

# Frequently Asked Questions

## About the league:

The Midwest Ohio Baseball League (MOBL) is a select baseball league, which offers a competitive baseball environment. The format of this organization enables coaches to develop their players' skills to prepare them for successful high school, and potentially, college competition. Thus, the format is designed to allow youth in the area the opportunity to play the highest level of competition available.

The 2018 season will see teams in age groups from 8-16. 8U is a coach pitch division that will give players an alternative to recreational leagues that do not provide players what they are looking for. 9U teams begin playing "real baseball" and are divided into geographic and competitive divisions. Age groups from 9 and up are divided into Competition Based Divisions in order to maximize competition and parity. This allows our players to be pushed by competition to be the best they can while recognizing that there are different levels of select baseball. Within each Division, teams are divided geographically where appropriate. Membership is selective, but may not be discriminatory. Anyone agreeing to these principles is welcome to apply for membership.

The Dayton Metro Baseball Association (DMBA) began in 1990 with eight teams from the Dayton metropolitan area. In 2009 more than 200 teams from the greater Miami Valley participated in the league. Teams from as far north as Bellefontaine, as far west as Richmond, as far east as Springfield and as far south as Cincinnati have joined the league. To recognize the expansion of the league, a new organization was formed The Midwest Ohio Baseball League (MOBL) began in 2006.

## What does the league hope to provide players?

Each of us, and each of our players, has our own agenda of what we want to accomplish with our team. We would hope that a common thread among us all would be the following:

1. Teach our players and provided drills, practice and game opportunities to improve their physical, mental and emotional skills related to baseball.
2. Provide opportunities to teach our players (and in some cases fans) respect for the game, the competition, the coaches and officials.
3. To provide opportunities to teach our players about the value of team play, camaraderie and building relationships.
4. To provide a forum where kids learn the lessons of the Little Red Hen.....that before you reap the harvest, you must sow the seeds (have a vision), water and hoe the garden (practice perfectly and at game speed), water and hoe some more, and only then can you expect to reap the harvest (a hit, a great defensive play, a strike out, a team victory, or a division championship).

We hope that each of you would include a similar list in your own mind and provide your vision to your players and parents. It is through these lessons that we hope to help make our players better men for the rest of their lives.

## How many games should I expect to play?

Generally, you are only required to play 16-24 league games. The league may offer a mid-season Multi-Sanctioned World Series Qualifiers and does offer a tournament at the end of the season for qualifying teams. Many teams also play 1-6 tournaments and/or several non-league games each year. Finally, it is up to you, your team and your parents as to how many games you play in total.

## **What do I need to consider when determining how many players to have on my team?**

You must take into account how many can pitch. This is very important, and may require more players today than in past years, as the movement to inning and pitch count limitations moves forward. Now we are seeing Tournaments instituting various pitch count rules. See the Rules section of the website for [Pitching Rules](#).

Commitment levels, potential injuries, vacations, reliability, parental and players' expectations and your philosophy all should be considered.

## **What should I expect to budget for the season?**

### League fees

- New team application fee (\$50, if applicable)
- League fees (\$325)

### Non-league required expenses (*estimates: 2017 numbers – so expect some increases regularly*)

- Umpires (\$55-60/one umpire; \$110-120/two umpires @ 13U+. Payment is split between the two teams, (although teams can agree together to pay the umpires at their home field). Some organizations may require consideration and cooperation among the teams due to legal requirements.
- Insurance (\$125-150)
- Game balls (\$60-100/dozen)
- Uniforms (Pants \$25-45; jerseys \$25-100; belt \$5-10; socks \$8-20)
- Non-league optional expenses (*umpires, baseballs*)
- Umpire scheduler\* (\$80/year)

\*Strongly recommended

- Indoor practice facility and/or batting practice (depending on size \$75-200 per hour)
- Tournaments (\$375– 675/tournaments)
- Equipment [batting helmets, catcher's gear & practice equipment] (helmets \$25-50; catchers gear total package \$175-225)

## **Where do my league fees go?**

Fees go to the following: trophies and awards, meeting expenses, insurance, office supplies, computers, office equipment, accounting services, legal services, phones, national affiliations, league website and league management and administration.

## **What affiliations are we part of?**

For the 2018 season, we will offer affiliations with the following national organizations:

- Continental Amateur Baseball Association (CABA): [www.cababaseball.com](http://www.cababaseball.com)
- United States Specialty Sports Association (USSSA) Baseball: [www.usssabaseball.org](http://www.usssabaseball.org)
- Nations Baseball: [www.nations-baseball.com](http://www.nations-baseball.com)

## **How do I register for the league?**

Go to the website [www.midwestohiobaseball.com](http://www.midwestohiobaseball.com) and follow the link on the left to [Forms](#). There you will find a "Registration Checklist". Initially, you will need to complete the [New Team Registration](#) (or [Existing Team Registration](#) if your team or organization was in the league last year) and send it, along with the new team fee (if applicable) to the address on the form.

## **What forms will I need?**

Eventually, you will need your team registration form, player contracts, medical release forms, roster, and birth certificates. There is a Registration Checklist available on the [Forms](#) section of the website. These will be delivered to the age-level coordinator at the February meeting.

## **About Umpires:**

While not required, it is strongly recommended that you utilize one of our Umpire Schedulers. For a relatively nominal fee (In 2018: \$80/year), professional schedulers will make all arrangements for your umpire needs. Coaches simply provide their schedule to the scheduler and umpire arrangements are made. As your schedule changes, simply update your schedule and the scheduler will make the appropriate changes. Coaches also have access to a website to confirm the umpire(s) scheduled for their games.

If you are going to schedule your own umpires, we require that they be on the approved umpire list. If they are not already on our approved list, we simply ask that any umpire you want to use submit 3 references to get on the "approved list". This is the same requirement made by many umpire associations in order for an umpire to join.

Umpires scheduled through the league Umpire Schedulers charge a set rate (In 2018: \$55-60 for one umpire, \$110-120 for two), but you may make your own payment arrangements if you schedule your own umpires. Umpires are to be paid prior to the game to avoid any problems. If you have a legitimate reason to do it another way, please contact us to discuss options.

The purpose of this is to improve the quality and consistency of the umpires. Umpiring does impact the game. We believe that the league and your games will be better as a result of this effort. Contact Jim Heatherly at: [jheatherly75@woh.rr.com](mailto:jheatherly75@woh.rr.com) or Bob Juliano at: [refbobjuliano@gmail.com](mailto:refbobjuliano@gmail.com) for more info on umpires.

## **Why do we have Competition Based Divisions?**

We believe it is critical to maintain competitive games in order for kids to improve and enjoy the game. Neither side enjoys a blowout. Even with the divisions, there is plenty of room for geographic splits to help control travel. However, it is a travel league and teams should welcome increased or equitable competition more than they should fear travel. We recognize that teams may have different skill levels, intensity levels and agendas. This is our attempt to provide equitable opportunities for all teams to compete with like-minded competitors. See the [Forms](#) section of the website for more info.

## **Why does the Midwest Ohio Baseball League use the continuous batting order until high school ages?**

Using the continuous batting order allows each player an opportunity to bat, increases his interest in the game (and hopefully keeps him interested for many years), keeps parents from complaining about playing time and takes the burden off the coaches from learning the more complicated rules for DH and EH line-ups.

## **What is the procedure if I have issues?**

First, try to resolve them with the player, parent, coach, etc. Then, either go to the conflict resolutions form, complete and submit it (there is a conflict resolution form on the website at [www.midwestohiobaseball.com](http://www.midwestohiobaseball.com)). Or you may contact us at: [help@midwestohiobaseball.com](mailto:help@midwestohiobaseball.com)

## **What about rain-outs and suspended games?**

See the rule books for specifics but generally games which are not completed games (ie. 4 1/2 if home team leads or 5 if the visitors lead) are suspended games. Suspended games should be resumed at the point of suspension with the same line-up and batting order as the original game (if possible). That is the ideal world and rarely applies to us perfectly. But it is our benchmark if it can be met.

A couple of comments will help you all resolve issues among yourselves as they come up:

- If a kid who was at the original game is not available when the game is resumed, the team should not be charged an out. Simply skip his turn at bat with no penalty. Likewise, if you need to place a runner on a base and he is not there, simply use the last out.
- As a rule, any kid not available at the original game, cannot play in the suspended game. This is one exception to the bat your roster rule. However, there is no problem if the two coaches involved in a suspended game decide together that they are willing to allow kids not available for the original game to play for both sides.....that is okay (it is always okay to get more kids in the game if both sides agree). But don't play the game and then complain about the results.
- Pitching. These come up several times each year.
  - If a player was ineligible to pitch during initial game, but has satisfactory rest for the make-up game, is he eligible? Yes. He would be able to pitch as long as he did not pitch the first game.
  - If a player begins pitching in a game, but does not finish b/c of rain, etc. when the game resumes, assuming he has satisfactory rest, do we pick up original pitch count, or start back at zero? The pitch count is limited to his remaining per day pitch limits including the rain delayed pitches.
- Please use common sense and try to resolve any issues among yourselves about this issue.

## **What is the best way to communicate with parents, other coaches and league officials?**

Many people today find email to be a simple way to communicate, while others prefer telephone. League officials are listed on the website with a direct link to their email. All coaches are provided with both telephone and email contacts of the league officials and the coaches in their age level. The league also makes available (at a cost) a service called One Call Now which allows you to make one phone call and send a message (including responses if you wish) to as many as 100 phone numbers. This significantly reduces the burden of contacting families via telephone.

## **What is expected of coaches concerning communication with other coaches and league officials?**

It is expected that you will schedule your games promptly, reschedule make-ups promptly and return phone calls and emails within a reasonable timeframe. If you are not a computer person, hand that duty to another parent. If you are going to be out of town provide an alternative contact. Apply the Golden Rule and treat others the way you want to be treated. We are all busy volunteers and simply trying to do the best we can.....help us all by communicating promptly.

## **Lessons learned from past coaches:**

It is a good idea to have a team meeting where you lay out the expectations for players, parents and coaches regarding: commitment levels, sportsmanship, playing time, multiple sport conflicts, handling player and parent questions; coaches philosophy, parental conduct etc. These meetings and how well you lay out your expectations can make a major contribution to the years' success.

It is critical to emphasize pitching and catching in this league. Due to the pitch limits, you should make sure that you are training several pitchers with an emphasis on efficiency. Since the players can lead-off and steal, it is also critical that both your pitchers and catchers are keeping runners close and you avoid past balls which translate to baserunners advancing.

Establish your tournament schedule before you set your league schedule to allow you plan your league games around any tournaments you plan to attend. Keep an eye on both the league website and [www.eteamz.com](http://www.eteamz.com) for tournament opportunities.

Many coaches have found that opponents closer to home make better weeknight games and schedule opponents further away for the weekends.

Use the number of games you plan to play to dictate uniform requirements. If you are playing several games per week, each parent in charge of laundry will appreciate having a second pair of socks, pants, jersey, etc. Obviously, this will increase the team or player budget, but is certainly worth considering.