League Commissioner and will be conducted by the Minor League Commissioner and the Minor League managers under the direction of the Baseball Committee. The Winter Park Optimist Club will furnish the necessary equipment to conduct all tryouts. Players are encouraged to wear baseball cleats to tryouts and bring their own glove(s) and bat(s).

The Major League Commissioner will have a meeting that must be attended by the manager of each team in the Major League immediately prior to tryouts at which time each manager will be provided with a list of all players who have signed up to participate in the Major League. All players who are returning to the Major League from the prior spring season will be identified on the list as a returning player as those players will not be trying out.

If a team does not have a manager by the time tryouts are held, the Major League Commissioner will appoint an acting manager to evaluate and keep a record of the players who participated in tryouts.

Tryouts will be conducted for all eligible players who did not participate in the Major League the preceding spring season. All new players must attend tryouts to be eligible for the draft. Returning players who played in the Major League the preceding spring season will not try out. While the sponsorship/name of a team may change, all players returning to the Major League from the preceding spring season will automatically be placed back on the same roster that they were on the preceding spring.

PLAYER DRAFT

The Major League player draft is designed to regulate and keep record of player assignments in each league. The Major League player draft will be conducted at a place and time so designated by the Baseball Committee. Only a representative(s) of the Baseball Committee, managers, coaches, or others specifically authorized by the Baseball Committee or by the Board will be allowed to attend the Major League player draft. Only managers or acting managers who have been approved by the League Commissioner will be allowed to make player selections at the player draft. The draft order is to be in reverse of the order of the final standings from the preceding Major League spring season. Any tie(s) in the final standings from the preceding Major League spring season are to be broken by a coin flip immediately prior to the Major League draft. The teams will draft from top to bottom, bottom to top. The names of all non-protected players who did not tryout and who are not a returning player are put into a hat to be drawn. Once all eligible players who attended tryouts have been drafted then the team with the next selection will draw first from the hat and the process will continue in the same selection order until all the names in the hat have been drawn.

The child (ran) of the manager may be protected in the Major League draft. Unless the Child(ran) is/are returning to the same league as they played on the preceding spring season, the child(ran) of all managers must tryout. Each child of a manager will be "rated" by the other league managers immediately prior to the draft via a group consensus. If a manager has one child eligible for the draft then the child is protected through the second round unless the child is "rated" as a lower round draft choice in which case the child is protected through the round the child is rated. For example, if the child of a manager is rated as either a first or second round choice then the child is protected through the second round. Alternatively, if the child of a manager is rated as a sixth round choice then the child is protected through the sixth round. If the child of a manager who is required to do so does not try out then the child is protected through the second round. In the event a team has more than one protected player, the second round limit rule may be suspended and the protected player can be assigned to the first round. Any child of a manager who is not selected by the manager in the protected round becomes available to all teams beginning with the selection immediately following the last protected pick of the manager who did not select their child.

TROPHIES

In addition to a team trophy, individual trophies will be awarded to each player on the roster of the Major League post-season tournament champion.

Immediately prior to closing ceremonies, the Major League managers will nominate one player from their team that they believe displayed the best sportsmanship during the season.

ALL STAR MANAGERS

Managers for the all-star teams will be selected based on the criteria as set forth by the baseball committee and agreed to by the Winter Park Optimist Board. This criterion is based on overall sportsmanship and positive support of the entire Optimist club program.

MAKE-UP GAMES

The Baseball Committee will attempt to reschedule all incomplete games and games that are cancelled as a result of unforeseen circumstances on the next available date. There may be occasions when games are either not rescheduled on the next available date or not rescheduled at all. The rules of Babe Ruth baseball apply to all make-up games.

POST-SEASON TOURNAMENT

The post-season tournament will be played pursuant to a division format. The teams in each division will play a single elimination tournament with the winner of each division playing in the Major League championship game.

LEAGUE TIES

1. Two teams tied:
 - A. Head to Head;
 - B. Fewest combined runs given up in all games between the two tied teams;
 - C. Most combined runs scored in all games between the two tied teams; and
 - D. Coin flip

2. Three or more teams tied:
 - A. Highest winning percentage against tied teams
 - B. If two teams are left then go to the two team tie breaker above. If more than two teams are left then go to fewest combined runs given up in all games between the tied teams
 - C. If two teams are left then goes to the two team tie breaker above. If more than two teams are left then go to the most combined runs scored in all games between the tied teams.
 - D. If two teams are left then goes to the two team tie breaker above. If more than two teams are left then coin toss