

2022  
OHIO HOT  
STOVE BASEBALL  
LEAGUE, INC.



**OHSBL LEAGUE RULES AND REGULATIONS**

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## EDITOR'S NOTE

The following are new rules for 2022:

1. Balks have been removed for Class HH. See [Rule 8.5.N](#).
2. The coin toss at all regional tournament games has been removed. The team with the lower seed may now choose to be the home or away team. In Classes with only one state bracket, the seeds will carry through the State Semi-finals and State Finals. In Classes with more than one state bracket, a coin toss will be used to determine home and away for State Semi-finals and State Finals.
3. Administrative policies and procedures as well as tournament rules have been moved to a new document, **ADMINISTRATIVE AND TOURNAMENT RULES AND POLICIES** and is located under "Forms" on [www.ohsbl.com](http://www.ohsbl.com).

All managers and coaches are urged to know this rule book. Managers are the only individuals in direct contact with the players, and are completely responsible for their behavior and knowledge of the rules. Managers must inform players of the rules; therefore, the manager must be totally responsible for informing and policing the players to maintain compliance with the Ohio Hot Stove Baseball Rules.

Any time you are dealing with rules you will encounter grey areas that will need to be interpreted by the official rules interpreter whose name and address is on the back cover.

# I - OHIO HOT STOVE BASEBALL LEAGUE, INC.

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# OHIO HOT STOVE BASEBALL LEAGUE, INC.

## OFFICIAL PLAYING RULES

### 1.0 - OBJECTIVES OF THE GAME

- 1.1 OHSBL in all classifications is a game between two teams of nine players each, under direction of a manager and not more than three coaches, played on a regulation OHSBL field in accordance with these rules, under jurisdiction of one or more umpires. OHSBL recommends a minimum of two umpires per game. (Exception for I League is on [Page 83](#).)
- 1.2 The objective of each team is to win by scoring more runs than their opponent.
- 1.3 The winner of the game shall be that team which shall have scored, in accordance with these rules, the greater number of runs at the conclusion of a regulation game.
- 1.4 The playing field shall be laid out according to the following instructions: (diagram is on [Page 86](#) and [Page 87](#)).
  1. **The infield** shall be a 60-foot square for I, HH & H League, 70 foot square for G League, 80-foot square for F League, 90 foot square for EE, E and D league.
  2. **The outfield** shall be the area between two foul lines formed by extending two sides of the square. The recommended distance from home base to the nearest fence, stand or other obstruction on fair territory should be 200 feet or more for I, HH, H and G League. 300 feet or more for F, EE, E and D League along the foul lines, and to center field is recommended. The infield shall be graded so that the base line and home plate are level.

3. **The infield and outfield**, including the boundary lines, are fair territory and all other area is foul territory. It is desirable that the line from home base through the pitcher's plate to second base shall run east-northeast. It is recommended that the distance from home base to the backstop, and from the base lines to the nearest fence, stands or other obstruction on foul territory should be 25 feet or more. When the location of home base is determined, with a steel tape, measure 84 feet, 10 inches for I, HH and H League, 99 feet zero inches for G League, 113 feet two inches for F League and 127 feet 3 3/8 inches for EE, E and D League in a diagonal direction to establish second base. From home base, measure 60 feet zero inches for I, HH and H League, 70 feet zero inches for G League, 80 feet zero inches for F League and 90 feet zero inches for EE, E and D League towards first base: the intersection of these lines establishes first base from home base, measure 60 feet zero inches for HH and H League, 70 feet zero inches for G League, 80 feet zero inches for F League and 90 feet zero inches for EE, E and D League towards third base: from second base, measure 60 feet zero inches for I, HH and H League, 70 feet zero inches for G League, 80 feet zero inches for F League and 90 feet zero inches for EE, E and D League towards third base: the intersection of these lines establishes third base. The distance between first base and third base is 84 feet, 10 inches for I, HH and H League, 99 feet zero inches for G League, 113 feet two inches for F League and 127 feet 3 3/8 inches for EE, E and D League. All measurements from home base shall be taken from the point where the first and third base lines intersect. The catcher's box, the batter's box, the base coaches' boxes and the runner's lane shall be laid out as shown in Regulation playingfield Diagram on [Page 86](#).
4. **The catcher's box:** The rear line of the catcher's box is 8 feet directly back from the point of home plate. It extends forward to the rear line of the batter's box. It is 3

feet 7 inches wide.

5. **The batter's box** shall be rectangular, 6 feet by 4 feet. The inside line, if used, shall be parallel to and 6 inches away from the side of home plate. It shall extend forward from the center of home plate 3 feet and to the rear 3 feet.
  6. **The coaches' boxes** shall be 10 feet by 13 feet for I, HH and H League, 11 feet by 15 feet for G league, 13 feet by 17 feet for F League, and 15 feet by 20 feet for EE, E and D League and shall not be closer than 6 feet for I, HH, H, and G League, 10 feet for F League, and 15 feet for EE, E and D League from the foul lines. The foul lines and all other playing lines should be marked with chalk or other white non-caustic material. **Caustic lime must not be used.**
- 1.5 Home base (plate) shall be marked by a five-sided slab of whitened rubber. It shall be a 17 inch square with two of the corners filled in so that one edge is 17 inches long, two  $8\frac{1}{2}$  inches and two are 12 inches. It shall be set in the ground with the point at the intersection of the lines extending from home base (plate) to first base and to third base; with the 17-inch edge facing the pitcher's plate, and the two 12 inch edges coinciding with the first and third base lines. The top edges of home base (plate) shall be beveled and the base (plate) shall be fixed in the ground level with the ground surface. The black beveled edge is not considered part of home plate.
- 1.6 First, second and third bases shall be marked by white canvas or rubber covered bags, securely attached to the ground. The first and third base bags shall be entirely within the infield. The second base bag shall be centered on second base. The base bags shall be not less than 14 nor more than 15 inches square and the outer edges shall not be more than  $2\frac{1}{4}$  inches thick and filled with a soft material. Bases designed to disengage their anchor systems for safety purposes are permitted. **NOTE:** If the impact of a runner breaks a base loose from its position, no play can be made on that runner at that base if the runner had reached the

base safely. If there is continual action involving a subsequent runner, the base plate becomes the actual base for rendering of the umpire's decision.

- 1.7 The pitcher's plate for all classifications shall be a rectangular slab of whitened rubber 24 inches by 6 inches. It shall be set in the ground so that the distance between the front edge of the pitcher's plate and home base (the rear point of home plate) shall be 40 feet for I, shall be 46 feet for HH and H League, 50 feet for G League, 55 feet for F League, and 60 feet 6 inches for EE, E and D League.
- 1.8 The Charters shall furnish players' benches, one each for the home and visiting teams. Such benches should be a reasonable distance from the foul line. Wire fencing shall protect them.
- 1.9 The ball used must meet OHSBL specifications and standards. It shall weigh not less than 5 or more than 5¼ ounces, and measure not less than 9 nor more than 9¼ inches in circumference.
- 1.10 The baseball bats which meet OHSBL specifications and standards are as follows:
  1. League Classification D shall use only wood or wood composite bats. Bamboo bats are legal.
  2. League Classifications EE and E. Bats can be one or two piece and made of wood, aluminum or composite and shall be a maximum of -3 using length to weight ratio. Ex: Length is 34 inches and the weight is 24 ounces. 34 inches – 24 ounces = -10 length to weight ratio which would not be a legal bat. All bats in number 2 must have the BBCOR .50 rating stamp on the bat. **Players moving up or down: bats must comply with bat rules for the class of the game they are playing with.**
  3. League Classifications F shall use a wood or aluminum bat that is a maximum diameter of 2¾ inches in diameter at the thickest part and is a maximum -5 using length to weight



ratio. Ex: Length is 34 inches and the weight is 24 ounces. 34 inches – 24 ounces = -10 length to weight ratio which would not be a legal bat. -4 and -5 bats do not have to have the BBCOR .50 stamp.

4. League Classifications HH, H and G shall use a wood or aluminum baseball bat that is a maximum diameter of 2 $\frac{3}{4}$  inches in diameter at the thickest part and is a maximum-10.0 using length to weight ratio. Ex: 29 inches 19 ounces = -10 length to weight ratio which is a legal bat. No composite or two piece bats can be used in these age classifications. For I League, no drop bat restrictions. No composite, two or three piece bats can be used. I League see Rule Exceptions: [10.2.P.](#)
5. Taping on all bat handles may be solid or spaced taped no higher than originally covered by the manufacturer. In space taping, width of spiral space will not be less than the tape being used with a maximum width of 1 inch.
6. All classifications - wooden bats shall be a smooth round stick not more than 2 $\frac{3}{4}$  inches in diameter at the thickest part and not more than 42 inches in length. Bat shall may be solid wood, wood composite or bamboo.
7. Choke-up knobs are illegal for all classifications.
8. Any bat that is altered and causes the manufacturers specification to be changed shall be considered an illegal bat and could be cause for legal action by the bat manufacturers and leagues.
9. “Axe Bats” may be used provided they meet the same restrictions for length, weight and material as all OHSBL approved bats.
10. **PENALTY 1.10:** If the umpire discovers that an illegal bat is used or detected in the batter’s box, the

batter will be declared out and all base runners will return to the base they occupied at the time of the pitch. This penalty will be applied regardless if the batter makes contact or not.

## 1.11 Uniform

1. All players on the team should wear like uniforms. Uniforms must be numbered on the back with at least a two inch high number. There should be no duplicate numbers. **2.** The OHSBL shoulder patch can be affixed onto the upper left sleeve of the uniform blouse. Patches are worn three inches below the left shoulder seam on raglan sleeve; one inch below seam on set-in sleeve; over left breast on sleeveless style. **3.** Memorial patch is permissible. This can be placed on the cap or uniform. Keep in mind that OHSBL tournament patch must be on the left shoulder. **4.** Any part of the pitcher's under shirt or T-shirt exposed to view shall be of a uniform solid color, pitcher cannot wear white or gray.
2. Sleeve lengths may vary for individual players, but the sleeves of each individual shall be approximately the same length. **2.** No player shall wear ragged, frayed or slit sleeves. **3.** If a sleeveless style uniform jersey is used or a muscle shirt style, an under garment with short or long sleeves must be worn.
3. No players shall attach to a uniform tape or other material of a different color than the uniform.
4. Glass or polished metal buttons shall not be used on a uniform or team baseball cap.
5. Baseball Shoes **1.** Classifications I, HH, H, and G. Plain or cleated rubber, half inch (maximum) molded plastic cleated shoes shall be worn by these classes. Shoes with metal spikes or cleats are not permitted. **2.**

Classifications F, EE, E and D. Plain, cleated rubber, or one half inch (maximum) molded plastic cleated or metal cleated shoes may be worn by these classifications. **3.** Replaceable molded plastic cleats are legal for all classifications. Broken, damaged or modified cleats must be removed and/or replaced. **4.** Football type cleats are not legal.

6. Pitcher may wear a compression sleeve or strap. May not be white or gray that may be distracting to the batter. This is a judgment call.

**1.12** The catcher may wear an approved leather glove or catcher's mitt.

**1.13** The first baseman may wear an approved baseball glove or first baseman mitt.

**1.14** Each fielder, other than the first baseman and the catcher, may use or wear a baseball approved leather glove.

**1.15** The pitcher's glove:

1. May not be white or gray.
2. No pitcher shall attach to the glove any foreign material of a color different from the glove that may be distracting to the batter. This is a judgment call.
3. No pitcher shall wear sweatbands on their wrists that may be distracting to the batter. This is a judgement call.
4. No pitcher shall have a batting glove of a different color showing or any foreign material of a color different from the glove that may be distracting to the batter. This is a judgement call.

**1.16** Batting helmets

1. Classes I, HH, H, and G must wear full protective helmets with double ear flaps and **official chin straps** worn while at bat and while running the bases. Chin straps must be worn and used properly while batting and while running bases.
  2. Class F, E, EE & D must wear full protective helmets with double ear flaps while at bat and running the bases. It is the umpire's responsibility to see that the batter has the proper protective head gear and to stop the game until the situation is corrected.
  3. All helmets must be NOCSAE approved.
  4. C-Flap protective devices may be used provided they are properly installed per the manufacturer's instructions and pose no safety risk.
- 1.17 Catchers must wear a fiber or plastic type cup, chest protectors, and catcher's helmet with extended throat guard, shin guards. Catcher's helmet for classification I, HH, H, G, and F must have double ear flaps.
1. Catcher's helmet for classification EE, E and D can be either a double ear-flap or skull type catcher's helmet or baseball approved hockey style mask/helmet. Must be NOCSAE approved. Note: skull type catcher's helmets will not have a NOCSAE stamp but are legal for use. All catchers must wear a mask, which includes the throat protector or the "dangling" type throat protector, and catchers must wear a helmet during pitcher warm-up time and games. **PENALTY:** If the situation is not corrected after a warning, the game shall be forfeited.
- 1.18 ***No metallic jewelry shall be worn.*** Exception: wedding rings and medical alert identifications can be worn provided they are taped down. ***Soft nonmetallic can be worn.***

**PENALTY:** A team warning will be given to the team manager that violates the rule. After a team warning, player will be ejected from the game. Umpires should keep in mind this is a team warning and each team receives a warning when a player from their team is in violation of the rule. ***DO NOT GIVE THIS WARNING AT THE BEGINNING OF THE GAME. IT IS TO BE GIVEN WHEN YOU DISCOVER A VIOLATION.***

**1.19** All casts, splints, and braces must be padded. No protective equipment shall have exposed metal or any hard material. **Note:** any equipment judged by the umpire to be potentially dangerous is illegal and will be removed. If it is not removed, the player is ineligible to play. Compression band/sleeve see [1.11-6](#).

**1.20** Safety equipment, such as defensive facemasks, are permitted for use in all OHSBL games, provided they follow all manufacturer's recommendations for proper use. Cracked or broken safety equipment may not be used.

## **2.0 - DEFINITION OF TERMS**

(All definitions in Rule 2.00 are listed alphabetically)

**ADJUDGED** is a judgment decision by an umpire.

**An APPEAL** is an act of a fielder in claiming violation of the rules by the offensive team.

**BACKSTOP** is the barrier erected behind the catcher in order to allow the catcher to retrieve passed balls easily.

**BALK** is an illegal act by the pitcher with a runner or runners on base, entitling all base runners to advance one base. ***A balk is a delayed dead ball.***

**BALL** is a pitch, which does not enter the strike zone in flight and is not struck at by the batter. (**NOTE:** If the pitch touches the ground and bounces through the strike zone it is a "ball." If such pitch touches the batter, he shall be awarded first base. If the batter swings at such a pitch after two strikes, the ball cannot be caught, for the purposes of [Rule 6.5.A](#) and [6.9.B](#). If the

batter hits such a pitch, the ensuing action shall be the same as if the batter hit the ball in flight.

**BASE** is one of four points which must be touched by a runner in order to score a run; more often applied to the canvas bags and the rubber plate which mark the base points.

**BASE COACH** is a team member in uniform or one adult manager or coach who is stationed in the base coach's box at first or third base to direct the batter and the runners. Uniform does not have to be the same as the players.

**BASE ON BALLS** is an award of first base granted to batters who, during their time at bat, receive four pitches outside the strike zone. This is a live ball.

**BATTER** is an offensive player who takes a position in the batter's box.

**BATTER-RUNNER** is a term that identifies the offensive player who has just finished a time at bat until that player is put out or until the play on which that player becomes a runner ends.

**BATTER'S BOX** is the area within which the batter must stand during a time at bat. Lines are considered part of the box.

**BATTERY** is the pitcher and catcher.

**BATTING ORDER** is the list of current players in the order in which they are to bat.

**BENCH OR DUGOUT** is the seating facilities reserved for players, substitutes, one manager, and not more than three coaches when they are not actively engaged on the playing field. One of the following is permitted; bat boy or bat girl, certified trainer scorekeeper.

**BUNT** is a batted ball not swung at, but intentionally met with the bat and tapped slowly.

**CALLED GAME** is one in which, for any reason, the umpire-in-chief terminates play.

**CATCH** is the act of a fielder in getting secure possession in the hand or glove of a ball in flight and firmly holding it before it touches the ground providing such fielder does not use cap, protector, pocket or any other part of the uniform in getting possession. It is not a catch, however, if simultaneously or

immediately following contact with the ball, the fielder collides with a player, or with a wall, or if that fielder falls down, and as a result of such collision or falling, drops the ball. It is not a catch if a fielder touches a fly ball, which then hits a member of the offensive team or an umpire and then is caught by another defensive player. If the fielder has made the catch and drops the ball while in the act of making a throw following the catch, the ball shall be adjudged to have been caught. In establishing the validity of the catch, the fielder shall hold the ball long enough to prove complete control of the ball and that release of the ball is voluntary and intentional. A catch is legal if any fielder finally holds the ball, even though juggled, or held by another fielder before it touches the ground. Runners may leave their bases the instant the first fielder touches the ball.

**The CATCHER** is the fielder who takes the position back of the home base.

**The CATCHER'S BOX** is that area within which the catcher shall stand until the pitcher delivers the ball.

**CHIN STRAP** is a manufactured strap that fits onto a helmet to help hold the helmet on the players head.

**A COACH** is appointed to perform such duties as the manager may designate.

**A DEAD BALL** is a ball, out of play, because of a legally created temporary suspension of play.

**The DEFENSE (or DEFENSIVE)** is the team, or any player of the team, in the field.

**A DOUBLE HEADER** is two regularly scheduled or rescheduled games, played in immediate succession. A suspended game played prior to or after a regularly played game is not considered a double header (see [Rule 3.12.](#))

**A DOUBLE PLAY** is a play by the defense in which two offensive players are putout because of continuous action, providing there is no error between put-outs.

A force double play is one in which both put-outs are force plays. A reverse force double play is one in which the first out is made at any base, and the second out is made by tagging a runner

who originally was forced, before the runner touches the base to which that runner was forced.

**DUGOUT** (SEE DEFINITION OF “[BENCH](#)”).

**A FAIR BALL** is a batted ball that settles on fair ground between home and first base, or between home and third base, or that is on or over fair territory when bounding to the outfield past first or third base, or that touches first, second or third base, or that first falls on fair territory on or beyond first base or third base, or that, while on or over fair territory touches the person of an umpire or player, or that, while over fair territory, passes out of the playing field in flight. **NOTE:** A fair fly shall be adjudged according to the relative position of the ball and the foul line, including the foul pole, and not as to whether the fielder is on fair or foul territory at the time such fielder touches the ball.

**FAIR TERRITORY** is that part of the playing field within, and including the first base and third base lines, from home base to the bottom of the playing field fence and perpendicularly upwards. Home plate, first base and third base and all foul lines are in fair territory.

**A FIELDER** is any defensive player.

**FIELDER’S CHOICE** is the act of a fielder who handles a fair grounder and, instead of throwing it to first base to put out the batter-runner, throws to another base in an attempt to put out a preceding runner. Scorers also use the term:

To account for the advance of the batter-runner who takes one or more extra bases when the fielder who handles the safe hit attempts to put out a preceding runner; To account for the advance of a runner (other than by stolen base or error) while a fielder is attempting to put out another runner; and To account for the advance of a runner made solely because of the defensive team’s indifference. (Undefended steal).

**A FLY BALL** is a batted ball that goes high in the air in flight.

**A FORCE PLAY** is a play in which a runner legally loses the right to occupy a base because of the batter becoming a runner.

**NOTE:** Confusion regarding this play is removed by remembering that frequently the “force” situation is removed



during the play. **Example:** Runner on first, one out, ground ball hit sharply to first baseman, which touches the base and the batter-runner is out. The force is removed at that moment, and the runner advancing to second must be tagged. If there had been a runner at second or third, and either of these runners scored before the tag out at second, the run counts. Had the first baseman thrown to second and the ball is returned to first, the play at second would have been a force-out, making two outs, and the return throw to first would have made the third out.

**A FORFEITED GAME** is a game declared ended by the umpire in favor of the offended team by the score of 7 to 0, for violation of the rules. The score of a Class I, HH or H forfeited game is 6 to 0.

**A FOUL BALL** is a batted ball that settles on foul territory between home and first base, or between home and third base, or that bounds past first or third base on or over foul territory, or that first falls on foul territory beyond first or third base, or that while on or over foul territory, touches the person of an umpire or player, or any object foreign to the natural ground. **NOTE:** A foul fly shall be judged according to the relative position of the ball and foul line, including the foul pole, and not as to whether the fielder is on foul or fair territory at the time that fielder touches the ball.

**FOUL TERRITORY** is that part of the playing field outside the first and third base lines extended to the fence and perpendicularly upwards.

**A FOUL TIP** is a batted ball that goes sharp and direct from the bat to the catcher's hands and is legally caught. It is not a foul tip unless caught, and any foul tip that is caught is a strike, and the ball is in play. It is not a catch if it is a rebound, unless the ball has first touched the catcher's glove or hand.

**A GROUND BALL** is a batted ball that rolls or bounces close to the ground.

**HOME TEAM** is the team which takes the field first at the start of the game. Adopted schedules will determine which team this will be.

**ILLEGAL (or ILLEGALLY)** is contrary to these rules.

**An ILLEGAL PITCH** is (1) a pitch delivered to the batter when the pitcher does not have the pivot foot in contact with the pitcher's plate; (2) a quick return pitch, or any other act meeting the criteria established in [Rule 8.05](#).

**An ILLEGALLY BATTED BALL** is one hit by the batter with one or both feet on the ground entirely outside the box.

**INELIGIBLE PITCHER** is any pitcher that violates: (1) pitching rule or (2) the reporting rule as stated in rule [T15.07B](#).

**INELIGIBLE PLAYER** - Applies to violations of regulations regarding league age, residence (as defined by Ohio Hot Stove Baseball League, Inc.) and participation on the proper team within the Local Charter. This also applies to all players that are required to play 50 % of their league games to qualify for tournament play.

**An INFIELDER** is a fielder who occupies a position in the infield.

**An INFIELD FLY** is a fair fly ball (not including a line drive nor an attempted bunt) that can be caught by an infielder with ordinary effort, when first and second, or first, second and third bases are occupied, before two are out. The pitcher, catcher and any outfielder stationed in the infield on the play shall be considered infielders for the purpose of this rule. This is a judgment call by the umpire and cannot be protested. When it seems apparent that a batted ball will be an Infield Fly, the umpire shall immediately declare "Infield Fly" for the benefit of the runners. If the ball is near the base line, the umpire shall declare "Infield Fly if Fair." The ball is alive and runners may advance at the risk of that ball being caught, or retouch and advance after the ball is touched, the same as on any fly ball. If the hit becomes a foul ball, it is treated the same as any foul.

**NOTE:** If a declared Infield Fly is allowed to fall untouched to the ground, and bounces foul and remains foul before passing first or third base, it is a foul ball. If declared Infield Fly falls untouched to the ground, outside the base line, and bounces fair before passing first or third base, it is an Infield Fly.

**In FLIGHT** describes a batted, thrown, or pitched ball, which

has not yet touched the ground or some object other than a fielder. If the pitch touches the ground and bounces through the strike zone, without being struck at by the batter, it is a "ball." If such a pitch touches the batter, that batter shall be awarded first base. If the batter hits such a pitch, the ensuing action shall be the same as if the ball was hit in flight.

**In JEOPARDY** is a term indicating that the ball is in play and an offensive player may be put out.

**An INNING** is that portion of a game within which the teams alternate on offense and defense and in which there are three put-outs for each team. Each team's time at bat is a half-inning. It will be held that an inning starts the moment the third out is made completing the preceding inning.

**INTERFERENCE** See index for rules related to interference.

- 1 Offensive interference is an act by a member of the team at bat which interferes with, obstructs, impedes, hinders or confuses any fielder attempting to make a play. If the umpire declares the batter, batter-runner or a runner out for interference, all other runners shall return to the last base that was, in the judgment of the umpire, legally touched at the time of the interference, unless otherwise provided by these rules.
- 2 Defensive interference is an act by a fielder, which hinders or prevents a batter from hitting a pitch.
- 3 Umpire's interference occurs;
  1. When an umpire hinders, impedes or prevents a catcher's throw attempting to prevent a stolen base, or when a fair ball touches an umpire in fair territory before passing a fielder. Pitcher is not considered a fielder.
- 4 Spectator interference occurs when a spectator reaches out of the stands or goes on the playing field and touches a live ball.
- 5 On any interference, the ball is dead.

**The LEAGUE** is a group of teams in the same classification who play each other in a pre-arranged schedule under these rules for the league championship.

**LEGAL (or LEGALLY)** is in accordance with these rules.

**A LINE DRIVE** is a batted ball that goes sharp and direct from the

bat to a fielder without touching the ground.

**A LIVE BALL** is a ball which is in play.

**THE MANAGER** is a person appointed by the Charter to be responsible for the team's actions on the field, and to represent the team in communications with the umpire and the opposing team. The manager shall always be responsible for the team's conduct, observance of the official rules and deference to the umpires.

If a manager leaves the field, that manager shall designate a Coach as a substitute, and such substitute manager shall have the duties, rights and responsibilities of the manager.

**OBSTRUCTION** See index for additional rules for obstruction.

Obstruction is the act of a fielder who, while not in possession of the ball or not in the act of fielding the ball, impedes the progress of any runner. A fake tag is considered obstruction. **NOTE:** If a fielder is about to receive a thrown ball and if the ball is in flight directly toward and near enough to the fielder so he/she must occupy his/her position to receive the ball, the fielder may be considered "in the act of fielding a ball." "It is entirely up to the judgment of the umpire as to whether a fielder is in the act of fielding a ball. After a fielder has made an attempt to field a ball and missed, the fielder can no longer be "in the act of fielding" a ball. Example: If an infielder dives at a ground ball and the ball passes the fielder, and continues to lie on the ground and delays the progress of the runner, the fielder has very likely obstructed the runner.

**OFFENSE** is the team, or any player of the team, at bat.

**OFFICIAL RULES.** The rules contained in this book.

**OFFICIAL SCORER.** The person keeping the official score book for a game.

**OHSBL.** Ohio Hot Stove Baseball League, Inc.

**An OUT** is one of the three required retirements of an offensive team during its time at bat.

**An OUTFIELDER** is a fielder who occupies a position in the outfield, which is the area of the playing field most distant from home base.

**OVER SLIDE (OR OVER SLIDING)** is the act of an offensive

player when they slide to a base, other than when advancing from home to first base, with such momentum that the player loses contact with the base.

**A PENALTY** is the application of these rules following an illegal act.

**PERSON** of a player or an umpire is any part of the body, clothing or equipment.

**A PITCH** is a ball delivered to the batter by the pitcher.

**A PITCHER** is the fielder designated to deliver the pitch to the batter.

The **Pitcher's PIVOT FOOT** is that foot which is in contact with the pitcher's plate as the pitch is delivered.

**"PLAY"** is the umpire's order to start the game or to resume action following any dead ball.

**PRACTICE GAME** is a game that can be made up of players from different OHSBL rostered player(s) to teach and instruct the skills of baseball. Keep in mind that if a team uses player(s) other than participants on rostered teams, they will not be covered by our insurance. Practice games should not circumvent OHSBL rules. See rule XI K.

**A QUICK RETURN** is a pitch made with obvious intent to catch a batter off balance. It is an illegal pitch. (See Penalty – [Rule 8.5](#))

**REGULATION GAME.** See Rules [4.10](#), [4.11](#), [4.12](#) and [3.22](#).

**A RETOUCH** is the act of a runner returning to a base as legally required.

**A RUN (or SCORE)** is the score made by an offensive player who advances from batter to runner and touches first, second, third and home bases in that order before the third run is scored.

**A RUN DOWN** is the act of the defense in an attempt to put out a runner between bases.

**A RUNNER** is an offensive player who is advancing toward, or touching, or returning to any base.

**"SAFE"** is a declaration by the umpire that a runner is entitled to the base for which that runner was trying.

**SCRIMMAGE GAME** is a practice game that is played with an OHSBL rostered team to be used to determine the progress the team is making as related to skills of the game and to determine the future instructional needs of the team. Scrimmage games cannot circumvent any of the rules. See XI-K.

**SET POSITION** is one of the two legal pitching positions.

**SLIDING SCALE** is the method used for pitching restrictions ([Rule 8.10](#))

**SQUEEZE PLAY** is a term to designate a play when a team, with a runner on third base, attempts to score that runner by means of a bunt.

**A STRIKE** is a legal pitch, which meets any of these conditions:

Is struck at by the batter and is missed;

Is bunted foul, batter is out and ball is dead. If batter bunts foul on third strike;

Touches the batter's person as the batter strikes at the ball, it is a dead ball;

Touches the batter in flight in the strike zone; or

Becomes a foul tip, ball is live and in play or:

Is a batted foul ball

**The STRIKE ZONE** is that space over home plate, the upper limit of which is a horizontal line at the midpoint between the top of the shoulders and the top of the uniform pants, and the lower level is a line at the hollow beneath the kneecap. The Strike Zone shall be determined from the batter's stance as the batter is prepared to swing at a pitched ball. See diagram of [Strike Zone](#).

**SUBSTITUTION** player not listed as a starter that enters the game is considered a substitute. (See substitution rules)

**A SUSPENDED GAME** is a called game, which is to be completed at a later date.

**A TAG** is the action of a fielder in touching a base with the body while holding the ball securely and firmly in the hand or glove; or touching a runner with the ball or with the hand or glove holding the ball, while holding the ball securely and firmly in the hand or glove.

**A THROW** is the act of propelling the ball with the hand and arm to a given objective and is to be always distinguished from

the pitch.

**A TIE GAME** is a regulation game, which is called when each team has the same number of runs.

**“TIME”** is the announcement by the umpire of a legal interruption of play, during which the ball is dead.

**TOUCH.** To touch a player or umpire is to touch any part of the player or umpire’s body, clothing or equipment.

**A TRIPLE PLAY** is a play by the defense in which three offensive players are put out as a result of continuous action, providing there is no error between put-outs.

**A WILD PITCH** is one so high, or low, or wide of the plate that cannot be handled with ordinary effort by the catcher.

**WINDUP POSITION** is one of the two legal pitching positions.

### **3.0 - GAME PRELIMINARIES**

**3.1** Before the game begins the umpires shall;

- A. Require strict observance of all rules governing team personnel, implements of play and equipment of players. **I League exceptions are found in [Rule 10.](#)**
- B. Be sure that all playing lines are marked with non-caustic lime, chalk or other white material easily distinguishable from ground and grass;
- C. Receive from the Charter/ Team a supply of baseballs which meet specifications and standards; the umpire shall be the sole judge of the fitness of the balls to be used in the game; be assured by the League/ Team that additional balls are immediately available for use if required;
- D. Have possession of at least two new balls and shall require replenishment of such supply of alternate balls as needed throughout the game. Such alternate balls shall be put in play when:
  - 1. A ball has been batted out of the playing field or into the spectator area;
  - 2. A ball has become discolored or unfit for

further use;

3. The pitcher requests such alternate ball.

- 3.2** No player shall intentionally discolor or damage the ball by rubbing it with soil, rosin, paraffin, licorice, and sand paper, emery paper or other foreign substance. **PENALTY:** The umpire shall demand the ball and remove the offender from the game. In case the umpire cannot locate the offender, and if the pitcher delivers such discolored or damaged ball to the batter, the pitcher shall be removed from the game at once.

- 3.3** Substitutions HH, H and G (I League see [Rule 10.2.C](#))

A. A player or players may be substituted during a game at any time the ball is dead. The actual substitution must be done as stipulated under the two-inning rule as follows:

1. Starters on HH, H, and G League teams must play a minimum of 12 outs. (6 defensive and 6 offensive outs). These outs do not need to be consecutive but must be played prior to the conclusion of the game. An unplayed half inning, such as the bottom of 6 for HH and H or 7 for H, and G does not count as part of the player's time in the game.

2. Nonstarters, **(substitutes) matching players listed at the start of the game**, must play two innings (12 consecutive outs) counting 6 offensive 6 defensive outs.

3. Note: After meeting requirements of 1 and 2, managers may re-enter all players as many times as they want as long as the batting order remains the same.

B. If there is an infraction discovered at the game, the opposing manager will allow the player to enter the game and play the required number of outs as stipulated in a and b. If the game progresses to a point that the players cannot be inserted into the game for the required **number of** outs, the game shall be played



under protest. A Charter (for League play) or OHSBL (for tournament play) protest committee will hear the protest. **PENALTY:** May or may not include resumption of the game or forfeiture. **Offending managers shall be suspended for the remainder of the game and the next scheduled game.** Protest should consider the intent of the rule and that is: All players, both starters and required substitutes (non-starter) are required to play their required innings.

A. Exceptions:

a. If one team has more players than the other at the start of the game, then the team with more players needs to match only the other team in substitution i.e.: one team has fourteen (14) players while the other team has eleven (11), the fourteen (14) player team has to play only (11) players. All players that must meet the two inning rule and must be placed on the score sheet so that manager's know who must play two innings.

b. Nonstarters who are not required to play as per exception (a) can be inserted into the game at any time at the discretion of the manager. These players are not bound by the mandatory playing time. When these players are inserted into the lineup/batting order, they must maintain that position in the batting order.

c. Players do not have to play (2) innings if being disciplined. However, the discipline for one game covers all past violation of team rules by the player, thus prohibiting long term discipline unless new violations occur after the penalty has been served.

d. When a player is disciplined during league play it must be verbally or electronically (email) communicated within 24 hours to the charter official. If (a or b) is violated, a hearing will be held. The penalty in league championship or playoff

games will be automatic resumption of the game from the point of the violation or replay the entire game if the violation involves a starter rather than a substitute. Depending on the circumstances, in other league games, the penalty may or may not include the resumption of the game, forfeiture or suspension of the manager.

**NOTE: (1)** When two or more substitute players of the defensive team enter the game at the same time, the manager shall, immediately, report changes to opposing score keeper before they take their positions as fielders and place them in the team's batting order. The Crew Chief shall have authority to designate the substitute's place in the batting order, if this information is not immediately provided. **NOTE:** If during a game (after the start of an official game) either team is unable to place nine (9) players on the field due to:

- 1 **Illness / Injury:** If there are no legal substitutions on the bench, the opposing manager shall select a player to re-enter the lineup for the sick player. If there are no legal players on the bench that the opposing manager can select from, the game will continue with 8 players with an out being declared in the ill player's batting order. A player removed from the game due to illness or injury is not eligible to reenter the game.
- 2 **Ejected player:** If there are no legal substitutions on the bench, the team can continue with not less than 8 players. An automatic "out" will be declared in the batting order of the player that is ejected from the game. **Note:** an opposing manager cannot select a player from the bench that has been ejected. An out must be declared in the batting order of the ejected player. Game must start with 9 players and can be completed

with 8 players. If a team cannot complete the game with 8 players the game will be forfeited. Once a team drops to 8 players, team cannot go back up to 9 players.

- B. A pitcher, withdrawn as the result of a second trip to the mound in the same inning, cannot return to the game as a pitcher.
- C. A pitcher remaining in the game, but moving to a different position and not violating the two trips to the mound rule (2 above), can return as a pitcher anytime in the remainder of the game, but only once in the same inning.

**Note:** Game must start with 9 players and can be completed with 8 players. If a team cannot complete the game with 8 players the game will be forfeited. Once a team drops down to 8 players it cannot go back up to 9 players.

### **3.03 - Substitution F, EE and E League**

- 1. Any player (Starter or substitute) who has been removed from the game due to a substitute, can reenter the game once, provided such player **occupies the same batting position** in the batting order that he or she originally occupied.
- 2. A pitcher, withdrawn as the result of a second trip to the mound in the same inning, cannot return to the game as a pitcher.
- 3. A pitcher remaining in the game, but moving to a different position and not violating the two trips to the mound rule (B above), can return as a pitcher anytime in remainder of the game, but only once in the same inning he/she was removed.

**NOTE: (1)** When two or more substitute players of the defensive team enter the game at the same time, the manager shall, immediately before they take their positions as fielders, designate to official scorekeeper such players' positions in the team's batting order. The crew-chief shall have authority to

designate the substitute's places in the batting order, if this information is not immediately provided, when requested, from the official scorekeeper. **NOTE: (2)** If during a game (after the start of an official game) either team is unable to place nine (9) players on the field due to:

- 1 **Illness or injury:** If there are no legal substitutions on the bench, the opposing manager shall select a player to reenter the lineup for a sick or injured player. If there are no legal players on the bench that the opposing manager can select from, the game will continue with 8 players with an out being declared in the sick or injured player's batting order. A player removed from the game due to illness or injury is not eligible for reentry.
- 2 **Ejected player:** If there are no legal substitutions on the bench, the team can continue with not less than (8) players. An automatic "out" will be declared in the batting order of the player that is ejected from the game. **Note:** If an opposing manager cannot select a player from the bench that has been ejected. An out must be declared in the batting order of the ejected player. Game must start with 9 players and can be completed with 8 players. If a team cannot complete the game with 8 players the game will be forfeited. Once a team drops down to 8 players it cannot go back up to 9 players.

### **3.03 - Substitution D League**

(The following are exceptions to Rule 3.03 - Substitution F, EE and E League)

1. Defensively, free and unlimited substitutions are permitted at any time without reporting, except that a pitcher, once removed from that position as a result of a second mound visit, may not pitch again in that game. All changes involving a pitcher must be reported to the opposing manager and the

home plate umpire.

2. Offensively, any player who has been removed from the lineup, either as a batter or a base runner, may re-enter his spot in the batting order without limitations. All offensive substitutions, whether for a batter or a base runner, must be reported to the opposing manager and the home plate umpire. More than two players may “share” the same spot in the batting order. If both players leave or become injured, and there are at least nine players remaining in the batting order, then that spot is skipped. If both players are ejected, that spot in the batting order becomes an automatic out. Game cannot end on an automatic out.
3. The starting batting order of each team may contain as many players as desired, with a minimum of nine, as long as at least nine players are present at game time. While in the batting order, a player’s batting position is fixed. Any player batting out of order is an automatic out.
4. If a player leaves a game because of injury or prior commitment, a reserve player not currently in the batting order, must bat in that player’s spot in the order. If no reserve player is available, as long as at least nine batters remain in the batting order, then that spot is skipped, without an out being taken.
5. A courtesy runner may be used at any time for any player on base. The designated runner must be either a player currently not in the game or a player that made the last out in the scorebook.

#### 3.4 Courtesy Runner (CR) for Catcher - All Classifications.

1. Whenever the catcher gets on base, a (CR) may be put into the game. Any player that is not currently in the game can be a (CR) for the catcher providing the catcher has played on defense. If a

catcher for the away team bats in the 1<sup>st</sup> inning, a CR can be used without playing defense. Any time a CR is used for a catcher it will not be considered a substitution. Note 1: If you have only eight or nine or all of the players are part of the matching player requirements, or all subs have been used the batter or runner that made the last out must be used as the CR. Note 2: If the proper runner has not been used as the CR; upon discovery, replace the improper runner with the correct runner There is no penalty. Note.3: You can put the CR in at any time. **INTERPRETATION:** When a courtesy runner is to be used for the catcher by a team using a continuous batting order, the last recorded out is the player designated as the runner. In the event the first batter of the game requires a courtesy runner, the last person listed in the batting order is considered to be the player to be used.

- 3.5 A player whose name is on the team's batting order (if they have batted or not) may not become a substitute runner for another member of the team.
- 3.6 The pitcher named in the batting order handed to the **Official Scorekeeper**, as provided in [Rule 4.1-A-1](#) shall pitch to the first batter or any substitute batter until such batter or any substitute batter is putout or reaches first base, unless the pitcher sustains injury or illness which, in the judgment of the crew-chief, incapacitates the pitcher from further play as pitcher. **B.** If the pitcher is replaced, the substitute pitcher (from the bench or field) shall pitch to the batter then at bat, or any substitute batter, until such batter is put out or reaches first base, or until the offensive team is put out, unless the substitute pitcher sustains injury or illness, which, in the crew chief's judgment, incapacitates the pitcher from further play as a pitcher.
- 3.7 The manager shall immediately notify the opposing teams **Official Scorekeeper** of any substitution and shall state to the plate umpire the substitute's place in the batting order.

3.8 The plate umpire, after having been notified, shall immediately announce, or cause to be announced, each substitution.

### 3.9 Announcement of Substitutions

If no announcement of a substitution during *league play* is made, the substitute shall be considered to have entered the game when:

1. If a pitcher, the substitute takes a position on the pitcher's plate and throws one warm up pitch to the catcher;
2. If a batter, the substitute takes a position in the batter's box;
3. If a fielder, the substitute reaches the position usually occupied by the fielder being replaced and play commences;
4. If a runner, the substitute takes the place of the runner being replaced.
5. Any play made by, or on, any of the above mentioned unannounced substitutes shall be legal.

Exception: During OHSBL tournament play you must report all substitutions to the official tournament scorekeeper. See [Rule T15.07 B](#).

3.10 Players, managers and coaches of the participating teams shall not address or mingle with spectators, nor sit in the stands during a game in which they are engaged.

### 3.11 Ground Rules

1. The home team manager shall determine the fitness of the playing field before the game starts.
2. Crew Chief shall be the sole judge as to whether and when play shall be suspended during a game because of unsuitable weather conditions or the unfit condition of the playing field; as to whether and when play shall be resumed after such suspension; and as to whether and when a game shall be terminated after such suspension. Said umpire shall not call the game until at least **thirty minutes** after play has

been suspended. The umpire may continue suspension as long as there is any chance to resume play.

**3.12 Double Headers**

1. Scheduled league doubleheader is permissible, but Charter must take into consideration OHSBL pitching rules.

2. Suspended league game must be played ahead of the regularly scheduled game. At least one full hour must be scheduled between games. Fifteen minute warm up is not part of the one hour. Tournament game see [Rule T15.05 G.](#)

**3.13** When the umpire suspends play, “Time” shall be called. When the umpire call’s “Play” the suspension is lifted and play resumes. Between the call of “Time” and the call of “Play,” the ball is dead.

**3.14** The Charter or home team manager will establish ground rules to be followed by all teams in the league play. If there are any disagreements about the ground rules, the crew chief will establish the ground rules.

**3.15** Members of the offensive team shall carry all gloves and other equipment off the field and to the dugout while their team is at bat. No equipment shall be left lying on the field, either in fair or foul territory.

**3.16** No person shall be allowed on the playing field during a game except uniformed players, managers and coaches, umpires and (professional photographers at the discretion of the crew chief). In case of intentional interference with play by any person authorized to be on the playing field, the ball is dead at the moment of the interference and no runners on base may advance. Should an overthrown ball accidentally touch an authorized person, it will not be considered interference and the ball will remain live.

**3.17** When there is spectator interference with any thrown or batted ball, the ball shall be dead at the moment of interference and the umpire shall impose such penalties as in the umpire’s opinion will nullify the act of interference. APPROVED



**RULING:** If spectator interference clearly prevents a fielder from catching a fly ball, the umpire shall declare the batter out.

**3.18** Players and substitutes shall sit on their team's bench or in the dugout unless participating in the game or preparing to enter the game. No one except eligible players in uniform, a manager, assistant manager, two coaches, one scorekeeper and non-adult bat retriever shall occupy the bench or dugout. When batters or base runners are retired, they must return to the bench or dugout at once.

**3.19** The Charter shall insure that there is proper protection sufficient to preserve order and to prevent spectators from entering the field. Either team may refuse to play until the field is cleared.

**3.20** All casts, splints and braces must be padded. No protective equipment shall have exposed metal or any hard material. **Note:** any equipment judged by the umpire to be potentially dangerous is illegal and will be removed. If it is not removed, the player is ineligible to play.

**3.21** Cell phones or other communication devices shall not be used on the field of play or in dugouts, except for those that respond to emergencies. These devices should be identified at ground rules.

**APPROVED RULING:** Cell phones or other communication devices may be used for the sole purpose of electronic score keeping.

**3.22** HH and H 7 run per inning rule. 7 run per inning per team limit until the 6 or last inning. When a team scores seven (7) runs with two or less outs, the half inning is considered completed. Once an inning is determined to be the last inning the seven (7) run per inning limit no longer applies, and for the remainder of the game, each half inning continues until the team at bat records three outs. For the purposes of the "seven run per inning" limit, an inning is considered the "last inning" If:

1. At any point during the 5th inning or 6th inning the visiting team has a lead of ten (10)

or more runs ([Rule 4.10 B.4](#)) if the home team achieves a ten run lead, the game is over.

2. After two hours of play, at any point during any inning either team has a lead of (10) or more runs ([Rule 4.10.B.3](#).)
3. The crew Chief declares the 5th or 6th to be the last inning due to impending darkness or weather conditions, that is the last inning and game is over once that inning has been completed.

- **Interpretation 1:** While the seven - run limit is in effect, if a batter reaches first base due to a hit or fielding error with runners on base, only the runners that score up to the seven (7) run limit are counted, and the half inning is completed.

- **Interpretation 2:** If any runner that scores up to the seven run limit results in the inning being considered the “last inning as defined above,” then all runners that score are counted, and the inning continues until the team at bat record three outs.

## 4.0 - STARTING AND ENDING THE GAME

- 4.1 Prior to the start of the game the umpires shall proceed directly to home plate where they shall meet the managers, have the home team go over the ground rules, establish time to begin the game, and establish the following:

A. Official score book:

1. The home team will be the official scorekeeper.
2. Umpire should tell the managers who is maintaining the official score book. **Note:** If there are any unresolved problems such as batting order, substitutions, pitching records, inning played etc., the official score book will be used to resolve the problems. Umpire should ask both managers if their teams are properly equipped as related to safety items. No defective equipment

can be used in the game. *This does not negate the fact that umpires must inspect all equipment.*

B. The Umpire must have the official scorekeeper record starting time of the game. Time could become a deciding factor in a game.

C. As soon as the plate umpire says “play ball,” the umpires are in charge of the game and from that moment have sole authority to determine when a game shall be called, halted or resumed on account of weather or the conditions of the playing field. **NOTE:** Team players who arrive at the game site after a game begins may be inserted in the lineup, if the manager so chooses. This applies even when a suspended game is resumed at a later date. Managers must be careful not to violate the HH, H, and G two inning playing **Rule 3.03 Substitution HH, H and G rule.**

42 The players of the home team shall take their defensive positions, the first batter of the visiting team shall take a position in the batter’s box, the umpire shall call “Play” and the game shall start.

43 When the ball is put in play at the start of, or during a game, all fielders other than the catcher shall be in fair territory. A player is considered to be in fair territory as long as any part of the foot is touching the bag or line. **Note:** Umpires should not put the ball in play until all fielders are in fair territory. This is a judgment call and cannot be protested.

A. The catcher shall be stationed directly in back of the plate. The catcher may leave that position at any time to catch a pitch or make a play except when the batter is being given an intentional base on balls, the catcher must stand with both feet within the lines of the catcher’s box until the ball leaves the pitcher’s hand. **PENALTY:** Illegal pitch - ball called on the batter (see [Rule 8.05](#)). With runners on base it is a balk.

B. The pitcher, while in the act of delivering the ball to the batter, shall take the legal position.

- C. Except for the pitcher and the catcher, any fielder may be stationed anywhere in fair territory.
  - D. Except the batter, or runner attempting to score, no other offensive player shall cross the catcher's lines when the ball is in play.
- 44 The batting order shall be followed throughout the game unless a player is substituted for another. Subs must take the place of the replaced player's position in the batting order except as covered by [Rule 3.3](#).
- 45 The offensive team shall station two base coaches on the field during its time at bat, one near first base and one near third base. Base coaches shall:
- A. Be eligible rostered player (wearing an approved helmet); or one adult manager or coach;
  - B. Remain within the base coach's boxes at all times, except as provided in [Rule 7.11](#);
  - C. Talk to members of their own team only. An offending base coach shall be removed from coach's box.
- 46 No manager, coach or player, shall at any time, whether from the bench, playing field or elsewhere:
- A. Incite, or try to incite, by word or sign, a demonstration by spectators;
  - B. Use language which will in any manner refer to or reflect upon opposing players, manager, coach, an umpire or spectators;
  - C. Call "Time," or employ any word or phrase or commit any act while the ball is alive and in play for the obvious purpose of trying to make the pitcher balk.
  - D. Make intentional contact with an umpire in any manner. Before, during or after a game.
  - E. Take a position in the batter's line of vision, and with deliberate unsportsmanlike intent, act in any way to distract the batter. **Penalty:** The offender shall be removed from the game and shall leave the playing field. If a balk is committed, it shall be nullified. **Note:** If the offender is a base runner, he shall be called out,

as well as being re- moved from the game.

- 4.7 When a manager, coach, player or any team personnel is ejected from a game, they shall leave the field immediately and take no further part in that game. If a player is a minor, an adult will accompany the player. They may not sit in the stands and may not be recalled. **Penalty: (1)** If the ejection occurs during a tournament game the ejected person shall be suspended from all games for the remainder of the day and any game played on the next tournament day for any team which the person is listed as a staff member (manager, coach, assistant manager, scorekeeper, etc.). If a team staff member is ejected the second time during the tournament, the suspension shall be for the remainder of the tournament, and additional disciplinary action may be taken by the OHSBL Executive Committee. Ejected person or persons cannot participate in any pre or post game activities during their suspension. **(2)** If the ejection occurs during a league game the ejected person shall be suspended for the remainder of the game and the next played **OHSBL** game. Any person ejected cannot play or be part of the team until the suspension is fulfilled.

- 4.8 When the occupants of a player's bench show violent disapproval of an umpire's decision, the umpire shall first give warning that such disapproval shall cease. If such action continues the following penalty shall be applied: **PENALTY:** The umpire shall order the offender out of the game and away from the spectators' area. If the umpire is unable to detect the offender or offenders, the bench may be cleared of all players. If a bench is cleared, one of the adult coaches must accompany the team. The manager of the offending team shall have the privilege of recalling to the playing field only those players needed for substitution in the game.

#### 4.9 **How A Team Scores**

A One run shall be scored each time a runner legally advances to and touches first, second, third and home base before three players are put out to end the inning.

**EXCEPTIONS:** A run is not scored if the runner advances to home

base during a play in which the third out is made: **1.** By the batter-runner before touching first base; **2.** By any runner being forced out; or **3.** By a preceding runner who is declared out because that runner failed to touch one of the bases on an appeal play.

APPROVED RULING: One out, Jones on third, Smith on first and Brown flies out to right field for the second out. Jones tags up and scores after the catch. Smith attempted to return to first but the right fielders throw beat Smith to the base for the third out, but Jones scored before the throw to catch Smith reached first base. Hence, Jones's run counts. It was not a force play.

- B. When the winning run is scored in the last half-inning of a regulation game, or in the last half of an extra inning, as the result of a base on balls, hit batter or any other play with the bases full which forces the runner on third advance, the umpire shall not declare the game ended until the runner forced to advance from third has touched home base and the batter-runner has touched first base.

#### **410 Regulation League Game**

A regulation game consists of seven innings except **HH** and **H** which is 6 inning, unless extended because of a tie score, or shortened **(1)** because the home team needs none of its half of the 7 or **(6 for HH and H )** inning or only a fraction of it; or **(2)** because the umpire calls the game:

See [Rule 3.22](#) for **HH** and **H** league. *I league rules are in [Rule 10](#).*

- A. If the score is tied after seven (six for **HH** and **H**) complete innings, play shall continue until **(1)** the visiting team has scored more total runs than the home team at the end of a completed inning; or **(2)** the home team scores the winning run in an uncompleted inning.
- B. If a game is called, it is a regulation game:
1. If  $4\frac{1}{2}$  or 5 innings have been completed or;
  2. If the home team has scored more runs in four or four and a fraction half innings than the

- visiting team has scored in five completed innings or;
3. Two-hour time limit is placed on all games when a team has a ten-run lead regardless of what inning you are in. Home team must complete their half of the inning if the visitors are leading or;
  4. If after 5 or more innings,  $4\frac{1}{2}$  innings if the home team is ahead, one team has a lead of 10 runs or more, the manager of the team with the least runs shall concede the victory to the opponent. **NOTE:** If the visiting team has a lead of 10 runs or more, the home team must bat in its half of the inning.
  5. **In Classes F, EE, E and D only**, if after 4 or more innings,  $3\frac{1}{2}$  innings if the home team is ahead, one team has a lead of 15 runs or more, the manager of the team with the least runs shall concede the victory to the opponent. **NOTE:** If the visiting team has a lead of 15 runs or more, the home team must bat in its half of the inning.
  6. If a game is called before it has become a regulation game, but after one (1) or more pitches have been thrown, it shall be a suspended game and will be resumed exactly where it left off. **NOTE:** All records, including pitching, shall be counted. Pitchers can pitch on another day as long as the pitching rule is not violated.
- 4.11** The score of a regulation game is the total number of runs scored by each team.
- A. The game ends when the visiting team completes its half of the inning if the home team is ahead.
  - B. The game ends when the seventh inning is completed, if the visiting team is ahead.

- C. If the home team scores the winning run in its half of the seventh inning or its half of an extra inning after a tie, the game ends immediately when the winning run is scored. **NOTE:** Once a game becomes regulation and it is called with the home team taking the lead in an incomplete inning, the game ends with the home team the winner. **EXCEPTION:** If the last batter in a game hits a home run out of the playing field, the batter-runners on base are permitted to score, in accordance with the base-running rules, and the game ends when the batter-runner touches home plate. Approved ruling: less than two outs the batter hits a home run out of the playing field to win the game in the last half of the seventh or sixth for HH and H or an extra inning, but is called out for passing a preceding runner. The game ends immediately when the winning run is scored.
- D. A called game ends at the moment the umpire terminates play. **Exception:** If the game is called during an incomplete inning, the game shall be a suspended game when;
1. The visiting team scores one or more runs to tie the score in the incomplete inning, and the home team does not score in the incomplete inning.
  2. The visiting team scores one or more runs to take the lead in the incomplete inning, and the home team does not tie the score or retake the lead in the incomplete inning. Note: The home team must bat in its half of the inning. If the visiting team has or takes the lead, the home team must bat in its half of the inning.
  3. A regulation game that is tied after five or more completed innings and halted by the umpire, is a suspended game and shall be



resumed from the exact point that play was halted. The game shall continue in accordance with [Rule 4.10](#). **NOTE 1:** When a tie game is halted, the pitcher of record may continue pitching providing there is no violation of the pitching rule. [Rule 8.10](#).

- 4.12** Games halted due to weather, curfew, light failure or darkness, prior to becoming a regulation, shall be resumed from the exact point at which they were halted in the original game. It can be completed preceding the next scheduled game between the same teams. A pitcher can pitch in both games on the same day subject to pitching limitation as established for each league classification. [Rule 8.10](#). The lineup and batting order of both teams shall be the same as the lineup and batting order at the moment the game was halted, subject to the rules governing substitution. A player who was not in the game prior to halting the original game may replace any player. No player once removed before the game was halted may be returned to the lineup unless covered by [Rule 3.03](#).
- 4.13** Double Headers see [Rule 3.12](#) and [T15.05G](#).
- 4.14** Crew Chief shall order the playing field lights turned on whenever, in such umpire's opinion, darkness makes further play in daylight hazardous.
- 4.15** A game may be forfeited by the crew chief of the game in progress to the opposing team when a team:
- A. Being upon the field, refuses to start play within 10 minutes after the appointed hour for beginning the game, unless such delay, in the umpire's judgment, is unavoidable;
  - B. Employs tactics designed to delay or shorten the game;
  - C. Refuses to continue play unless the game was terminated by the umpire;
  - D. Fails to resume play, after the game was halted by the umpire, within one minute after the umpire has called

“Play Ball”;

E. Fails to obey within a reasonable time the umpire’s order to remove a player from the game;

F. After warning by the umpire, willfully and persistently violates any rules of the game;

**4.16** If a game cannot be played because of the inability of a team to place 9 players on the field at the starting time of the game, the team with less than 9 player shall forfeit the game to the opposing team. **Note:** A game may not be started with less than nine (9) players on each team.

**4.17** A game shall be forfeited to the opposing team when a team is unable to place the required number of players on the field. Once a team drops to 8, game must be finished with eight players.

A. All Classifications: If after the start of the game either team is unable to place (9) players on the field due to:

1. Illness or injury: If there are no legal substitutes on the bench, the opposing manager shall select a player to reenter the lineup for the ill player. If there are no legal players on the bench that the opposing manager can select from, the game will continue with 8 players with an out being declared in the ill or injured player’s position in batting order. A player removed from the game due to illness or injury is not eligible for reentry. **NOTE:** When a Player is selected under **(1) that** player shall assume the injured or sick players spot in the batting order (which may not be the re-entered player’s original spot in the batting order).

2. Ejected player: If there are no legal substitutions on the bench, the team can continue with not less than (8) players. An automatic “out” will be declared in the batting order of the player that is ejected from the

game. **Note:** an opposing manager cannot select a player from the bench for a player that has been ejected. An out must be declared in the batting order of the ejected player.

- 418 Forfeited games shall be recorded in the score book and the book signed by the crew chief. A written report stating the reason for the forfeiture shall be sent to the Charters' umpire-in-chief, but failure of the umpire to file this report shall not affect the forfeiture.

419 **Protesting Game**

A. Protest shall be considered only when based on the violation or interpretation of a playing rule, use of an ineligible pitcher or the use of an ineligible player. No protest shall be considered on a decision involving umpire's judgment. Equipment, which does not meet specifications, must be removed from the game.

B. The managers of contesting teams only shall have the right to protest a game or, in their absence, the acting manager. However, the manager or acting manager may not leave the dugout until receiving permission from an umpire. It is the responsibility of the protesting manager to know the requirements relating to the filing of protest as well as to which rule and regulation is protestable.

C. Protests shall be made as follows:

1. The protesting manager shall immediately, and before any succeeding play begins,
2. Notify the umpire that the game is being played under protest.
3. Provide the umpire with a detailed account and must quote the rule number and page number of the specific rule violation.
4. Charter protest fee of \$75 cash must accompany the written protest, which must be filed according to established Charter

procedures.

- D. Following such notice the umpire shall consult with the other umpire(s). If the umpire is convinced that the decision is in conflict with the rules, the umpire shall reverse that decision.
- E. If, however, after consultation, the umpire is convinced that the decision is not in conflict with the rules, said umpire shall announce that the game is being played under protest. Failure of the umpire to make such an announcement shall not affect the validity of the protest.
- F. Protest made due to use of ineligible pitcher or ineligible player may be considered only if made to the umpire. In the event it is discovered after the game, the protest must be filed directly with the Charter. Any protest for any reason whatsoever during League play must be verbally submitted stating rule violation by the manager first to the umpire on the field of play and then in writing along with the Charter protest fee as established by the Charter. If a protest is filed directly with the Charter the same procedure must be followed as related to fees, written details etc. **Only fraudulent roster information will be considered for a protest after 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday in June of current year.**
- G. The crew chief shall also submit a report immediately, as established by the Charter for league play.
- H. During League play a protest committee established by the Charter Holder shall have the exclusive right to determine whether all steps involved in a protest have been followed sufficiently well for it to hear and resolve any such protest as above, including playing rules if allowed, resume game from exact point when infraction occurred and return the protest fee. If a protest is filed for violation of the roster rule or two-inning rule, the protesting manager will have his protest fee refunded. (Win or lose). **NOTE: (1)** This rule does not pertain to charges of infractions of regulations such as field decorum or actions of the league personnel or spectators, which must be considered and resolved by

Charter. **NOTE: (2)** All Charter officials are urged to take precautions to prevent protests. When a protest situation is imminent, the potential offenders should be notified immediately. Example: should a manager, official scorer, or league official discover that a pitcher is ineligible at the beginning of the game, or will become ineligible during the game or at the start of the next inning of play, the fact should be brought to the attention of the manager of the team involved. Such action should not be delayed until the infraction has occurred. However, failure of personnel to notify the manager of the infraction does not affect the validity of the protest.

**4.20** No local league game shall start prior to 9:00 AM on Saturdays and 9:00 AM on Sundays.

**4.21** Lightning

A. When lightning is spotted the game will be delayed one half hour from the time the lightning is spotted. Time is started over from each time lightning is spotted.

B. Any time that a time delay is encountered it will not count as part of the two-hour rule.

## **5.0 - PUTTING THE BALL IN PLAY-LIVE BALL**

**5.1** At the time set for beginning the game, the plate umpire shall order the home team to take its defensive positions and the first batter of the visiting team to take a position in the batter's box. As soon as all players are in position the plate umpire shall call "Play Ball."

**5.2** After the umpire calls "Play Ball," the ball is alive and in play and remains alive and in play until, for legal cause, or at the umpire's call of "Time" suspending play, the ball becomes dead. While the ball is dead, no player may be put out, no bases may be run and no runs may be scored, except that runners may advance one or more bases as the result of acts which occurred while the ball was alive (such as, but not limited to an illegal pitch, an overthrow, interference, or a

- home run or other fair hit out of the playing field.)
- 5.3 The pitcher shall deliver the pitch to the batter who may elect to strike the ball, or who may not offer at it, as such batter chooses.
  - 5.4 The offensive team's objective is to have its batter become a runner, and its runners advance.
  - 5.5 The defensive team's objective is to prevent offensive players from becoming runners, and to prevent their advance around the bases.
  - 5.6 When a batter becomes a runner and touches all bases legally, one run shall be scored for the offensive team.
  - 5.7 When three offensive players are legally put out, that team takes the field and the opposing team becomes the offensive team (side retired).
  - 5.8 If a thrown ball accidentally touches a base coach, or a pitched or thrown ball touches an umpire, the ball is alive and in play. However, if the base coach interferes with a thrown ball, the runner is out.
  - 5.9 The ball becomes dead and runners advance one base, or return to their bases, without liability to be put out, when;
    - A. A pitched ball touches a batter, or the batter's clothing, while in a legal batting position; runners, if forced, advance (see [Rule 6.8](#));
    - B. The plate umpire interferes with the catcher's throw, runners return to the base they occupied at time of pitch. If the catcher's throw gets the runner out, the out stands. No umpire interference;
    - C. An illegal pitch (a balk) (see [Penalty 8.05](#));
    - D. A ball is illegally batted either fair or foul; runners return;
    - E. A foul ball not caught, runners return. The umpire shall not put the ball in play until all runners have retouched their bases;
    - F. A fair ball touches a runner or an umpire in fair territory before it touches an infielder including the pitcher, or touches an umpire before it has passed an

infielder other than the pitcher. **NOTE:** If a fair ball goes through, or by an infielder and touches a runner immediately back of said infielder, or touches a runner after being deflected by an infielder, the ball is in play and the umpire shall not declare the runner out. In making such decision, the umpire must be convinced that the ball passed through, or by, the infielder and that no other infielder had a chance to make a play on the ball; runner's advance, if forced:

G. A pitched ball lodges in the catchers or umpire's mask or paraphernalia; runners advance.

**5.10** The ball becomes dead when an umpire calls "Time." The umpire shall call "Time":

A. When in said umpire's judgment, weather, darkness or similar conditions make immediate further play impossible.

B. When light failure makes it difficult or impossible for the umpires to follow the play;

C. When an accident incapacitates a player or an umpire;

D. If an accident to a runner is such as to prevent said runner from proceeding to an entitled base, as in (D);

E. On a home run hit out of the playing field or an award of one or more bases, a substitute runner shall be permitted to complete the play;

F. When a manager requests "Time" for a substitution, or for a conference with one of the players; **NOTE:** Only one offensive time-out, for the purpose of a visit or conference, will be permitted each inning;

G. When the umpire wishes to examine the ball, to consult with either manager, or for any similar cause;

H. When a fielder, after catching a fly ball, goes out of play, with either foot, the ball shall become a dead ball play. As it pertains to runner(s), the provisions of [Rule 7.4.C](#) shall prevail;

I. When an umpire orders a player or any other person

removed from the playing field;

- J. Except in the cases stated in paragraphs (1) and (2-1) of this rule, no umpire shall call “Time” while a play is in progress.

**5.11** After the ball is dead, play shall be resumed when the pitcher takes a position on the pitcher’s plate with a new ball or the same ball in said pitcher’s possession and the plate umpire calls “Play.” The plate umpire shall call “Play” as soon as the pitcher takes a position on the plate with possession of the ball and all fielders are in the field of play.

## **6.0 - THE BATTER**

**6.1** –

- A. Players of the offensive team shall bat in the order that their name appears in the team’s batting order.
- B. The first batter in each inning after the first inning shall be the player whose name follows that of the last player who legally completed a time at bat in the preceding inning.

**NOTE:** In the event that while a batter is in the batter’s box, the third out of an inning is made on a base runner, the batter then at bat shall be the first batter of the next inning and the count of balls and strikes shall start over.

**6.2** –

- A. The batter shall take his/her position in the batter’s box promptly when it is said batter’s time at bat.
- B. The batter shall not leave that position in the batter’s box after the pitcher comes to set position, or starts a windup.  
**PENALTY:** If the pitcher pitches, the umpire shall call “Ball” or “Strike” as the case may be.
- C. If the batter refuses to take his/her position in the batter’s box during a time at bat, the umpire shall order the pitcher to pitch, and shall call “Strike” on each such pitch. The batter may take a proper position after any such pitch, and the regular ball and strike count shall continue, but if the batter does not take the proper position before three strikes are called, that batter shall be declared out.



- 63 The batter's legal position shall be with both feet within the batter's box. APPROVED RULING: The lines defining the box are within the batter's box.
- 64 A batter has legally completed a time at bat when the batter is put out or becomes a runner.
- 65 A batter is out when:
- A. A fair or foul fly ball (other than a foul tip) is legally caught by a fielder;
  - B. The catcher legally catches a third strike;
  - C. A third strike is not caught by the catcher when first base is occupied before two outs;
  - D. Bunting foul on a third strike;
  - E. An infield fly is declared;
  - F. The batter attempts to hit a third strike and is touched by the ball;
  - G. A fair ball touches said batter before touching a fielder;
  - H. After hitting or bunting a fair ball, the bat hits the ball a second time in fair territory. The ball is dead and no runner may advance. If the batter-runner drops the bat and the ball rolls against the bat in fair territory and, in the umpire's judgment there was no intention to interfere with the course of the ball, the ball is alive and in play;
  - I. HH & H League - When catcher drops a ball that is a third strike. When the ball hits the ground in front of the plate it is a ball unless the batter swings at the pitch; then it is a strike and is considered a dropped ball. If less than two outs, the runners may advance at their own risk;
  - J. After hitting or bunting a foul ball, that runner intentionally deflects the course of the ball in any manner while running to first base. The ball is dead and no runners may advance;
  - K. After a third strike or after hitting a fair ball, the batter runner or first base is tagged before said batter runner touches first base;
  - L. In running the last half of the distance from home plate to first base, while the ball is being fielded to first base, the

- batter- runner runs outside (to the right of) the three foot line, or inside (to the left of) the foul line, and in the umpire's judgment (batter-runner does not have to be hit by the ball) in so doing interferes with the fielder taking the throw at first base; except, that the batter runner may run outside (to the right of) the three-foot line or inside (to the left of the foul line) to avoid a fielder attempting to field a batted ball;
- M. An infielder intentionally drops a fair fly ball or line drive with first, and second, first and third, or first, second and third bases occupied before two are out. The ball is dead and runner or runners shall return to their original base or bases This is an umpire's judgment call; **APPROVED RULING:** In this situation, the batter is not out if the infielder permits the ball to drop untouched to the ground, except when the infield fly rule applies.
- N. A preceding runner shall, in the umpire's judgment, intention- ally interfere with a fielder who is attempting to catch a thrown ball or throw a ball in an attempt to complete a play.
- O. With two out, a runner on third base, and two strikes on the batter, the runner attempts to steal home base on a legal pitch and the ball touches the runner in the batter's strike zone. The umpire shall call "strike three," the batter is out and run shall not count; before two are out, the umpire shall call "strike three," the ball is dead and the run counts.
- P. Class I, HH, H, & G. Batter must wear a NOCSAE approved batting helmet with ear lugs and a chin strap. It is the umpire's responsibility to see that the batter has the proper protective head gear and will stop the game until the situation is corrected. If it is not corrected, the game shall be forfeited.
- Q. Class F, EE, E & D. Batter must wear a NOCSAE batting helmet with ear lugs. It is the umpire's responsibility to see that the batter has the proper protective head gear and will stop the game until the

situation is corrected. If it is not corrected the game shall be forfeited.

**6.6** A batter is out for illegal action when:

- A. Hitting the ball with one or both feet on the ground entirely outside the batter's box.
- B. Stepping from one batter's box to the other while the pitcher is in position ready to pitch.
- C. Interfering with the catcher's fielding or throwing by stepping out of the batter's box or making any other movement that hinders the catcher's play at home base.  
**EXCEPTION:** Batter is not out if any runner attempting to advance is put out, or if runner trying to score is called out for batter's interference.
- D. When the batter steps into the batter's box with an illegal bat.

**6.7** Batting Out Of Turn

- A. A batter shall be called out, on appeal, when he/she fails to bat in his/her proper turn, and another batter completes a time at bat in his or her place. The proper batter may take a position in the batter's box at any time before the improper batter becomes a runner or is put out, and any balls and strikes shall be counted in the proper batter's time at bat.
- B. When an improper batter becomes a runner or is put out, and the defensive team appeals to the umpire before the first pitch to the next batter of either team, or before any play or attempted play, the umpire shall **(1)** declare the proper batter out; and **(2)** nullify any advance or score made because of a ball batted by the improper batter or because of the improper batter's advance to first base on a hit, an error, a base on balls, a hit batter or otherwise. **NOTE:** If a runner advances, while the improper batter is at bat, on a stolen base, illegal pitch, wild pitch or passed ball, such advance is legal.
- C. When an improper batter becomes a runner, or is put out, or a pitch is made to the next batter of either team before an

appeal is made, the improper batter thereby becomes the proper batter, and the results of such time at bat become legal.

- D. 1. When the proper batter is called out for failing to bat in turn, the next batter shall be the batter whose name follows that of the proper batter called out. 2. When an improper batter becomes a proper batter because no appeal is made before the next pitch, the next batter shall be the batter whose name follows that of such legalized improper batter. The instant improper batter's actions are legalized, the batting order picks up with the name following that of the legalized improper batter.

### APPROVED RULINGS

To illustrate various situations arising from batting out of turn, assume a first-inning batting order as follows: Abel - Baker - Charles - Daniel - Edward - Frank - George - Henry - Irvin.

**PLAY (1).** Baker bats. With the count 2 balls and 1 strike, (a) the offensive team discovers the error or (b) the defensive team appeals.

**RULING:** In either case, Abel replaces Baker, with the count 2 balls and 1 strike.

**PLAY (2).** Baker bats and doubles. The defensive team appeals (a) immediately or (b) after a pitch to Charles. **RULING:** Abel is called out and Baker is the proper batter; Baker stays on second and Charles is the proper batter.

**PLAY (3).** Abel walks. Baker walks. Charles forces Baker. Edward bats in Daniel's turn. While Edward is at bat, Abel scores and Charles goes to second on a wild pitch. Edward grounds out, sending Charles to third. The defensive team appeals (a) immediately or (b) after a pitch to Daniel. **RULING:** (a) Abel's run counts and Charles is entitled to second base since these advances were not made because of the improper batter batting a ball or advancing to first base. Charles must return to second base because the advance to third resulted from the improper batter batting a ball. Daniel is called out and Edward is the proper batter; (b) Abel's run counts and Charles stays on third. The proper batter is Frank.

**PLAY (4).** With the bases full and two out, Henry bats in Frank's

turn, and triples, scoring three runs. The defensive team appeals (a) immediately or (b) after a pitch to George. **RULING:**

Frank is called out and no runs score. George is the proper batter to lead off the second inning; (b) Henry stays on third and three runs score. Irvin is the proper batter.

**PLAY (5).** After Play (4) (b) above, George continues to bat. (a) Henry is picked off third base for the third out, or (b) George flies out, and no appeal is made. Who is the proper lead-off batter in the second inning?

**RULING:** (a) Irwin became the proper batter as soon as the first pitch to George legalized Henry's triple; (b) Henry. When no appeal was made, the first pitch to the lead-off batter of the opposing team legalized George's time at bat.

**PLAY (6).** Daniel walks and Abel comes to bat. Daniel was an improper batter and if an appeal is made before the first pitch to Abel, Abel is out, Daniel is removed from base, and Baker is proper batter. There is no appeal and a pitch is made to Abel. Daniel's walk is now legalized, and Edward thereby becomes the proper batter. Edward can replace Abel at any time before Abel is put out, or becomes a runner. Edward does not do so. Abel flies out, and Baker comes to bat. Abel was an improper batter, and if an appeal is made before the first pitch to Baker, Edward is out, and the proper batter is Frank. There is no appeal, and a pitch is made to Baker. Abel's out is now legalized, and the proper batter is Baker. Baker walks. Charles is the proper batter. Charles flies out. Now Daniel is the proper batter, but Daniel is on second base. Who is the proper batter? **RULING:** The proper batter is Edward. When the proper batter is on base, that batter is passed over, and the following batter becomes the proper BATTER. **NOTE:** The umpire and scorekeeper shall not direct the attention of any person to the presence in the batter's box of an improper batter. This rule is designed to require constant vigilance by the players and managers of both teams. There are two fundamentals to keep in mind: (1). When a player bats out of turn, the proper batter is the player called out. (2). If an improper batter bats and reaches base or is out and no appeal is made before a pitch to the next batter, or before any play or attempted play, that improper batter is considered to have batted in proper turn and establishes the order that is to follow.

**68** The batter becomes a runner and is entitled to first base without liability to be put out (provided said runner advances to and touches first base) when:

A. Four “balls” have been called by the umpire;

B. The batter is touched by a pitched ball which the batter is not attempting to hit unless **(1)** The ball is in the strike zone when it touches the batter, or **(2)** the batter makes no attempt to avoid being touched by the ball; **NOTE:** If the ball is in the strike zone when it touches the batter, it shall be called a strike, whether or not the batter tries to avoid the ball. If the ball is outside the strike zone when it touches the batter, it shall be called a ball if that batter makes no attempt to avoid being touched.

**APPROVED RULING:** When a pitched ball, which does not entitle that batter to first base, touches the batter, the ball is dead and no runner may advance.

C. The catcher or any fielder interferes with the batter. If a play follows the interference, the manager of the offense may advise the plate umpire of a decision to decline the interference penalty and accept the play. Such election shall be made immediately at the end of the play. However, if the batter reaches first base on a hit, an error, a base on balls, a hit batter, or otherwise, and all other runners advance at least one base, the play proceeds without reference to the interference;

D. A fair ball touches an umpire or a runner in fair territory before touching a fielder. **NOTE:** If a fair ball touches an umpire after having passed a fielder other than the pitcher, or having touched a fielder, including the pitcher, the ball is in play.

**69** The batter becomes a runner when:

A. A fair ball is hit;

B. **G, F, EE, EE and D League:** The third strike called by the umpire is not caught, providing **(1)** first base is unoccupied or **(2)** first base is occupied with two out. **NOTE:** A batter forfeits his/her opportunity to advance

- to first base when he/she enters the dugout or other dead ball area;
- C. A fair ball, after having passed a fielder other than the pitcher, or after having been touched by a fielder, including the pitcher, touches an umpire or runner in fair territory;
  - D. A fair fly ball passes over a fence or into the stands. Such hit entitles the batter to a home run when all bases have been legally touched;
  - E. Any fair ball which after touching the ground, bounds into the stands or passes through, over or under a fence, or through or under a score board, or through any opening in the fence or score board, or through or under shrubbery or vines on the fence, or which sticks in a fence or score board, in which case the batter and the runners shall be entitled to two bases;
  - F. Any bounding fair ball is deflected by the fielder into the stands, or over or under a fence on fair or foul territory, in which case the batter and all runners shall be entitled to advance two bases;
  - G. Any fair fly ball is deflected by the fielder into the stands, or over the fence into foul territory, in which case the batter shall be entitled to advance to second base; but if deflected into the stands or over the fence in fair territory, the batter shall be entitled to a home run.

#### **6.10 EXTRA HITTER F, E, EE and D Classifications**

- A. Extra Hitter must be declared at ground rules.
- B. If a team uses an EH and starts play with ten (10) players and an injury or sickness occurs, the EH may take the defensive position vacated by the sick/ injured player and will continue to bat in his original place in the batting order. Play will continue with nine (9) players. The batting order cannot be altered, and an out will be declared at the place in the batting order where the sick/injured player is due to bat.

- C. Starting EH may take the field once he/she has recorded a time at bat (including base on balls) and the field player may assume the EH position. The batting order cannot be altered.
  - D. Should an EH become ill/injured during the course of a game, a substitute will be allowed and will assume that position in the batting order. The batting order cannot be altered. Should a substitute not be available, an out will occur at the EH spot in the line-up when due to bat. Substitutions may be a reenter player.
  - E. Ejection of an EH may only be substituted by a non-reentered player. Should a legal player not be available, an out will be declared at that position in the batting order when due to bat.
- 6.11 Extra Hitter for Classes HH, H, and G.** (Go to [Extra Hitter HH-G](#)) to better understand the EH rule.
- A. EH will be declared at ground rules.
  - B. EH will be a position player and the player that starts EH must play a mandatory two innings as the EH per rule 303 Substitution for HH, H, and G.
  - C. The starting EH must play 6 outs at defensive position during the game.
  - D. A substitute player may not enter the game as the EH. Player must meet the 6 outs as a defensive player before player can assume the EH position. Should an EH become sick or injured during the course of the game, a substitute will be allowed and will assume that position in the batting order. The batting order cannot be altered. Should a substitution not be available, an out will be declared at that position in the batting order when due to bat. Substitution may be a re-entered player.
  - E. A Position player currently in the game may not assume the position of EH until the player has played two innings. Player in a matching situation may not assume the EH position until the EH that the player is



replacing has met this requirement. Managers do not alter the batting order.

- 6.12** HH & H league when a batter is walked, the runner can continue running to 2nd as long as the runner does not stop at 1st. This is a judgment call as to whether the runner rounds 1st in a proper manner and comes to a logical conclusion.
- 6.13** Continuous Batting Order for Classes HH-D is permitted for season and tournament play. Each team has the option to use a continuous batting order. All players present at the game must be placed into the batting order. If a player arrives late, they are added to the bottom of the original batting order. The use of a continuous batting order must be declared at ground rules. If one team chooses to use a continuous batting order, the other team is not required to use it. If a player becomes injured or is ejected, the spot vacated in the batting order becomes an out for the remainder of the game. Player that vacated that batting position may not return to the game. All defensive substitution rules must still be met by Class. Player matching may not be used by a team utilizing a continuous batting order.

## **7.0 - THE RUNNER**

- 7.1** A runner acquires the right to an unoccupied base when he touches it before he is out. He is then entitled to it until he is put out or forced to vacate it for another runner legally entitled to that base.
- 7.2** In advancing, a runner shall touch first, second, third and home base in order. If forced to return, the runner shall retouch all bases in reverse order, unless the ball is dead under any provision of [Rule 5.09](#). In such cases, the runner may go directly to the original base.
- 7.3** Two runners may not occupy a base, but if, while the ball is alive, two runners are touching the base, and the following runner shall be out when tagged. The preceding runner is

entitled to the base.

- 74 Each runner, other than the batter, may, without liability to be put out, advance one base when:

A. The batter's advance, without liability to be put out, forces the runner to vacate a base, or when the batter hits a fair ball that touches another runner or the umpire before such ball has been touched by, or has passed a fielder, if the runner is forced to advance with two out. **NOTE:** A batter forfeits his/her opportunity to advance to first base when he/she enters the dugout or other dead ball area;

B. There is a balk committed;

C. A fielder, after catching a fly ball, goes out of play with either foot;

D. While he is attempting to steal a base, the catcher or any other fielder interferes with the batter. **Note:** When a runner is entitled to a base without liability to be put out, while the ball is in play, or under any rule in which the ball is in play after the runner reaches the base to which he is entitled, and the runner fails to touch the base to which he is entitled before attempting to advance to the next base, the runner shall forfeit his exemption from liability to be put out, and he may be put out by tagging the base or by tagging the runner before he returns to the missed base.

- 75 Each runner including the batter-runner may, without liability to be put out, advance:

A. To home base, scoring a run, if a fair ball goes out of the playing field in flight and he touched all bases legally; or if a fair ball which, in the umpire's judgment, would have gone out of the playing field in flight, is deflected by the act of a fielder in throwing his glove, cap, or any article of his apparel;

B. Three bases, if a fielder deliberately touches a batted fair ball with his cap, mask or any part of his uniform detached from its proper place on his person. The ball is in

- play and the batter may advance to home base at his peril;
- C. Three bases, if a fielder deliberately throws his glove at and touches a batted fair ball. The ball is in play and the batter may advance to home base at his peril;
  - D. Two bases, if a fielder deliberately touches a thrown ball with his cap, mask or any part of his uniform detached from its proper place on his person. The ball is in play;
  - E. Two bases, if a fielder deliberately throws his glove at and touches a thrown ball. The ball is in play; **NOTE:** In applying (B-C-D-E) the umpire must rule that the thrown glove or detached cap or mask has touched the ball. There is no penalty if the ball is not touched. Under (C-E) this penalty shall not be invoked against a fielder whose glove is carried off his hand by the force of a batted or thrown ball, or when his glove flies off his hand as he makes an obvious effort to make a legitimate catch.
  - F. Two bases, if a fair ball bounces or is deflected into the stands outside the first or third base foul lines; or if it goes through or under a field fence, or through or under a score board, or through or under shrubbery or vines on the fence; or if it sticks in such fence, score board, shrubbery or vines;
  - G. Two bases when, with no spectators on the playing field, a thrown ball goes into the stands, or into a bench (whether or not the ball rebounds into the field), or over or under or through a field fence, or on a slanting part of the screen above the back-stop, or remains in the meshes of a wire screen protecting spectators. The ball is dead. When such wild throw is the first play by an infielder, the umpire, in awarding such bases, shall be governed by the position of the runners at the time the ball was pitched; in all other cases the umpire shall be governed by the position of the runners at the time the wild throw was made; **Note:** If all runners, including the batter-runner, have advanced at least one base when an infielder makes a wild throw on the first play after the pitch, the award shall be governed by

the position of the runners when the wild throw was made;

- H. One base, if a ball, pitched to the batter, or thrown by the pitcher from his position on the pitcher's plate to a base to catch a runner, goes into a stand or a bench area, or over or through a field fence or backstop. The ball is dead. **APPROVED RULING:** When a wild pitch or passed ball goes through or by the catcher, or deflects off the catcher, and goes directly into the dugout, stands, above the break, or any area where the ball is dead, the awarding of bases shall be one base. One base shall also be awarded if the pitcher, while in contact with the rubber, throws to a base, and the throw goes directly into the stands or into any area where the ball is dead. If, however, the pitched or thrown ball goes through or by the catcher or through the fielder and remains on the playing field, and is subsequently kicked or deflected into the dugout stands or other area where the ball is dead, the awarding of bases shall be two bases from position of runners at the time of the pitch or throw; One base, if the batter becomes a runner on ball four or strike three, when the pitch passes the catcher and lodges in the umpire's mask or paraphernalia. **NOTE:** If the batter becomes a runner on a wild pitch which entitles the runners to advance one base, the batter-runner shall be entitled to first base only.

**7.6** When obstruction occurs, the umpire shall call or signal "Obstruction":

- A. If a play is being made on the obstructed runner, or if the batter-runner is obstructed before touching first base, the ball is dead and all runners shall advance without liability to be put out, to the bases they would have reached, in the umpire's judgment, if there had been no obstruction. The obstructed runner shall be awarded at least one base beyond the base last legally touched by such runner before the obstruction. Any preceding runners forced to advance by the award of bases as the penalty for obstruction shall

advance without liability to be put out;

- B. If no play is being made on the obstructed runner, the play shall proceed until no further action is possible. The umpire shall then call "Time" and impose such penalties, if any, as in that umpire's judgment will nullify the act of obstruction. **NOTE 1:** When the ball is not dead on obstruction and an obstructed runner advances beyond the base which, in the umpire's judgment, the runner would have been awarded because of being obstructed, the runner does so at his/her own risk and may be tagged out. This is a judgment call. **NOTE 2:** The catcher, without the ball in their possession, has no right to block the pathway of the runner attempting to score. The base line belongs to the runner, and the catcher should be there only when fielding a ball or with the ball already in his/ her possession.

- 7.7** If, with a runner on third base and trying to score by means of a squeeze play or steal, the catcher or any other fielder steps in front of home base without possession of the ball, or touches the batter or the bat, the pitcher shall be charged with a balk, the batter shall be awarded first base on the interference and the ball is dead.

- 7.8** Any runner is out when:

- A. Running more than three feet away from a direct line between bases to avoid being tagged, unless such action is to avoid interference with a fielder fielding a batted ball; or
- B. After touching first base the runner leaves the base line obviously abandoning all effort to touch the next base.
- C. Intentionally interferes with a thrown ball; or hinders a fielder attempting to make a play on a batted ball. **NOTE:** A runner who is adjudged to have hindered a fielder who is attempting to make a play on a batted ball is out whether it was intentional or not;
- D. That runner is tagged, when the ball is alive, while off a base; **EXCEPTION:** A batter-runner cannot be

tagged out after overrunning or over sliding first base, if said batter-runner returns immediately to the base. **APPROVED RULING: (1)** If the impact of a runner breaks a base loose from its position, no play can be made on that runner at that base if the runner has reached the base safely. **APPROVED RULING: (2)** If a base is dislodged from its position during a play, any following runner on the same play shall be considered as touching or occupying the base if, in the umpire's judgment, that runner touches or occupies the dislodged bag, or the point marked by the original location of the dislodged bag;

- E. Failing to retouch the base after a fair or foul fly ball is legally caught before that fielder tags runner or the base. The runner shall not be called out for failure to;
- F. Retouch the base after the first following pitch, or any play or attempted play. This is an appeal play; **NOTE:** Base runners tag up on a foul tip. They may steal on a foul tip. If a so-called tip is not caught, it becomes an ordinary foul ball. Runners then return to their bases;
- G. Failing to reach the next base before a fielder tags said runner or the base after that runner has been forced to advance by reason of the batter becoming a runner. However, if a following runner is put out on a force play, the force is removed and the runner must be tagged to be put out. The force is removed as soon as the runner touches the base to which that runner is forced to advance, and if over sliding or overrunning the base, the runner must be tagged to be put out. However, if the forced runner, after touching the next base, retreats for any reason towards the base last occupied, the force play is reinstated, and the runner can again be put out if the defense tags the base to which the runner is forced;
- H. Touched by a fair ball in fair territory before the ball has touched or passed an infielder. The ball is dead and no

runner may score, no runners may advance, except runners forced to advance; **EXCEPTION:** If a runner is touching a base when touched by a called infield fly, that runner is not out, although the batter is out; **NOTE (1):** If a runner is touched by a called infield fly when not touching a base, both runner and batter are out. **NOTE (2):** If two runners are touched by the same fair ball, only the first one is out because the ball is instantly dead.

- I. Attempting to score on a play in which the batter interferes with the play at home base before two are out. With two out, the interference puts the batter out and no score counts;
- J. Passing a preceding runner before such runner is out;
- K. Failing to return at once to first base after overrunning or over sliding that base. If attempting to run to second the runner is out when tagged. If after over running or over sliding first base, the runner starts toward the dugout, or toward a position, and fails to return to first base at once, that runner is out on appeal, when said runner or the base is tagged;
- L. In running or sliding for home base, the runner fails to touch home base and makes no attempt to return to the base, when a fielder holds the ball in hand, while touching home base, and appeals to the umpire for the decision. **NOTE:** This rule applies only where the runner is on the way to the bench and a fielder would be required to chase the runner to tag him/her. It does not apply to the ordinary play where the runner misses the plate and then immediately makes an effort to touch the plate before being tagged. In that case, the runner must be tagged.
- M. Runner is out if player removes their batting helmet any time during a live ball situation. If a player deliberately removes his protective headgear during playing action the player shall be called out. Ruling: a

dead ball advance on bases is not considered playing action.

**7.9** It is interference by a batter or runner when:

- A. The batter hinders the catchers attempt to field the ball;
- B. After hitting or bunting a fair ball, while holding the bat, the bat of such batter hits the ball a second time in fair territory. The ball is dead and no runners may advance. If the batter-runner drops the bat and the ball rolls against the bat in fair territory and, in the umpire's judgment, there was no intention to interfere with the course of the ball, the ball is alive and in play;
- C. The batter intentionally deflects the course of a foul ball in any manner;
- D. Before two are out and a runner on third base, the batter hinders a fielder in making a play at home base; the runner is out;
- E. Any member or members of the offensive team stand or gather around any base, to which a runner is advancing, to confuse, hinder or add to the difficulty of the fielders. Such runner shall be declared out for the interference of teammate or teammates;
- F. Any batter or runner who has just been put out hinders or impedes any following play being made on a runner. Such runner shall be declared out for the interference of a teammate;
- G. If, in the judgment of the umpire, a base runner willfully and deliberately interferes with a batted ball or a fielder in the act of fielding a batted ball, with the obvious intent to break up a double play, the ball is dead. The umpire shall call the runner out for interference and also call out the batter runner because of the action of the runner. In no event may bases be run or runs scored because of such action by the runner.
- H. If in the judgment of the umpire, a batter-runner fully and deliberately interferes with a batted ball or a



fielder in the act of fielding a batted ball, with the obvious intent to break up a double play, the ball is dead. The umpire shall call the batter-runner out for interference and shall also call out the runner who advanced closest to home plate regardless where the double play might have been possible. In no event shall bases be run because of such interference;

- I. In the judgement of the umpire, the base coach at third base, or first base, by touching or holding the runner, physically assists that runner in returning to or leaving third base or first base;
- J. With a runner on third base, the base coach leaves the box and acts in any manner to draw a throw by a fielder;
- K. In running or sliding for home base, the runner fails to touch home base and makes no attempt to return to the base, when a fielder holds the ball in hand, while touching home base, and appeals to the umpire for the decision.  
**NOTE:** This rule applies only where the runner is on the way to the bench, and a fielder would be required to chase the runner to tag him/her. It does not apply to the ordinary play where the runner misses the plate and then immediately makes an effort to touch the plate before being tagged. In that case, the runner must be tagged.
- L. The runner fails to avoid a fielder who is attempting to field a batted ball, or intentionally interferes with a thrown ball, provided that if two or more fielders attempt to field a batted ball and the runner comes in contact with one or more of them, the umpire shall determine which fielder is entitled to the benefit of this rule, and shall not declare the runner out for coming in contact with a fielder other than the one the umpire determines to be entitled to field such ball;
- M. A fair ball touches the batter or runner in fair territory before touching a fielder. If a fair ball goes through or by an infielder and touches a runner immediately back of said infielder or touches the runner after having been

deflected by a fielder, the umpire shall not declare the runner out for being touched by a batted ball. In making such decision, the umpire must be convinced that the ball passed through or by the infielder and that no other infielder had the chance to make a play on the ball. If in the judgment of the umpire, the runner deliberately and intentionally kicks such a batted ball on which the infielder had missed a play, then the runner shall be called out for interference; **PENALTY FOR INTERFERENCE:** The runner is out and the ball is dead.

**7.10** Any runner shall be called out on appeal:

- A. After a fly ball is caught and the runner fails to retouch the base before said runner or the base is tagged. **NOTE:** “Retouch” in this rule means to tag up and start from contact with the base after the ball is caught. A runner is not permitted to take a flying start from a position in back of, and not touching, the base;
- B. With the ball in play, while advancing or returning to a base, the runner fails to touch each base in order before said runner, or a missed base, is tagged; **APPROVED RULING: (1)** No runner may return to touch a missed base after a following runner has scored. **(2)** When the ball is dead, no runner may return to touch a missed base or one abandoned after said runner has advanced to and touched a base beyond the missed base. **Play A** - Batter hits ball out of the park, or hits a ground rule double, and misses first base (ball is dead). The runner may return to first base to correct the mistake before touching second. But if the runner touches second, he/she may not return to first and if the defensive team appeals, the runner is declared out at first. (Appeal play.) **Play B** - Batter hits a ground ball to shortstop, which throws wild into the stands (ball is dead). Batter-runner misses first base, but is awarded second base on the overthrow. Even though the umpire has awarded the runner second base on the overthrow, the runner must touch first base before

proceeding to second base. (Appeal play.)

- C. The runner overruns or over slides first base and fails to return to the base immediately, and said runner or the base is tagged;
- D. The runner fails to touch home base and makes no attempt to return to that base, and home base is tagged. A runner forfeits his/her opportunity to return to home base when he/she enters the dugouts or other dead ball area. Any appeal under this rule must be made before the next pitch, or any play or attempted play. No appeal can be made if the ball is dead. If the violation occurs during a play, which ends a half-inning, the appeal must be made before all the defensive players have left fair territory. An appeal is not to be interpreted as a play or an attempted play. Successive appeals may not be made on a runner at the same base. If the defensive team on its first appeal, errs, the umpire shall not allow a request for a second appeal on the same runner at the same base. (Intended meaning of the word “err” is that the defensive team in making an appeal threw the ball out of play. For example, if the pitcher threw to first base to appeal and threw the ball into the stands, no second appeal would be allowed.
- NOTE: (1)** Appeal plays may require an umpire to recognize an apparent “fourth out.” If the third out is made during a play in which an appeal play is sustained on another runner, the appeal play decision takes precedence in determining the out. If there is more than one appeal during a play that ends a half-inning, the defense may elect to take the out that gives it the advantage. For the purposes of this rule, the defensive team has “left the field” when all players have left fair territory on their way to the bench or dug out.
- NOTE: (2)** If a pitcher makes an illegal pitch when making an appeal, such act shall be a play. An appeal should be clearly intended as an appeal, either by a verbal request by the player or an act that unmistakably indicates an appeal to the umpire. A player,

inadvertently stepping on the base with a ball in hand, would not constitute an appeal. The ball must be live to make an appeal.

- 7.11 The players, coaches or any member of an offensive team shall vacate any space (including both dugouts) needed by a fielder who is attempting to field a batted or thrown ball. **PENALTY:** Interference shall be called, and the batter or runner on whom the play is being made shall be declared out.
- 7.12 Unless two are out, the status of a following runner is not affected by a preceding runner's failure to touch or retouch a base. If, upon appeal, the preceding runner is the third out, no runners following the preceding runner shall score. If such third out is the result of a force play, neither preceding nor following runners shall score.
- 7.13 HH and H League: Player cannot lead off or steal any base until the pitched ball passes home plate. The umpire will call time when:
- A. All play comes to a logical conclusion (umpire's judgment) i.e., the lead runner stops (change of direction is considered a stop), the umpire will call time out and all other runners will return to the last touched base. Last touched base does not mean, if a player is over half way to the next base, that he is entitled to it. Umpires keep in mind that the key to this interpretation is the lead runner. All calls made under this rule will be considered a judgment call.
  - B. Lead runner is stopped, no play is being made on runners in jeopardy of being put out, (play comes to a logical conclusion), and the umpire will place the runner on their last occupied base. This does not void any legal advances that must be made. This rule is not intended to stop all stealing, but its intent is to control it by not allowing it to occur until the ball passes the plate. Time out will be called when, in the judgement of the umpire, the play is over. **PENALTY:** When the player leaves early, the ball is dead, the runner is called out and the

count continues on the batter. This is considered an immediate dead ball. No player can advance. This is considered a judgement call.

- 7.14** Crashing into a fielder who is holding the ball waiting to make a tag. Cases have been reported in which the base runner, upon seeing the catcher or another infielder who has the ball waiting for him, remains on their feet and deliberately crashes into the defensive player hoping to jar him/her so that the ball will be dropped. To avoid injury, the runner should attempt to slide to avoid being tagged. Severe injury can result from such unnecessary, unsportsmanlike tactics. **Penalty:** It is the duty of the umpire to declare the runner out, and when the action of the runner is also interpreted as being a flagrant act, the violator shall be disqualified from the game. Coaches and players must be aware of the fact that umpires are being asked to watch more closely for obstruction by the catcher and other fielders. It appears to the members of the committee that coaches need to remind their players of the rule pertaining to obstruction and the proper method of making the tag during a putout. Catchers need to be taught to give the runners a piece of home plate to allow a slide prior to the catcher receiving the ball to make the putout. It appears to the committee that catchers, because of the added protective equipment, defy runners unnecessarily when they do not have the ball. We apparently have the ability to make the putout at 1st, 2nd and 3rd base without violent collision. It should be no different at home base. It is the duty of the umpire to enforce the obstruction rule and not give the defense an unfair advantage.

## **8.0 - THE PITCHER**

- 8.1** Legal pitching delivery. There are two legal pitching positions, the Windup Position and the Set Position, and either position may be used at any time. Pitchers shall take signs from the catcher

while standing on the pitcher's plate.

A. The Windup Position. The pitcher shall stand facing the batter, the entire pivot foot on, or in front of and touching and not off the end of the pitcher's plate, and the other foot free. From this position any natural movement associated with the delivery of the ball to the batter commits the pitcher to pitch without interruption or alteration. The pitcher shall not raise either foot from the ground, except that in the actual delivery of the ball to the batter, said pitcher may take one-step backward, and one step forward with the free foot. From this position the pitcher may:

1. Deliver the ball to the batter, or;
2. Step and throw to a base in an attempt to pick off a runner, or;
3. Disengage the pitcher's plate. In disengaging the pitcher's plate, the pitcher must step off with the pivot foot and not the free foot first. The pitcher may not go into a set or stretch position. If the pitcher does, it is an illegal pitch, a (balk).

**NOTE:** When a pitcher holds the ball with both hands in front of the body, with the entire pivot foot on, or in front of and touching but not off the end of the pitcher's plate, and the other foot free, that pitcher will be considered in a Windup Position.

B. The Set Position. Set Position shall be indicated by the pitcher when he stands facing the batter with his/her entire pivot foot on, or in front of, and in contact with, and not off the end of the pitcher's plate, (**Note:** the whole length of the foot must be in contact with the rubber. A pitcher cannot pitch from off the end of the rubber with just the side of his foot touching the rubber), holding the ball in both hands in front of the body and coming to a complete stop. From such Set Position the pitcher may deliver the ball to the batter, throw to a base or step backward off the pitcher's plate with the pivot foot. Before assuming Set Position, the pitcher may elect to make any natural preliminary motion such as that known as "the

stretch.” But if the pitcher so elects, that pitcher shall come to Set Position before delivering the ball to that batter commits him to pitch without alteration or interruption. Preparatory to coming to a Set Position, the pitcher shall have one hand on his side; from this position he/she shall go to the set position as defined in Rule 8.01(b) without interruption and in one continuous motion. The pitcher, following his stretch, must **(a)** hold the ball in both hands in front of his body and **(b)** come to a complete stop. This must be enforced by the umpires, and they should watch this closely. Pitchers are constantly attempting to “beat the rule” in their efforts to hold runners on bases, and in cases where the pitcher fails to make a complete “stop” called for in the rules, the umpire should immediately call a “balk.”

- C. At any time during the pitcher’s preliminary movements and until the natural pitching motion commits that pitcher to the pitch, said pitcher may throw to any base provided the pitcher steps directly toward such base before making the throw. The pitcher shall step ahead of the throw. “A snap throw” followed by the step toward the base is an illegal pitch (a balk). (See Penalty for illegal pitch under [Rule 8.05](#).)
- D. If the pitcher makes an illegal pitch with the bases unoccupied, it shall be called a ball unless the batter reaches first base on a hit, an error, a base on balls, a hit batter or otherwise. A ball that slips out of the pitcher’s hand and crosses the foul line shall be called a ball, otherwise it will be called “no pitch” without runners on base, and an illegal pitch (a balk) with runners on base. (See **Penalty** for illegal pitch under [Rule 8.05](#).)
- E. If the pitcher removes the pivot foot from contact with the pitcher’s plate by stepping backward with that foot, that pitcher thereby becomes an infielder, and in the case of a wild throw from that position, it shall be considered the same as a wild throw by any other infielder.

## 8.2 The pitcher shall not:

A -

1. Bring the pitching hand fingers in contact with the mouth or lips unless the pitching hand/fingers are wiped off prior to making contact with the ball. This is commonly referred to as “wetting the fingers”. **PENALTY:** For violation of this part of the rule, the umpires shall immediately call a ball and warn the pitcher that repeated violation of any part of this rule can cause the pitcher to be removed from the game. However, if the pitch is made and a batter reaches first base on a hit, an error, a hit batter or otherwise, and no other runner is put out before advancing at least one base, the play shall proceed without reference to the violation.
2. Apply a foreign substance of any kind to the ball;
3. Expectorate on the ball, either hand or the glove;
4. Rub the ball on the glove, person or clothing;
5. Deface the ball in any manner;
6. Deliver what is called the “shine” ball, “spit” ball, “mud” ball or “emery” ball. The pitcher, of course is allowed to rub off the ball between the bare hands.

**PENALTY:** For violation of any part of this [Rule 8.2.A-1 through 6](#), the umpire shall: call pitch a ball and warn pitcher. If a play occurs on the violation, the manager of the offense may advise the plate umpire of acceptance of the play. (Such election must be made immediately at the end of play.) **NOTE:** A pitcher may use a rosin bag for the purpose of applying rosin to the bare hand or hands. Neither the pitcher nor any other player shall dust the ball with the rosin bag; neither shall the pitcher nor any other player be permitted to apply rosin from the bag to their glove or dust any part of the uniform



with the rosin bag.

B. Intentionally delay the game by throwing the ball to players other than the catcher, when the batter is in position, except in an attempt to retire a runner, or commit an illegal pitch for the purpose of not pitching to the batter (i.e. intentional walk, etc.); **PENALTY:** If, after warning by the umpire, such delaying action is repeated, the pitcher can be removed from the game.

C. Intentionally pitch at the batter. If in the umpire's judgment, such violation occurs, the umpire shall warn the pitcher and the manager of the defense that another such pitch will mean immediate expulsion of the pitcher. If such pitch is repeated during the game, the umpire shall eject the pitcher from the game.

83 When a pitcher takes a position at the beginning of each inning, that pitcher shall be permitted to pitch not to exceed eight preparatory pitches to the catcher, or other team mate acting in the capacity of catcher, during which play shall be suspended. Such preparatory pitches shall not consume more than one minute of time. If a sudden emergency causes a pitcher to be summoned into the game without any opportunity to warm up, the umpire-in-chief shall allow the pitcher as many pitches as the umpire deems necessary.

84 When the bases are unoccupied, the pitcher shall deliver the ball to the batter within 20 seconds after the pitcher receives the ball. The 20-second timing starts when the pitcher is in possession of the ball and the batter is in the box, alert to pitcher. The timing stops when the pitcher releases the ball. The umpire shall call a ball when this rule is violated. **NOTE:** The intent of this rule is to avoid unnecessary delays. The umpire shall insist that the catcher return the ball promptly to the pitcher, and that the pitcher take a position on the pitcher's plate promptly.

85 An illegal pitch (is a balk when a runner or runners are on base) is when;

A. The pitcher, while touching the plate, makes any motion

- naturally associated with the pitch and fails to make such delivery;
- B. The pitcher, while touching his plate, feints a throw to first base and fails to complete the throw;
  - C. The pitcher, while touching his plate, fails to step directly toward a base before throwing;
  - D. The pitcher, while touching his plate, throws, or feints a throw to an unoccupied base, except for the purpose of making a play; makes any motion naturally associated with the pitch while not touching the pitcher's plate;
  - E. The pitcher makes an illegal pitch;
  - F. The pitcher delivers the ball to the batter while not facing the batter;
  - G. The pitcher makes any motion naturally associated with his pitch while he is not touching the pitcher's plate;
  - H. The pitcher unnecessarily delays the game;
  - I. The pitcher, without having the ball, stands on or astride the pitcher's plate or while off the plate, he feints a pitch;
  - J. The pitcher, after coming to legal pitching position, removes one hand from the ball other than in an actual pitch, or in throwing to a base;
  - K. The pitcher, while touching his plate, accidentally or intentionally drops the ball;
  - L. The pitcher, while giving an intentional base on balls, pitches when the catcher is not in the catcher's box;
  - M. The pitcher delivers the pitch from set position without coming to a complete stop. **PENALTY:** The ball is dead, and each runner shall advance one base without liability to be put out, unless the batter reaches first on a hit, an error, a base on balls, a hit batter, or otherwise, and all other runners advance at least one base, in which case the play proceeds without reference to the balk. Umpires should bear in mind that the purpose of the balk is to prevent the pitcher from deliberately deceiving the runner. If there is doubt in the umpires mind, the intent of the pitcher should govern. However certain specifics should be

born in mind:

1. Straddling the pitcher's rubber without the ball is to be interpreted as intent to deceive and ruled a balk.
2. With a runner on first base the pitcher may make a complete turn, without hesitating toward first, and throw to second. This is not to be interpreted as throwing to an unoccupied base.

N. Balks are not called or enforced in Class I or Class HH.

86 This rule, which applies to each pitcher who enters a game, governs the visits of the manager or coach to the pitcher.

A. A manager or coach may come out twice in one inning to visit with the pitcher of record, but the second trip out, the player must be removed as a pitcher. The manager or coach is prohibited from making a second visit while the same batter is at bat.

B. A manager or coach may not confer with any other defensive player. This is included in the visit with the pitcher. This is an umpire judgment call. **APPROVED RULING:** A conference with the pitcher or any other fielder to evaluate the player's condition after an injury shall not be considered a visit for the purposes of this rule. The manager or coach should advise the umpire of such a conference, and the umpire should monitor it. A manager or coach cannot make a second trip to the mound with the same batter at bat. If a pinch hitter is substituted into the game for the batter, the manager can make a second trip to the mound at which time the pitcher must be removed from the game.

87 Any pitcher during the same inning that is recalled to pitch may not be granted any warm up pitches.

88 Any pitcher may be recalled to the mound provided the removal was made on the first trip to the mound.

89 Pitchers changing positions from the bench between innings shall not under any rules be considered a trip to the mound.

810 Pitching restrictions for OHSBL classifications:

A. HH and H League Classification:

1. A pitcher may pitch 6 innings in a 60 hour period.
2. If a pitcher pitches 6 complete innings in a 60 hour period, player will not be eligible to pitch in a game scheduled within the next 60 hours.
3. Pitcher shall not pitch more than 3 innings in a calendar day. **Penalty:** If a pitcher is found to have pitched more than three innings in a calendar day, the pitcher will not be able to pitch in the next game. The manager of the offending team will be suspended for the remainder of the game and for the next two games.
4. Any single pitcher that pitches a complete half inning with run limit ([Rule 3.22](#)) shall be charged with three (3) outs.

B. G League Classification:

1. A Pitcher may pitch 8 innings in a 60 hour period.
2. If a pitcher pitches 8 complete innings in a 60 hour period, player will not be eligible to pitch in a game scheduled within the next 60 hours.
3. Pitcher shall not pitch more than 4 innings in one calendar day. **Penalty** If a pitcher is found to have pitched more than 4 innings in a calendar day, the pitcher will not be able to pitch in the next game. The manager of the offending team will be suspended for the remainder of the game and for the next two games.

C. HH, H, and G League: The number of innings shall be determined by:

1. Each putout is considered to be  $\frac{1}{3}$  of an inning.
2. If no putout is recorded the pitcher of record is charged with one third ( $\frac{1}{3}$ ) of an inning when the player is in the game as a pitcher regardless

- if he makes a putout or not;
3. A sudden double or triple play cannot be construed as a violation of the rule [8.10.A](#) and [8.10.B](#). **Note (1):** It is possible to have more than 3 putouts charged to the pitchers in one inning. **Note (2):** This Rule 8.10.C, in no way alters other requirements of Rule 8.10.
  4. The 60-hour pitching rule shall be from scheduled game starting time to the next scheduled game starting time.
  5. If any game is not a complete game as stipulated, all records of any full inning or part of any inning a pitcher has pitched in the game shall count toward interpretation of the number of innings they may pitch in sixty (60) hour period.
- D. F, EE, E, and D League:
1. A Pitcher may pitch 10 innings in a 60 hour period in Hot Stove games, starting time to the next scheduled game starting time.
  2. If a pitcher pitches 10 complete innings in a 60 hour period, pitcher will not be eligible to pitch in a game scheduled in the next 60 hours.
  3. The number of innings shall be determined by:
    - a. Each putout is considered to be 1/3 of an inning;
    - b. The pitcher is charged with 1/3 of an inning when he is in the game as a pitcher regardless if he makes a putout or not;
    - c. A sudden double or triple play cannot be construed as a violation of the 10 inning rule. **Note:** it is possible to have more than 3 putout charged to a pitcher in one inning.
  4. The 60 hour pitching rule shall be from scheduled games starting time to the next scheduled game starting time.
  5. If any game is not a complete game as stipulated,

all records of any full inning or part of any inning a pitcher has pitched in the game shall count toward interpretation of the number of innings they may pitch in sixty (60) hour period. Pitchers will be bound by the sixty (60) hour pitching rule.

E. Pitchers in all classifications will be bound by the 60 hour pitching rule (as stated in A, B, C and D for) all games played under the jurisdiction of Ohio Hot Stove Baseball League rules and regulations. Innings pitched, not associated with Hot Stove, will not count as part of OHSBL pitching rule. Pitchers should be aware of this rule and understand that they must assume the responsibility of protecting their arm from being excessively used. 60-hour period is to be used as a sliding scale for all OHSBL pitchers.

F. Ambidextrous pitcher shall be charged outs, whether delivered from the right or left hand, and shall count against the total outs recorded in an inning.

**Violation** of any part of Rule 8.10 regardless when discovered, shall cause the game to be forfeited to the opposing team. In the event that both teams are in violation of any of the above rulings, it shall be declared a double forfeit. **Note:** Violations of this nature must be submitted to the OHSBL Executive Committee for any further action that is stipulated in the rules and regulations that pertain to violations of this nature. (See additional **Penalty** in [Rule 8.1.A.3](#))

## **9.0 - THE UMPIRE**

### **9.1 UMPIRE APPOINTMENT**

A. The charter shall appoint one or more umpires to officiate at each league game (OHSBL recommends two umpires per game). The umpire shall be responsible for the conduct of the game in accordance with these official rules and for maintaining discipline and order on the playing field during the game. **NOTE:** Plate umpire must wear mask, shin guards and chest protector. Male umpire must wear

protective cup.

- B. Each umpire is the representative of the Charter and of the Ohio Hot Stove Baseball League, and is authorized and required to enforce all of these rules. Each umpire has authority to order a player, coach, manager or League officer to do, or refrain from doing, anything which affects the administering of these rules and to enforce the prescribed penalties.
- C. Each umpire has authority to rule on any point not specifically covered in these rules.
- D. Each umpire has authority to disqualify any player, coach, manager or substitute for objecting to decisions or for unsportsmanlike conduct or language and to eject such disqualified person from the playing field. If an umpire disqualifies a player while a play is in progress, the disqualification shall not take effect until no further action is possible in that play except in rules that state otherwise.
- E. All umpires have authority at their discretion to remove from the playing field **(1)** any person whose duties permit that person's presence on the field, such as ground crew members, photographers, newsmen, broadcasting crew members, etc. and **(2)** Any spectator or other person not authorized to be on the playing field.

## 9.2 UMPIRE DECISIONS

- A. Any umpire's decision which involves judgment, such as, but not limited to, whether a batted ball is fair or whether a pitch is a strike or a ball, or whether a runner is safe or out, is final. No player, manager, coach or substitute shall object to any such judgment decisions.
- B. If there is reasonable doubt that any umpire's decision may be in conflict with the rules, the manager may appeal the decision and ask that a correct ruling be made. Such appeal shall be made only to the umpire who made the protested decision.
- C. If a decision is appealed, the umpire making the decision may ask another umpire for information before making a

final decision. No umpire shall criticize, seek to reverse or do so by the umpire making it.

D. No umpire may be replaced during a game unless injured or ill.

### 93 NUMBER OF UMPIRES

A. If there is only one umpire, that umpire shall have complete jurisdiction in administering the rules and the game will be called from behind the home plate.

B. If there are two or more umpires, one shall be designated Crew chief and the others field umpires.

C. Crew Chief, which does not have to be the plate umpire and can be assigned by the charter umpire-in-chief, or decided at the start of the game by the umpires assigned to a game, or in the absence of the assignment, the plate umpire, will be the crew chief and have complete jurisdiction in administering the rules. Crew chief will assist in all aspects of the game and its rules. The crew chief should be the most experienced umpire assigned to the game.

### 94 UMPIRE POSITIONS

A. The plate umpire shall stand behind the catcher. This umpire usually is called the plate umpire. The plate umpire duties shall be to:

1. Take full charge of, and be responsible for, the proper conduct of the game;
  - a. Call and count balls and strikes;
  - b. Call and declare fair balls and fouls except those commonly called by field umpires;
  - c. Make all decisions on the batter;
  - d. Make all decisions except those commonly reserved for the field umpires;
  - e. Decide when a game shall be forfeited;
  - f. Inform the official scorer of the official batting order; and any changes in the lineups and batting order, on request;
  - g. Announce any special ground rules.



2. A field umpire may take any position on the playing field best suited to make impending decisions on the bases. A field umpire's duties shall be to:
  - a. Make all decisions on the bases except those specifically reserved to the umpire-in-chief;
  - b. Take concurrent jurisdiction with the plate umpire in calling "time, illegal pitches, or defacement or discoloration of the ball by any player;
  - c. Aid the plate umpire in every manner in enforcing the rules, excepting the power to forfeit the game; shall have equal authority with the plate umpire in administering and enforcing the rules and maintaining discipline.
3. Crew chief duties shall be:
  - a. If different umpires should make decisions on one play; the crew chief shall call all the umpires into consultation, with no manager or player present. After consultation, the crew chief shall determine which decision shall prevail, based on which umpire was in best position and which decision was most likely correct. Play shall proceed as if only the final decision had been made.

## **95 INCIDENT REPORT**

- A. The umpire shall report to the Charter president within twenty-four hours after the end of a game all violations of rules and other incidents worthy of comment, including the disqualification of any manager, coach or player, and the reasons therefore.
- B. When any manager, coach or player is disqualified for a flagrant offense such as the use of obscene or indecent

language, or an assault upon an umpire, manager, coach or player, the umpire shall forward full particulars to the charter within twenty-four hours after the end of the game.

- C. After receiving the umpire's report that a manager, coach or player has been disqualified, the charter shall require such manager, coach or player to appear before charter holder officers to explain their conduct. In the case of a player, the manager shall appear with the player in the capacity of an advisor. The charter officers present at the meeting shall impose such penalty as they feel is justified.

## 9.6 UMPIRE DRESS

- A. Black shoes, shined and with black shoelaces. (Single white strip is permissible).
- B. Socks, black or dark blue.
- C. Trousers, heather gray with black belt.
- D. Shirts, light blue polo shirt is optional for league play. Optional major league replica pull over shirt can be worn providing all members of the crew are using the same shirt. Shirts of same color should be worn by the crew for all league play. Only OHSBL patches are to be attached to the sleeve(s) of your shirt. Major League Replica Black pull over shirt shall be the official shirt worn at all tournament games. If a tee shirt is worn it must be red.
- E. Umpire caps, regulation black or dark blue shall be worn by all umpires with the bill of the cap always to the front. Exception: Plate umpires who elect to wear a hockey style helmet will not be required to wear a cap. All caps or helmets shall be plain or have an Insignia or lettering approved by OHSBL or the Charter.
- F. Uniforms and equipment shall be clean and neat.
- G. Plate umpire must have a chest protector, mask with throat protector, shin guards, indicator, protective cup, short brush, shin guards and a ball bag. Field umpire

- must have an indicator. Do not wear a ball bag.
- H. Shin guards must be worn underneath trousers.
- I. No jewelry (both soft and metallic types) shall be worn on the field with the exception of wedding bands and medical alert bracelet.
- J. For tournament information, please check [Rule T15.13L](#).

## 97 UMPIRE CONDUCT

- A. An umpire shall not fraternize with managers, coaches, players, spectators or any field personnel.
- B. Be firm but polite. Abuse of the umpire will not be tolerated. The rules clearly state that no protest is allowed on a judgment call. A question on a rule interpretation should be courteous, but brief. The only consultation should then be with fellow umpires and the rule book. Make the ruling and continue on with the game.
- C. Always keep your eyes everlasting on the ball while it is in play.
- D. Each umpire team should work out a simple set of signals.
- E. Umpires must be certified by OHSBL Chief Umpire or Executive Committee appointed personnel and should attend umpires' clinics each year as they become available to obtain refresher training and rule change data. It is a must that umpires know the OHSBL, Inc. Baseball rules.

## 98 CELL PHONES

- A. Cell phones or other communication devices shall not be used on the field of play or in dugouts, except those that respond to emergencies and identify themselves at ground rules. Cell Phones are not considered part of your uniform. Put it in your pocket.

In the final analysis, the success or failure of the Hot Stove league rests to a large degree on the quality of the Umpire corps. Good umpiring will foster more interest from the players, more help and cooperation from the parents and more aid from the

community. Bad umpiring will destroy anything we have built.

## **10.0 - CLASS I PLAYING RULES**

### **10.1 Field Dimensions**

**A.** Pitching Distance is 40 feet. Bases are 60 feet.

**B.** AD Starr 100/DOL-1 or equivalent baseball

### **10.2 Playing Rules**

**A.** On Defense, A team can field 10 players consisting of 6 infielders and 4 out fielders.

1. Teams may use 9 or 10 defensive players to start game.

2. If starting with 9, may not go up to 10. Team may finish with 8 players, regardless of how many defensive players start the game.

**B.** 5 coaches are allowed on the roster. At most 2 coaches may be on the field for defensive instructions. They must be positioned in the outfield.

**C.** Each team will use continuous batting order. Players arriving late can be added to the end of the lineup.

**D.** All players must play 6 defensive outs.

**E.** Games will be 6 innings.

**F.** Maximum of 10 batters per inning. (Except the 6<sup>th</sup> inning.)

**G.** An at bat will be 10 batter, 5 runs or 3 outs whichever occurs first.

**H.** 6th inning or extra innings a team can score unlimited number of runs.

**I.** 10 run rule will apply.

**J.** All play will come to an end when a logical conclusion of play has occurred.

**K.** Infield Fly will not apply.

**L.** No dropped 3<sup>rd</sup> strike rule.

**M.** No leading off or stealing.

**N.** No balks

**O.** The ball is dead from catcher to pitcher.

**P.** No drop bat restrictions. (No composite, two or three piece bats can be used. Cracked or dented bats must be removed from the game.)

**Q.** If there is an injury on the field immediate dead ball will be called by the umpire.

R. There are no protests.

### **10.3 Pitching Rules**

- A. Coach Pitch - A Coach of the team at bat will pitch the 1<sup>st</sup> three innings.
- B. The defensive pitcher will stand alongside the coach that is pitching, opposite the side of the batter.
- C. Each pitcher will receive at most 6 pitches. If the batter fails to hit the ball in fair territory after 6 pitches, he shall be declared out.
- D. If a batted ball hits the coach pitching, it will be a live ball unless it is caught out of reflex. In this case the ball is dead, and the batter will receive first base and forced runners will advance one base.
- E. The coach that is pitching is not allowed to give instructions to the base runners. (If he does, one warning will be given, and the lead runner will be called out for coach's interference for subsequent offenses.)
- F. Coach must be in contact with the rubber when pitching. (Can get on one knee.) Player pitch will begin after the first three innings of coach pitch and continue from the 4th inning to the end of the game. Pitcher cannot pitch more than two innings in a calendar day.

### **10.4 Umpires:**

- A. Can use two 13-17 year olds or one adult umpire.
- B. State tournament - no more than 3 man crew with minimum one adult.
- C. All Managers and coaches must have a background check through NCSI (OHSBL approved background provider.)
- D. Keep in mind that the above rules apply only to I league.

*The I League rules are exceptions to the 2022 OHSBL Rules and Regulations*

## **11.0 - OHSBL TOURNAMENT RULES**

All OHSBL Tournament Rules, Regulations and policies are contained in the "ADMINISTRATIVE AND TOURNAMENT RULES AND POLICIES" document. This document complements and supersedes any rule contained in this rule book.

## **EXTRA HITTER HH THRU G**

### **1st Inning**

Smith (EH)

Jones (6)

Thomas (4)

Fey (9)

Marks (7)

Sams (3)

Orr (1)

Pete (2)

Lock (8)

Todd (5)

This game is not a match situation. Johnson and McDonald are substitutes.

### **2nd Inning**

Smith must remain as the EH hitter, need to stay at the position of the EH hitter for two (2) innings, per rule 6.11 page 62

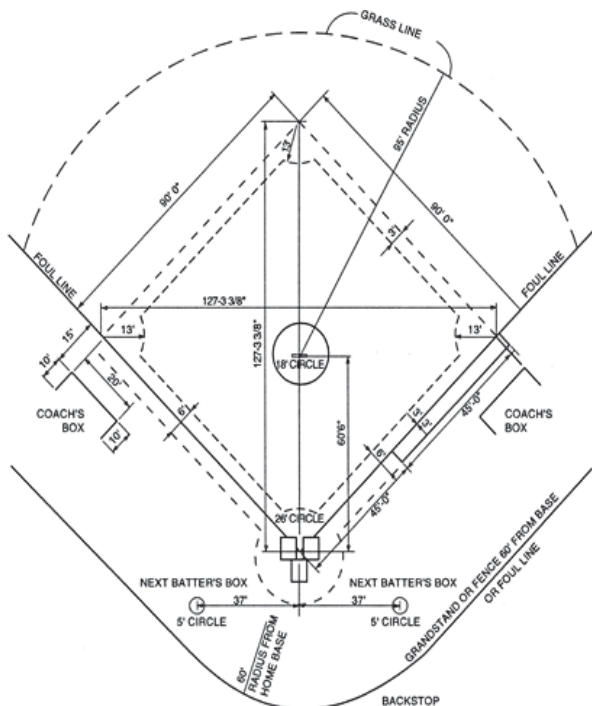
### **3rd Inning**

- |             |      |
|-------------|------|
| 1. Smith    | (3)  |
| 2. Johnson  | (1)  |
| 3. Thomas   | (EH) |
| 4. McDonald | (4)  |
| 5. Marks    | (7)  |
| 6. Sams     | (3)  |
| 7. Orr      | (1)  |
| 8. Pete     | (2)  |
| 9. Lock     | (8)  |
| 10. Todd    | (5)  |

McDonald and Johnson (Substitutes) must play 12 consecutive outs. Smith has met his two (2) inning requirements as EH hitter, now must play 2 defensive inning. Thomas played a defensive position for (2) innings, he has met his defensive requirement and can take the EH hitter position.

### **4th Inning**

Smith starts at 1, complete his defense requirement. Thomas and Johnson completes their 12 consecutive out requirement (Substitute). All players except, McDonald, Thomas and Smith may become the EH because they have all met the defensive requirements. Jones and Fry must remain out of the game because of the batting order and substitution rules.



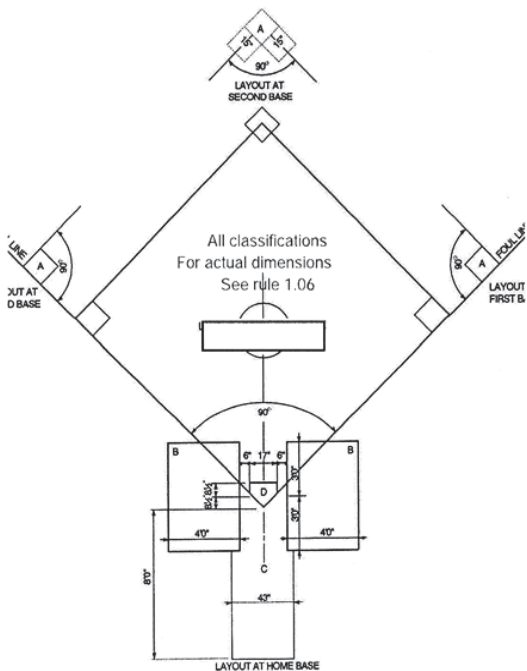
Basic field layout for all classifications. Use rule 1.06 for actual dimensions.

**DIAGRAM NO. 1**

**LEGEND**

- BATTER'S BOX, CATCHER'S BOX, FOUL LINE, PITCHER'S PLATE, COACH'S BOX
- NEXT BATTER'S BOX
- - - BASE LINES
- - - GRASS LINES

*Basic Field Layout 1*



**DIAGRAM NO. 2**

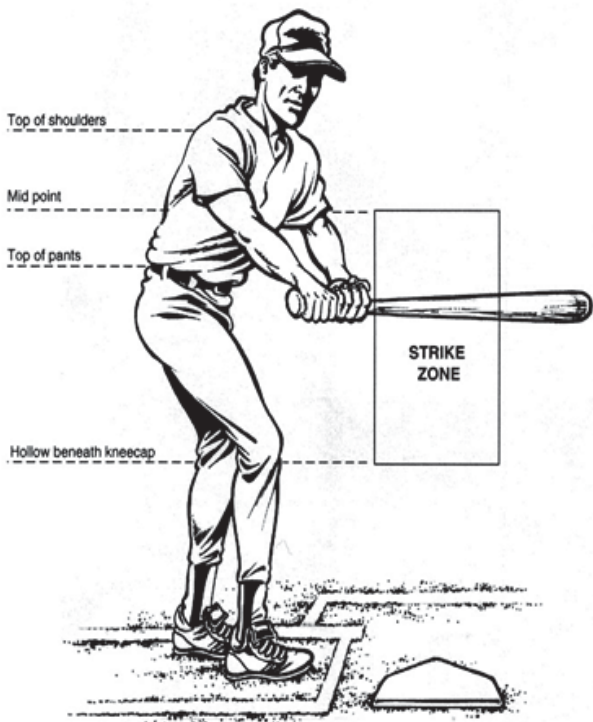
**LEGEND**

- A 1st, 2nd, 3rd BASES
- B BATTER'S BOX
- C CATCHER'S BOX
- D HOME BASE

*Basic Field Layout 2*



**Rule 2.00**



*Strike Zone*

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**Extra Hitter (EH)** HH, H, G, 6.11, see pg. 87 for help.

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**Resuming Play after Dead Ball:** 5.11  
**Restrictions on Players:** No Fraternizing 3.10; Barred from Stands 3.10; Confined to Bench 3.18  
**Runner:** Advance of 7.4; 7.5; 7.6; Entitled to Base 7.1, 7.3; Base Touching Requirements 7.2; 7.4 - Note, 7.8.D - K, 7.10.A, B & D, 7.12; Is Out 5.8, 5.9, 7.8-7.11;

Leaving Early 7.13; Reverse Run Prohibited 7.8.I; Running out of Base line 7.8.A.1; H league lead off and stealing 7.13 Scoring Runs: 4.9, 4.11, 5.6

**Scrimmage Game:** 2.0

**Sickness:** 4.17.A

**Spectators:** Barred from Field 3.16, 3.17; Touching Batted or thrown Ball 3.17; Actions Causing Dispute 4.19; No Mingling 3.10

**Strike:** 2.0; Diagram on page 111

**Strike Zone:** 2.0, 6.2 and 6.8.B

**Substitutions:** 3.3, 3.8, 4.4, 4.12, 5.10.C

**Ten Run Rule:** 4.10

**Tie Games:** 4.11, 4.12

**Uniform:** 1.11

**Umpires:** 9.0

**Local Officials, Managers, Coaches and Umpires, only**, are invited to request, **in writing**, a rule interpretation at any time. Only the OHSBL Rule Interpreter can provide an official rule interpretation. If anyone other than the OHSBL rule interpreter provides an interpretation it is an opinion of the individual providing the information and as such is not an official interpretation.

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