



## Meridian Township PARKS & RECREATION Baseball (3<sup>rd</sup> -5<sup>th</sup> grade)

### LEAGUE PHILOSOPHY

This program exists to serve the needs of our youth. All involved should be allowed to participate on an equal basis on a low competitive atmosphere. The primary focus should be on individual development (learning all the positions), FUNdamentals, and teamwork. The main emphasis is on having fun, involving the family, and developing a positive self-image. Good sportsmanship is expected at all times from the players, coaches and parents.

Meridian Township youth leagues are set up for participation and not win - loss records. If a team shows up with less than the required number of players and wishes to play, the game should be played and not ruled a forfeit. It is encouraged that the other team lend a player whenever possible.

### COACH / PLAYER CONDUCT

Coaches whose conduct conflicts with league philosophy may be reprimanded. Coaches are responsible for their own conduct as well as the conduct of their players and spectators. Any coach who is ejected by an umpire for misconduct shall be ineligible for the next game. Meridian Township Parks & Recreation office retains the right to further disciplinary action if the infraction warrants it. All ejections need to be reported to the Parks & Recreation office the next day after the incident.

### SPORTSMANSHIP

- In order to keep up with our recreation philosophy and sportsmanship, remember to shake hands with your opponents **before** and at the conclusion of the game.
- Coaches, players and spectators are reminded that this is a recreation league and should conduct themselves accordingly

### EQUIPMENT

- Meridian Township Parks & Recreation Department will provide all team equipment. Volunteer coaches will be responsible for the care of their equipment. The team equipment will need to be returned promptly at the conclusion of the season so we can keep our inventory updated.
- Players will be allowed to wear rubber cleats only. Steel cleats / metal spikes are not permitted.
- Batting Helmets - shall be worn at all times by the batter and base runners
- Protective cup is Highly recommended
- Please keep all batters behind the screens. **No on deck batters circles.** On deck batter stays behind the screen and come out when the coaches instruct you to bat. **No hands on a bat while sitting on the bench.**
- Other Protective Headgear - All catchers must wear protective headgear, including a mask, shin guards, chest protector

### PLAYING RULES AND REGULATIONS

Games will be (7) innings and played under official baseball rules. All games, teams and coaches are subject to the provisions of the National Federation of State High School Associations' general rules and regulations, with exceptions and additions noted below.

### **Team Responsibilities**

Home team will use the first base bench.

Visiting team will use the third base bench.

### **Game Time Limits**

- GAME TIME IS 6:15 PM. (unless otherwise noted)
- The time limit on each game shall be 1 hour and 45 minutes. No inning will begin after 1 hour and 35 minutes after the beginning of play.
- Games called because of the time limit shall constitute a complete game, regardless of the number of complete innings.
- An inning started before expiration of the time limit will be completed. If an inning is not completed, then the last complete inning is the final score of the game.
- A new inning begins at the instant of the third out in the home (last) half of an inning.
- The home half inning need not be played if the time limit has expired and the home team is winning.
- If the score is tied at the end of regulation play of (7) innings

### **BATTING ORDER**

- A batting order comprised of all players present will be exchanged by the scorekeepers prior to the start of the game. This order shall not be altered during the game. ALL PLAYERS PRESENT AT THE GAME WILL BAT.

### **PLAYING TIME REQUIREMENT:**

- As with all Meridian Township Parks & Recreation programs, equal play time for participants is required. All coaches must play all players at least two innings in the field, one of which shall be the infield unless sought otherwise by the player or parent. All coaches are strongly encouraged to have players play several positions.

### **RUN AHEAD RULE:**

- Total runs scored per half inning will be limited to five (5) unless team is trailing by more than five (5) runs. On the play in which the fifth run is scored, play will continue and additional runs after 5 will be allowed to score until play has stopped with a dead ball situation. At the end of the play, teams will switch from offense to defense and vice-versa.

EXAMPLE: A team has already scored 4 runs in an inning and has a runner on first base. The batter hits a home run. Both the person on first base and the batter are allowed to score, giving that team a total of 6 runs.

### **SCORING IN THE LAST INNING:**

Both teams shall be allowed to score an unlimited number of runs in the last inning! The coaches/umpire will determine which inning will be the last based on the time limit.

### **NUMBER OF PLAYERS ON DEFENSE:**

- Ten (10) defensive players will be permitted to play at any one time with a maximum of 6 infielders (including the catcher). Infielders shall play first base, second base, shortstop, third base, pitcher and catcher. The pitcher shall be positioned to the side of the pitcher's mound while the coach is pitching in front of the mound. Outfielders must be positioned on the grass outfield. Plays at home plate are allowed.
- All outfielders must position themselves at least 10 feet beyond the infield
- (7) Players are required for a team to begin a game. If the team cannot field a team, please borrow from the other team and play the game.

- (1) Coach may be stationed in the field of play on the outfield grass to help position and instruct players between pitches. These coaches can instruct any player while the ball is in play

### **SUBSTITUTIONS:**

- Free substitution of all players and positions. You can sub in and out during the inning to keep kids focused on the bench.
- QUICK in and QUICK OUT. Should not have to delay the game for this substitution

**PLEASE HAVE A PARENT HELP WITH CATCHERS EQUIPMENT each INNING. A lot of time is being wasted because of the slow process of getting ready. Please tell a child before the inning is done that he will be the catcher and allow him to start the process of getting the equipment on. You can start the inning without the catcher; they will place themselves behind the plate once they have all the equipment on.**

### **Pitching Procedure and Time at Bat (first 5 games)**

- Opposing coach must be behind the pitcher with a glove full of balls.
- Catcher catches the ball and tosses back behind him to another coach, that coach will place them in a bucket that is close to the fence.
- The batter will have a maximum of seven (7) pitches. The pitcher will pitch a maximum of five (5) pitches to a batter. Strikes will be called – three (3) strikes, you're out. If after five (5) pitches and the batter hasn't struck out or been put out the offensive coach will pitch a maximum of two (2) good pitches from in front of the pitching rubber on their knees.
- If the batter hasn't hit a fair ball after seven (7) pitches they are out.
- Balls will not be called.

### **Pitching Procedure and Time at Bat (last five (5) games)**

Traditional baseball rules: 4 balls or 3 strikes constitute an at bat. A hit by pitch, the batter is awarded first base. A wide strike zone will be called and batters should be encouraged to swing.

The last five (5) games will be played using traditional baseball rules. The exception is if a pitcher walks more than three (3) batters in one (1) innings the coach will finish the inning. The same pitcher can return in the next inning.

- Opposing coach is still behind the pitcher with a glove full of balls.
- No balks.
- On the 3<sup>rd</sup> walk given up by a pitcher in one inning a coach will pitch the rest of the inning.(on their knees)
- Pitchers can pitch 6 outs per game
- Pitchers will be given 5 warm-up pitches between innings or in relief.
- To speed the game up: A coach that is behind the pitcher will have 7 balls in hand. After the catcher catches the ball or does not catch the ball. The ball will be thrown back behind him while another coach will collect them. The ball becomes LIVE only after it is 'pitched' to the batter; however, on a pass ball, the base runners shall not advance.

### **OVERTHROWS**

- When an overthrow goes into an out-of-play area, the umpire shall declare the ball dead and the runners can advance one base past the base the runner was going to (e.g. a runner going to first is awarded second base).

- When an overthrow remains within the playing field ( i.e. has not gone out of the playing area designated by the home field), runners can advance **1 base** at own risk. No other overthrows on the same player.
- To speed the game: A coach that is behind the pitcher will have 7 balls in hand. After the catcher catches the ball or does not catch the ball. The ball will be throw back behind him while another coach will collect them. The ball becomes LIVE only after it is 'pitched' to the batter; however, on a pass ball, the base runners shall not advance
- In no case can a runner score on an overthrow that goes out of play. All runs must be batted in.

**STEALING:** Base stealing is not allowed. A two-step lead is permitted after the pitch crosses the plate. No plays at the base between pitches.

**SLIDING:** Sliding is allowed and encouraged to slide. Runners must be instructed to slide feet first or attempt to avoid making contact with any defensive player at any base. 2. Defensive players must provide a running path for the base runners

**BUNTING:** Bunting is allowed

**INFIELD FLY RULE:** Does not apply.

### **Player Participation**

- Players on each team should play at least three (3) innings at a defensive position in each game, unless injured, arrive late or the game is shortened. Players should not sit out two consecutive innings in one game; however, they can sit out more than one inning in a whole game.
- Players cannot remain in the same defensive position for more than two (2) innings per game.
- No forfeits try to have at least seven (7) players are to begin the game If the team cannot field a team; you can borrow from the other team. Please play the game no matter what the circumstances are.

**PLEASE HAVE A PARENT HELP WITH CATCHERS EQUIPMENT each INNING. A lot of time is being wasted because of the slow process of getting ready. Please tell a child before the inning is done that he will be the catcher and allow him to start the process of getting the equipment on.**

### **UMPIRES**

The umpires are representative of the League and are officially in charge of the game once it begins. If a problem arises, the umpire shall notify both team coaches of the problem, granting the coaches the opportunity to resolve the problem. Continuation of the problem, without resolution allows the umpire to postpone, suspend or cancel the game or declare a forfeited game. High school kids will be the umpires. Please work with them...not against them.

*Note: When umpires ARE NOT provided, one (1) parent from each team will be an umpire or the coach behind the pitcher will call balls and strikes and outs at the bases.*

### **INCLEMENT WEATHER / RAINOUTS**

- All games must be played on their scheduled dates unless weather or conditions of the playing field warrant postponement. If the Parks & Recreation Department cancel games, teams will not be allowed to play anyway, regardless of whether or not the weather changes.
- Coaches or parents may call the Meridian Township Parks & Recreation Sports Information Number at 853-4688 after 5:00-5:15 p.m. After 5:15 it will be up to the coaches at the field.
- **RESCHEDULING** Meridian Township will try reschedule the game could be that Friday of that week or a practice time