

## Clarkson Lorne Park T Ball Association

### House League Playing Rules

#### Junior Division



The following rules are intended to cover play in the Clarkson Lorne Park T Ball Association T Ball league. Unless otherwise stated, the rules apply to all divisions.

They are intended to maximize play by all players.

#### 1-1 The Game

T Ball is a game of baseball under the direction of a coach under the authority of an umpire or umpires on a recommended T ball field. In the absence of an umpire, coaches may act as umpires.

It is designed to get young people interested in the game of baseball by stressing and maintaining active participation of all players; with mandatory use of all players at a game.

#### 1-2 Insurance

It is recommended, but not mandatory, that children be covered by 12-month accident insurance, similar to that available from the schools.

#### 1-3 Players

Team rosters will be provided by the league organizers. Junior teams may use substitutes from Mites teams during the summer.

Use of substitutes in the September tournament requires the convenor's approval.

#### 1-4 Field Decorum

- The actions of the players, managers, coaches, umpires and league officials must be above reproach
- The use of alcohol, tobacco, or illicit drugs in any form is prohibited on the playing field, benches or in dugouts

- Players or coaches while participating in a game are not permitted to deliberately harass or direct discourteous remarks to the officials or any member of the opposing team
- Managers, coaches, players or spectators engaged or persisting in conduct contrary to the spirit, principles and objectives of good sportsmanship in T Ball, shall receive a single warning from the umpire/coaches/convenor. If the behaviour continues, the offender(s) will be asked to leave the game and field.

## 2. EQUIPMENT

### 2-1 Helmets

Helmets must be worn when the player is at bat, in pitcher's position, while running the bases, while in the batter's box and while acting as catching.

Cages on helmets are mandatory for catcher/pitcher positions.

For health reasons, hats should be worn under helmets.

### 2-2 Footwear

Recommended footwear is good fitting running shoes. Non-metal cleats are optional. For player safety, sandals are discouraged from being worn on the playing field.

### 2-3 Personal Protective Equipment

It is recommended that suitable athletic protection including jocks/jills **and mouth guards?** be worn by all players; however, this may **(is?)** be left to the discretion of the parents.

### 2-4 Bats

Aluminium regulation t ball bats will be supplied by the league.

## 3. THE PLAYING FIELD

### 3-1 Base Distances

The base distances are 50 ft. in Junior T ball.

### 3-2 The Pitcher's Rubber

The pitcher's rubber is located on the imaginary diagonal line running from 1<sup>st</sup> to 3<sup>rd</sup> base.

### 3-3 The Infield

The line dividing the infield playing area from the outfield in seniors has a radius of 40 feet from the centre of the imaginary line from 1<sup>st</sup> to 3<sup>rd</sup> base

### 3-4 The Batting Lines/Box

The “batting lines/box” is two lines drawn on the sides of the plate behind which the batter must stand to hit the ball. These lines are not normally placed on the field but may be marked in by the umpire.

### 3-5 Playing Line

The playing line is an imaginary line running directly from 1<sup>st</sup> to 3<sup>rd</sup> base which is a guide line for the umpire to distinguish a fair hit or dead ball. The playing line is approximately at the pitcher’s position.

### 3-6 A Fair Hit Ball

A legally batted ball that in the plate umpire’s opinion will or could have firmly crosses the playing line (*Rule 3-5*) in fair territory, even if it is fielded before crossing the line.

### 3-7 A Dead Hit Ball

A legally batted ball that, in the plate umpire’s opinion, does not have enough momentum to firmly cross the playing line. The umpire should call **dead ball** as quickly as possible after the ball hits the ground.

If the ball is caught in flight before crossing the line, the out stands as the catch makes the play a live ball.

Players are permitted to continue to try to hit the ball until such time as they make adequate contact with the ball to have it cross the playing line or in the event that a player is

unable to bat the ball over the playing line after 3 fair hit attempts the umpire will declare that the fair hit ball is in play and the infielders will be allowed to move closer from their normal infield positions.

### 3-8 Bunting

When the batter does not attempt to hit the ball firmly or purposely chop swings downward at the ball, it is considered bunting and the ball is dead even if it crosses the playing line.

### 3-9 A Fielder’s Choice (calling time)

When any defensive infield player has **control** of the ball **in the infield area** and, in the judgement of the plate umpire there is no attempt to make a play on any of the base runners, time will be called. The base runners, in the judgement of the umpires, will be held on the base they last occupied or the unoccupied base they were approaching when time was called.

Outfielders should be making a play to the infield.

A player is not required to raise the ball above his head to get a time call from the umpire. However, should the player do so, time should be called. The defensive player will not be forced to make a play by the umpire regardless of the position of the base runners.

The fielder’s choice rule only applies when the ball has been hit to the outfield.

For example, the ball must be returned to the infield area and be in the possession of a player in the infield area. If a throw from the outfield is an attempt to make a force or tag play at any base, the under throw or over throw rule applies (see next line).

A ball hit in the infield area (that is it did not go to the outfield area) to a non-baseman must be thrown **towards** a baseman in order to stop play in a force play situation. The throw can be an under throw or an overthrow.

The **intent** must be to attempt to throw in a force play situation. The play will cease if there is an overthrow to any base.

No throw is required on a non-force play situation. Any defensive player can make a tag on that runner.

#### **Examples:**

Time is called by the umpire and the batter has already rounded 1<sup>st</sup> base intending to go to 2<sup>nd</sup> base. The umpire allows the batter to proceed to 2<sup>nd</sup> base only if the base is unoccupied. This runner can not force a runner ahead of him to the next base (3<sup>rd</sup> base) if that runner has not rounded 2<sup>nd</sup> base with the intent of going to 3<sup>rd</sup> base.

When time is call, the runner is awarded the base he/she is approaching whether the runner is 5 feet or 49 feet from the base. There is no halfway rule but rather a question of intent.

Note: the intent is judged at the time of the infield throw, **not** when the ball goes out of bounds. Except for catching a pop

fly ball, time is called (and play ceases) only when the ball is in the infield playing area.

### **3-10 An Appeal**

An appeal can be made for:

- a missed base by a runner,
- a missed tag-up on a fly ball,
- a player batting out of order, or
- failure of a team to make proper defensive rotations.

The appeal must be made:

- before play is called for the next batter, or
- in the case of last batter, it must be called before the last defensive player has left the field.

### **3-11 Protests**

Protests are not allowed during regular season play.

Protests during the September Tournament must be settled on the field prior to continuation of the game.

Protests concern only the umpire's interpretation of the rules and can be brought to the attention of the Umpire-In-Chief or Convenor of the tournament. A judgement call is not a protest situation.

## 4 General Rules

### 4-1

In T Ball as there is no pitching to the batter:

- there will be no base-on-balls awarded,
- there is no bunting, and
- the infield fly rule does not apply.

### 4-2 Number of Batters:

All players on each team will bat and take a defensive position in each inning. The number of batters per inning will correspond to the number of players on the team with the most players present.

For example, if one team has 13 players present and the other team has 12, then 13 batters will bat for each team.

**Note:** In the September Tournament only 11 batters bat each inning. There are no defensive limitations (Dina – is clarification required here?)

### 4-3 Batting Order

The two types of line-ups which can be employed in the regular season are fixed batting order or rotational batting order.

**Fixed batting order:** In a fixed batting order all players are listed on the game sheet and players sit out of the batting order for specific innings so that **only 11 players bat per inning**. No player will sit out of the batting order for a second

time unless all other players, except the last batter, have sat out at least once.

**Rotational batting order:** All players are listed on the game sheet and the first 11 listed bat in the 1<sup>st</sup> inning and the batting order continues from that point in the next inning (that is the 1<sup>st</sup> batter in the 2<sup>nd</sup> inning is the 12<sup>th</sup> batter listed in the sheet).

Alternatively, if the team wishes to keep the same last batter in each inning, the manager may rotate all players except the last player on this list who will bat last in each inning. The last batter will not bat twice in any inning.

If fewer than 11 players are present for each team, the number of batters in each inning will correspond to the number of players on the team with the most players present.

For example when 10 players are present:

- **In a rotational order,** the 10 players will bat in order and the first batter will be the last batter in the 1<sup>st</sup> inning. The 2<sup>nd</sup> batter on the sheet will lead off the 2<sup>nd</sup> inning and be the last batter in that inning.
- **In a fixed batting order,** the permanent last batter can only bat once per inning and the remaining players are rotated in the batting spots before last batter.

In the September Tournament a fixed batting order is required and Junior games are 3 innings with an 11 batter maximum.

#### 4-4 Batting Out of Order

The CLP T Ball Rules deviate from normal baseball rules due to the fixed number of batters normally permitted in T Ball (that is 11) versus the rotational order of baseball until 3 outs are recorded.

Batting orders must be followed for each inning. The intent is to:

- Still have 11 players bat in the inning
- The batter who missed his/her turn (that is the proper batter) should still have his/her turn at bat.

Where a batter fails to bat in proper order (as his/her turn was taken by an improper batter), the **improper batter** shall be declared out on an appeal by the defensive team, if that improper batter completes a time at bat in place of the proper batter. However, the proper batter may take his place at any time before the improper batter becomes a base runner.

If the improper batter becomes a baserunner and the proper appeal is made, the plate umpire shall:

- Declare the improper batter out,
- Nullify any advances or scores made by the baserunners because of a ball hit by the improper batter, and
- The next batter will be the player who missed the turn at bat, if the improper batter was scheduled to bat in the same inning OR if the improper batter was not scheduled to bat in that same inning, then the proper batter does not get his turn at bat but he/she replaces the improper batter in the next inning.

If the appeal is made too late (that is after play has been called for the next batter):

- The improper batter can not bat a second time that inning
- The batter who missed his turn will take the batting position of the **improper batter**.

The coach should inform the other team of the error and the batting changes.

**Note:** This rule is waived if the coach informs the umpire that the player is missing his turn at bat due to illness, injury or calls of nature. An appropriate player will take the batter's turn. Normally this will be a player not scheduled to bat that inning.

It is not considered in the spirit of the game to have batters miss their turn by being replaced by a batter batting twice in that inning.

#### 4-5 Defensive Players

Within the constraints of the number of players present, each defensive team shall have:

- A catcher (wearing proper equipment) who shall normally play a position behind home plate
- A pitcher (wearing proper equipment) shall play in the infield and must assume a set position with both feet on the pitcher's rubber until the ball is hit
- A 1<sup>st</sup> baseman, a 2<sup>nd</sup> baseman, a 3<sup>rd</sup> baseman, and two shortstops each of whom play between 2 separate bases who shall play in positions regularly

played by these infielders and they shall not cross the playing line until the ball is hit

- Outfielders must not play in the infield area until the ball is hit. There is no limit on the number of outfielders.

**Note:** In the event a team has fewer than 9 players the team may choose to play without a catcher and move the pitcher into the catcher's position for last batter.

#### **4-6 Defensive Rotations**

Except in the case of illness or injury, no player may be moved between the infield and outfield during an inning.

Each player must play at least 1 inning in the infield (includes pitcher and catcher) and at least 1 inning in the outfield in the first 3 innings of a game.

If a team fails to make proper defensive rotations, the umpire, upon an appeal from the other team's manager, will ask the offending team to move the players who had not rotated to the infield or outfield as required.

September Tournament – scoresheets indicate the 1<sup>st</sup> inning that each player played in the infield and outfield in the first 3 innings.

#### **4-7 Number of Innings and Start Time**

A house league game will consist of a maximum of 3 innings. The September Tournament will be 3 innings.

The length of the game will depend on conditions of light and weather.

Game time is 6:30 sharp. Late players may not play until the next full inning begins, unless opposing team consents.

#### **4-8 Offensive Coaches**

Coaches are allowed at 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> bases.

Offensive coaches are not allowed to physically assist the runners.

#### **4-9 Defensive Coaches**

For instructional purposes during the regular season, two coaches are allowed in the outfield as needed.

Two coaches are allowed in the outfield during regular games as well as during the September tournament.

## 5 Playing Rules

### 5-1

To begin the game, the plate umpire shall instruct the home team to take their positions in the field, place the Tee of the batting team on home plate and call “play ball” for the first batter of the offensive team.

### 5-2 The Batter Becomes a Base Runner When

- The batter hits a ball hard enough to cross the playing line in fair territory.
- The catcher interferes with the batter attempting to hit the ball. The batter is awarded 1<sup>st</sup> base, the ball is dead and no runners may advance except those forced by the batter becoming a baserunner. In the event the batter, in spite of the interference, hits the ball fairly and reaches bases safely and all runners have advanced at least 1 base safely, then the interference is disregarded.

In the case of catcher interference on the last batter attempting to hit the ball, the ball is dead, no runners may advance and the last batter is allowed to continue his turn at bat with the same count. In the event the last batter in spite of the catcher’s interference, hits the ball fairly and reaches home base safely, the ball is alive and the catcher’s interference is disregarded. However, in all cases of catcher interference, the offensive manager has the option of accepting or refusing the catcher interference.

### 5-3 A Batter is Out When ...

- The batter’s fair hit, dead hit, foul fly or fly ball is put into play by an illegal swing (“play ball” has not been called) is caught by a member of the defensive team. The ball is alive and in play until time is called.
- The batter throws his bat. If, in the opinion of the umpire, the batter threw the bat (that is did not drop the bat), the batter is out. This rule is intended to teach the players to drop the bat in a controlled fashion. **This rule will be enforced in the September Tournament.**

### 5-4 A Base Runner is Out ...

- On a force play made by an infielder. Force outs on the bases must be made by the player on that **specific** base (that is the 2<sup>nd</sup> baseman at 2<sup>nd</sup> base). When the baserunner attempts to take an extra base, she/he can be tagged out by **any** defensive player as this has become a **tag** play rather than a **force** play.

**Example:** With a runner on 1<sup>st</sup>, a ground ball is hit to the centre fielder, who races to 2<sup>nd</sup> base and steps on the base ahead of the runner coming from 1<sup>st</sup>. No out is recorded because a force play must be made by an infielder. If the centre fielder had thrown the ball to any infielder, who made the same play, the runner would be declared out.

- when he is tagged. The ball is hit into right field (RF), the batter decides to try to make it to 2<sup>nd</sup>; the batter is out if the RF der tags the batter because as soon as the batter passed 1<sup>st</sup> base with the intent to go to 2<sup>nd</sup> base, the force play was no longer in effect and the runner can now be tagged out by **any** defensive player (that is a **tag** play is in effect).
- when running off his baseline to avoid a tag, in the judgement of the umpire. (Note: the runner established his running arc and should be allowed a 3 foot area to avoid a tag.)
- when the runner is hit by a fair batted ball, either on or off the base, before the ball has touched any infielder or passed an infielder (other than the pitcher) trying to make a play on the ball. Time is called, the ball is dead, no other runners may advance on their own unless forced by the batter taking 1<sup>st</sup> base. The batter is awarded 1<sup>st</sup> base.

On Last Batter, only the runner hit by the ball is out, but play continues (see Rules 5-9), except in the event of intentional interference by that runner.

- On last batter, he does not score (see Last Batter Rules 5-9). Clarification: On last batter, the pitcher may place the ball in the catcher's glove; that is it does not have to be thrown to the catcher by the pitcher.
- a) A caught pop-out creates a force play situation if the **base runner** did not tag; that is the ball must be thrown to force

out any runner who did not tag up, unless the ball was caught by that baseman.

### 5-5 Lead-Offs

No player on the offensive team, while a base runner, shall take a lead-off from the base. In the event that a lead-off occurs on the last batter, play will continue and all legal runs are allowed to score except any player(s) who led-off.

### 5-6

If a fielder intentionally drops a fly ball or line drive when 1<sup>st</sup> base is occupied, the force is removed and the base runner must be tagged.

### 5-7 Overthrows

With the exception of last batter, runners may not advance on a ball overthrown at any base.

When a ball is overthrown, time will be called immediately when, in the opinion of the umpire, a play cannot be made. Runners on other bases when an overthrow occurs will be given the base they were approaching when the ball was thrown, in the judgement of the umpire.

**Example 1:** The ball is hit to the pitcher who throws the ball over the head of the 1<sup>st</sup> baseman. The umpire will call time when the batter reaches 1<sup>st</sup> base and all other runners will be given the base they were approaching at the time of the throw.

**Example 2:** The ball is hit to the pitcher who throws the ball to the 1<sup>st</sup> baseman who misses the ball but it does not roll far from the baseman, and in the opinion of the umpire, a play can still be made (and therefore, this is not yet an overthrow situation), the umpire will **not** call time until the runner has made it to 1<sup>st</sup> base.

The purpose of the throwing rules in T-ball is to attempt a throw on most plays. An under throw has the same status as an overthrow.

#### **5-8 The Offensive Team's Turn at Bat Ends when:**

- When the catcher (only) touches home plate with the last batter's fair hit ball in his possession. The ball must be thrown over the playing line (the imaginary line from 1<sup>st</sup> to 3<sup>rd</sup> base) at least once on its way to the catcher unless the fair hit ball was fielded in front of the playing line. The pitcher, only, is allowed to assist the catcher in the home plate area.

For example, if the pitcher has the ball in his/her control behind the playing line, she/he must throw the ball over the playing line. On last batter, the pitcher may place the ball in the catcher's glove (that is it does not have to be thrown to the catcher by the pitcher in the home plate area, if the ball has already been thrown over the playing line.).

In the event of a defensive player, other than the catcher/pitcher ??, in the judgement of the umpire, crosses into the home plate area, the umpire will allow all legal runs to score.

**For safety reasons and in the spirit of good sportsmanship, it is recommended that the defensive team remain in their defensive positions until all runners have completed running the bases on Last Batter. This is not meant to restrict any play of the defensive team in retrieving or relaying the ball to the catcher's area. The defensive team can have players (1<sup>st</sup> baseman or 3<sup>rd</sup> baseman) cover the out of bounds area outside the home plate area.**

- When a base runner with last batter status (Rule 5-9) on being hit by a fair hit ball intentionally interferes with the defensive team's attempt to play or field the ball.
- any runner who did not tag up after a fly ball was caught and reaches home plate safely. (This is not an appeal call – the base umpire will advise the home plate umpire).
- When the last batter's fly ball is legally caught and there are no runners on the bases.
- All runners score and there is no appeal by the time the last defensive player has left the field.

## **Last Batter Status**

### **5-9**

Any players on the offensive team who are base runners when the last batter is at bat are regarded in the same manner as the last batter and no defensive play can be made on them on the bases. They are all forced to home plate when the last batter has hit the ball fairly.

### **5-10**

- In the event the last batter's fair hit ball leaves the playing field by going over an outfield fence, either in flight or bouncing over, it will be declared a home run and all legal runners with last batter status will be allowed to score. However, if the ball goes under or gets caught in the outfield fence and in so doing interferes with the fielder's chances to field the ball, the home base umpire will determine how many runs would have scored, in this judgement, without the interference, and rule accordingly.

It is recommended the home base umpire inform teams before the game how he will rule in the event of such interference.

- In the event that when the defensive team is throwing the ball into the home plate area, the ball leaves the playing field by going over, past or under the backstop, it will still be a live ball and all legal runners with last batter status will be allowed to score before the defensive team can return the ball to the catcher.

It is recommended the home base umpire inform teams before the game if he wishes to award a home run rather than play a live ball in the event of such ball leaving the playing field behind the home plate area.

### **5-11**

In the event that the last batter of the offensive team is out on a fly ball, the players who are baserunners shall be permitted to score, provided they are on base when the ball is caught or they tagged up after the ball is caught before touching the next base. These runners have to score prior to the ball being returned to the catcher at home plate.

### **5-12**

In the event that the last batter of the offensive team or any base runner with last batter status is obstructed in any manner by any defensive player while running the bases (defensive interference), it shall be the discretion of the umpire as to how far he would have advanced had there been no obstruction.

### **5-13**

#### **A run does not count when a runner with last batter status ...**

- Reaches home plate after the plate has been legally touched by the catcher,
- Has led off and reaches home plate safely,

- Has not tagged up after a fly ball has been caught and reaches home plate safely
- Has touched any base before the runner in front of him has (that is the player has passed the runner ahead of him).
- On all of the above, the call is made by the umpire and an appeal is not necessary.

Note: A missed base by any runner with last batter status is still an appeal play.

## **6 Umpires/Coaches-Acting Umpires**

### **6-1**

Once the batting line-ups have been exchanged, the plate umpire takes charge of the game and takes his place behind home plate.

### **6-2**

The decisions of the umpire shall be final; however, the managers of each team shall be entitled to ask for permission to approach the umpires for an interpretation of the rules. Umpires should never be approached to discuss a judgement call (for example, a close play on the bases).

### **6-3**

The plate umpire is the only one that call “time” to cease play.

### **6-4**

To resume play after time has been called, the plate umpire will call for the next batter, and after the next batter has stepped up to the plate, the umpire will place the ball on the Tee and call “play”/playball. The batter is then allowed to hit.

### **6-5**

In the interests of safety, the plate umpire must remove the tee from home plate to prevent any interference with a play at home plate. Failure to do so will be no cause for the umpire to change the results of the play.

### **6-6**

The plate umpire must call out all strikes, dead hit and foul ball as quickly as possible.

### **6-7**

Base coaches/umpires shall:

- Judge the position of the base runners on an overthrow
- Watch for and indicate lead-offs, and inform the plate umpire which runner(s) lead-off if they have last batter status
- Watch for and inform the plate umpire of runners that do not tag up when the batter’s fly ball is caught

- Hold up runners when time is called.

### **6-8**

All umpires must make sure the fielders are all behind the playing line and the pitcher is in his proper position before play is called for the next batter.

### **6-9**

It is the duty of the plate umpire, after he has been notified, to call out "last batter". The offensive must notify the plate umpire before play begins.

### **6-10**

The plate umpire may terminate a game before its completion for reasons such as darkness, weather or dangerous field conditions.

### **6-11**

The umpires shall have the authority to rule on any situation not covered specifically in these House League Rules.

Note: Baseball rules normally cover rules of play in T-Ball if there are no specific exceptions in T-Ball.

### **6-12**

The convenor acts as the chief umpire and all decisions are final.