

## MOUNTAIN TOP BASEBALL LEAGUE

Welcome to the Mountain Top League, dedicated to the organization and support of youth sports. Our league will use National Federation Scholastic rules except as modified here:

### BASEBALL DIVISIONS

<u>League</u>	<u>Grade/Age Group</u> (as of August 1st of the current year)
T-Ball	Ages 5 and 6
Coach Pitch	Age 7
AA Minors	Ages 8 and 9
Majors	Ages 10, 11, and 12
Babe Ruth	Ages 13, 14 and 15

### SPORTSMANSHIP

Players are expected to be at all practices and games and must call the coach if he cannot attend. On Game Day, please arrive 15 minutes early. Joining a team means making the commitment to be on time and at every scheduled event. If you arrive before the coach, begin warming up by having a catch with teammates. If a player has a circumstance where a conflict exists, the coach must be notified in advance. Attendance is the most critical part of a player's performance.

While the league emphasizes that all players will play in each and every game and benefit from participation in team sports, it is the responsibility of all the players to attend all the games to support the team. The coaches must contact the league commissioner immediately if a player misses games or practices without an excuse. If a player cannot make a commitment to the team, then the league will not make a commitment to the player by guaranteeing innings - we want the children to understand that they are making a commitment to their team and teammates. This decision will be up to the league commissioner.

Each player will receive a Team Shirt, Team Hat and baseball pants and socks. Team uniforms must be worn during games. Players must wear long pants or baseball pants to all practices. All players must have a baseball glove. Sneakers or spikes with rubber cleats only will be permitted during games (exception: metal spikes are allowed in Babe Ruth league on grass fields only). It is recommended that all players wear a protective cup (mandatory for catchers) and/or slider pants. Torso protection shirts (hearguards) are recommended and mandatory for all pitchers. All Little League Approved composite, aluminum and wood bats are permitted. Wide barrel bats are only permitted in Babe Ruth but must have a BBCOR minus-3 weight/length measurement (some bats may be considered ineligible even with the minus-3 measurement). MTL supplies wood bats for each team. Anyone who has a bat should bring one to practices and games. No food or snacks are permitted on the bench at practices or games. It is highly recommended that each player bring a Water Bottle to all Practices and Games. All batting helmets and catcher's equipment will be provided, but players are encouraged to bring their own if they like (please ensure that the player's name is on all personal equipment).

Bench is restricted to adult Head Coach and two adult Assistant Coaches only. Failure to enforce this rule when warned by the umpire may result in the forfeit of the game. No parents or non-players are permitted in the dugouts. This rule will be enforced by all umpires. Head coach shall be designated as the contact person with the umpires. Head coach shall be responsible for the conduct of his players, assistant coaches and spectators. Only one coach is permitted in the first and third base coach's boxes. No one else shall be permitted in that area. Coaches in the boxes at first and third are not permitted to distract pitchers or players. A warning will be followed by an ejection from the game.

Spectators seating shall be limited to the bleachers. Spectators shall be expected to cheer for their team in a positive manner. Coaches and/or parents are specifically prohibited from entering the field of play except to care for an injured player. Spectators not adhering to the Spectator Guidelines shall be removed from the field for the duration of the game and banned for the following two game dates.

No foul language or unsportsmanlike conduct by players or managers will be tolerated. Such behavior will be the basis for immediate rejection. A subsequent violation will result in forfeit. No heckling, use of abusive language, distracting of opposing players by parents, managers, or players will be permitted. Chatter, which is not abusive, is encouraged. Umpires will be instructed to enforce this rule, including warning managers to control spectators "related" to their players. The umpire shall have the authority to forfeit a game if any person or group of persons violates these rules. All managers are asked to use common sense on all judgment calls and must control their player's parents.

Use of an ineligible player at any time is an automatic forfeit of the game. No manager can add or delete a player from the original roster without permission first being granted by the baseball trustees.

A manager can report to the commissioner any player who does not show the proper attitude or discipline and who fails to report to scheduled practices and/or games without valid reasons.

Only the manager shall discuss any ruling with the umpire in a quiet manner. Other coaches and players shall not enter into the discussion. No parent, player, or assistant coach is permitted to discuss any ruling with any umpire.

A manager may protest a game to the umpire only on the basis of interpretation of the rules. Protest on "judgment" calls will not be considered. Protesting managers shall submit the protest in writing within 48 hours to the commissioner of the respective league, who shall submit it to the baseball trustees. The baseball trustees shall meet within seven (7) days to rule upon the protest. If the protest is upheld the baseball trustees shall determine an appropriate remedy, which may include replaying the game from the point of protest. Frivolous and overly technical protests, especially those which have no reasonable bearing on the outcome of the game are to be discouraged as being contrary to the spirit and rationale behind the MTL program. Our goal is to provide recreation and instruction to our children and, therefore, protests inconsistent with these goals will be denied.

We are guests on all of the fields where we play. Clean your bench area before you leave. Fields must be left in a clean condition. Managers are responsible to see that their players police their area after each practice and game. Failure to do so may curtail the use of that field thereafter.

Intentional delay or speeding up of a game in the umpire's decision can result in forfeit (i.e. - instructing a player to strike out).

Sportsmanship is always the primary concern. It can never be compromised. No other factor outweighs it. For example, winning by an unreasonable amount of runs is unacceptable. If this occurs, a coach may:

- Remove the starting pitcher as early as possible. No excuses are acceptable to run up a score.
- Use the opportunity to develop your players by playing them in different positions.
- In AA and Majors, there is a 12-run mercy rule (which a losing coach may decline), by which the game will be called after the losing team has batted 4 times. In Babe Ruth, the mercy rule is 10 runs and after the losing team has batted 5 times (no decline option).

Immediately following the end of each game, all players will line up to shake hands with the opposing team (win or lose).

Mountain Top League follows a strict "No Refund" policy. By registering a child in our programs, parents understand he/she is expected to participate for the duration of the season by attending all practices and games. Mountain Top League considers quitting an established team a violation of our principles of sportsmanship. A decision to leave an established team has negative consequences on many individuals within our community: our volunteers, our coaches and our players. Consequences for these players may include future ineligibility to participate in Mountain Top League programs or to participate for any scholarship awards associated with Mountain Top League. An appeal can be made that includes a formal apology presented to the Mountain Top League Board of Trustees as well as a commitment from the parents of the player to volunteer time to Mountain Top League programs.

### GAME MANAGEMENT

T-Ball, Coach Pitch	3 Innings
AA Minors, Majors	6 Innings
Babe Ruth	7 Innings
Championship Games	Must complete all scheduled innings

All weekday games begin at 6:00 p.m. and any weekend games begin at the time scheduled based upon team and field availability. Forfeit time is fifteen minutes after scheduled game time. Players should arrive 30 minutes prior to game time (5:30 p.m.). Cancellation of a game can only be effected by the commissioner of the particular league when requested at least 72 hours in advance, except in the case of rain outs. At the umpire's decision, it is recommended that no inning starts 20 minutes before sunset.

The Weather Hotline, (973) 243-1115, is updated at 3PM on game day. After that time, umpires must decide if game is played. On rainy or wet days, when games have not already been called off, both teams must appear at the field. The two managers shall determine if the field is in playing condition. If both disagree, the umpire shall make the final determination. A game interrupted as a result of inclement weather or darkness shall be considered complete if the losing team has been at bat in at least four innings for all leagues. Once a game has started, only the umpire has the authority to call a game due to inclement weather or darkness. His judgment will be final and unquestioned. The home team coach must call the assigner to arrange for fields and umpires. Once the game has been rescheduled, the home team must call and confirm field location, date and game time with the visiting team's coach.

The West Orange Recreation Department is responsible for all fields in the Mountain Top program. No coaches, managers or parents are to do any "Groundskeeping to any baseball fields.

League	Mound to Home Plate	Between Bases
T-Ball, Coach Pitch	38 Feet	50 feet
AA Minors	40 Feet	60 feet
Majors	46 Feet	60 feet
Babe Ruth	60 Feet Six Inches	90 Feet

The winning coach must provide the league commissioner with results within 24 hours of the games completion.

**DO NOT MOVE ANY PLAYER WHO IS INJURED IF YOU FEEL THE INJURY IS SEVERE ENOUGH AND MAY CAUSE ADDITIONAL INJURY OR PARALYSIS. USE CAUTION AND GOOD JUDGMENT AT ALL TIMES.**

In case of injury to a player, the manager must advise the commissioner immediately and file the appropriate medical/injury form for the leagues records.

Metal cleats are allowed only in Babe Ruth. However, they will not be permitted on artificial turf fields.

Wide barrel bats are only permitted in Babe Ruth but must have a minus -3 weight/length measurement. Some bats may be considered ineligible even with the minus-3 measurement.

### T-BALL, COACH PITCH

T-Ball	Coach Pitch
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Everyone plays in the field. No "extra" infield positions. Defensively, play only a 1st base, 2nd base, shortstop, 3rd base and one pitcher. Put all others in the outfield grass.</li> <li>• Batters will be allowed five (5) swings per at bat at coaches' discretion. If the batter neither misses the ball nor hits a playable ball on the fifth swing, he/she will continue to swing until he/she either misses the ball or hits a playable ball. After 3 swings and misses, coach "helps" kid hit ball off tee.</li> <li>• Games are up to 3 innings.</li> <li>• All batters bat around once each inning.</li> <li>• Play outs. If the defensive team gets an out, remove the base runner.</li> <li>• There are no umpires, so be reasonable.</li> <li>• No bunting.</li> <li>• Hold all baserunners once ball is returned to infield by defensive team.</li> <li>• The last 2 games will be games "coach pitch" (everyone in the field).</li> <li>• All batters bat around once each inning.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No "extra" positions.</li> <li>• Batters will be allowed five (5) swings per at bat at coaches' discretion. If the batter neither misses the ball nor hits a playable ball on the fifth swing, he/she will continue to swing until he/she either misses the ball or hits a playable ball.</li> <li>• All batters bat around once each inning.</li> <li>• Play outs. If the defensive team gets an out, remove the base runner.</li> <li>• There are no umpires, so be reasonable.</li> <li>• No bunting.</li> <li>• Hold all baserunners once ball is returned to infield by defensive team.</li> <li>• Games will be coach pitch (everyone in the field)</li> <li>• The last 2 games will be games pitched by the players (10 players in the field, alternating innings). If three (3) outs are not attained, the inning will end when all players on the roster have been to bat that inning.</li> </ul>

## PLAYING REQUIREMENTS: AA, MAJORS, BABE RUTH

The goal of the Mountain Top League is to provide players of all ability levels the opportunity to play. Coaches are therefore encouraged to provide as much playing time as possible for all players. Each player enrolled in the MTL must play at least two (Majors) or half of all innings in the field in a regulation game and must have at least one time at bat. Managers and their coaches should devote all their energy in furthering the skills and knowledge of the game to players and teaching the proper manner in handling a win, as well as a loss.

AA	Majors	Babe Ruth
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Each player must play in the field at least two innings out of the first four innings. After having played at least two innings in the field and having been removed from the game, a player may return to the game at the beginning of any following inning, but he must play at least one or more complete inning in the field.</li> <li>• All players on the roster will be in the batting order. This means players not in the game defensively will bat.</li> <li>• A batter cannot advance to first on a missed third strike.</li> <li>• Sliding is permitted, but "steamrolling" is never permitted at any base. Runners must avoid collisions - failure to do so will result in a runner being declared out.</li> <li>• No leading or stealing.</li> <li>• No runner may advance once play has been "stopped;" as soon as the ball has been returned to the pitcher and he is on the mound, ready to pitch to a catcher at home plate.</li> <li>• A game can begin when both teams have at least 8 players. Teams fielding 8 players will receive an automatic out for the vacant ninth position until a ninth player arrives.</li> <li>• No bunting is allowed.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Each player must play in the field at least two out of the first four innings. After having played at least two innings in the field and having been removed from the game, a player may return to the game at the beginning of any following inning or to replace an injured player..</li> <li>• All players on the roster will be in the batting order. This means players not in the game defensively will bat.</li> <li>• A batter cannot advance to first on a missed third strike.</li> <li>• Sliding is permitted, but "steamrolling" is never permitted at any base. Runners must avoid collisions - failure to do so will result in a runner being declared out.</li> <li>• No base runner may leave the base until the ball is past the batter (no leading). Stealing of home is permitted.</li> <li>• No runner may advance once play has been "stopped;" as soon as the ball has been returned to the pitcher and he is on the mound, ready to pitch to a catcher at home plate.</li> <li>• A game can begin when both teams have at least 8 players. Teams fielding 8 players will receive an automatic out for the vacant ninth position until a ninth player arrives.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Please note that these rules may be superceded, depending on participation in leagues involving other towns.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A line-up consists of nine players. If a team follows this, for any substitution, a substituted player is allowed to reenter the game one time in their original spot in the lineup.</li> <li>• Teams have the option to bat all players on the roster with free substitutions. This means players not in the game defensively will bat.</li> <li>• A batter may advance to first on a missed third strike.</li> <li>• Sliding is permitted, but "steamrolling" is never permitted at any base. Runners must avoid collisions - failure to do so will result in a runner being declared out.</li> <li>• Leading and base stealing is permitted.</li> <li>• A base runner may attempt to advance at any time at his own risk.</li> <li>• A game can begin when both teams have at least 8 players. Teams fielding 8 players will receive an automatic out for the vacant ninth position until a ninth player arrives.</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A player may pitch a maximum of 9 outs per game and 18 outs per week. The pitching week runs Monday through Sunday.</li> <li>• Balks are not called.</li> <li>• No intentional walks.</li> <li>• If 3 outs are not attained, the inning will end with a 5-run maximum per inning. This rule does not apply in the 6<sup>th</sup> inning.</li> <li>• Coaches should adhere to a pitch count that does not exceed 50 per game for 8 yr olds and 75 for 9 yr olds.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A player may pitch a maximum of 18 outs per week. The pitching week runs Monday through Sunday.</li> <li>• Balks are not called.</li> <li>• No intentional walks.</li> <li>• Coaches should adhere to a pitch count that does not exceed 75 to 85 per game.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A player may pitch a maximum of ten (10) innings per week. The pitching week runs Monday through Sunday.</li> <li>• Balks are called.</li> <li>• Intentional walks will be allowed only when there are at least two runners on base.</li> <li>• Coaches should adhere to a pitch count that does not exceed 85 to 95 per game. If a player pitches for another team (e.g. Middle School, Travel, etc.), those innings should be applied to rest period guidelines.</li> </ul>
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If a player pitches for up to 9 outs in a game, one calendar day of rest is mandatory. If a player pitches for more than 9 outs in a game, two calendar days of rest are mandatory. There is no mandatory rest for players who pitch up to 3 outs in a game.

A player once removed as a pitcher may not pitch again in the same game.

Eight (8) warm-up pitches will be allowed at the beginning of a game and with the change of any pitcher. Five (5) warm-up pitches thereafter.

A manager may visit the pitcher's mound once during each inning for the pitcher who started the inning. On the second visit the pitcher must be removed. If the pitcher leaves the mound to talk to his manager or coach on the sidelines, it will be considered a trip. For subsequent pitchers within the same inning, a pitcher will be removed on any visit to the mound. This rule may vary in Babe Ruth.

A pitcher may be removed by an umpire if there are three hit batters in one inning or four hit batters in one game.

**PLAYER EVALUATIONS AND CLOSING THE SEASON**

It is the responsibility of each manager to properly close out their season. This includes, but is not limited to; returning all equipment bags and uniforms to the

MTL building, completing final evaluations for all players, attending the final evaluation meeting for the league.