



## **THREE TEAM BASEBALL**

What happened? The other team didn't show up, or it showed up with only a few players?

What do you do now? Just pack up all the baseball gear and go home?

Why not play a game of three-team baseball?

More than forty years ago, we kids used to play game after game of three-team, when we weren't playing one of the other pickup teams in the neighborhood. I'm surprised that no one in the 21st century seems to know about three-team.

Most of the regular baseball rules apply, except the players present divvy up into three teams instead of two. You need a minimum of 12 players, plus a permanent pitcher who's only there to lob pitches to get clobbered. If you also have a permanent catcher, then you can allow steals. When you make the divvy, be sure the teams come out as close to equal in ability and skills as possible.

**TEAM A:** Is at bat.

**TEAM B:** Takes the left part of the diamond and is responsible for left field, center field, third base and shortstop.

**TEAM C:** Takes the right part of the diamond and is responsible for right field, second base, first base and defensive (fielding only) pitcher.

There's no catcher – unless you assign a permanent catcher – because it takes too long for three different catchers to doff and don the tools of ignorance. And the two defensive teams act together to put out runners.

After three outs, team A moves to the left part of the diamond, team B moves from the left part of the diamond to the right, and team C goes in to bat. After the next three outs, team A moves to the right part of the diamond, team B goes in to bat, and team C takes the left part of the diamond. Nine outs, three for each team, constitute a full inning.

You keep playing for a couple of full innings. Then you find someone else to lob in the pitches and assign the pitcher to the team from whence came the reliever. Or maybe the pitcher swaps off with the catcher. (If there's a coach present, the coach should serve up the pitches.) Eventually it gets dark or it's dinner time and everyone has to go home. But three-team is a lot of fun while you're playing it.

Needless to say, three-team does not fit in a regular scorebook very well. And it's complicated enough that it's easy to lose track of the score, etc. So the next page is a scoring form for three-team baseball.

**MANAGERS:** You might want to print out this instruction page and several copies of the scoring form to put in your score-book, just in case.

