

# WESTERN OHIO BASEBALL LEAGUE

## Major League Rules

Revised 3-7-2022

ALL GAMES SHOULD BE STOPPED AT THE SOUND OF THUNDER OR THE SIGHT OF LIGHTNING; PLAY MAY RESUME THIRTY (30) MINUTES FROM THE LAST SOUND OF THUNDER OR SIGHT OF LIGHTNING. THIS IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE COACHES AND UMPIRES.

Unless specified below, rules shall follow those depicted in the National Federation Baseball Rulebook:

### General Rules and Information

1. Major League players cannot be 13 years old before January 1<sup>st</sup> of the current year; players that are 13 can be no higher in school than the 6<sup>th</sup> Grade. **Once the season begins, Minor League players cannot move up to the Major League level. The result of the infraction is a forfeit for the offending Major League team. Teams are only allowed to play with the players that are on their roster to start the season.**
2. Players must reside in or attend the local school; or meet WOBL Criteria; exceptions can only be approved by the WOBL Board.
3. Coaches will refrain from the use of alcohol & tobacco at all WOBL games & practices and will not attend WOBL games or practices after having consumed such an amount that said use is obvious to other coaches, players, and fans and presents an unhealthy message to the kids you are coaching. Suspected use of either can be grounds for removal from the league, all decisions regarding this issue will be made by the WOBL Board.
4. Coaches will not argue with the umpires. Coaches can discuss rule infractions only. The strike zone and other judgment calls are not rule infractions and cannot be discussed with the umpire. \*\*\*Head coaches are reminded that they are responsible for the behavior & actions of the assistant coaches & players. Unacceptable behavior can be grounds for removal from the league; the WOBL Board will be the final decision-maker regarding this issue.
5. The umpire will set the ground rules as he/she feels necessary, and on judgment calls, THE UMPIRE'S DECISION IS FINAL.
6. In case of rainouts, all games should be made up as soon as possible.
7. The home team must supply one new game ball and one good used game ball.
8. The playing field shall have 70 feet between all bases. The distance between the front of the pitching rubber and the back point of home plate will be 50 feet.
9. The length of the game is 6 innings. For the game to be official, at least 4 complete innings must have been played. A game that is rained out while in progress is also complete after 4 innings (3 ½ if the home team is winning).

10. On single games, the Visitors shall use the infield for practice from 5:45 to 6:00 and the home team from 6:00 to 6:15. GAME TIME IS 6:15 PM. Prior to 5:45 scheduled teams have priority on a first come, first served basis for the diamond use.
11. If a team does not have 7 registered players available at game time, the game will be forfeited to the opponent.
12. If neither team has 7 registered players available at game time, the game will be a double forfeit. Both teams will be charged with a loss.
13. The defense will play four outfielders (left, left-center, right-center, and right) for a total of 10 defensive players.
14. Unsportsmanlike conduct by players or coaches may be cause for them to be removed from the game, or the game to be forfeited by the umpire. Foul language is considered unsportsmanlike conduct. Players and coaches shall not call the opposing team members by their name or nickname for harassment. Anyone ejected from a game will be suspended for the following league game. Any time a parent/guardian is ejected from a game their child will also serve the one game suspension.
15. Each registered player that is present must play at least 2 innings in the field and bat once during each game (except for unusual situations, such as game called for rain or darkness or discipline). Free defensive substitutions of all players will be permitted.
16. All Players present must be placed in the batting order. Late arriving players must be placed at the bottom of the batting order. Anytime there is an injury, there will be no penalty (out occurring) in the batting order.
17. No steel spikes.
18. All catchers must wear a protective cup, a one-piece catcher's mask and throat protector.
19. Game Delay Rule – A member of the coaching staff may make only one visit with the current pitcher per inning. The second visit dictates a pitching change at that time. Only three pitching changes per inning can be made (except for injuries).

#### **Run Rules**

20. **Each team will only be allowed to score 6 runs per inning, once a team scores 6 runs that half of the inning is over. If the last batter of the inning finishes his at bat, the next batter in the line-up will lead off the following inning. It is possible for a batter to be at the plate of an inning where his team scores 6 runs and still lead off the next inning. A team may score as many runs as possible in the last inning of the game.**
21. A 10 run rule after four innings will apply in all games. If after the fourth inning a team is winning by 10 runs, the game is over and the leading team is the winner (3 ½ if the home team is winning).

#### **Pitchers**

22. No balks will be called. In the event of an illegal move by a pitcher, the base runner will remain at the base and the umpire/coach will tell the pitcher what he has done incorrect.
23. Innings pitched limits will be as follows: one pitcher from each team will be allowed to pitch 3 innings in each game, all other pitchers will be limited to 2 innings per games.

These innings must be consecutive and one pitch thrown in an inning constitutes one inning pitched.

### **Batting**

24. **Only bats with the USA BASEBALL stamp are allowed. Maximum barrel diameter is 2 5/8 inches. NO WOODEN BATS MAY BE USED. No 2 3/4 inch barrel bats are allowed.**
25. If a player steps into the batter's box, without a helmet, there will be one team warning. After that team warning, the umpire will call out any following player stepping into the batter's box without a helmet.
26. If a batter throws a bat there will be a team warning. After that team warning, any following player who throws a bat will be called out.
27. The strike zone is the space above home plate, which is between the batter's armpits and the top of the knees, when they assume a natural batting stance.
28. After the third strike, the batter is automatically out whether the catcher catches the ball or not.

### **Base Running**

29. All runners on the base paths must wear batting helmets. Every team will be allowed one warning. The next time a runner will be called out if the runner fails to comply. This means all the way around the base path including first base to home.
30. With an overthrow remaining in play on a batted ball, the base runners can attempt to advance as many bases as desired. With an overthrow that goes out of play, the runner is granted only one base.
31. On a passed ball by the catcher, runners can attempt to advance one base (including Home). If the passed ball is ball four, the batter is automatically awarded first base and must remain there until the pitcher toes the pitching rubber. The runner cannot advance to 2<sup>nd</sup> base on ball four. A passed ball is defined as any ball the catcher does not catch cleanly, a ball that bounces can still be caught cleanly.

### **Stealing**

32. Base runners can lead off any base and can steal any base, except home, once the ball crosses home plate. In the event of an overthrow on a steal the runner cannot advance. One Pitch One Base. However once the pitcher toes the pitching rubber, the "one pitch one base" is null and the ball is again live. **Coaches need to instruct pitchers to hold runners on base, this will help combat the large lead-offs.**
33. A runner on 3<sup>rd</sup> cannot advance to home except in the following situations:
  - A. The result of a batted ball.
  - B. The runner is forced home as a result of a walk or hit-by-pitch with the bases loaded.
  - C. A play is made on the runner; the play can be made by either the pitcher or catcher.
  - D. A passed ball by the catcher. (Passed ball is defined as any ball not caught cleanly by the catcher, a ball that bounces can still be caught cleanly)

### **League Rules**

34. The infield fly rule will not be invoked.

35. There will be no pointing to first base on an intentional walk. The pitcher must throw the pitches to the batter.
36. No fake tags. Umpire's discretion can award base runners one base.
37. League/Division standings will only be used for seeding in the tournament. Individual trophies will be awarded for the Tournament Champions and Runners-up.
38. Contact your school commissioners with any problems, issues, or suggestions.
39. All tie games will be played out except for darkness, and then will only be made up if the outcome affects the standings.
40. No more than three coaches/adults in the dugout at a time, except in the case of an injury.
41. If a team cannot play for any reason when weather permits, they forfeit the game.
42. Organizations must report team records before or at the BEGINNING of the stated time of the tournament draw meeting; any organization failing to do so will not be placed in the league tournament.
43. All League fees are due no later than May 1<sup>st</sup> of the current year.
44. Above rules must be obeyed. Noncompliance dictates forfeiture.
45. **Players can only participate in either the WOBL Baseball League or the WOSL Softball League, they cannot play in both. The result of the infraction will be a Forfeit.**
46. SEE ATTACHED PAGE ON SLIDING AT BASES TO AVOID CONTACT.