

## **SENIOR BOYS BASEBALL**

**PHILOSOPHY:** Senior 15-U will be a league for boys. Emphasis is to be on participation and instruction in throwing, hitting, catching, pitching from a stretch position, base running and offensive & defensive strategy. Managers, coaches, & parents must be patient with players. Remember: you are out there for the children; they are not out there for you.

**COVID-19:** There are small differences in league play this season to combat the spread of the Coronavirus. Patience, understanding and realizing everyone has their “own” comfort level regarding COVID-19 is essential. We need to be empathetic to everyone’s feelings towards it. It is up to the participant, coach, spectator, umpire to participate at their own risk and to take the proper precautionary measures that will keep themselves and others safe. These procedures/protocols are suggested in addition to those set forth in the traditional rules for league play.

~ **Face Masks:** No longer required but may be worn at the individual’s discretion.

~ **Symptom Checks (self-evaluation):** Anyone experiencing fever or symptoms of illness should stay home.

~ **Reduce Person-to-Person Contact:** Players and coaches should refrain from high-fives, handshake lines, and other physical contact with teammates, opposing players, other coaches, umpires and fans.

~ **Further Reduction of Germs:** No sunflower seeds, gum or spitting. Individual water bottles encouraged.

~ **Sanitizer:** Parents are encouraged to supply their player with antibacterial wipes and hand sanitizer for disinfecting shared playing equipment and hands.

### **LEAGUE RULES: NO HITTING BALLS INTO FENCE**

1. A team on the field consists of nine players (seven player minimum to start and/or end a game).
2. Players must be thirteen (13), fourteen (14), or fifteen (15) years old as of August 31<sup>st</sup> of said season. A player shall not turn sixteen years old prior to August 31<sup>st</sup>.
3. Games will be six innings. No new inning can start after 1 hour, 20 minutes from the start of the game.
4. Games will start at the scheduled time or five minutes after the conclusion of the previous game. For the first scheduled game of the night, 10 minutes grace will be allowed before a forfeit is called due to lack of players.
5. MERCY RULE: Games shall be terminated and the team in the lead declared the winner when there is a 15 run difference after 3 innings or a 10-run difference after 5 innings.
6. No throwing the bat. If a batter throws the bat (more than five feet or hits the catcher) the batter will be called out.
7. First Base slides: are not allowed. The base-runner should be taught to run through first base, turn right and return to the base. If a player slides into first base, the player will be called out and a verbal warning will be given to the entire team. If a second offense occurs during the same game, the offending player will be dismissed from the game.

Head First slides: are not allowed into any base when a base runner is trying to advance to the next

base. If a player commits a head first slide while advancing to the next base the player will be called out and a verbal warning will be given to the entire team. If a second offense occurs during the same game, the offending player will be dismissed from the game.

The only exception to the Head First slide rule is when the pitcher is attempting a pick off and the base runner is diving back to a base.

8. Pitchers get five warm up pitches or a one-minute time limit between innings. This includes the first inning. Pitchers can not wear light undershirts under uniform.
9. If the pitcher hits two batters in one inning or three during the game, he must be removed as a pitcher for the remainder of the game.
10. On the second trip to the mound in any one inning to the same pitcher, that pitcher must be removed from that inning. A 3rd trip to the mound for the same pitcher during a game will mean that pitcher is to be removed from the pitching position.
11. A pitcher who is removed from the pitching position can re-enter in the game as a pitcher just one additional turn. The additional turn cannot be in the same inning the pitcher was removed.
12. The pivot position of the pitcher must be in contact with the pitching rubber until the ball is released.
13. Pitching balks are to be called.
14. Pitching limits will be in effect for all games per MHSAA rules.
15. The manager must remove the pitcher when said pitcher reaches the limit for his/her age group, but the pitcher may remain in the game at another position.

Exception: If a pitcher reaches the limit for his/ her age while facing a batter, the pitcher may continue to pitch until any one of the following conditions occurs. That batter reaches base. That batter is put out.

16. Each team will be responsible for tracking their pitcher's count (the umpire in the field will keep the official count and turn in with scorecard). Tracking sheets will be provided.
17. All players must wear complete safety equipment including a cup for boys.
18. Each team can use free substitution. Each player must play at least two innings defensively. The catcher position may change only once per inning except for injury. A continuous batting order will be used.
19. A player batting out of order will be replaced by the correct batter. The correct batter will assume the count of the out of order batter.
20. A player that leaves the game early is not called out when their turn at bat comes up, batting order shall continue in the same continuous order. The manager must notify the other team when the player has left.
21. Umpires will not call a player out for missing a base unless the call is appealed by the opposing manager after time is called and before time resumes.

22. The batter is not automatically out on a dropped third strike by the catcher. Some common dropped third strike situations and rulings would be:

Situation: There is a 0-2 count on the batter, with two outs and bases loaded. The batter swings through the next pitch, but the catcher fails to catch it cleanly.

Ruling: Even though first base is occupied, because there are two outs the batter is not out and may run to first. Because the batter became a runner on this play, all the other runners are forced to advance. Thus, if the catcher secures the ball and steps on home plate before the runner on third touches it, this is a force out at home.

Situation: 0-2 count on the batter, with no outs and a runner on first. The batter swings through the next pitch, but the catcher fails to catch it legally. The batter takes off for first base, and the runner takes off for second. Instead of throwing to second, the catcher throws to first base. The defense manager comes out and asks for an interference call against the batter for “drawing a throw when already out.”

Ruling: In this situation, first base was occupied with fewer than two outs. Thus, the batter was automatically out when the third strike happened. The fact that the batter took off for first base, however is not considered ground for an interference call. The defense is responsible for knowing the rule, and thus knowing that the batter is already out. If they make the mistake of attempting to play in the batter anyway, this is their fault. At the end of the play, the batter must obviously be removed from the bases; however any advance of the runner originally at first base is legal.

23. The distance between bases will be 90 feet. A 60' 6" pitching distance will be used.

#### **BAT SPECIFICATIONS:**

1. All bats must be approved by Parks & Recreation baseball program staff. All barrels must be 2 5/8" and follow Little League standards.
2. **2018 is a transition year for bats.** Starting in 2019 & beyond only USA Bat Standard bats will be permissible for use. Bats that were approved for use during the 2018 season will no longer be acceptable in 2019. If you are in the market for a new bat, be sure to purchase one that conforms to the USA Baseball Bat standard. A list of the approved bats can be found at [usabat.com](http://usabat.com)
3. If an illegal bat is used during a game, that team will be warned once and that bat will be ejected from further use. If a second violation occurs then that team will be forced to forfeit the game. If the issue continues throughout the season further actions could be taken against either the coach or the players who are in violation of the regulation.
4. **2019 Bat Standards (Major Leagues & Under):** All bats must be a USA Bat Standard bat. A list of approved bats can be found at [usabat.com](http://usabat.com)
5. All players in the Senior Division must use a BBCOR certified bat with a -3 drop (bat length-bat weight= -3). Any bat that is not BBCOR certified and/or not of the -3 length/weight restriction will not be allowed.
6. Coaches should do a gear check of the players and players should be told to leave any illegal bat at home.

#### **REGULATION GAME RULING:**

A regulation game consists of six innings, unless shortened due to game time limits or shortened because the home team needs none of its half of the sixth inning or only a fraction of it after taking the lead with less than three outs or because the umpire calls the game. If the game is called, it is considered a regulation game:

- a. If four innings have been completed
- b. If the home team has scored more runs in three and a half innings than the visiting team has scored in four
- c. If the home team scores one or more runs in its half of the fourth inning to tie the score

If a game is called before it has become a regulation game, but after one or more innings have been played, it shall be resumed where it left off. Note All Records, including pitching shall be counted.

NOTE: When a TIE game is halted, the pitcher of record may continue pitching in the same game on any subsequent date provided said pitcher has observed the required days of rest and has pitching eligibility in the calendar week in which the game is resumed. For scorekeeping purposes, it shall be considered the same game, and all batting, fielding and pitching records will count.

EXAMPLE:

Rule 4.11

	1	2	3	4	5	6
VISITORS	0	0	0	4	1	
HOME	0	0	0	5		

Game called in top of 5<sup>th</sup> inning on account of rain. Scores revert to last completed inning (4<sup>th</sup>) and the home team is the winner 5 to 4.

All games reverting back to a tie will go on record as a tie. The tied game will not be considered suspended and will not be continued at a later date and time.

#### PROCEDURES:

1. Prior to the start of the game, the starting pitcher should throw at least 15 minutes to warm up his arm.
2. Teams should arrive at their scheduled time and practice time limits must be enforced.
3. Batting practice is not allowed prior to game time and practicing on the field after a game is not allowed.
4. Coaches are encouraged to hold a wrap-up meeting after the game, but should clear the dugouts and hold their team meeting in another area of the park. This will allow players to get into the dugouts and be ready to go for the next game.
5. It is recommended that a runner be used for the catcher.
6. Umpires will check bats and helmets before each game.
7. Defensive team coaches cannot be on the field of play.
8. For safety purposes, bats need to be kept in the dugout.
9. Managers & umpires should sign the score sheets at the end of the game.
10. Home Team Manager will be responsible for providing an umpire, if necessary. Visiting Team Manager will provide second umpire, if necessary.

11. Managers must maintain defensive player sheets and provide them to the P & R Department upon request.
12. Additional practices can be secured by permit (pending field availability).
13. Batting cages are available for use at Pollard Park, but an adult parent/coach is required to be in the cage with the child. The child must wear a helmet. Park employees facilitate use of the batting cages on a first-come, first-serve basis with departmental teams and players having first priority.
14. All managers and coaches will return all equipment after the last game to a park employee inside of the Pollard Pole Barn.

#### **LEAGUE POLICIES:**

1. Positive Cheering only. No comments are to be directed to opposing team or game officials.
2. Parents are never to approach an official; not before, during or after a game. Questions directed to the umpire must come from the team manager only. Some umpires will be approachable and others will not. Coaches and players must adapt to an umpire's style, because the umpire makes the decision on the field and their decision is final. Questions regarding rule interpretation and overall general conduct can be directed to the Parks and Recreation Department the next business day.
3. Scores are kept in Pitching Machine. Standings are not kept.
4. Players are not to wear jewelry or wrist bracelets of any kind. No metal spikes.
5. No smoking, tobacco products, or alcohol allowed within 200 feet of any playing field.
6. No dogs are allowed on Township property. Only exception is at the park behind the Township Offices.
7. All "official" practices and games are scheduled through the Parks & Recreation Department and are held at Township facilities unless otherwise noted on the official schedules.
8. Coaches are not to encourage or condone unnecessary roughness. Any player using unnecessary roughness will be called out and warned once per game. On a second occurrence, a player will be removed from the game. A second occurrence must be reported to the Parks & Recreation Department by the next business day. Additional penalties may be assessed.
9. A coach or manager who is ejected from a game will include a minimum suspension of 2 games with further review from department staff depending on infraction.
10. Coaches must return all equipment after the last game to a departmental representative.
11. At times, there may be questions on rules that are not specifically covered in our house rules. While we are not a Little League affiliate program, we feel their guidelines are best suited to utilize as supplementary to our rules provided. If there is a rule that is a discrepancy between our house rules provided and the Official Little League Rules. The rule in question will automatically default to our house rules.

#### **ADVANCE WEATHER CANCELLATIONS:**

1. In the case of severe weather, cancellations will be posted by 4:30PM on our weather hotline at

586-949-0400, press 4, then 1. Cancellations will also be posted on our Department Facebook and Twitter pages.

## **ON-SITE CANCELLATIONS:**

1. Cancellations after 4:30PM will be determined by park supervisors and umpires on the field at practice/game time. All players and coaches should report to the practice/game site.

### **2. UNPLAYABLE FIELDS / RAIN:**

- Together park employees and umpires will make the decision to cancel games based on weather and field conditions.
- Cancellations can be made on a field by field basis. If one field is unplayable, but the rest are playable, only games scheduled on the unplayable field need to be cancelled.
- If the first game is cancelled (6PM), the second game does not necessarily have to be cancelled. The decision to cancel the second game will be made based on weather predictions and field readiness.

3. **LIGHTNING:** Lightning can travel up to 10 miles from the storm's edge, so if it is seen or heard, the fields should be cleared and the game paused to wait for lightning to pass. If lightning is not seen for a reasonable time (usually 30 minutes), the game can continue.

- Anybody who sees lightning should report it to the official on the field or to a park employee.
- The fields should be cleared, and the game paused to wait for lightning to pass (30 minutes).
- If an umpire sees lightning, the umpire should report the sighting to the park employees who will notify the official on every field of the decision to delay the game.
- The umpires and park employees should remain in contact with each other during the game delay. Together the park employees and umpires will make the decision to resume play or cancel based on weather and field conditions.
- If play resumes, the game should continue with the inning/time limit requirements outlined in the league rules. The delay of game does not count against the time limit.
- If the coaches decide not to wait out a delay of game, the game will be considered a forfeit and will not be made up.