

A Guide to Coaching 8U Baseball

McGee's Crossroads Athletic Association

www.gomcaa.com



August 2015

I. Introduction to the MCAA

- a. The McGee’s Crossroads Athletic Association is a non-profit organization created to develop, support and promote recreational activities in the McGee’s Crossroads area.
- b. The primary focus of the organization will be teaching the fundamentals of each sport and sportsmanship to the players. This focus is intended to bolster the abilities and understanding of the participants, to aid in physical conditioning, and to increase community spirit.

II. Our Fields

- a. The primary practice and playing field for 8U Baseball is at Johnson Memorial Church, a couple of miles down from the Sheetz Station
 - i. Address: 8280 NC 50 Hwy North, Angier, NC
- b. Participation at some events such as practices, ceremonies and make up games could be scheduled at the McGee's Crossroads Middle School field.
 - i. Address: 13353 NC Highway 210, Benson, NC
- c. The League for the most part will maintain the facilities (such as mowing the outfield), but coaches are expected to make sure the fields are game ready. This can involve raking around the bases, dragging the field, painting lines, and so on. Keep an eye out for works shop memos and participation requests from the other coaches.
- d. All Parents and Guests must be made aware of the policies that we have in place at our JMC field

Johnson Memorial Church Athletic Field

Facility use is strictly for official McGee’s Crossroads Athletic Association
8U Baseball, T-ball, Softball and Soccer

All adjoining properties are Private Property and trespassing is prohibited
Any ball or other item that needs to be retrieved must be done so by an MCAA official
At no time is any child or visitor allowed outside the designated field area

Parking in designated spaces only
No Littering - No Loitering - No Smoking - No Profanity - No Drugs - No Alcohol
All stadium lights will be turned off by 9:00 p.m. with no exception
No artificial noise makers, excluding referee whistles
No pets of any kind with exception of licensed service animals
Concessions, restrooms, picnic areas, and seating areas must be trash free

Hours of Operation for MCAA
Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday 5pm to 9pm
Saturday 9am to 2pm
Wednesday, Sunday no MCAA use



- e. Similarly, at the McGee's Middle School Fields:
 - i. Parking in designated spaces only
 - ii. No Littering - No Loitering - No Smoking - No Profanity - No Drugs - No Alcohol
 - iii. No pets of any kind with exception of licensed service animals
 - iv. Concessions, restrooms, picnic areas, and seating areas must be trash free

III. Spring Ball, Fall Ball, Select and All Stars

- a. MCAA Baseball is proudly affiliated with Tar Heel Leagues, Inc.
 - i. Information regarding divisions, field dimensions, general baseball rules, league rules, tournament regulations, and so on can be found at www.tarheelbb.com
 - ii. General SJBA 8U play rules are as follows:

1. **Coach must submit a batting order to umpire and scorer before game. All players must be listed in a batting order that will not change during said game. All players must bat in order for the entire game. In the event a player is injured (umpire will justify), scorer will be notified and said player will sit out for remainder of said game with no penalty in batting order. No player shall sit in dugout two straight innings. Ten players are allowed on defense and each player must play at least every other inning in field.**
2. **A maximum of five runs, or three outs will constitute an offensive inning.**
3. **Six (6) innings will constitute a game.**
4. **Once a team becomes mathematically eliminated, the game shall end.**
5. **No team shall play more than 4 games per day in one tournament.**
6. **No intentional bunting is allowed. No walks are allowed. Attempted bunting will constitute a strike.**
7. **An eight (8) foot radius circle is to be drawn around pitching plate. Defensive pitcher, with both feet in the circle, must remain inside circle, even or behind the pitching rubber, until batter makes contact with ball.**
8. **All outfielders must be positioned at a similar radius.**
9. **Each batter will be allowed six (6) pitches or 3 swings per bat. No limit of number of foul balls on 6th pitch or 3rd swing.**
10. **No head first sliding will be allowed at any base - Penalty - runner will automatically be declared out. Diving back to a base is not considered a head first slide.**
11. **There is no infield fly rule.**
12. **No base stealing allowed. A runner may leave the base once contact is made by the batter.**
13. **Base runners that miss touching a base, or leaves a base early, shall be called out by the umpire upon completion of the play. No appeals on missed bases will be allowed. Delayed dead ball called by umpire.**

14. A team may have a courtesy runner for the catcher at any time. It is mandatory that the catcher be removed from base running with two outs to speed play. The runner used as a courtesy runner will be player that made last out.

15. The umpire's judgement will rule on runner's position at time of called time by either official. Time is called once front runner is contained.

16. Catcher must be in a squatted catcher's position and not standing.

17. Pitcher must stay in contact with pitching rubber until ball is released. Once a pitcher/coach releases the ball, he cannot be involved with coaching until time is called. There are base coaches to direct runners. Coach may not deceive defensive players to get ball thrown before time is called. Penalty Ball is dead, batter is declared out and all runners return to base occupied before pitch and lead runner declared out.

18. If batted ball hits coach/pitcher before defensive player touches ball, ball is dead, all runners advance 1 base if forced. If coach/pitcher intentionally interferes. Penalty ball is dead, batter is declared out and all runners return to base occupied before pitch and lead runner declared out.

- b. Fall Baseball – Mid August to Mid November
 - i. This is a recreation league season.
 - ii. An evaluation/draft will be scheduled prior to season start by the league
 - If a player is unable to make the evaluation they will be placed on a team based on league determination
 - iii. Players are drafted by skill level in order to balance out all teams
 - iii. There are no less than 10 players on a team, with the average team size being 12
 - iv. There are no traditional tournaments, and although we are still competitive, Fall Ball is primarily a season for building on the core fundamentals of baseball. For example, players are allowed 6 pitches regardless of strike count.
 - v. If we have enough teams we will play in-house, but it is also possible that we would play team in other communities
- c. Select Baseball – Late February to Mid May
 - i. The Select Season is a precursor to the Spring Rec Season
 - ii. All players must play in the Rec Season
 - iii. There is a draft that will be scheduled prior to season start
 - iv. Head Coach and Assistants are selected by the MCAA Baseball Committee
 - v. The Players are ranked and chosen in order of that rank
 - vi. There are no less than 10 players on a team, with the average team size being 12
 - vii. There are typically 6 scheduled double headers with each game having a 1 hour time limit
 - viii. An Invitational Game weekend is typically scheduled midway through the season, and there is a Select League Tournament to complete the season
- d. Spring Baseball – Mid March to Mid June
 - i. This is a recreation league season.
 - ii. An evaluation/draft will be scheduled prior to season start by the league

- If a player is unable to make the evaluation they will be placed on a team base on league determination
 - iii. Players are drafted by skill level in order to balance out all teams
 - iv. There is a Division Pre-Season Tourney scheduled prior to regular season games
 - v. There is no Season Ending Tourney, and win/loss records have no relevance
- e. All Stars – Mid May to Late July
 - i. All players must play in the Rec Season
 - ii. There is an evaluation that will be scheduled prior to season start
 - iii. Head Coach is chosen by vote by the rec season coaches
 - iv. The Players are evaluated, and each voting coach will use their own criteria for the players they vote for. The players are chosen based on the number of votes.
 - v. There are no less than 10 players on a team, with the average team size being 12
 - vi. Although there is an Invitational Game weekend typically scheduled in mid June, this is a tournament league. The Trophy is the end game!
 - vii. The Division Tournament takes places early July, and the 1st place and 2nd place teams (note that there has been a 3rd place in the past) will move on to the State Tournament which takes place the last week of July

IV. Game and Practice Schedules

- a. Rec League practice and game schedules are provided by the league.
 - i. There is typically a 1 ½ hour practice during the week and a practice on Saturday
 - ii. When the season starts games are typically played during the week, with practice remaining on Saturdays
 - iii. As the season progresses it is common and encouraged to use your practice time as a scrimmage with the other team sharing the field.
 - iv. Fall Baseball is generally geared more to fundamentals, there are no traditional tournaments, and players are allowed 6 pitches regardless of strike count
- b. Select games are primarily on Sunday afternoons
 - i. Invitational and Tournament schedules are provided by the Triangle Select League during season
- c. All Rec League games and practices are consider priority, making All Star and Select practices secondary.
- d. When there are enough teams to support in-house play, the league may choose that option. If SJBA play is needed, away games could be but not limited to Benson, Meadow, Four Oaks and so on.
- e. Weather happens - work with the MCAA League as well as Tarheel and TSL for reschedules.

V. The Game Basics

- a. Although there are exceptions to players moving up from T-ball, typically the age range is 7 and 8
- b. Age Chart: 8U – For ages 7 and 8. A player may be no more than 8 as of May 1st
- c. This is baseball – know the game
- d. In general the league will provide 1 to 2 umpires for each game
 - i. Sometimes that may be a volunteering coach or two from another Mx team
- e. Practice the Fundamentals
 - I. Catching
 - II. Throwing
 - III. Positions
 - IV. Fielding
 - V. Batting
 - VI. Base Running

VI. Asking for Help

- a. Assistant Coaches
 - i. Four (4) coaches are allowed during games
 - Pitcher, 2 base coaches, and a dug out coach
 - The Head coach does not have to be the pitcher
 - ii. You will need an experienced scorekeeper for every game
 - iii. If you are not email savvy or you have limited access to the internet, choose a parent to be your “voice”. Have the Team Parent send out your emails so there is no lag in communication with your team.
- c. Game Snacks and Concessions
 - i. At the beginning of the season designate a player each week to bring snacks and drinks for after the game.
 - ii. For Home Games, each team should have at least one adult volunteering to run concession for ½ the game. It’s a good idea to have that be the same family that is bringing snacks so that they are limiting their personal participation to only one game of the season.

VII. Stay in Touch

- a. The primary tool for communication within the league is email.
- b. Team Snap is Free and popular choice for managing your team communication
 - i. Visit www.teamsnap.com for more information
- c. Communicate with Coaches
 - i. Highly recommended that you have the emails and cell numbers of your fellow coaches. This comes in handy for weather updates, game and practice reschedules, etc.
- d. Communicate with Parents
 - i. You need to have the cell number and email addresses of each parent, and if there are other adults such as grandparents that would be involved in bringing the players to practices and games get theirs too.
 - ii. Use a consistent email contact list and provide updates often and well in advance if there are any changes to schedules, venues, etc.

VIII. Planning and Preparation

- a. Seniority prevails, but you have options on your uniforms
 - i. Choose a color that is available - favorites are red, blue, yellow, orange, etc.
 - ii. Players (parents) can choose their number. The choice should be in the range of how many are on the team, such as 1 through 11 if there are eleven players. It is customary, however, to allow returning players to keep their number from the previous season.
 - iii. Make sure that you have the players' names spelled correctly.
 - iv. Sponsor names are printed on the shirts, meaning that no other official name is given to your team.
- b. Always have a scorebook, and have at least one assistant keep a scorebook as a backup.
- c. Always have Line-Up Cards
- d. Having your line-up set prior to the game provides a variety of benefits. In the event that you have to miss a scheduled game, you can relieve the burden from your assistant coaches. They may not know the progress level for each player and may be uncomfortable with trying to set positions and batting orders.

IX. Equipment and Uniforms

- a. The League will provide catcher's gear, game balls, scorebooks and line-up cards.
- b. Each player will receive a game shirt and ball cap from the League
- c. The Head Coach is provided an Mx shirt for games as well as several adult ball caps for yourself and a couple of assistant coaches.
- d. Each player is responsible for having cleats, socks, standard gray baseball pants, helmet, glove and bat.

- e. Our Select and All Star uniforms are chosen by the Baseball Committee, with the player responsible for matching belt and socks
 - f. At practice they should wear pants and a shirt other than their game ones.
 - g. If any of your players are unable to provide their own gear, ask around for help.
- X. Sponsors, Pictures and Trophies
- a. The League will ask each coach to get at least one sponsor.
 - b. Levels and cost are determined seasonally and the detail is provided by the League.
 - c. Sponsors can be local business, but also know that organizations, families, etc. can sponsor a team as well.
 - d. Normally the primary sponsor of a team also has a player on the team. They will also be recognized on the jersey, but it's not uncommon to have multiple team sponsors because of the different contribution levels.
 - e. Pictures will be scheduled prior to season end
 - i. All players are expected to participate in the team photo regardless of whether or not they are buying pictures
 - ii. Your assistant coach or coaches should be in the team photo
 - f. Every player will receive a trophy for participation. A ceremony will be scheduled prior to season end.
- XI. So we can't exactly cover "everything" but this outline is a good starting point. If you have any questions do not hesitate to ask. This association is a volunteer and community based organization and all of the age groups have a vested interest in your success. Thank you.

Play Ball!