

## GLMM Coaches Information

*Last Updated: April 2014*

Thank you for volunteering to be a Glen Lake Mighty Mite coach! You play a vital role in the league's success and we are grateful to you for volunteering your time and talents. This document provides guidance for activities occurring before and throughout the season. If you have any questions, contact the Coordinator for your level.

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## **BEFORE THE SEASON BEGINS**

### **Reach out to your Players and Families**

- One of your most important jobs off the field is communicating with the players' families. In these younger levels, families may be unfamiliar with Glen Lake Mighty Mites and will rely upon you for information. This can't be over emphasized. Many families register in January and then don't hear from us for up to 3 months and wonder what is going on.
- Once the GLMM Coordinator sends you your team roster, send an email to the parents/guardians, no later than April 10.
  - Communicate who the head coach and assistant coach are along with your contact information
  - Send out the team roster with the player names, emails, and phone numbers to facilitate car-pooling and communications (Please do not use this as a means to gain business contacts.)
  - Confirm email addresses and phone numbers and ask if other email addresses/phone numbers should be added to your distribution list
  - You may request a volunteer to be the team manager to assist with communications, handing out picture forms, organizing end of season party, etc.
- Follow-up this email with a phone call to each player's family to answer any questions
- Team Rosters will be added to each team's website
- At one of your first practices, schedule time for a team meeting and ask at least one parent or guardian of each player to attend. Go through expectations for the year, communications, practice schedule, and most importantly – set the tone for a great year.

### **Team Parent**

Hopefully, there is a player on your team whose parents have already volunteered as a team parent. If not, ask for volunteers – this is a very important job!

Responsibilities of team parents include:

- Assisting coaches in notifying players of meeting times, practice times, and alterations in schedules and rainouts.
- Help coordinate getting the names on the back of the jersey's if the team decides to do so.
- Organize optional end of season parties and appreciation gifts for Coaches

### **Website**

One of our goals with the new website is better communication to families, coaches, and players. When schedules change, games get cancelled/rescheduled, or rain outs occur we are expecting to be able to communicate quicker and more efficiently with the use of email alerts to

teams, coaches and parents. Each coach should also use the site and the team page to communicate to parents on changes or important events during the season. Coaches will be receiving information on how this is done along with instructions on how to keep their teams informed.

### **Prepare to Coach**

- Coaches Clinics - It is expected each coach will attend one of the sessions if they have not done so already. Hopkins High School Coaching staff puts together an outstanding program of speakers and presentations geared toward coaches and players of all levels. Please consult the "Coaches" tab on the website; [www.glmightymites.com](http://www.glmightymites.com); for upcoming clinic information.
- Visit the GLMM website:
  - Review the "Coaches" information located on the "League Info" tab
  - Know the rules for your level located under "Rules" on the "League Info" tab
  - Review league expectations and general GLMM information
- Submit your background checks and concussion certificates. These forms are available in the "Coaches" section of the GLMM website under "League Info"
- For MP 2 and MP 1 coaches, learning the mechanics and operation of the pitching machine is important. The machines are kept in the knock boxes behind the 3<sup>rd</sup> base dugout at the lower field and in the storage shed behind the upper field. Getting to the fields 30 minutes prior to the game to set up the machine and make sure you are getting a consistent pitch is time well spent. For MP 1, we typically set the speed at 28-32 mph. The ball should have a slight arc as it crosses home plate. For MP 2, the speed is typically 36-40 mph. Feel free to adjust both speeds to accommodate the abilities of the kids playing. We want kids to put the ball into play.
- Finally, remember that the primary goal of GLMM is for kids to have fun playing baseball in a great family environment.

### **Equipment Distribution**

Equipment will be distributed to A & B ball coaches in the upcoming weeks. All other divisions will be informed by the division coordinator when and where to pick up their equipment. If it is not possible for either the head coach or the assistant coach to pick up the equipment on that day, please contact the division coordinator to make other arrangements.

### **Field Clean Up and Preparation Day – April 12th**

Field clean up is scheduled for **Saturday, April 12th at 9:00AM** at Optimists Fields. Bring your own rakes!!

## EVENTS

### Season Opener Pizza Party – Thurs, April 24<sup>th</sup>, 2014 (6:00 – 8:00 p.m.) at Hopkins High School

- The Season Opener Pizza party occurs in April, right before opening weekend. Make sure you know the date and location and communicate this to your players and families.
- Often times the Pizza Party is the first time families will meet their child's coach in person. It is vital that coaches attend the Pizza Party for this reason.
- Many families come to the Pizza Party as it serves as the "season opener" of sorts for the GLMM season and fundraiser for the league. Uniforms are also often passed out at the Pizza Party. The Uniform Coordinator will provide further instructions for your level

### Family Day/Picture Day – Saturday, May 17<sup>th</sup>, 2014

- Family Day takes place in mid-May at Optimist Fields. Make sure you know the date.
  - For Family Day, this is when team and individual pictures are taken along with many games and family related events taking place throughout the day.
  - All coaches must pick up the picture packets and distribute them the week before Family Day
  - Coaches should send an email to their team, communicating the picture time and remind parents to bring the completed picture forms and payment
  - In the event of rain, pictures will still be taken at Glen Lake Activity Center but the other activities may be cancelled.

## PRACTICE

### Practice Fields and Batting Cages

We will schedule teams for field practice and batting cage times. This will begin the first or second week of April. Our plan is to not schedule any indoor gym practices for this season. Practice Schedules for all teams will be posted on the website.

The practice fields GLMM will be scheduling for are Gatewood school, Boulder Creek Park, and our own Optimist Cages. You are welcome to look for alternative practice venues if you wish.

For the batting cages, the last team in the batting cage MUST put away the pitching machine and bucket of balls. Please keep the batting cage area clean of trash. **ONLY ADULTS MAY FEED THE BALLS INTO THE PITCHING MACHINE. HITTERS MUST WEAR BATTING HELMETS INSIDE THE CAGE.** For A-Ball & B-Ball, batting cages at the Optimist fields are always used by the scheduled teams for warm-ups, one hour before games begin.

## **MP 2/MP 1**

Practice times will be assigned by the league for batting practice and field practice. Coaches are free to schedule additional times if they like. We do recommend having no more than 2 events (games and or practices) per week for younger kids—particularly during the school year.

## **Rookie League**

The first half of the season is Saturday morning clinics and the second half is Saturday morning T-ball games. For the Rookie League clinics, we have put together a series of stations that all the kids rotate through during the morning sessions. The stations are manned by GLMM coaches, volunteers and players. The goal of the Rookie League is teaching kids the fundamentals of baseball and keeping the session's fun.

## **SEASON OVERVIEW**

- A-Ball and B-Ball games begin **April 26, 2014**
- Rookie League, MP1, and MP2 games begin **May 3, 2014**
- The biggest challenge we run into is weather and unfortunately cancellations. As a league we generally error on the side of caution when it comes to the younger kids and playing games. Communicating cancellations and schedule changes is a part of this process.
- The GLMM field supervisor will make the final play/no play determination. Once a cancellation is made, every effort is made to notify all coaches, players and parents quickly

## **AFTER GAME CLEAN-UP**

DUG OUTS – Please be sure your players **CLEAN UP** after themselves after every game by picking up all garbage and putting it into the trash receptacles at the end of the game. Let's keep "our" fields looking great!

## **END OF DAY FIELD MAINTENANCE**

We do not schedule field crews for the end of day field maintenance at Optimists. Often times due to the length of games and needing to shut off the lights, we found the time given to get the work done was not worth having a crew do the work.

The home team will be responsible for the following duties:

1. Filling in dirt around home plate/pitchers mound
2. Putting tarps on home plate and pitchers mound

We keep field crew equipment—rakes/drags/tarps,etc—at each field. Each team is responsible for cleaning their own dugout. The hard stop time for games is 9:50 pm. No exceptions. This will allow a quick clean up of dugouts and the field with the lights being shut off prior to 10:00 PM.

## **PACE OF PLAY**

We can all do a better job at keeping the game moving at a quicker pace and avoiding time limit issues. This benefits everyone and lends itself to better baseball. Remember the following guidelines:

- Have your line up ready to go before the game
- Get your catcher ready to go and if needed pinch run for him with 2 outs
- 7 warm up pitches between innings. Warm your pitchers up before the game/inning
- Tell your kids to hustle in/hustle out
- Have your kids ready to hit. They may only see one strike per at bat so be ready to hit that first pitch. You don't have to take a strike
- Be ready to start your game on time
- Limit your between innings meetings.

## **SPORTSMANSHIP**

One of the goals of the Glen Lake Mighty Mites Baseball organization is to teach the principles of good sportsmanship. An easy way to teach this is to demonstrate this in the stands. Parents and spectators should never criticize the umpires, coaches or players. Remember, the coaches are strictly volunteers, parents like you. The only rewards they receive are the joys of the players and the appreciation of the parents. Many of our umpires are junior and senior high school students. Although they have been thoroughly trained, umpiring is still a learning experience for them. Booing or criticizing an umpire sets a terrible example for our children. If anyone has concerns about the coaching or umpiring, feel free to contact the coach, the division coordinator, or any board member.

It's also important to remember a big part of baseball at GLMM is player development. Players should get a chance to play at all positions throughout the season. Winning at the expense of player development is not something we hope to achieve in GLMM baseball. For A-ball, B-ball, MP-2, and Travel Teams: once play offs or tournaments begin it is understood that coaches will look to structure their line up with winning games as a high priority. That being said, keep in

mind these are young kids who look to you in a leadership role. Winning can be done the right way and it is expected that will be done in GLMM.

## **TRAVEL TEAMS**

Glen Lake Mighty Mites offers the opportunity for 9, 10, 11 and 12 year-olds to participate on travel teams. These teams play in three tournaments with the exception of the 9 year olds that play in one tournament. The 10, 11 and 12 year olds play one tournament during the season and two after the regular season. Encourage your players to try out, but make sure that they understand: 1) Not everybody makes the team 2) The cost is approximately \$35 per tournament, plus uniform 3) The player and his/her parent must make the time commitment to participate in practices and tournaments. GLMM may field two teams per age level if there is sufficient interest.

## **UMPIRES**

### **Machine Pitch 2 Umpires**

These umpires are usually 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> graders, and are in their first year umpiring for Mighty Mites. Since they are in their rookie years, please be considerate of judging their calls. There will be absolutely **NO** arguing with any umpire; any call stands. If a machine pitch umpire is a no-show, proceed with the game using a “volunteer” parent. Please report the no-show to the umpire coordinator Brad Lane.

### **Umpire Evaluations A-Ball, B-Ball & Machine Pitch**

Each coach is requested to complete an umpire evaluation card following every game. A card will be given to coaches by the umpire following each game; completed cards are to be placed in the lock box (in the Concession Stand at Optimists Field or in the equipment shed at Gatewood). Umpire evaluations will be seen only by the umpire coordinator to determine whether there is a need to improve the umpires’ skills through additional training.

## **CALL UP PROCEDURES FOR A-BALL AND B-BALL**

**B-Ball and Machine-Pitch** coaches must submit the names of three players from their team that have the ability to play as “call-ups” in the next division. B-ball players should be second year players. It is a good idea to check with the players’ parents for permission. The names should be given to your division coordinator by Opening Day so that the call-up sheet can be posted before games begin. It is sometimes hard to identify your top three players this early in the season; however, it is important that the players are identified so they can make themselves available as soon as possible. As players’ skills develop during the season, you can add names to the call-up list by contacting your division coordinator.

The names of call-up players will be posted in the concession stand. A player can be called up once by each team during the regular season, with the cycle starting again during the playoffs. Each team will be allowed to select any player from the appropriate roster but may use that player for only one game. If a particular call-up player was used by a team for previous game, then a different player must be used.

The names of all call-up players must be reported to the umpire at the start of the game. Remember you can start a game in the field with 8 players. You will forfeit if a 9<sup>th</sup> player (the call-up) does not arrive on time. In a forfeit situation, play anyway, just for fun, as long as you are there. The call-up list will be posted inside the concession stand door.

Call-Ups CANNOT pitch or catch, bat lasts in the lineup and can only play 2 innings in the infield. COACHES CAN ONLY CALL UP PLAYERS TO FILL THEIR ROSTER TO 9 PLAYERS A Ball, 10 PLAYERS B Ball – ROSTERS CANNOT BE FILLED TO 11 OR 12 PLAYERS WHEN USING CALL-UPS. If you have a call-up player in your lineup and one of the regular team members finally shows up for the game (late), and you exceed 9 or 10 players, ask for a time out, talk to the umpire and other coach and decide how to handle the situation. We need to be fair and considerate to the call-ups player's situation and their effort to be at the game. If all parties agree, it is permissible for the call-up player to play the full game, or play 3 innings and the regular player play 3 innings, work out a compromise.

## **RULE CHANGES, CLARIFICATIONS AND COACH RELATED ITEMS.**

Game protests must be made IMMEDIATELY, before the resumption of play. If nothing else, call time out to give you time to decide what to do.

Outfielders in Machine Pitch and B-Ball must play Left, Left Center, Right Center, and Right Fields. An outfielder is not permitted to play short center field.

During severe or threatening weather, coaches are NOT to leave players alone at the field, please stay with the players and umpires until the player is picked up.

Make Up Games: At Optimists, Jason Meyer 612-239-8306 will schedule all makeup games. At Gatewood just contact the other coach and reserve a time on the web site scheduling link. Optimist's games for T Ball, MP1 and MP2 are made up at Gatewood Fields.

T-Ball rule change: If a runner is put out on the base paths, they will leave the base and return to the bench.

Machine Pitch: Base running in machine pitch is coaches' issue. Coaches should refer to Rule Book, page 11, 2f. there is potential abuse of this rule; therefore, coaches should familiar with the rule book language.

Catchers should be ready to play as soon as possible when taking the field. This speeds up the game.

Coaches should prepare LINE-UPS AND FIELD ROTATIONS in advance of the game. Post your filed rotations on a clipboard (hung on a fence, on the bench, etc.) or in the dug out.

No head first sliding except for post season travel tournament games hosted by GLMM. A runner may return to a base headfirst in A-Ball and B-Ball.

There will be no courtesy runners for catchers except games under the lights. Coaches are reminded to speed up the transition as effectively as possible.

There is no MUST SLIDE rule... runners are simply required to avoid contact with the fielder in possession of the ball.

Field Supervisors are responsible for suspending or canceling/postponing games. Field Supervisors will suspend a game first, waiting to see what the weather will do, then cancel/postpone the game if the weather does not clear.

RainOuts: Games, which are rained out, will be rescheduled into the next available slot except if one or both teams would end up playing three (3) days in a row. The scheduler will avoid scheduling any team to play three days in a row if at all possible unless there is no alternative. The scheduler has the discretion to cancel a game completely.

Games are only rescheduled due to inclement weather.

Games may be suspended due to inclement weather. Players and coaches should remain near the field with the intent of continuing play when the weather clears. Remember to keep the game times in mind. For example, you begin play at 6:30, a shower moves through the area at 7:15 and the game is suspended for 20 minutes and play resumes at 7:35. Your game must end (no matter what inning you play) at the end of the inning of play at 8:50. This allows for two hours of playing time per the rules.

A-Ball, B-Ball and Machine Pitch 2 coaches, please turn in your umpire evaluation sheets after each game.

## **SOLICITATION OF SPONSORS**

Please stress the importance of patronizing and recognizing our sponsors to all players and their parents. We also suggest that you think of a way to personally, or as a team, thank your sponsor for supporting our youth program.

## **PLAYER EVALUATIONS**

All coaches, Machine Pitch 2 through A-Ball are required to evaluate players in preparation for the next year's draft. This is very important to make sure we can have balanced teams going into the next season. Player evaluation forms will be distributed near the end of the season. These forms are to be returned to your division coordinator at the coaches' meeting in July (location and date TBD)

## **GENERAL INFORMATION**

### **NO-SMOKING POLICY**

Please be aware that the Glen Lake Mighty Mites facilities—including Optimists Fields 1 and 2 as well as Gatewood School, are **entirely smoke-free**. Please make sure that all parents are aware of this policy. We need to be healthy role models for our players.

### **RAIN-OUT POLICY**

GENERAL – We want to play out as many games as possible. Standing water on the field and/or lightning are the normal criteria for cancellation. Common sense should always be used, but generally games can be played in light rain.

GATEWOOD - The two head coaches will decide if the game will be played. In Machine-Pitch, the umpire coordinator should be called to inform the umpire if the game has been canceled.

OPTIMISTS FIELDS – The FIELD SUPERVISOR will decide if the game will be played. This decision will almost always be made no sooner than one hour before game time, as we all know how quickly weather changes in Minnesota. Coaches and players should always assume that there will be a game and show up at the field. If the FIELD SUPERVISOR determines ahead of time that there is no possible way that the game can be played, the FIELD SUPERVISOR will call each head coach as well as the umpires. The GLMM schedule coordinator is the only person who can assign a make-up date for a rainout game.

### **A-BALL AND B-BALL Bat Sizes**

BAT SIZE - There have been some questions regarding bat size. Please consult the website for clarification on what bat's are legal/illegal.

## **FIELD SUPERVISOR DUTIES**

We are continuing with the **On Call System for Field Supervisor Duties**. In short, the Field Supervisor will be on site at the beginning and ending of the day/evenings games and then “on call” for special circumstances during the rest of the time. Details are listed below.

**Board member would be on call for Field Supervisor Duties. They would be expected to be at the fields 30 minutes prior to first pitch and arrive back at the fields 15 minutes before the scheduled end of the game or by 8:45 PM for doubleheaders. The Concession Stand will close at 9:00 PM. When on call the field supervisor would:**

- a. Open the concession stand up and make sure the umpires/workers show up.

- b. Leave the field and go home or wherever, but have their cell phone on so they are on call in case a question, issue, or weather develops. Phone numbers would be posted in the Concession Stand along with a Schedule of who is handling Field Duty Responsibilities.
- c. After the games are done show up to take the money and lock up. Field Supervisors will need to stay at the field until the lights are turned out no later than 9:50 PM.
- d. As a Board member, you can be considered doing Field Supervisor duties when you are coaching a game or practicing with your team at Optimists.

**The parents working the concession stand would be in charge of:**

- a. Setting up the stand (getting the hot dogs and popcorn going, slushies flowing, etc) – they would need to show up earlier and stay later than they do now. Expected arrival 30 minutes prior opening.
- b. Cleaning up (including the bathrooms) at the end of the night
- c. Turning the field lights on when needed (the field supervisor can turn them off them they lock up)
- d. We would require that at least one adult be on every shift. This might mean that not everyone can “buy out” of concession stand duty.
- e. MP 1 and T-Ball parents would be now be scheduled for Concession Stand work

**The coaches would take over once the games start and need to deal with:**

- a. Rules and game play issues (the ump would likely also be involved with those)
- b. We’d list the cell phone numbers of the field supervisor and applicable coordinators in the dugouts or at the concession stand
- c. Weather issues and whether to play or stop a game due to rain/lighting. Again, the field supervisor would be on call by cell phone to make a final call if needed, or might need to drive up to the field.
- d. Covering home plate and pitcher’s mound in case of bad weather