

## HARRISON COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION

### T-Ball Instructional League Local Rules and Regulations

#### **LEAGUE PURPOSE: to learn basic sports skills, AND TO HAVE FUN**

1. T-Ball is a modified form of baseball. T-Ball is a form where the ball is not "pitched"; batters hit the ball from a batting tee. Eligible players must have turned 4 by May 1<sup>st</sup> and not have turned 7 by September 1<sup>st</sup> of the current year to participate in T-Ball (unless age waiver form has been approved by the HCPR Staff). **All players must be registered through the HCPR office.** If a coach is found playing an ineligible player he/she will not be allowed to coach in any HCPR Leagues. Players are placed according to school attended or area of residence.
2. **THIS IS AN INSTRUCTIONAL LEAGUE:** No standings will be tabulated; no scores recorded. No first place trophies will be awarded. A scorebook is to be kept only as an aid to insure that all participants have equal playing time and as a measure of the individual's skill improvement. The League's purpose is to learn skills and have fun.
  - A. **ROSTER LIMITS ARE 16:** This allows for the required minimum participation of 3 innings during a 5-inning game. If a game ends before 5 innings are played, a player being shorted playing time will be played extra time, if possible, the following game or at least be given the first turn at playing 3 innings. **ALL PLAYERS SHALL PLAY IN AT LEAST EVERY OTHER INNING** (If a player sits out an inning he/she must play in the next inning.) Coaches are expected to give all players at a game near equal playing time as possible. If numbers allow **NO PLAYER CAN PLAY THE ENTIRE GAME.**
  - B. There is no way to keep watch on all players in the League. However, if infractions are reported to us they will be checked. **All coaches found not following the equal participation rule will be dismissed.**
  - C. Coaches are to give **PLAYERS OPPORTUNITIES TO PLAY VARIOUS POSITIONS** during the season. In other words do not stick a player in right field to never be seen again. We do realize that all children are not ready to play every position (such as pitcher.) We do not want you to put a child in a position where he/she could embarrass himself or where they could not defend themselves - this would do more harm than good.
  - D. If there is a reason that a player in attendance will not play or is limited in playing time due to sickness, injury, discipline, etc. let the umpire know prior to the game. If a coach is not playing a child due to discipline, they must discuss the matter with the child's parent(s) or guardian, and the Program Coordinator.
3. The game will consist of five (5) complete innings. However, **ALL GAMES MUST START ON TIME.** This is in fairness to the teams involved in the second game so that darkness will not overcome them. **REMEMBER!! SCORES DO NOT MATTER,** so every team will get their last bats to insure equal participation. If weather causes a game to be called before three (3) complete innings are played it will be treated as a "rain out." Scores do not count so "tie" games do not affect innings played.
4. In order to avoid overlapping game times and darkness, after 60 minutes the inning

being played will be completed and no other inning will be started. It is possible to play a complete game within this time frame if coaches help move things along by having players ready, on deck, etc.

5. There will be a five-minute grace period. If a team fails to arrive or does not have enough players, an umpired scrimmage game can be played if both coaches agree to a workable format. This game will be made to fit a time period so that the next game will start on time. If late arriving players show up to make a complete team, a shortened game can be played; the 60-minute time frame (rule #4) will begin at the **original** game time.
6. If a game or skill clinic must be cancelled due to weather, etc. the coach or his/her representative will be contacted by the League Supervisor as early as possible. **The office will not call teams. Under NO circumstances should team parents be calling the HCPR office for cancelled game information. If not contacted by 5:00 p.m.** teams must report to the field where the umpire has the option of calling off games due to weather or poor playing conditions. Umpires can telephone coaches of the teams involved when appropriate. Coaches handle all arrangements and cancellations for practices.
7. The HCPR will try to insure a fair number of games for all teams. Rained out games will be made up during the season or at the end of the regular season. Games cancelled because of a "no show" by a team **will not** be made up. Games cancelled by mutual agreement between two coaches (for their convenience) **will not** be made up.
8. Teams will field 10 players at a time. All infielders, including pitcher and catcher field traditional positions of baseball. There will be 4 outfielders that are set at approximately equal distance around the outfield; (i.e. left, left center, right center, and right field position.)
  - A. TEN BATTER RULE: All ten players that are playing or will play the field bat all the way through their order. After the 10<sup>th</sup> batter, the team at bat has completed 1/2 inning at bat. If the 10<sup>th</sup> batter gets a hit, the inning is complete when the ball is in control of an infielder and all runs scored before this count. This way every participant is assured of batting. Players can make "outs", but 3 out does not end the half inning.
9. FREE SUBSTITUTE RULE: Re-entry of a player who has been replaced is allowed. Substitutions are made in between innings only (exceptions; an injury.) No pinch-hitting, whoever plays or will play the field must bat.
10. SET BATTING ORDER: To avoid confusion all teams will use the following batting order, regardless of substitutions. First, pitcher; second, catcher; third, first baseman; fourth, second baseman; fifth, third baseman; sixth, shortstop; seventh, leftfielder; eighth, left centerfielder; ninth, right centerfielder; and tenth, right fielder.
11. ROSTERS ARE FINAL: No changes are to be made. Registration is closed. The only roster additions allowed are in case of dropouts. REPLACEMENTS FOR EACH DROPOUT CAN BE MADE ONLY THROUGH THE HCPR OFFICE.
12. **Boys and girls who play Minor League and Little League Baseball are ineligible to play HCPR T-Ball.**
13. Each team will be allowed TWO PRACTICES PER WEEK BEFORE GAMES BEGIN AND THEN ARE ALLOWED ONE PRACTICE PER WEEK AFTER GAMES BEGIN. It will be the coach's responsibility to set time and get their practice field. Use school fields or other fields in the area for practice. Work out schedules with other coaches if other

teams use the field. The HCPR will assist coaches when possible. **DISMISSAL OF COACHES WILL RESULT IF THIS RULE IS NOT FOLLOWED.** The office receives many complaints from parents about "excessive practices" interfering with school and family life.

14. One umpire will be used. The one umpire system is adequate for T-Ball and holds down expenses, therefore, fees. The umpire is stationed behind the pitcher's mound in general. However, the individual umpire is encouraged and instructed to position himself/herself where they feel they have the best vantage point to control the game and may move around as game situations dictate.
15. Since T-Ball is designed as an instructional league, players can be told what they are doing wrong and helped within reason. Coaches cannot interfere with game play or take excessive time due to time restraints. Umpires will also be encouraged to help "wayward" players, without interfering with play. For example: many players will not remember how to stand when batting; many times it will help the player and take less time if a coach or umpire physically corrects the stance **INSTEAD OF YELLING INSTRUCTIONS.**
16. The umpire is in complete charge of the game and the Program Coordinator is in complete charge of the League. **ANY ARGUMENTS WITH THE UMPIRE WILL NOT BE TOLERATED.** You may discuss matters with the umpire between innings. **All decisions of the umpire must be abided by.** There is no reason for arguments since this is an instructional league, with no winners or losers. Mistakes will be made and some plays will be missed, but the coach and player will have to accept this in a sportsmanlike and adult manner. After all in baseball, even after all the arguments; the player and coach have to accept the umpire's ruling. The umpires do attend training sessions.
17. The HCPR fully supports good, wholesome competition and the desire to excel. However, this cannot mean winning at the expense of good sportsmanship and fair play. All participants in the League are encouraged to constantly stress sportsmanship. If this is done there will not be any real losers. **DO NOT OVER EMPHASIZE WINNING!!!** Try to remember to let the kids enjoy themselves. A game is supposed to be fun and not a stress-filled experience. **COACHES WILL BE DISMISSED IF THEY FAIL TO FOLLOW THESE STANDARDS.**
18. **Batting:** A batter is automatically out for slinging a bat. A batter must remain in the batting box while hitting. No bunting is permitted. All batted balls must pass a designated line between home and the pitcher's mound to be fair. If the ball fails to go past the designated line, it is a foul ball and is considered a strike. A strike will be called if the player misses or fouls the ball when batting. A batter is out on the fifth strike (missed or fouled.) Any batted ball, fair or foul, should be played in the usual manner. The catcher or batter may place the ball on the tee for each batter. Batters have the option of adjusting the tee.
19. **Base Running:** On any ball hit to or going into the outfield as a result of play, the base runner may advance until relay is in possession of an infielder in the area of the infield. Once possession is established, a runner may advance to the base he/she was headed for at his/her own risk. If no play is made on a runner the runner must stop at that base. If a play is made on the runner he/she may advance at his/her own risk, etc. The umpire's judgment rules. The umpire will stop action at its logical conclusion. There is no infield fly rule in T-Ball. **NO STEALING OF BASES IS PERMITTED.** Base runners may not lead off the base. Runner is out for doing so or is out if he/she leaves the base before the ball is hit. Sliding will be permitted. First base slide is not

an out, it is just not smart. Coaches should use discretion in teaching players to slide. Sliding to knock over a fielder intentionally will result in an automatic out or a double play, depending on the situation.

20. Field Rules: Base pads will be 50 feet apart. The base pads are not stationary for safety reasons. Umpires will adjust pad's position when out of place and allow for their movement in making calls. Team will field 10 players at a time. Refer to rule 8 for positions, which must be fielded as stated. The pitcher will field this position approximately 38 feet from home plate. A line should mark the position. The player can stray from the position when the batter begins the swing at the ball. The catcher should stay approximately 5 feet behind home plate when a player is batting. **NO STEEL CLEATS.** Rubber cleats or tennis shoes only. Batting tee will be placed approximately 1 foot behind home plate (THE TEE IS NOT HOME PLATE. PLEASE INSTRUCT YOUR PLAYERS FOR SAFETY REASONS.) The foul line will be 18 feet from home plate (forming a semicircle between foul lines.) So as not to discourage the learning of throwing to get the runner, base runners will automatically advance one base only on all overthrows. The umpire's judgment will determine what is ruled an overthrow. A semicircle line 10 feet behind the bases may be marked to distinguish the infield from the outfield. The coach should always remain close to the dugout area. If the coach touches a runner the runner can be ruled out.
21. General rules of baseball will be used with the exception of local rules.
22. Award certificates will be available upon coach's request.
23. The only people to be in the dugouts with players are coaches and one assistant (ASSISTANT COACH MUST BE APPROVED BY HCPR) to keep track of players. No other person will be allowed in the dugout or on the playing field during a game.
24. The main purpose of this league is **INSTRUCTION**. Coaches are to teach the game of baseball, not find loopholes in rules or ways to make the rules help them win.
25. The T-Ball equipment that will be issued to coaches will be all you receive for the season. No replacements can be made. EACH TEAM IS RESPONSIBLE TO BRING THEIR OWN BATS, BALLS, AND TEE to the games. The umpires will supply batting helmets and bases for the games. Only the equipment such as balls, bats, etc. distributed by the HCPR office is permitted. **Coaches are required to return their equipment to the HCPR office at the end of the season.** Equipment is very expensive, and if we have to replace all the equipment every year, then league costs will go up.
26. During games no collections or passing the hat for contributions will be allowed. Concessions will only be sold by authorized groups. Parents, friends, or relatives can contribute to coaches for treating teams after games, picnics, etc. **The HCPR does not provide end-of-season trophies. The HCPR does not pay for end-of-season parties. The HCPR is not responsible for team pictures.**
27. Registration fees for HCPR T-Ball are: \$20.00 per child. No multiple child discounts will be given. The registration fee covers league administration costs only. If a team wants to have matching t-shirts and hats, they will need to make their own arrangements, collect fees from parents or obtain a sponsor. The parents/sponsor will then be responsible for the cost of the shirts, hats and any other expenses the parents/sponsor may wish to cover. **The \$20.00 registration fee, however, will still be collected, as that goes only to help defray the costs of equipment and personnel to umpire the games and run the skills clinics.**
28. If there are any questions not covered by these rules concerning the league, contact the HCPR Program Coordinator Jack Cann at 304-423-7800.

29. Our office is open Monday through Friday from 8:30am to 4:30pm, and is located at 43 Recreation Drive, (Harrison County Recreation Complex, Rt. 19 S. Clarksburg).
30. The HCPR wants and appreciates your input. Any problems, complaints, etc. that you may have will be discussed. THERE CANNOT BE GAME PROTESTS. Please discuss your problems with the Program Coordinator.
31. **The Program Coordinator, umpires, or HCPR staff has the right to dismiss any players, coach, or spectator from the field or premises for any CONDUCT THAT IS DETRIMENTAL TO GOOD SPORTSMANSHIP.** The intentional striking of any player, coach, or official, shall result in the immediate and permanent expulsion of the offending person for the remainder of the season. This rule shall apply to players, coaches, managers, and spectators. IF ANY DISMISSED PERSON OR PERSONS REFUSE TO LEAVE, THE GAME WILL AUTOMATICALLY AND IMMEDIATELY END. Coaches and spectators can be dismissed for coming on the field to argue with the umpire or for excessive arguments. Dismissals can range from one (1) game to the entire season. A second dismissal will result in being dismissed for the rest of the season. **Coaches can be relieved of duties if in the opinion of the Program Coordinator the coach is running the team contrary to the purposes of the league as explained in these rules.**
32. **Remember** – your child's coach is your source of information about the team, such as when and where games are scheduled. Be sure you know what team your child is on, who your child's coach is and that you have his or her telephone number.
33. **What comes next?** You will receive a schedule for skill clinics. The skills groups have been divided according to where the child goes to school. This is not a tryout, nor will teams be divided by talent. Team assignments are made according to where the child goes to school. The skill clinics are the first step in skill learning in our instructional league. Teams will be divided after the second skill clinic. Hopefully we will know the players and parents who are going to stick with T-Ball by that time. Your coach will be in contact with you prior to your last skill clinic. **Volunteer coaches are needed.**