

# Immanuel Mel Ott Baseball 2019

## Frequently Asked Questions

### **What is Mel Ott Baseball?**

The Mel Ott Memorial Lutheran Baseball League was founded in 1956, after the late Hall of Fame baseball player, Mel Ott. The league consists of 7 local area churches. Our philosophy is to teach the basic fundamentals of baseball to each player...and make it FUN. Our coaches promote Christian sportsmanship and team building with every opportunity they have. Everything we do as a program is done for the KIDS, to help them develop a love for the game! Mel Ott Baseball is part of the Immanuel Church Athletic Ministry. We strongly encourage our teams to pray before and after games or practices. Anyone can lead the prayer - A coach - A player – A parent. We've made it a tradition to invite the opposing team to join us at home plate before each game to pray. Some teams join us and some teams don't! That's ok. Either way, we will be a positive Christian example to the rest of the league.

### **Divisions for 2019**

We will have 4 divisions. Teeball/Coach Pitch (K and 1<sup>st</sup> grade), Rookie (2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> grade), Beginner (4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade) and Junior ( 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade). This allows the kids to pitch in the 4<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> grade divisions.

### **When does the regular season start and end?**

Practice normally begins in early April, depending on weather. Games typically begin in late April/early May and end in mid-June. The game schedules are provided by the league and usually become available in mid April. (TeeBall/Coach Pitch), Machine Pitch and Rookie division play 10 games. Beginner and Junior division play 12 games, in addition to playoffs if their team qualifies. Rookie Division also has a single elimination playoff.

### **Who can play Mel Ott baseball?**

The minimum age is 5 years old by May 1<sup>st</sup> of 2019. The maximum age is 8th grade of the current school year. We allow friends and or relatives to join the team as an outreach to the community. So, if you know someone who may be interested, let them know about the league.

### **How do I become involved in coaching?**

Simply fill out the Mel Ott coaching application found on the school website and turn it in to the school office before the season. All coaches (head or assistant) are also required to fill out a risk management form if one is not on file with the church or school already.

**Rookie Level:** To help player development overall, we will be using the pitching machine the first 3 innings and then players will pitch the last 3 innings (2 inning max per pitcher). This will get more kids hitting and fielding instead of walks and not many innings.

- PM: 5 pitches ... No walks.
- Players can bunt.
- No stealing at anytime.... Players can lead off after pitch crosses plate.

**What is TeeBall/Coach Pitch?**

In 2008, Immanuel formed our own Kindergarten/1st grade coach pitch league, instead of playing t-ball against other local area churches. In 2009, the Mel Ott organization adopted the teeball coach pitch rules.

In teeball coach pitch, players are given the chance to hit a moving pitch (overhand or underhand) once they have developed the proper swing technique. Players are typically given 5 pitches to hit at each at bat. If the ball is not hit within 5 pitches, the batting tee is brought out for one or two swings. The teeball coach pitch division provides an opportunity to have a coach pitch to them without competing as an underage player in the 2nd and 3rd grade division.

**How competitive is the Mel Ott baseball league?**

The Mel Ott Memorial baseball league is a Christian-based instructional league. There are varying opinions amongst league coordinators, in regards to the level of competition in T-ball, Rookie and Beginner divisions. However, all the coordinators are in unanimous agreement that the Junior Division (7<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> graders) should be a competitive division. The Immanuel Mel Ott coordinating team views the younger divisions as a chance to develop individual fundamental skills. Playing time is relatively equal, within reason. As players advance into the upper divisions, playing time and positions played start to be based on ability, dedication, attitude and coach-ability, which may alter equal playing opportunities during the season. However, each player will be given a fair opportunity to demonstrate their fundamental skills for any position in Spring Training