



Tottenham Oldtimers Slo-Pitch Captain's Handbook

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Change History

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Overview

On behalf of the elected executive, thank you for volunteering to captain a team in our league. We recognize the time this will take and commend you on your commitment to our league. At times it can be a thankless job but it has its own rewards and is a critical role in maintaining the values, integrity, operation, and ultimately the future of our league.

The handbook is intended to provide Captains with information to assist you in understanding expectations for the role, in managing your team and what you should expect. It is not intended to be a be-all, end-all guide so there will be times when you will have questions or need guidance. Your peer Captains and the elected executive are here to support you so do not hesitate to ask any of them for help.

League Philosophy, Principles and Rules

The mandate of our league is *to provide recreational baseball in a manner, which promotes the ideals of sportsmanship and friendship while minimizing the potential for injury.*

The primary focus of the league is to have fun and interact socially with our neighbours while playing ball. This is reflected in our local rules that stress safety, the blind draft and the fact that all teams make the playoffs. Everyone wants to win and we encourage competitive play, however the competition is always friendly. Through the history of the league, there has always been a pride that we promote having fun as its first priority.

As Captains, you provide leadership in upholding this focus.

Our Constitution

The Constitution has been around since the late 1980s and over time has been revised to cover the various rules and situations that have arisen. The only time that it may be changed is via a majority vote at the Annual General meeting (AGM) held annually in November.

Please ensure that you have familiarized yourself with it prior to your first season as captain (and perhaps giving it a once over every now and again).

You can view the Constitution on the TOT web site at the following link:

http://www.tottenhamoldtimers.ca/files/TOT_Constitution.pdf

League Rules

TOT is governed by Slo-Pitch National rules of play but some local rules have been adapted and are outlined in the Constitution.

Expectations of the Captain's Role

There are several sections in the Constitution that covers this item however there are a few points worth noting:

- Respect the decision(s) of the umpires and maintain discipline of the players on your team.
- Communicate with your team's players regularly including:
 - advising players that they are on your team no later than 1 week after the annual draft
 - having a batting order and at least of rough defensive alignment ready for game time
 - upcoming game schedule including any make-up game dates
 - asking players if anyone will be missing upcoming games
 - advising players of upcoming league events
- Communicate with the elected executive and volunteers when required, including but not limited to:
 - provide as much notice to the Sub-Controller when players will be needed
 - any player behaviour issues or warnings are to be brought to the President's attention as soon as possible
 - equipment issues are to be brought to the Equipment Vice President's attention as soon as possible
 - players that withdraw or will miss extended time due to injury (i.e., more than 3 consecutive weeks) are to be brought to the President's attention as soon as possible
- The home team has several responsibilities to get the game started on time including:
 - setting up the bases and locking them up after the last game
 - providing a brand new ball and a slightly used backup ball to the umpire prior to the game start
 - completing the batting line-up for both teams and keep score for the game. Games sheets are to be placed in the drop box immediately following the game in the Tottenham Legion (under the sports board beside the pool table)
- Complete the end of season administration including:
 - distributing and collecting completed award ballots
 - completing the player rating evaluations
- Participate in captain-oriented league events such as draft day, bat day, etc.
- Arrange for an appropriate number of volunteers from their team for tournaments (typically bar and/or barbeque duty)
- Collect money for league events such as HTKP tournament, banquet, etc.

Monthly Meetings

Executive Board meetings are open to all players in the league however very rarely do any non-Captains attend so it is important that Captains maintain an open communication with their players on league operations. Captains are encouraged to bring items to the table they hear from their players and also inform their players of any key decisions made at the previous meeting.

Frequency and Attendance

The Executive Board meets every month inclusive from February to September on the last Wednesday of the month in the Tottenham Community Centre in the Lion's Hall. Meetings start promptly at 7:15pm. Co-Captains are encouraged to sit together to confer on voting items.

Meeting agendas are typically distributed at least 48 hours in advance. If you have items to bring to the table, please advise the President by the Friday prior to the meeting. Meeting minutes are distributed within 72 hours of the meeting and also posted to the Captain's Corner of the league web site.

Please ensure that at least one of the co-Captains attends each meeting. If neither co-captain can attend please ask one of your players to attend as your proxy and advise the President.

Protocol

The President (or his delegate) chairs the meeting and follows the agenda. Discussion is encouraged on the agenda topics and the Chair will recognize the current and following speakers to maintain order and flow of the discussion. The last agenda item is an open floor where anyone may raise a new item to the agenda.

Voting

When a topic is raised that will require a decision, a motion is tabled and prior to discussion commencing, must be seconded for the topic to be heard. Upon the end of the discussion the Chair will call for a vote. Majority rules for all decisions.

Each team has a single vote at the table. Confer with your co-captain on the issue and ensure that only one of you votes on behalf of the team.

In addition to each team having a single vote, several of the elected executives also vote. Each of the Vice-Presidents and the Secretary/Treasurer has a single vote. The President only votes in the event of a tied vote (i.e., breaks a voting deadlock).

Draft Day

Our planning culminates at Draft Day when rosters are selected and therefore Captains' participation is critical. Both co-Captains should arrive at least 20 minutes early to secure a table and get prepared. As you draft players in each round, complete your roster form based on the information on the draft card. Please keep the draft cards for your team's records.

Completed roster forms are given to the Equipment Vice President at the conclusion of the draft. These forms are used for ordering of jerseys and failure to hand in the roster form will result in delays in getting the order to our supplier.

Registering Your Roster with SPN

SPN requires all TOT teams and players to be registered in the database, primarily for insurance purposes. It is mandatory for captains to add/modify their teams and ensure that their roster is accurate (that's why we asked you to keep the draft cards).

Instructions will be provided at the March Executive Board meeting on how to register teams. It is highly recommended that you complete the registration as soon as possible after the draft.

Having Your Players Sign the Waiver

As part of the team registration you will complete your roster with the players on your team. Other than rookies, all players should already be in the database so it is a fairly straightforward process. Make sure that the option to email the waiver to the player is selected.

All players will receive an email requesting them to accept the liability waiver ... and by doing so they get insurance coverage. In your initial team communications after the draft, please ensure that you set the expectation with your players that they will get this waiver email and they are requested to complete it as soon as possible.

If any player does not wish to sign the waiver, please contact the League President to outline the player's concern(s).

Instructions will be provided at the March Executive Board meeting on how to handle players with no email.

It is critical that all players accept the waiver prior to the beginning of the season as it protects both the player (insurance) and the league (liability) should the player be injured.

Schedules and Make-up Games

The regular season schedule is usually available at least 2 weeks prior to the start of the season.

In the event of a make-up game, the Scheduling volunteer will advise of the next available time slot for the two teams to play. In general, the Scheduling volunteer will try to ensure that the make-up time slot does not cause a team to play a double-header or 3 games in a week, however this is not always possible.

Note that make-up games are almost always 9:30pm time slots.

Inclement weather

If inclement weather is in the forecast, the Scheduling volunteer works with the umpire-in-chief and the elected executives to determine whether games should be played. If you have first-hand information on field conditions based on your own inspection, feel free to pass that along however please refrain from asking “are we playing tonight?”. Communications will go out once a decision is made.

In the event that the field conditions are determined to be unplayable in advance of game time, the Scheduling volunteer will do their best to advise at least 2 hours prior to game time. This is not always possible so be prepared to play as a decision will be made at the field.

For game time decisions, it is up to the umpire and the Captains of both teams to determine whether the field conditions are playable. However, once the umpire has been given the game ball, it is solely the umpire's decision if play will be suspended or stopped.

Bases, Scoring, Lights, Keys and Equipment

Bases

The home team of the first game is responsible for ensuring the bases are set properly prior to the game. Use your key to unlock the bases storage cabinet.

Place the bases at the furthest blue spray painted markers along each of the baselines – the front edge of the base should align to the painted marker (i.e., no portion of the base should be between the parker and home plate). Align the base edge from home plate with the foul pole (it is much easier to have 2 people work together to do this alignment). Secure the bases with the pegs by hammering the pegs completely into the ground – ensure that the peg is not sticking up at all as this can be a cause for injury. Secure the first base safety bag with 2 pegs.

At the end of the last game, the home team is responsible for returning the bases to the cabinet and locking it.

If the bases are in poor condition (e.g., flattened, broken straps, missing peg) advise the Equipment Vice President.

Scoring

The home team is responsible for completing the batting line-up for both teams and to keep score for the game. Games sheets are to be placed in the drop box immediately following the game in the Tottenham Legion (under the sports board beside the pool table).

A box of game sheets will be made available to Captains at the annual Bat Day.

Lights and Keys

The home team is responsible for turning the lights on and off with the keys provided. (Keys are distributed at the April Executive Board Meeting). The lights are on timers and will not begin to light up until 8:00pm.

The light switch at Keogh is located on an outfield fence pole in centre field.

At Coventry the C2 and C3 switches are located on the end of the electrical panel by C2. We've had issues at Coventry in that once the key is turned it cannot be removed. Should this occur, simply exchange key sets with a captain from the later game. Ensure that the lights are not turned off until the final game is completed as they require a cool down period of 15 minutes before they will come back on.

When at Coventry, the first game home team at C2 is responsible for unlocking the washrooms at the Pavilion and the last game home team at C2 is responsible for locking the washrooms at

the end of the game. Please ensure that this is done as vandalism of the washrooms is a common occurrence if left unlocked.

Equipment

At the annual bat day, Captains are issued bats and enough new game balls to last the entire regular season. Please ensure that you do not give away balls to avoid running out. Bats will be inspected at the annual Bat Day for conformance to safety regulations.

The home team is responsible for providing a brand new ball and a slightly used backup ball to the umpire prior to the game start. Ensure that the backup ball is the current SPN DOT rating. Captains should retrieve the used balls at the end of the game from the umpire.

Should you have issues with any equipment during the season, please contact the Equipment Vice President.

Player Attendance at Games

Players are expected to advise with as much notice as possible when they will be missing future games. Sometimes life happens and a player may provide little or no notice that they will miss a game and Captains are requested to roll with this when it arises based on the circumstances.

That said, our league uses a “three strikes and you’re out” guideline for players that do not provide prior notice to missing games.

1. The first no-show without notice is a “freebie”. Captains should remind the player to call or text even if it is last minute (see note above about life happens and consider the circumstances).
2. After the second no-show without notice, the captain should use their judgement whether a warning should be issued to the player based on the circumstances. This warning should be explicit to say that *players are expected to advise their captain when they will miss games and that the next time the player misses a game with no notice, the League President will contact the player to discuss their attendance*. After issuing a warning, please notify the League President as soon as possible about the situation.
3. After the third no-show without notice, notify the League President as soon as possible. The President will contact the player and based on the conversation may issue a final warning or remove the player from the league.

Player Substitutions

All Captains should be familiar with the process and the format for substitutes as defined in the Constitution. Captains are encouraged to contact the Sub-Controller as soon as they know they will be short.

Captains are discouraged from requesting specific positions or a type of player when calling for substitutes - the Sub-Controller has a difficult and exceptionally time consuming job and asking for a type of player to fill in makes their job even harder. The Sub-Controller will do their best to accommodate the substitute rules however be aware that they are not always able to get an appropriate rating.

During the regular season we ask Captains to work together to find a compromise to get the game in and respect our league mandate of having fun. However to maintain fairness during the playoffs, we follow the explicit outline of Substitutes in the Constitution. This process is reviewed annually at the August Executive Board meeting to ensure all Captains are clear on how substitutes will be handled during the playoffs.

If Captains are unclear on how subs are selected, how players advise that are available to sub or any other questions, they should contact the Sub-Controller.

Not Having 10 Players at Game Time

There will be times when your team or the other team will be short players at game time - this is especially common during peak vacation periods of July and August. In these cases, all Captains are encouraged and expected to work together to find a solution to start on-time.

Often this involves the other team providing a catcher or even a loaner player(s) to the team that is short. In these cases, it is often not possible to get the same player rating as what you are missing.

Other times, a team will ask a league player in the stands to play. It is the prerogative of the opposing Captains to determine if they accept the player from the stands to sub in.

Under no circumstances is a non-league player permitted to take the field due to insurance liability restrictions.

Getting a Replacement Player

If you lose player prior to the July 31 roster cut-off date, you will get a replacement player if one is available from the waiting list. The League President will advise you of the replacement player and their contact details. Please contact the replacement player to introduce yourself and advise them of the upcoming schedule.

Should a player withdraw from your team, please notify the League President as soon as possible.

Player Injuries

Should a player become injured during the game, assess with the player whether they feel able to continue but do not encourage them to do so. It's their decision and always err on the side of caution. If a player cannot continue, advise the umpire and scorekeeper to remove them from the game.

If a player is seriously injured do not hesitate to contact emergency services to get immediate help for the player. Once the player is stable, assist the umpire in taking notes about the injury and the circumstances. Immediately after the game, contact the League President and advise who has the injury details so that he can complete an injury report for insurance purposes.

Note that defibrillators are on-site at the Tottenham Legion (just inside the doors facing Keogh Park) and the men's washroom in the Coventry pavilion. Instructions on the use of the defibrillators are on the unit.

Discipline

Captains are always the first line in maintaining discipline of your players. If a player on your team becomes belligerent or otherwise inappropriate to another player, an umpire or someone in the stands, Captains should attempt to diffuse the situation. Simply ask for time from the umpire and quietly talk to the player out of earshot from other players.

Umpires

Without umpires, the effectiveness of our league is greatly diminished so please show the umpires respect at all times. You are within your rights to call time to ask for an explanation of a call however continued arguing and/or sniping is only going to piss them off and result in a bad experience for everyone involved. Captains are encouraged to ensure their players show the umpires respect and act as a go-between between players and umpires.

If an umpire feels that a player or a captain has not maintained the spirit and mandate of our league, they will notify the umpire-in-chief who will then notify the League President. Our elected executives takes situations of umpire disrespect seriously and discipline may be issued if the elected executive feels it is warranted.

Warnings

If the player continues to act inappropriately, you are within your rights to warn the player to cease. Captains have the support of the League President to use your judgement in this regard.

Should a player get a warning – from the umpire or you – please notify the League President as soon as possible after the game.

Ejections

Umpires have the right to eject a player, including Captains, based on their judgement. They are not obligated to issue a warning prior to the ejection. In the unlikely event a player is ejected, calmly ask the player to leave to park immediately after retrieving their gear from the bench. Ejected players are not permitted to stay in the park under SPN rules.

If a player is ejected, under the Constitution he will receive an automatic 1 game suspension (not including the game he was ejected from). The elected executives will meet within 48 hours to determine if further discipline is warranted.

Unacceptable Behaviour

Violent behaviour or threats are unacceptable and Captains should not hesitate to contact the police in the unlikely event that such a situation arises.

Drinking or using illegal drugs during the game is strictly prohibited. It is both an insurance liability and potentially our permit could be cancelled by the Town if it comes to light. Quietly

ask the player to put it away until after the game. Players that refuse are to be removed from the game immediately. Any player that comes to the game drunk is not permitted to play – remove them from the game roster and issue a warning to the player that a repeat will result in disciplinary action by the League President.

In any of these cases, notify the League President as soon as possible after the game.

End of Season Awards

During the playoffs, each team is provided with a ballot sheet for the end of season awards. Captains are requested to have their players complete the ballots and submit all ballots to the League President. Instructions on completing the ballot is covered at the August Executive Board meeting.

Based on the completed ballots, Captains put forth their team's most sportsmanlike player. If Captains have a player they deem to be a candidate for most improved in the league, they bring this forward at the September Executive Board meeting.

Ratings

To maintain our rating system, Captains will assess their players at the end of the season on a set of defined criteria in order to establish a recommended rating for each player going into the next season. Instructions will be provided at the August and September Executive Board meetings on how to perform ratings.

It needs to be said that Captains are given latitude on how to assess the players within the defined criteria – the league provides guidance and basic instructions but does not mandate the assessment be done in a specific way. Ultimately how the Captains arrive at a player rating is your choice using the defined criteria and the guidelines. If Captains have questions or are not sure how to perform the ratings assessment, please contact your peer Captains or any of the elected executives for clarification.

Annual General Meeting (AGM)

Held on the third Saturday every November, the AGM is where we recap the season, review the end of year financials, elect the next years' executive positions and call for volunteers. We also amend the Constitution as required and discuss league business in general.

All players and especially Captains are encouraged to attend as this is where the larger decisions governing the operations and the future of the league are made.