

Sacred Heart CYO

Baseball

Minors 9 Rules

SUMMARY:

- Everyone should be getting plenty of playing time, with players rotating positions on a fairly regular basis. Under no circumstances should a player sit for a second inning before every player has sat for one inning. If you see a team putting the same players in the same positions, it is your responsibility to make the Division Coordinator aware of the situation.
- Rule D: There is a 5 run max per inning, with 10 run mercy rule after four innings. If time permits, teams can continue playing after the game was decided by 10 run rule if the coaches agree to play (stop keeping score at that point, and work on seeing players at new positions)
- Rule D: Weeknights: no new inning starts after 2 hour mark. Saturdays: no new inning starts after 1:45 mark. Started inning plays to completion unless darkness absolutely makes that impossible.
- Rule G: During the first half of the season, baserunners are allowed to “steal” second base and third base on a passed ball or wild pitch only. After the half way point of the season this restriction is lifted and baserunners can steal second base and third base like normal baseball. Baserunners are not permitted to advance home on a steal, wild pitch, or passed ball in this division, nor are they permitted to advance on a catcher's overthrow when he is attempting to get the runner out at any base.
- Rule J: Players can pitch a max of 2 (consecutive) innings per game subject to a pitch limit of 40 per player per game. This rule applies for playoffs as well as regular season games.

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A. Official Rules

With the exception of rules noted below, Minors 9 games are played under Official Baseball Rules as amended by Babe Ruth Cal Ripken League rules.

B. Use of Players / Substitutions

1. Each player must play a minimum of four (4) innings in the field during a six-inning game. No player shall sit for a second inning before all players have sat for one inning. Unlimited defensive substitutions are to be used and are critical to compliance with the minimum play provision. Failure to comply will result in forfeit of the game. For games in which teams do not complete six innings in the field, coaches should still make every effort to have each player play three innings in the field.
2. Players are to be rotated through all positions giving all players the opportunity to play all positions if they would like. All players should play at least 2 innings in the infield. If the coach feels that a player is at a safety risk while playing in the infield, it is the responsibility of the coach to bring this to the attention of the division coordinator and discuss it with the parents. A decision can then be made as to which positions this player is safe to play.
3. A continuous batting order is to be used, whereby all team players bat consistent with the lineups exchanged immediately before each game. Any player that arrives late for a game shall be placed at the end of the batting order. In instances where a player is either injured or too ill to continue playing during the game, that player's turn can be skipped without penalty. Consensus should be reached for these circumstances, between both teams' coaches and the umpire, before the inning begins. The continuous batting order does not change throughout the game and is therefore independent of the defensive changes made.
4. In order to keep the game moving along and minimize delays between innings, a pinch runner may be used (only when there are two outs) for a player who will be catching the next inning. This "courtesy runner" must be the player on the bench who was placed out for the second out of the inning. This is the only instance where a pinch runner may be used, absent player injury, illness, or other extreme circumstances.

C. Positions in the Field

Teams will have 9 players in the field: Pitcher, Catcher, 4 Infielders, and 3 Outfielders. Outfielders must play a minimum of 6 feet beyond the perimeter of the infield and an extra infielder is not permitted.

D. Game Completion and Mercy Rule

A regular game consists of six (6) innings (unless a tie score forces extra innings), with the game becoming official after completion of four (4) innings. (3-1/2 innings if the home team is ahead after the top of the fourth inning). If the score is tied after six innings the game should continue into extra innings, but regular season games will still be subject to the normal time limits in place.

When weather (rain, lightning, darkness) prevents the completion of at least six innings, games shall generally revert back to the last completed inning for determination of final score. At that

point, tie games (during the regular season only) that have completed four innings of play should officially be declared a tie and not resumed.

Additionally, no new inning (top half) shall begin for any regular season game (including extra-inning games) after the game has reached the 2 hour mark (subject to adequate daylight). Exception: For all Saturday games (including the final game of the day), the no new inning cutoff will be at the 1 hour, 45 minute mark. At that point, the current inning (top and bottom) is to be completed and the game declared official (even with a tie score).

In the event that inning still cannot be completed due to darkness or weather, the entire partial inning is declared void and the game reverts back to the last completed inning for the purposes of determining final score. Any attempts to artificially delay the progress of a game, for the possible purpose of having a game called without playing to its natural completion, will result in forfeit.

A game that does not match the definition of an official game as outlined above may also be declared official upon mutual agreement of the head coaches, without becoming a suspended game to be resumed at a later date. As an example, this could come into play for a lopsided game that completes just three innings, or in early season games where darkness may limit the potential to complete a game of even four innings.

Suspended games that are agreed to be resumed shall be resumed from the point of suspension, under the viewpoint that no break in action had occurred. This holds true relative to batting order, pitching records, as well as completion of the game. *(Note: for the purposes of completing that game, the pitcher in place at the point of suspension can continue pitching through his two- inning stint, however, other pitchers used in the original game as pitcher will not be eligible to pitch, even though time has passed since the game was originally played. At the same time, for the purposes of rules relating to innings pitched during a week, determination is made based on when the innings are physically pitched).*

The preferred date for resumption of a suspended game is immediately before the next scheduled game between the two teams (finishing the suspended game before playing the new game). The Minors 9 division coordinator has final say in determining when, and if, suspended games are to be resumed.

Mercy rules: In this Division, a team can score no more than five (5) runs in any inning. Once a team scores 5 runs in an inning (or has seen three outs made) that turn at bat is completed. Exception: if the 5th run is scored as a result of a home run hit over the fence, all runs shall count on that play.

Games shall be called when either team leads by ten (10) or more runs at the conclusion of the fourth or fifth inning, or earlier upon the agreement of both head coaches. At that point, play can continue for developmental purposes upon mutual agreement by the coaches, however, the game's official outcome (and final score) will have already been determined.

During the playoffs: a) the 5 runs max per inning rule is NOT in place, to provide teams an opportunity to come back in a game even if down by a wide margin early, and b) the mercy rule will be 10 runs after 4 innings or 3 ½ innings if the home team is ahead. Typically, though, in playoffs there are few 10 run rule games.

E. Not Enough Players

A team can begin a game with as few as 7 of their official team players present. If additional players arrive after the start of the game, they should be entered at the **end of the batting order**. A team with less than 9 players may “borrow” players in each inning to play a defensive outfield position. That player will be determined by the “lending” team’s coach, however, the player should be instructed to play the field to the best of his abilities. “Borrowed” players are for defensive purposes only and are not eligible to bat for the other team.

For the regular season, the games are to be played and scored no matter how many players end up showing up for the team that doesn’t have enough players. Since we don’t keep standings there is no reason to have a team forfeit. For the playoffs, if the team does not have its own 8th player show up by the end of the second inning, the game can be declared a forfeit but still played through to a reasonable end for the players’ developmental purposes.

F. Leading Off Base

Runners may leave a base only after the pitched ball has been hit or after the pitch has crossed home plate. Leads taken while the pitcher is preparing to deliver a pitch are not permitted in this Division.

See Babe Ruth Cal Ripken League rules for penalties. In general, here is a good rule of thumb to follow regarding runners leaving early: a stealing runner that leaves early can be thrown out during the play, and will be returned back to the base if successfully advancing on a ball not hit into play by the batter. If the ball is hit into play, the runner that leaves early can be called out or limited in his advancement if the umpire is of the judgment that the runner benefited unfairly from leaving too early. (There’s no such thing as a “re-do” here as far as the batter is concerned, so a ball put into play by the batter will see the “early-bird” baserunner determined as either out or safe, per the umpire’s judgment).

Once a pitcher has possession of the ball on the mound (need not actually be on the pitching rubber) baserunners can no longer advance and are expected to return to their base in preparation for the next pitch. However, the baserunner must return safely to the base and may be thrown out at any time while attempting to return to the base. At the same time, baserunners are still permitted to advance if the pitcher has the ball but is in an area other than the pitcher’s mound. (For example, a catcher tosses a retrieved wild pitch to the pitcher covering home plate. The play is not yet dead, and the play should still be considered live. Runners are permitted to advance until the pitcher gets back to the mound.)

G. Stolen Bases and Runner Advancement on Wild Pitches & Passed Balls

For the first half of the season runners are only allowed to steal second base and third base on a passed ball or wild pitch. This is to allow players to get acclimated with the season and the division. If the catcher’s throw eludes the player covering second base or third base on a runner’s attempt to advance to second base or third base as outlined above, no additional advancement (by any runner) is permitted. This promotes catchers trying to make an out on an advancing runner without risk of error.

After the halfway point of the season the above restriction is lifted and runners are permitted to advance to second base and third base consistent with the official rules of baseball that are used, Sacred Heart Minors 9 Baseball Rules, Updated 3/26/12 for use thereafter

provided the runners are abiding by the rules regarding taking leads as outlined above (one foot on the base when the pitch crosses home plate).

In this division at no time are baserunners allowed to steal home or advance to home on a wild pitch or passed ball.

H. Infield Fly Rule

This Division uses the Infield Fly Rule, consistent with the Official Rules of Baseball.

I. Contact Rule and Head-first Sliding

If in the umpire's judgment a runner attempting to reach any base intentionally and maliciously runs into a defensive player, he/she will be called out on the play and ejected from the game. The runner must slide or otherwise attempt to avoid contact.

Head-first sliding is not allowed. Exception is when a player is diving back to a base from a somewhat stationary position, while not trying to advance to the next base. Baserunners attempting a head-first slide while advancing to the next base will be automatically called out in all instances, and will be ejected from play for a second infraction in any single game.

Enforcement of the sliding / contact rules is entirely an umpire's judgment call and may not be appealed.

J. Pitching Rules

There is a pitch count limit of 40 for this division, requiring any pitcher to be removed upon completion of the batter during which the pitcher reaches the 40 pitch limit.

During the regular season, pitchers are permitted to pitch a maximum of 2 innings per game (still subject to the pitch count limit) and those innings must be consecutive innings. (Any portion of an inning pitched counts as 1 inning for any player.) For example, a pitcher throws 26 pitches in inning 1, and then in inning 2 reaches his 40th pitch. He is permitted to finish pitching to that batter, and then must be replaced regardless of game situation. Another example, a pitcher throws 28 pitches over 2 innings, but still must be replaced based on the 2 inning limit even though he is still within the pitch count limit.

No pitcher may pitch more than 6 innings per week, regardless of the number of games played in a week. A week is defined as any rolling 7 day period.

Pitching rules for the playoffs at the end of the season will be the same as in place during the regular season.

Violations of the pitching rules are viewed with great disdain by the league and will result in forfeiting of games.

K. Field Preparation and Reconditioning, Warm-up's

Both teams are responsible for preparing the field before the game. This includes the

batter's box, pitching mound, bases, and anything else that needs to be addressed. Fields should be properly raked and lined prior to the start of every game. When it starts to get hotter it is also a good idea to water the field periodically. This all helps in keeping our fields in the best condition possible and giving the players the best playing experience possible.

General team warmup's are not to be conducted on the infield. Instead, the outfield area is to be used in addition to the batting cages, where preference is usually provided for games on the immediate schedule.

Both teams are also responsible for cleaning up the field after games as well. Fields should be left in a condition that makes them ready for another game's use. Filling in holes around home plate and the pitcher's mound will increase the likelihood that the field is still playable the next day if there is rain overnight.

Additionally, before leaving the dugout area, coaches and team members are responsible for picking up any trash and scanning the area for any items that might otherwise be left behind.

L. Dugout Behavior

Cheering for teammates is encouraged and a great way to keep players' minds on the game at hand. However, it is requested that loud, team rally chants and songs be discouraged, particularly while the pitcher is in his wind-up and delivery. Hitting the fence with bats or rattling the fence is not permitted at any time. Coaches are not allowed to yell instructions to their players while the pitcher is delivering his pitch in an attempt to tip off the batter. This guidance applies to coaches and parents as well, with all parties being expected to act within the context of the Sacred Heart Code of Conduct.

M. Umpires

The home plate umpire has complete charge of the game and has final say on all matters.

As such, Sacred Heart has adopted a ZERO-TOLERANCE POLICY, whereby any coach (including assistants) that is ejected from a game will also be subject to an immediate SUSPENSION for the team's next two games. (including playoffs). A second offense will subject the coach to a meeting with the division coordinator, with penalties that could include suspension for the remainder of the season.

Coaches can discuss, in a civil manner, any questions or disagreements with the umpire. Balls and strikes cannot be disputed and can result in ejection. Abusive, offensive, or belligerent language directed at players, umpires or coaches by anyone (including parents) may result in forfeit at the umpire's discretion.

Coaches and parents are expected to be supportive of the umpire's efforts and maintain the flow of the game in the interest of quality play.

N. Protests

Protests will be accepted on rule interpretations only. No protests will ever be permitted on judgment calls made by the umpires. If a head coach wishes to protest a game, he/she must

inform the umpire of the protest immediately after the activity-in-question occurred, but before a new pitch is made. The protest must be in writing and presented to a Sacred Heart Board member within two (2) days of the game. The Board will review protests immediately and will inform the coaches of the Board's decision within a reasonable time period, generally before either team plays its next game.

O. Rescheduling Rainouts and Other Stopped Games

A Board member on duty has the responsibility of deciding whether to begin games. Once games are started, any decision to stop a game is the result of consultation between the game's umpire and a Board member on duty.

Rained out games are to be replayed in their entirety, unless the rained out game has been declared official or the coaches of both teams agree to resume an otherwise unofficial game that had begun before being rained out.

All makeup games will be played in the next available opening in the league schedule. A Board member responsible for scheduling will confirm arrangements with the coaches and have the final decision regarding the rescheduling. Any game not played in the reassigned time may be considered a forfeit by the team(s) that fail to show up.

League officials reserve the right to modify rainout makeup rules (including the decision to not make up a game), particularly during periods where there is a backlog of rainouts or other league activities.

P. Recording and Reporting Scores

Team scorekeepers should confirm the game score with the other team periodically throughout the game. In instances where a discrepancy exists and cannot be readily resolved, the home team's scorebook is to be considered the official scorebook.

Teams are required to record the pitch count and innings pitched for every pitcher at the conclusion of every game in the Pitching Log located on the desk on the inside of the Snack Shack.

Additionally, final scores are to be emailed (by both teams: win or lose, home or away) within 24 hours to the email address used by the league. In doing so, coaches should also report their team's pitching activity for the day.

Please submit results in the following format, to shcyobaseball@gmail.com:

Subject: 4/15 Dev 8: Astros 6, Mets 3 (*putting this information in the subject line helps identify the game ... on any given Saturday, our league will have as many as 30 games*)

Message: (*each team is responsible for reporting their own pitchers ...if you can, also cc your opposing coach from the game, too*)

Astros pitching: (innings, # pitches)

Jones (1, 22)

Smith (1, 25)

Johnson (1, 16)

Etc.....