

SOUTHWEST OHIO LEAGUE SAFETY/EMERGENCY CHECKLIST

Larry Redwine, President

Members of the Southwest Ohio League, in order to promote league wide safety for players, spectators and coaches, have undertaken the task of placing safety first in both the preparation and playing of our season. The following is the foundation of a formative checklist to promote a safe and healthy attitude toward the game of baseball. It is not intended to replace individual effort and responsibility to develop a comprehensive checklist. We as coaches are encouraged to lead the way in this effort.

PRE-SEASON CHECKLIST

FACILITIES:

1. While most reasonable people realize there are inherent risks to their safety when attending any sporting event, the courts, during certain of their sways to the position that nobody is really accountable for their actions, or that we are all somehow victims, have awarded unreasonable court settlements to persons injured while playing or watching a game. Therefore, we should ask or atleast encourage the owner of the facility we use to post signs warning of these risks.
2. We should point out areas to the facilities operator where fencing is missing, where needed or is in need of repair. Specific areas would be the backstop, potential overthrow areas and in front of benches/dugouts. Note: If we play in a field with benches positioned too close to the field to be safe, move the team to a position of safety for the duration of the game.
3. We should examine both the infield and outfield surfaces to insure there are no major holes, which, if stepped in, could cause injury. In addition, warning tracks are encouraged and should be maintained in good condition.
4. Bench/dugout areas should be free of broken glass, metal or other safety hazards.

EQUIPMENT:

All team equipment should be examined for safety prior to the start of the season and periodically thereafter. A spot check of helmets should occur daily, with a rotating system being employed to insure a "regular" inspection.

1. All helmets are to be N.O.C.S.A.E approved and free from cracks or damage, which would compromise structural integrity.
2. All Catchers equipment should be examined for defect prior to the season and routinely throughout the season. Catcher's masks must have throat protectors and guidelines established in league rules should be followed.
3. Players gloves should be examined prior to the season and periodically throughout the season with possible hazards being pointed out to them and if severe, to their parents.

PLAYER EDUCATION AND GAME/PRACTICE SAFETY

Coaches should make a point to instruct players not only in the fundamentals of the game, but in matters of safety as well. The following are some of the areas, which should be discussed.

1. 1. On deck areas (circles) should be far enough away from the batter that ample reaction time is afforded to create a safe situation relative to batted balls and players chasing after balls. Yet the on deck hitter should be far enough from the bench/dugout that he is not distracted from paying proper attention to the game and does not pose a threat, while swinging the bat, to other players in the area.
- 2.. Players should be continually instructed to check around them before swinging a bat, to watch where they walk in areas where someone might be swinging a bat and appropriate "coaching reminders" within league rules should be applied when these guidelines are violated.
3. Both the batter and batting practice pitcher (if a player) should wear a batting helmet. Never remove a helmet while in a batting cage or pitched ball area
4. Keep all equipment out of play at all times.
5. Catchers should be in full gear when catching a pitcher whether in the bullpen or on the field. Coaches should at least use a facemask when they catch a pitcher warming-up.

SOUTHWEST OHIO LEAGUE SAFETY CHECKLIST (p2 of 2)

6. All players should be instructed regarding the need for protective gear such as athletic supporters and cups. Helmets with facemasks are encouraged. Base coaches are encouraged to wear a cup. Players should wear protective gear that meets the comfort level of parents and the player. If no amount of protection provides a level of comfort for being reasonably protected from injury, it is suggested that that athlete or his parents participate in activities other than baseball.
7. Guards should be posted to protect bullpen personnel and spectators standing or sitting behind the bullpen catcher should be removed from the area.
8. Spectators located in an in-play area or hazard area should be removed or warned of potential risk as appropriate to protect players and to be courteous to the spectator. We would not be required under reasonable circumstances to do more than warn them of potential risks. But who said our courts are reasonable?
9. Study and make use of the heat protection plan circulated to all managers at league meetings.
10. Always carry a well-stocked first aid kit to all team functions.
11. Always have a cooler of water (or more as needed) at all times.
12. Always have ice available at team games and practices.
13. Leave first aid applications to team staff most qualified to assist in this way.
14. Take special care to protect pitchers and catchers from heat risk.
15. When a player tells you he is hurt, believe him.
16. Coaches choosing not to wear a cup should insure they are no closer to the plate than the coach's box and should point in the direction of the infielders.
17. Players should not routinely coach a base. However, when done for training purposes, or of necessity, he **MUST** wear a batting helmet.

EMERGENCY & ESCAPE PLAN:

Make available at all games the **SOUTHWEST OHIO LEAGUE EMERGENCY MEDICAL AND PRE-GAME INFORMATION** form.

1. In the event of an injury, have assigned individuals posted at all key locations for the purpose of directing emergency medical equipment to the facility when a serious injury or medical emergency arises. Also, insure that every team member (Coaches and players) knows their emergency situation/condition assignments.
2. Every team should have an emergency plan in the event of potential severe weather conditions. Those would include tornadoes, heavy downpours and lightning
3. Each team should carry the **SOUTHWEST OHIO LEAGUE MEDICAL RELEASE FORM** for every player to all team functions.
4. Rubber gloves should be used by anyone treating a player with an open wound. Only persons knowledgeable in methods for treating such injuries should apply treatment.
5. Coaches may wish to employ highschool federation policies with regard to issues of blood either in full or in modified forms. But a definitive plan should be followed.
- 6. Anyone coaching any sport in the state of Ohio MUST have taken and passed the Concussion In Sports course. This is state law, there are no exceptions.**