

Metro East Youth League

MEYL

Collinsville
MEYL Headquarters



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2021 RULE BOOK

Metro East Youth League Baseball and Softball Official Rules (MEYL)

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I. Metro East Youth League Objective & Bylaws (MEYL)

Part 1. Objective

The Metro East Youth League (MEYL) is a recreational sport program formed specifically for the benefit and enjoyment, moral improvement, and physical advancement of the youth of the area. The MEYL shall foster good, clean, sportsmanlike conduct and fair play in individuals as well as team competition. All actions of the MEYL will have one main goal: entertain and improve the youth of the community through the games of baseball and softball by promoting teamwork and sportsmanship throughout.

All MEYL participants, coaches, and spectators must remember the league is for the youth. Misconduct, immoral behavior, or dishonesty is not the example we wish to display for our children and it will not be tolerated.

Part 2. Registration

1. Registration for all players will be held on the date(s) selected by the local organization.
2. No player shall participate until verification of age is produced during registration. Verification of player's age will be the responsibility of the local organization. If a player is found to be over the age limit, the player's team will forfeit all games in which the player participated. Mentally or physically challenged children can be placed in a lower age division prior to the start of the first official game in that lower age division with the approval of the local organization.
3. Only the local organization is authorized to assign a child to a team. No coach may do so without the prior consent of the local organization.
4. A player may be allowed to play up one (1) year age group.
5. The team Coach and Assistance Coach's son or daughter will be placed automatically on their team. No other players are guaranteed a spot on any roster.
6. Registration will follow the school year. Pre-Kindergarten children will be allowed to participate in Tee Ball providing the child is eligible for kindergarten in the following fall.
7. Once the rosters are created they are final; there will be no trading of player(s) unless approved by the local organization. The local organization will add players as need be if space allows.
8. Anyone signing up by the final scheduled sign up date is guaranteed a spot on a team, however, if you sign up after the final scheduled sign up date, there is NO guarantee of a spot on a team.
9. Once all spots on every team are filled, late sign-ups will be added to a waiting list. Players on the waiting list will be called on a first come, first serve bases IF any spots in their division open up. There will be no guarantee of fulfilling any requests from the wait list.
10. MEYL strives to create a recreationally competitive atmosphere. Teams will be formed based on player/parent requests, school, and previous team played on.
11. All Coaches are required to pass a background check yearly.
12. All Coaches are required to take, pass, and provide proof for local organization files of the CDC Head Up Concussion Certification per the State of Illinois.
13. All Coaches are required to take, pass, and provide proof for local organization and the City of the local organization files of Mandated Child Reporter training.

Note: Since all situations cannot be documented, the local organization may override any sections herein after discussion/approval of the Director of Parks and Recreation.

Part 3. Umpires

1. The MEYL in conjunction with the Umpire in Chief (UIC), is in full charge of, and responsible for, the training and assignment of all umpires.
2. Any umpire(s) assigned by the head Umpire shall be in complete charge of the game. Profane language, harassment, physical contact, and any other unsportsmanlike conduct, including unnecessary delay, by any coach, player, or spectator, is strictly prohibited, will not be tolerated and can lead to ejection without warning.
3. An umpire has the authority to eject, after proper warning, any coach, player, or spectator at any time, if, in the umpire's judgment, such action is warranted in order to eliminate conduct which the umpire deems offensive, or in any way interferes with the orderly playing of the game. If the game is delayed longer than deemed appropriate by the umpire while waiting for a coach or spectator to leave the area after being ejected, the game will be forfeited in favor of the opposing team. An ejected player will remain on the bench under the supervision of the Coach.
4. In any case, whether or not ejected, a party interfering with any umpire's control of the game, is subject to probation or suspension. Sign up fees, or any portion thereof, will not be refunded to any player who is suspended or banned from league play.
5. Any umpire's decision which involves judgment such as, but not limited to, whether a batted ball is fair or foul, whether a pitch is a strike or a ball, or whether a runner is safe or out, is final. No player, coach or spectator shall object to any such judgment decisions.
6. Any umpire's decision which involves an interpretation of playing rules may be discussed by the coach (only one). No other person will be permitted on the playing field to discuss such playing rule decisions. The ultimate decision of the umpire(s) is final, subject only to pursuant to the rules governing protests.

II. General Rules - Applies to all Divisions

G1. Rule Book

The MEYL rulebook shall take precedence over NFHS rules. The NFHS rules shall govern when the MEYL rulebook does not address a situation. If a situation arises that is not covered or clarification is needed; it will be addressed by the MEYL UIC and league coordinators.

G2. Conduct

1. Do not direct negative comments at players, coaches, or umpires. Inappropriate behavior by players, coaches, or spectators WILL NOT BE TOLERATED. You will be asked to leave the park as a result of any confrontation with an umpire in this league. If it occurs more than once, you will be banned from ALL MEYL events for the remainder of the season. If a parent is ejected from a game, the head coach will also be ejected for the remainder of that game and the next. If a coach/assistant is ejected, they will remain ejected the rest of the game and the next. This will be applied to home and away games.
2. The head coach is responsible for the conduct of his team. This includes assistant coaches, players, and fans. No member of the team (assistant coach or player) other than the head coach may leave the area of the dugout or coaching box to dispute an umpire's call.
 - a. No team member, coach or player, may leave the area of the dugout or coaches box to argue a call or ridicule an umpire.
 - b. The penalty for this infraction will result in both the offender and the head coach being restricted to the dugout for the remainder of the game.

- c. If the offender is a player, this will also result in an out each time his or her spot in the batting order is due. If the incident is severe enough, the offender may be ejected, with the head coach restricted to the dugout.
 - d. If any person threatens an umpire, either physically or verbally, the game will be forfeited by the offending team, and if the offending person is a player or coach, he will be permanently banned from participating in the league.
3. Fighting during a game will not be tolerated. If there is a fight during a game, all persons will be sent to their respective dugouts until the situation is calmed down. All participants in the fight will be ejected from the game. If there are any further altercations during the game, it will be forfeited by the offending team or teams.
 - a. If ejected for fighting the resulting penalty is a two game suspension.
 - b. If ejected for fighting twice during the same season the result will be being banned for the remainder of the season
 4. After an ejection has occurred for any reason, the ejected person must leave the vicinity of the playing area immediately, and is prohibited from further contact, either direct or indirect, with the team (distance must be out of sight and out of sound). Failure to comply will result in a forfeit.
 - a. If for any reason a player or coach is ejected from a game, he will receive the following disciplinary action:
 - I. 1st offense will result in a one game suspension, served the next played game.
 - II. 2nd offense will result in a two game suspension, served the next two played games.
 - III. 3rd offense will result in league dismissal for the remainder of the season, with loss of all registration fees.
 - IV. 1st offense for fighting will result in a two game suspension, served the next two played games.
 - V. 2nd offense for fighting will result in league dismissal for the remainder of the season, with loss of all registration fees.
 - b. All suspensions/ejections can be appealed to the league coordinator. All suspensions/ejections will be followed through regardless of where your next game is being played.

G3. Official Game Ball

The official baseballs and softballs shall be authorized by each home city. The various divisions of the league must use only the designated baseballs or softballs as authorized for each division. The umpires for each game will provide one new ball and one used ball.

G4. Pitching Outs, Distances, Base Paths, Ball Size, and Time Limit

1. Baseball

DIVISION	PITCHING	BASE PATH	PITCHING OUTS	BALL SIZE	DIAMONDS	TIME LIMIT
Tee Ball	Coach (Optional)	50ft	N/A	Tee Ball		N/A
Pitching Machine	44ft	60ft	N/A	Official Baseball		1hr 40 min
Minors	44ft	65ft	See rule G15	Official Baseball		1hr 40 min
Majors	50ft	70ft	See rule G15	Official Baseball		1hr 40 min

2. Softball

DIVISION	PITCHING	BASE PATH	PITCHING OUTS	BALL SIZE	DIAMONDS	TIME LIMIT
Pitching Machine	30ft	55ft	N/A	11 in (white)		1hr 40 min
Minors	35ft	60ft	N/A	11 in (raised seam – yellow)		No new innings after 1hr 30 min
Majors	40ft	60ft	N/A	12 in (raised seam – yellow)		No new innings after 1hr 30 min
Juniors	40ft	60ft	N/A	12 in (raised seam – yellow)		No new innings after 1hr 30 min

G5. Game Length

1. Before the first pitch is thrown, the umpire will call out the official start time to both coaches and keep track of the official time. Time limits apply to all games, including playoffs, and are as follows:
 - a. Based on the pace of the current game, the umpires should declare “last inning” prior to the start of the visiting teams last time at bat based on the time limit in the charts in Rule G4. However, it is up to the coaches as well as the umpires to monitor the time limit. If a coach has any questions during the game as to whether it is last inning or not it should be directed to the umpire. If the umpire fails to call last inning due to the inning running extremely long or is busy with game activity, the time limit will still be enforced. Games will not be called in the middle of an inning unless there isn’t an option for the opposing team to win.

Softball: Timers will placed on softball fences. Any inning started after 1 hour and 15 minutes will be played without run limits. Softball NOTE: A new inning starts IMMEDIATELY after the last out of the bottom of an inning is made. If the last out of an inning (bottom) is made with 30 seconds left on the clock, a new inning will be played to completion.

- b. No matter the timing or declaration (or lack thereof) of (1.) above, no new innings shall begin two hours past the official start time. Innings played during the allotted time will constitute a complete game. The only exception to this rule is for play-off games. Play-off games will be played until there is a winner.
2. In the event of rain, lightning or darkness, a complete game will consist of four (4) completed innings or 3 1/2 innings if the home team is ahead.
 - a. A MEYL member present (UIC) and/or a game umpire will make the final decision in regards to
 - i. weather or nightfall.
 - ii. Prior to the start of a game, a MEYL member will make the final decision in regards to weather or nightfall.
 - iii. Once the game has started, the umpire will make the final decision in regards to weather or nightfall.
 - b. In the event of a tie game due to rain, lightning or darkness, the game will end in a tie and be officially recorded as such. For "suspended" and "cancelled" game definitions, see Rule G18 - Inclement Weather.
3. In the event there would be stoppage in play due to necessary field repairs (i.e. broken bases or pitching rubber, backstop fencing, etc.) that fall under the control of MEYL, time will be added to the length of the game equal to stoppage in play. Even with this additional time, games can still be called in the event of rain, lightning or darkness. Games will be considered complete, suspended or cancelled based on Rule G4 - Game Length and Rule G18 - Inclement Weather.
4. At no time will time be added due to weather or other conditions out of the control of the MEYL.

G6. Speed-up Rules

Between innings, five warm-up pitches or two minutes are allowed. New pitchers are allowed eight (8) warm-up pitches. Penalty - if batting team is delaying the game more than 2 minutes, the umpire will start calling one strike every 20 seconds. If the defensive team is delaying more than 2 minutes, the umpire will call a ball every 20 seconds delayed.

G7. Delay of Game

Baseball: Intentional delay of the game by the team in the lead to take unfair advantage of the 1 hour, 40 min. time limit will result in a warning on the first occurrence and a forfeit on the second occurrence in the game (Umpire's Judgment).

Softball: Intentional delay of the game by the team in the lead to take unfair advantage of the 1 hour, 30 min. time limit will result in a warning on the first occurrence and a forfeit on the second occurrence in the game (Umpire's Judgment).

G8. Mercy Rule

1. If during the progress of any game one of the following occurs, the umpire shall end the game in favor of the leading team:
 - a. The home team is leading by ten or more runs after 4 ½ (i.e. middle of the 5th inning) or more innings has been played.
 - b. The visiting team is leading by ten or more runs after 5 or more innings has been played at the end of the inning.

2. Softball: If during the progress of any softball game one of the following occurs, the umpire shall end the game in favor of the leading team.
 - a. 15/4 Rule – The home team is leading 15/4 after 3 ½ (i.e. middle of the 3rd inning) or more innings has been played, or any new inning started after 1 hour and 15 minutes.
 - b. The visiting team is leading by ten or more runs at the end of any completed inning after 5 or more innings has been played.

G9. Batting Order

1. The official batting order must give the player's name and number.
2. No players on the same team may have the same number.
3. Roster batting is used (all available players are in the batting order).
4. Once a player is in the lineup and leaves for any reason other than injury, illness, or a predetermined reason, that position in the batting order will be an out each time it comes up for the remainder of the game after the player leaves.
 - a. All predetermined reasons must be communicated to both head coaches and the umpires before the game begins.
5. Players arriving late may be added to the bottom of the batting order at any time before the start of the fourth inning.
6. In the event of injury to a player, if the injured player cannot continue when scheduled to bat, the position in the line-up will be dissolved and the injured player will not be allowed to re-enter the game.

G10. Equipment

1. Uniforms
 - a. All players will be expected to play any schedule game with a uniform issued by their city.
 - b. Hats/visors are optional; however, only hats/visors issued by the home can be worn during the game.
 - c. Players may wear additional garments, e.g. a sweatshirt or jacket for their comfort. However, the home city shirt shall be worn on the outside of any other clothing.
 - d. All boys must wear a hard cup in baseball league play.
 - e. Shorts are not allowed.
2. No uniform alterations allowed. Nothing is allowed to be ironed on, silk screened, pressed or attached to league issued hats, pants, shorts or shirts. Examples include personal names, additional numbers, anything that individualizes a person or team. All games will be played as scheduled, however, such uniform alterations will result in an automatic team forfeit (and a loss counted in team standings) until which time proper uniforms can be fielded.
3. Metal spikes: Shoes with metal spikes or metal cleats are strictly prohibited in all divisions. The penalty for wearing them shall be ejection from the game. No exceptions; however, this ejection will not prohibit them from playing in the next game providing proper cleats are worn. Subsequent violations by players will result in an ejection from the game which will prevent them from playing in the next game.
4. Umpires will give players the opportunity to produce any needed equipment, with the exception of player being caught wearing metal cleats. Failure to do so will result in the player being ejected from the game.
5. Catcher's Equipment: Players must wear facemask with throat protector, helmet, chest protector, and shin guards as provided their city for league play. Players warming up a pitcher are required to wear facemask with throat protector.
6. Helmets: All players will wear helmets while batting and running the bases. Any oversight on a forgotten helmet will not cause the play to be call out if the helmet falls off accidentally. Time out will be called when noticed and the player will be required to put on a helmet. Any player who intentionally tosses off a helmet while running the bases shall be declared out. All strikes and balls,

hits and outs will stand. While the MEYL does not currently issue helmets with face masks, it is acceptable for players to wear their own.

7. All equipment will be kept in the dugouts, behind the benches, or out of the playing area.
8. Bats:
 - a. The maximum barrel size is 2 ¾" for wood and 2 5/8" for any other material.

G11. Batting/Base Running

1. Bat throwing: Coaches must teach their players to hold onto the bat when swinging through the ball.
 - a. The accidental throwing of the bat by the batter will result in a warning by the umpire.
 - b. Each team will be given one warning.
 - c. In the umpire's judgment, subsequent offenses will result in any batter being declared out and play is dead.
 - d. No player or coach may throw any equipment in anger and the umpire may eject the offending person from the game. In the umpire's judgment, a player flagrantly throwing the bat will be declared out and ejected from the game.
2. Collisions: Base runners must slide to avoid contact; with the one exception of first base.
 - a. If the runner goes into a base standing up and runs into the defensive player, the base runner will be declared out for interference provided the defensive player has possession of the ball. If the runner interferes with the relay throw to another base the batter will also be declared out.
 - b. If such contact is malicious or flagrant, the runner shall be ejected from the game.
 - c. Defensive players must have the ball or the ball must be thrown to them. They cannot fake or bait runners into sliding to reduce chances of advancing.
 - d. Base runners must yield to the fielder when a ball is hit to them. If contact is made with a fielder in the act of catching a ball, it is an out due to interference.
3. Obstruction:
 - a. If, in the opinion of the umpire, a fielder does not give the runner a piece of the base in which to slide prior to the fielder receiving the ball, obstruction will be called on the fielder.
 - b. Baseball: Catchers are allowed to block the plate, but must have possession of the ball prior to blocking the plate. The catcher must give the runner access to the base if they don't have the ball.
 - c. Softball: Catchers are NOT allowed to physically block the plate (body block) in Girls Majors and Girls Juniors. Pitching Machine and Girls Minors will be the teaching of this rule.
 - d. Fake Tag: When a defensive player fakes a tag without possession of the ball and impedes the progress of any runner, the umpire shall declare an obstruction and award the runner an additional base. On the second offense, the player will be ejected from the game.

G12. Scoring

1. The official score will be kept by the home plate umpire. When a team scores five runs in an inning, the inning is over, with the exception of the last inning of the game. In the last inning a team may score until they have made three outs. In the event of extra innings within the time limit of the game, a team may score until they have made three outs.

G13. Free substitution

Free defensive substitutions are allowed at the half inning only. During an inning a player from the bench may enter the game only as a pitcher or in the case of an injury. In addition, a defensive replacement will be allowed during an inning if a player is warming up to pitch.

G14. Equitable Playing Time

1. It is to be considered a MEYL guideline that all players are given an opportunity to play in every game.
2. All players in league play must participate in a minimum of three innings in a seven- inning game and two innings in a five-inning or six-inning game. **We strongly suggest that all players must play at least one inning in first two innings.** Failure of any team to comply with this rule will result in forfeiture of the game. If a game is terminated for any reason (including a ten run lead) before 5 innings has elapsed, failure of either team to use all of its players shall not be a violation of this rule.
3. It is also considered to be a MEYL guideline that all players be given the opportunity to play infield at least one inning per game by the third inning in the Tee Ball, Pitching Machine, Minors and Majors divisions. Failure by any team in Minors and Majors divisions to comply with this rule will result in forfeiture of the game. The MEYL recognizes the problem with tracking such activity during a game; so if resolution cannot be achieved at the game site, "Rule G20. Protests" can be pursued. This rule applies during regular season. This rule is not applicable during playoffs.

G15. Pitching

1. **Baseball:** Pitchers in the Minors division will be allowed to pitch up to 9 outs or 50 pitches per game. Pitchers in the Majors Division will be allowed to pitch up to 9 outs or 70 pitches. Pitchers in both divisions can exceed their pitch count to finish the current batter. Rest time for pitching greater than 1/2 of the maximum pitched outs is 40 1/2 hours. Pitchers pitching less than or equal to 1/2 of the pitched outs are required to rest 20 1/2 hours. This rule does not apply to softball.
2. Pitching changes:
 - a. **Baseball:** If a coach calls timeout to talk to the same pitcher more than once in a half inning, a pitching change must be made.
 - b. **Softball: A coach is allowed 2 talks (timeouts) to the pitcher per game. On the 3rd talk (timeout) a pitching change must be made.**
 - c. **Baseball:** A pitcher removed from the pitching position cannot re-enter the game in the pitching position.

G16. Forfeits

1. Failure to have a minimum of eight players available results in a forfeit. A game can be started, continued, and finished with a minimum of eight players.
2. Should either team not be ready to start the game within fifteen minutes after the scheduled game time, the Umpire in Chief (UIC) shall forfeit the game to the opposing team. In order for a team to be credited with forfeit victory, the team must be present at game time with the minimum number of players to play a game. Should both teams violate the rule, each shall be charged with a loss.

G17. Makeup Games

All makeup games will be rescheduled by the Scheduling Director or League Coordinator for each town in connection with the UIC and posted online. Coaches will be contacted with the makeup game date and time.

G18. Inclement Weather

1. In case of inclement weather, the designated person in their town will attempt to notify each team affected by postponements via email or posts.
 - a. The teams may call the rain-out number for the site of your game for the recorded message for all games.
2. Any game stopped due to wet or dangerous conditions where 2 or more innings have been completed shall be deemed "suspended."
 - a. Any "suspended" game will be continued at a later date from the point of which the game was deemed "suspended."
3. Any game stopped due to wet or dangerous conditions where less than two innings have been completed shall be deemed "cancelled" and made up at a later date from the beginning of the game.
4. If at least 3 1/2 innings have been played and the "home team" is winning at the time of play stoppage, the game shall be deemed completed and recorded as such.

G19. League Playoff Championship Games

1. Where scheduling and facilities allow, all playoff championship games will waive the 3 1/2 innings rule. Every possible attempt will be made to complete these suspended games, with the league scheduler having the final say on when suspended games will be made up.
2. When original play is suspended, the games will be "frozen in time" with Coaches signing each other's scorecard and/or scorebook. If and when the game is continued:
 - a. Pitchers will still only get up to the original 9 outs in the game; pitchers cannot benefit from the rest rule; as if the game is continued on the same day as when the original game was suspended.
 - b. The same lineups for batting and fielding apply.
 - c. If any players from the suspended game cannot attend the makeup game, their batting spot is skipped; no out is recorded.
 - d. Conversely, if any players attend the makeup game that didn't attend the suspended game, they are added to the bottom of the batting order.
3. Regular season time limits apply to all post season games with the only exception being that playoff games will be played until there is a winner.

G20. Protests

1. MEYL shall have the authority to act on all rule violations and protests involving teams, players or coaches under its jurisdiction.
2. If games are to be put under protest because of an infraction of the official rules, the following steps should be taken (no protests will be allowed when it involves a questions of an umpire's judgment).
 - a. The notification of the intent to protest must be made immediately before the next pitch, concerning infraction of given rule.
 - b. The Coach of the protesting team must immediately notify the umpire and the opposing Coach that the game is being continued under protest.
 - c. The umpire will notify both scorekeepers that the game is under protest and both scorebooks will be initialed by the umpire indicating the point at which the protest occurred.
 - d. The protest of any game shall be made in writing and filed with a fee of \$100 to the MEYL no less than 24 hours after the game in which the alleged rule violation occurred.
 - e. The letter of protest must include the date, names of umpires, and all matters pertaining to the alleged infraction, citing which rule(s) were violated. The letter of intent must be generated by the protesting Coach and accompanied by the \$100 fee.
 - f. All specifics relating to a protest must be included in scorebook:
 - iv. player at bat
 - v. Inning
 - vi. balls
 - vii. strikes
 - viii. name of pitcher
 - ix. Number of outs
 - x. And the bases on which there were runners.
 - g. All protests shall be acted upon by the MEYL & UIC. The decision of the "Committee" is final.
 - h. The \$100 protest fee will be applied to the home cities funds if the protest is denied. The \$100 fee will be reimbursed to the protesting Coach is the protest is won.

G21. Play Area

1. The "Live Ball" area or "Play Area" is defined as the area enclosed by the line that extends from the end of the backstop and runs parallel to each foul line. For safety reasons, spectators will not be allowed in the official playing area.
2. Overthrows: A runner may advance as many bases as they can on an overthrown ball as long as the ball remains in the "Play Area". A runner may advance one (1) base plus the base he is going to when a thrown ball goes out of the "Play Area" and the ball is dead.
3. If a pitched ball delivered by the pitcher goes through or under the backstop or is lodged in the backstop, the runner(s) shall be awarded one (1) base. This does not apply to the Minors (Girls and Boys) Division.

G22. Players on Bench

1. All players will stay on or behind benches when not in the field except for the player at bat and player on-deck batter.
2. Only one coach per coach's box.

G23. Individuals behind Backstop

No coaches, players, or fans are allowed directly behind the backstop during the progress of games. If in the opinion of the umpire, individual(s) are bothering the pitcher, catcher, or umpire, the umpires on duty have the authority to ask the individuals(s) to relocate to another portion of the unofficial area.

G24. Field Usage before Game Time

1. The visiting team will have the infield from 30 minutes before game time until 15 minutes before game time.
2. The home team will have the infield from 15 minutes before game time until the game starts.
3. This example will be used for all start times.
4. No batting practice on the infield. All batting practice should be conducted in the outfield or a grassy area away from the stands and parking lot. The team will use either the first base side of the field or the third base side.
5. Warm ups will be simultaneous for both teams. (No pre-game warm ups allowed in the spectator areas). There will be no warming up on the spectator side of the out of play areas on any diamond while spectators are watching an ongoing game.

G25. Dugouts during the Game

1. The home team is always entitled to the first base dugout.
2. Visitors use the third base dugout.
3. The home team is listed on the game schedule second, whereas the visitor is always listed first. For example, if the game schedule shows 1 vs. 2, then team #1 is the visiting team and #2 is the home team.

G26. Umpire's Scorecard

Both team Coaches and umpires must legibly sign and date the official game scorecard. This is necessary to ensure that team standings and umpire pay is recorded correctly.

G27. Infield Fly Rule

1. The infield fly rule will be enforced in the Majors Divisions.
2. The infield fly rule will NOT be enforced in all other divisions.
3. The infield fly rule is defined as: The batter is declared out when there is a catchable routine fly ball on the infield, with runners on first and second, or bases loaded and less than two outs. Base runners may advance at their own risks.

III. SPECIAL DIVISION RULES

MEYL has developed a program which concentrates on teaching baseball/softball fundamentals in the early years and developing baseball/softball skills in the later years. During the early years, the MEYL rules have been modified to help foster learning the game. The intent of the rule modification is to provide all of the younger players with every opportunity to learn the game and to encourage participation in the program in the later years. The Division Summary illustrates how the rules are modified in the early years of the program. It is also provided for quick reference for umpire and coaches.

III- A. Rules for Tee Ball

The primary purpose of this division is for instruction into the sports of baseball and softball. It is intended to be a fun introduction into a sport that can provide enjoyment for all involved. Coach pitching, while optional for each player, is allowed in Tee Ball. If coach pitch is desired, batters may receive up to three (3) coach pitches. If after three pitches (regardless of quality or the outcome) the ball is not hit into play, the ball will be placed on the Tee to speed up play. See Rule T4 - Tee Setup.

T1. General Rules

The following rules are additions or substitutions to the baseball and softball rules. All baseball and softball rules not mentioned herein apply to the Tee Ball Division. Any rule not stated will be determined by the MEYL.

T2. Playing Field

1. Bases will be 50 feet apart.
2. A 20 foot "fair ball" arc will be marked around home plate.

T3. Length of Game

1. A game consists of three 3 innings.
2. An inning shall be defined as each child batting once through a team's lineup.
3. The last batter runs all the way around the bases until the catcher has tagged home plate for the final "out" of the inning.
4. All games end in a tie.
5. No records of game scores will be kept.

T4. Tee Setup

1. The tee will be set up and removed by the coach whenever a potential play at home plate exists.
2. One coach is allowed at first base, third base, and home plate.

T5. Hitting/Bunting

1. There are no strikeouts in Tee ball.
2. The ball must be hit beyond the 20 foot arc in fair territory to be playable. If the batted ball is not hit beyond the arc, the ball is declared dead and the batter tries again.
3. If the batted ball is not hit beyond the arc on the third strike and remains in fair territory, the batter shall take first base.
4. If the batted ball rolls into foul territory on the third strike, it is considered a foul ball.
5. If a fielder touches the ball before it crosses the arc, the batter is awarded first base.
6. No other base runners may advance unless forced.

T6. Stealing

1. There will be no stealing, for Tee Ball, Pitching Machine and Minor Divisions. The base runner may only advance on a batted ball.
2. If a runner leaves the base before the bat contacts the ball or hits the tee below the ball, the ball is dead. At that time, all runners must return to their base.

T7. Overthrows and Base Running

1. Runners may leave a base when the batter makes contact with the ball on the tee.
2. When a fielder throws the ball home, it must cross the arc before the play is ruled dead.

3. When the ball is delivered to the arc and stops play, runners on the base path may advance to the next base they are heading.
4. On an overthrow at any base whether in fair or foul territory, the runner(s) advance one base and play is ruled dead.
5. After the ball is hit, the batter and base runners may attempt to take as many bases as possible, until the umpire or coach declares the play dead.

T8. Defensive Positions

1. Each team will field all available players defensively at one time.
2. Children may never play the same defensive position in two consecutive innings.
3. The infield will have six (6) fielders with the sixth player positioned a few steps in front of second base.
4. The remaining players shall be positioned in the outfield.
5. Outfielders cannot stand on the foul lines.
6. As stated in the General Rules section, it is to be considered a MEYL guideline that all players be given the opportunity to play both infield and outfield (Particularly in the Tee Ball, PM, and Minor Divisions).

T9. Defensive Coach on the Field

Two (2) coaches will be allowed on the playing field to assist with defense. They must be positioned in the outfield or in the bench area. No infield coaches are permitted.

T10. Logical Play

1. When a ball is hit back to the pitcher, the pitcher can run home to get the force out; however, teach the children to throw base runners out.
2. Players should not be encouraged to make an unassisted out unless it is a logical baseball play.
3. The player should throw the ball if it is the logical play. This rule is intended to apply to all positions so that appropriate plays are developed.

III- B. Rules for Instructional Division

PM1. General Rules

The following rules are additions or substitutions to the General Rules. All General Rules not mentioned herein apply to this division. Any rule not stated will be determined by the MEYL. Use of the pitching machine is intended to develop and enhance the skills of hitting, catching, and throwing the baseball.

PM2: Inning Length

1. An inning is three (3) outs, or five (5) runs, whichever occurs first, with the exception of the last inning.
2. In the last inning a team may score until they have made three outs.

PM3. Pitches, Walks, and Strikeouts

1. No base on balls (walks) will be allowed.
2. Except as otherwise provided herein, three swinging strikes constitute an out.
3. The batter is still at bat when hitting a foul ball on a third strike.
4. No strikes will be called unless the batter doesn't make any attempt to swing after three quality pitches. A quality pitch is defined as a pitch in or reasonably near (i.e. a hittable ball) the batter's strike zone.
5. Pitching:
 - a. Pitching will be done by pitching machines.
 - b. The pitching machine will be set to deliver the ball at a mutually agreed upon speed that maximizes the development of batting skills in both baseball and softball.
 - c. The balls will be fed into the pitching machines by the umpire, coach or an adult designated by the batting team.
 - d. The pitching machine operator is allowed to adjust the delivery of the ball.
 - e. The pitching machine operator is allowed up to five (5) practice pitches to adjust the delivery of the ball as needed.
 - f. The coaches are responsible for setting up the pitching machine before the game starts and returning it to the storage shed next to the concession stand.
 - g. If a batted ball strikes the pitching machine or the umpire (or operator), the umpire or coaches (if no umpire provided) shall automatically declare a ground rule single and all other base runners will advance one base.
 - h. If a batted ball is deflected by a fielder prior to striking the machine or operator, or if a thrown ball hits the machine or operator, the ball will be considered live and in play.
 - i. If the pitching machine operator intentionally interferes with a live ball, the batter will be declared out and all runners must return to their previously occupied base.
6. Bunting or any deliberate attempt thereof will not be allowed. (i.e. swinging bunts, half swings, etc.)

PM4. Overthrows, Base Running, and Time Outs (One play rule)

1. No stealing of bases will be allowed.
2. A base runner may not lead off from a base; however, a base runner may leave a base when the pitching machine delivers the ball to the batter and the ball crosses the plate.
 - a. If a base runner leaves a base before the pitch is across the plate, play shall be called dead and the base runner shall return to the base.
 - b. Both coaches should educate the players on the rule.
3. Runners can advance one (1) base on an overthrow and the ball will be considered dead.
4. In the play area, fielders are encouraged to make plays at any base or runner until play is dead. There is no restriction to the number of outs that can be recorded.
5. If an overthrow occurs, the runner is awarded the next base and the play is dead. Balls thrown back to the pitcher from the catcher will not be counted as overthrows.
6. If a double-play is attempted and an overthrow occurs, the runner is awarded the next base and the play is dead.
7. After the ball is hit, the batter and base runners may attempt to take as many bases as possible, until the ball has reached the infield. (Player possession is not required in the Pitching Machine leagues for stoppage in play.)

8. Runners are awarded the next base if they are beyond the half -way point between bases, otherwise, the runner must return back to the previous base.
9. Any intentional overthrows into foul territory will result in all base runners being awarded two bases.
10. No coach/player can ask for a time out until ALL play activity has stopped.

PM5. Defensive Position

1. All outfielders, including the rover, must start each play on the outfield grass past the infield. These four fielders must remain on the outfield grass until a ball is batted.
2. A defensive player will be positioned on either side of the pitching machine to field the pitcher's position. At no time will a defensive player be allowed to be in front of the pitching machine prior to a pitch being hit by the batter.

PM6. Umpires

1. Pitching Machine games will be umpired by the coaches of the team that is batting if the town provides no umpire.
2. The first base coach shall call play at 1st and 2nd base and the third base coach shall call plays at 3rd base and home plate if the town provides no umpire.

PM7. Defensive Coach on the Field

1. One coach will be allowed on the playing field to assist with defense. They must be positioned in the outfield.
2. Except during periods of non-play where the coach needs to properly position a play prior to play or to provide player instruction, no coach is permitted on the infield.

PM8. Courtesy Runner

1. Teams must get a courtesy runner for the catcher if there are two outs (optional with less than 2 outs).
2. This runner must be the last player that made an out while batting.
3. No courtesy runners will be allowed in the last half inning.

III –C. Rules Minor Division

Mi1. General Rules

The following rules are additions or substitutions to the General Rules. All General Rules not mentioned herein apply to this division. Any rule not stated will be determined by the MEYL. All playoff games shall be governed by regular season rules.

Mi2. Innings

1. An inning is three (3) outs, or five (5) runs, whichever occurs first, with the exception of the last inning.
2. In the last inning a team may score until they have made three outs.

Mi3. Pitches, Walks, and Strikeouts

1. Minor league is the beginning stages of pitching for MEYL players, stressing the fundamentals of throwing the ball over the plate, (pitching strikes).
2. There will be a liberal strike zone. Umpires will be calling strikes in an area they feel is good enough for a batter to hit the ball. This will give young pitchers confidence.
3. Baseball: Strikeouts and walks will be called; however, there will be no dropped 3rd strike rule.
4. Softball: Strikeouts and walks will be called; however, there will be no dropped 3rd strike rule. The pitcher will pitch to a single batter until the batter strikes out, hits the ball or reaches a four (4) ball count. In the case where the batter reaches a four (4) ball count, a coach from the batters team will move quickly to the mound (not using this as an opportunity to delay the game) and throw a maximum of Five (5) pitches. The strike count will carry over throughout the batters time at the plate. (The umpire will continue to call strikes when the coach is pitching { i.e. if the coach enters with a (2) strike count and the first pitch from the coach is in the strike zone or swung at and missed, the batter is out}. A foul ball hit on the third pitch will not constitute an out).
5. Pitching rubber: Encourage pitchers to start with both feet on the rubber from the beginning. By Majors Ball all pitches will be regulated to start with both feet on the rubber. The goal is to advance to both feet on the pitching rubber by the end of Minor Division as it will be considered an illegal pitch by Girls Majors.
6. Bunting or a deliberate attempt thereof will not be allowed (i.e. swinging bunts, half swings etc.)
7. Pitchers are not allowed to re-enter the game as a pitcher after they have been removed from the position. They are allowed to re-enter at another position in the field.

Mi4. Stealing, Overthrows, Base Running, and Time Outs

1. In Baseball, stealing and secondary leads are allowed; however, the base runner can only leave the base once the pitch has left the pitcher's hand. Since there is no leading off, pitching balks will not be called in the Minor League. Stealing home is NOT allowed.
2. In Softball, stealing is NOT allowed, lead offs are not allowed except after the ball leaves the pitchers hand. If the umpire declares the runner left early, the runner will be called out.
3. If while attempting to make a play at first or third an overthrow occurs and goes out of play the runner is awarded the next base, and the play is dead.
4. Runner can advance one (1) base on an overthrow and the ball will be considered dead.
5. After the ball is hit, the batter and base runners may attempt to take as many bases as possible, until the umpire declares the play is dead.
6. The play is considered dead when an infielder has possession of the ball on the infield.
7. Runners are awarded the next base if they are beyond the halfway point between bases, otherwise, the runner must return back to the previous base.
8. Any intentional overthrows into foul territory will result in all base runners being awarded two bases.
9. No player or coach can ask for time out until ALL play is stopped.

Mi5. Defensive Positions

1. Baseball: There will be nine defensive players used by each team.
2. Softball: There will be nine defensive players used by each team.
 - a. All outfielders must start each play on the outfield grass past the infield. All outfielders must remain on the outfield grass until a ball is batted.

Mi6. Post Season Playoffs

1. There will be a post-season play-off tournament.
2. Through the playoffs, the visiting and home teams will be decided by a pre-game coin flip by the home plate umpire.
3. Brackets will be available online.
4. It is the goal to complete play-off games by July 4th. All schedules are tentative and subject to change pending weather and any other unforeseen circumstances.

Mi7. Courtesy Runner

1. Teams must get a courtesy runner for the catcher if there are two outs (optional with less than 2 outs).
2. This runner must be the last player that made an out while batting.
3. No courtesy runners will be allowed in the last half inning.

III-D. Rules for Majors Division Baseball and Majors and Juniors Division Softball

Ma1. General Rules

The following rules are additions or substitutions to the General Rules. All General Rules not mentioned herein apply to this division. Any rule not stated will be determined by the MEYL.

Ma2. Inning

1. An inning is three (3) outs, or five (5) runs, whichever occurs first, with the exception of the last inning.
2. In the last inning a team may score until they have made three outs.

Ma3. Pitching and Base running

1. In Baseball, lead-offs and stealing all bases are permitted.
2. In Softball, stealing is allowed, lead offs are not allowed except after the ball leaves the pitchers hand. If the umpire declares the runner left early, the runner will be called out.
3. Dropped Third Strike: The batter/runners can advance on a dropped third strike if first base is not occupied with less than two outs, or with two outs and any bases occupied. If the batter "commits" to going to his or her dug out he will be out. (Committing is defined as leaving the batter's box with the intent of returning to their dugout)
4. Runners must slide to avoid collisions.
5. Illegal pitches:
 - a Baseball: Each pitcher will be given one warning for a balk and no runners will advance. After a warning has been issued, if another balk is called, all runners will advance one base.
 - b Softball: In Majors or Juniors, the pitcher must start with both feet on the rubber or it will be considered an illegal pitch.
 - i Majors-warnings will be given every time this occurs.

- ii Juniors-one warning will be given per pitcher. The second illegal pitch, the batter will be awarded a ball.
6. Softball-Bunting will be allowed.

Ma4. Defensive Positions

1. Baseball: There will be nine defensive players used by each team.
2. Softball:
 - a. All outfielders must start each play on the outfield grass past the infield. These three fielders must remain on the outfield grass until a ball is batted.
3. Softball: Catchers are NOT allowed to physically block the plate (body block) in Girls Majors and Girls Juniors. If a catcher is called for blocking, the run will be awarded to the runner. This is the umpire's discretion.
4. We decided not to have a 10th player at this level.

Ma5. Borrowing Players

1. Teams may borrow up to 2 players to get up to eight, the minimum needed to play during regular season games, as well as tournament/playoff games.
2. We decided that the borrowed player would come from the same division, not a lower division.
3. The Borrowed players cannot pitch or catch, and they must bat at the bottom of the order. These arrangements must be made before the official start of the game to avoid a forfeit.
4. All team rosters will be maintained by the home city to approve these arrangements.

Ma6. Post –Season Playoffs

1. There will be a post-season playoff tournament.
2. Throughout the playoffs, the visiting and home teams will be decided by a pre-game coin flip by the home plate umpire.
3. Brackets will be available online.
4. It is the goal to complete play-off games by July, 4th. All schedules are tentative and subject to change pending weather and any other unforeseen circumstances.

Ma7. Courtesy Runner

1. Teams must get a courtesy runner for the catcher if there are two outs (optional with less than 2 outs).
 - a. Softball, the pitcher of record is allowed a courtesy runner.
2. This runner must be the last player that made an out while batting.
3. No courtesy runners will be allowed in the last half inning.