

# WEXFORD AREA BASEBALL LEAGUE

## T-BALL RULES

**Rule #1:** No swinging of bats. There is no on-deck circle and there is no warm-up area to swing a bat. The only place to swing a bat is in the batter's box during a game.

**Rule #2:** This is a teaching league with an emphasis on fun. IT IS NOT A COMPETITIVE LEAGUE.

### **OPERATIONS**

All games are played at either 5:30 p.m. or 6:45 p.m. at Wexford Park

Games have a 60-minute time limit. This should allow for three innings.

Snack is key. If you don't get a parent to bring snack, be prepared for mutiny.

### **GAME RULES**

All players are positioned on the field

Everyone bats each inning

There is no penalty for knocking the tee over

Catcher must wear full catcher's gear

Catcher is responsible for putting ball on the tee.

All hitters/runners must wear a helmet

Outs are not kept but if a player is put out they should return to the bench.

Players are allowed one base per at bat

Score is not kept

No climbing the back stop

When your team is batting, have all players wait their turn BEHIND THE BACK STOP.

Keep all bats on the opposite side of the backstop (home plate side)

It will be up to the coaches of the WABL to determine rain outs and make-up games.

## Coaching Tips and Tricks

Make it very clear at practice that you will need help from parents. You will need 3 other parents to help at the games. 2 base coaches and 1 at the back stop to help organize the kids and keep them off the fence. The Head coach should be teaching the kids how to bat.

**Warm up:** Ask people to show up 10 minutes early for warm up. Line up the kids on the baseline and Mom or Dad on the other side. Have parents play catch with their kids. Ask kids & parents to practice at home, give kids pointers. Hit some ground balls to them, I stand at pitcher's position and hit 10 foot ground balls to them while the play 2<sup>nd</sup> base. Have a parent play first base and have the kids throw it to 1<sup>st</sup>. Teach them to shuffle with glove between legs, stay on your feet, do not drop to your knees. If both teams are doing this use 3<sup>rd</sup> base.

**Playing the field:** The pitcher and 1<sup>st</sup> base get the ball 90% of the time. Do a position switch (especially pitching and 1<sup>st</sup> base) in the middle of the inning. Keeps more kids involved and excited about playing the field. Due to time and equipment, catcher should play the entire inning at the position.

Keep true to the actual positions that baseball has. We are teaching the kids for the next step. Teach where to play. The Second Baseman does not stand on 2<sup>nd</sup> base, etc. No 10 person infields or having 2 pitchers. It is okay to have a fourth outfielder. If you have less than 9 kids, reduce outfield spots.

We found that the fastest way to place kids in field is to send them out one by one. Call out the position to the 2 assistant coaches in the field and they can help the kids get placed. By the end of the season many of them will go to the spot without the help from the assistant coach. If you walk around with 10 kids following you it takes forever and the kids learn nothing. You are just saying stand here.

You should have 2 field coaches giving instruction and keeping the kids awake. Teach them the ready position, punching the glove is fun. "Show me the ready position" Have ball in your pocket and give them grounders between batters to keep them interested. 5 year olds get bored in 30 seconds standing in the field. Help them pass the time, 15 minutes for them is forever.

Speed up the game and have your 1<sup>st</sup> batter be the catcher for the next inning. Back stop coach can help them get ready. Also helps you as every kid asks you 100 times if they can be catcher or pitcher.

**Batting:** Work to get kids squared up properly to hit. Feel free to use a mat at home plate for the first few games to help kids get feet placed correctly. Otherwise, have kids position their feet inside the coaches to achieve the proper position. You can then work on the swing instead of where to put the feet. Later in the season challenge kids to see if they remember the proper position.

If you have a big hitter, make sure to warn the other coach. Do NOT let them swing until the fielders are paying attention. Do not need someone getting hit in the face. Move the pitcher back. Have coach stand next to pitcher. Safety and good experience is the focus.

Last hitter clears the bases. Teach the fielders to get the ball to the catcher before the last runner crosses the base. It teaches the concept of throwing to a base other than 1<sup>st</sup>.

Lineups – You can take the time to plan this all out, you can use uniform numbers (1 to 12, 12 to 1, odds then evens), tallest to shortest, etc. Give different kids the chance to be the first batter and the last batter.

Teach the kids to hold the bat correctly - hands together and over the shoulder. Teach them to watch the ball and swing the bat hard and level. Teach them to step and swing. Teach them how to run through first base and stop on 2nd and 3rd.

# WEXFORD AREA BASEBALL LEAGUE

## MACHINE PITCH RULES

**Rule #1:** No swinging of bats. There is no on-deck circle and there is no warm-up area to swing a bat. The only place to swing a bat is in the batter's box during a game.

**Rule #2:** Only adults may operate the pitching machines. Kids cannot due to liability issues.

**Rule #3:** This is a teaching league with an emphasis on fun. IT IS NOT A COMPETITIVE LEAGUE.

### OPERATIONS

All games are played at either 5:30 p.m. or 6:45 p.m. at Wexford Park

Games have a 60-minute time limit. This should allow for at least two innings (a goal of three innings).

Snack is key. If you don't get a parent to bring snack, be prepared for mutiny.

### GAME RULES

All players are positioned on the field in standard baseball positions, so kids learn positions. No two pitchers, ten player infields, etc. Move kids around halfway through an inning.

Everyone bats each inning. The last hitter runs all of the bases.

Catcher must wear full catcher's gear.

All hitters/runners must wear a helmet.

There is a MAXIMUM of 5-7 hittable pitches per batter. If a ball is not hit the player gets a walk. If there are 8-10 kids hitting, go with 5 pitches. If there are 7 or fewer kids, go with 7 pitches. Please use your judgment for pace of play and a goal of three innings.

Outs are not kept but if a player is put out they should return to the bench.

Players are allowed a maximum of two bases per at bat (generally, it is one).

Score is not kept.

No climbing the backstop.

When your team is batting, have all players wait their turn BEHIND the backstop. For pace of play, have a coach / parent line up kids accordingly to the order and get helmets on.

Keep all bats on the opposite side of the backstop as the players waiting to hit (the home plate side).

It will be up to the coaches to determine rainouts and make-up games. Rainouts are automatic when the city closes the parks / fields.

## Other Rules, Coaching Tips, and Tricks

Make it very clear at practice that you will need help from parents. You will need 2-3 other parents to help at the games. 1-2 base coaches and 1 behind the back stop to help organize the kids and keep them off the fence. The head coach / coach of the hitting team should be teaching the kids how to bat. The head coach of the fielding team will be loading the pitching machine. Kids cannot load the pitching machine. Only coaches.

**Warm up:** Ask people to show up 10 minutes early for warm up. Line up the kids on the baseline and Mom or Dad on the other side. Have parents play catch with their kids. Ask kids & parents to practice at home, give kids pointers. Hit some ground balls to them, stand at pitcher's position and hit 10 foot ground balls to them while they play 2<sup>nd</sup> base. Have a parent play first base and have the kids throw it to 1<sup>st</sup>. Teach them to shuffle with glove between legs, stay on your feet, do not drop to your knees. If both teams are doing this use 3<sup>rd</sup> base.

**Playing the field:** The pitcher and 1<sup>st</sup> base get the ball 90% of the time. Do a position switch (especially pitching and 1<sup>st</sup> base) in the middle of the inning. This keeps more kids involved and excited about playing the field. Due to time and equipment, catcher should play the entire inning at the position.

Keep true to the actual baseball positions. We are teaching the kids for the next step. Teach where to play. The Second Baseman does not stand on 2<sup>nd</sup> base, etc. No 10 person infields or having 2 pitchers. It is okay to have a fourth outfielder. If you have less than 9 kids, reduce outfield spots.

Teach the kids about force outs at any base. You can get an out at any base in machine pitch.

Teach the outfielders to throw the ball to the cutoff fielder.

We found that the fastest way to place kids in field is to distribute them by coaches. Call out the position to the 1-2 assistant coaches in the field and they can help the kids get placed. By the end of the season many of them will go to the spot without the help from the assistant coach. If you walk around with 10 kids following you it takes forever and the kids learn nothing. You are just saying stand here.

You should have 1-2 field coaches giving instruction and keeping the kids awake. Teach them the ready position, punching the glove is fun. "Show me the ready position."

Speed up the game and have your 1<sup>st</sup> batter be the catcher for the next inning. Back stop coach can help them get ready. Also helps you as every kid asks you 100 times if they can be catcher or pitcher.

**Batting:** If you have a big hitter, make sure to warn the other coach. Do NOT let them swing until the fielders are paying attention. We do not need someone getting hit in the face. Move the pitcher back. Have coach stand next to pitcher. Safety and good experience is the focus.

Last hitter clears the bases. Teach the fielders to get the ball to the catcher before the last runner crosses the base. It teaches the concept of throwing to a base other than 1<sup>st</sup>.

Lineups – You can take the time to plan this all out, you can use uniform numbers (1 to 12, 12 to 1, odds then evens), tallest to shortest, etc. Give different kids the chance to be the first batter and the last batter.

Teach the kids to hold the bat correctly - hands together and over the shoulder. Teach them to watch the ball and swing the bat hard and level. Teach them to step and swing. Teach them how to run through first base and stop on 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup>.