

Minor League Rules Updated: 2017

Personal Conduct:

****ALL COACHES AND MANAGERS MUST SHOW THEIR BADGE IN ORDER TO BE IN THE DUGOUT OR ON THE FIELD. IF THE BADGE IS NOT ON THEM, THEY WILL NOT BE ALLOWED TO COACH OR MANAGE BUT MAY SIT WITH THE OTHER PARENTS AND WATCH THE GAME****

- Umpires are **NOT** to tolerate inappropriate behavior.
- Coaches, players, or parents are to leave the park if ejected.
- 2nd ejection, that person is expelled from the league.
- Umpires and coaches are expected to report the name of any ejections to Minor League Commissioner.
- An umpire's call is **FINAL**.
- No one is permitted to argue balls and strikes.
- Coaches are responsible for the conduct of themselves, their players, and fans/parents supporting their team. Talk to them before the season. Neither the league nor they want to be a story in the Times.
- If there is a problem with an umpire, please contact the Minor League Coordinator or the Umpire Coordinator.

Game Guidelines:

- Games will begin on time.
- Daylight and weather permitting, games consist of six (6) innings. Four (4) innings must be completed to qualify an official game.
- Game Time Limits: o All games will be limited to a two hour time limit. No inning may start after the two hour time limit. (If the 6th inning is completed in a tie and the two hour time limit has not been reached then the game will continue, but in no event shall any inning start after the two hour time limit.) If a winner is not declared then the game will be ruled a tie.
- Games may be called at any time by the umpire, depending on the conditions.
 - o The decision to call a game due to darkness is the umpires call. The decision is final and will not be debated.
 - o During the first sign of lightning or sound of thunder, all players will be removed from the field immediately until it is safe to return **30 minutes** following the last sighting of lightning/sound of thunder.
 - o The decision to return lies with the two head coaches and the umpire. If anyone of those three objects to continuing or starting the game, the game will be cancelled and rescheduled at a later date.
 - o The rescheduled game will be determined by both coaches, in coordination with the Minor League Coordinator.
 - o Field conditions following weather- The decision to start a game after a weather event will be decided collectively between the Umpire and the Head Coaches. If any two of the three agree that the field is suitable for play then the game will proceed.

- Home teams have the responsibility of maintaining the official game score. Teams will provide results of games (wins/losses) to the Minor League Coordinator for official record keeping.
- For games called due to weather, darkness or time.
 - o If a game is called after the 1st half of an inning, then the final score of the game will be the score of the game preceding the start of that final inning.
 - o If a game was called prior to completing four innings, that game will be suspended and rescheduled.

On-field Rules:

- Unless specified herein, otherwise, MMTA or Modified Little League game rules apply.

Game Management:

- If available, 10 players must play in the field (4 outfielders). Westminster Baseball Association may elect to play 9.
- A team may play with 8 players. If a team does not have 8 players, that team forfeits the game. A loss is recorded to the team that forfeits; a win is recorded for the opposing team.
- An inning consists of three outs or five runs (whichever comes first) during the first four innings of each game. The fifth and sixth innings are limited to three outs or ten runs (whichever comes first).
- If at the conclusion of the fourth or fifth inning a team is leading by fifteen runs or more, the “mercy rule” is triggered.
 - The “mercy rule” officially ends the game and the leading team is the winner. Play will continue until the time limit or six innings has been completed. The team that has won the game will be limited to five runs per inning for the duration of the game so as to allow players on both teams to enjoy the game. The losing team may still score up to ten runs in the fifth and sixth inning, but they cannot win the game once the “mercy rule” has been triggered.
- No player is permitted to sit a second (any part of a 2nd) inning while team is on defense until all players have sat out one full inning of defense.
- All players are to be inserted in the lineup. All players are to hit during their turn in that lineup. This applies even if they did not play in the field during that inning.
- Coaches are strongly encouraged to provide all players the opportunity to pitch and play other popular positions during the course of each week. Coaches do have discretion to only place players in positions they can handle. Teach them to play the more challenging positions.

Communicate this to the parents ahead of time.

- If a player arrives after the game has started, they are to be placed at the bottom of the lineup and take their turn batting in accordance to that "revised" batting order.
- Once a player has either played in the field or taken a turn at the plate, they must continue batting in the order as originally placed.
- A player who leaves early will be skipped in the order with no penalty. Please remember this is a rec. league and we are here to allow kids to play ball. Communication between coaches and scorers regarding late arrivals, or players leaving early is vital.

Base Paths and Pitching Distances:

- Pitching mound is 46/48 feet from the back point of the plate. **See Pitching Notes below.**
- Bases are set at 60 feet (closest base sleeve to the plate).

Equipment:

- No restrictions on bat sizes.
- All players are required to wear a batting helmet containing a mask. This only applies to Finksburg Players.
- Athletic protection is recommended for all players. Athletic protection is **mandatory** for all catchers.
- All base coaches under the age of 18 shall be required to wear a protective helmet.

Pitching:

- No balks.
- Pitchers are limited to 3 **innings per game (has to be consecutive) or 50 pitches total and a maximum of 9 innings** per week (Starting Monday through Sunday).
- If a pitcher hits three batters during the course of the game, he must be removed.
- A ball that hits ground then the batter constitutes a hit batter.
- A pitcher is removed when manager makes 2nd trip to the same pitcher in the same inning.
- Any pitch in an inning by a player constitutes an inning for that pitcher.
- Once a pitcher is removed from a game, he/she **CAN NOT** re-enter that same game as a pitcher. **Reminder – both coaches must communicate pitch count to each other so as to not go over the 50 pitch rule.**
- **Pitching distance if 46' Coaches are install a temporary rubber. (UPDATED 03/30/16)**

Batting:

- **All** players available are in the batting order.
- Bunting is permitted.
- A bunt foul with 2 strikes is a 3rd strike.
- **Strike Zone** is batter's armpit to batter's knees, 2 inches inside and outside of plate. This is the zone instructed to the umpires during their training.

Catching:

- If the catcher drops or catches a 3rd strike, the batter is **OUT**.
- A courtesy runner may be used for the catcher to help speed up the game. The runner can be inserted for the catcher only with 2 outs. The runner **MUST** be the player who made the last out (either at bat or on the bases). The runner replaced on the bases **MUST** be the catcher in the following inning.

Fielding (Infield/Outfield):

- Infield fly rule is **NOT** in effect. However, the defense cannot turn a double play unless the catch is made in the air or if the runners are trying to advance multiple bases. If the defense catches the ball in the air or if the runners are trying to advance an extra bases after the first out is made, the defense can record multiple outs. The intention of this rule is to allow play to continue on infield flies but not unfairly disadvantage the batting team. The umpire will have final discretion as to how this rule is applied.
- When the ball is hit or thrown to the outfield, play continues until the ball is thrown into the infield and controlled by an infielder. That infielder may request timeout from the umpire. Timeout is **ONLY** granted by the umpire. **The player must be around the baseline & request a time-out to the umpire so the runner stops advancing. If not, the runner may advance to the next base.**

Base running (Stealing/Leading):

- No stealing Home.
- No stealing if the batting team is leading the game by 5 or more runs during the first four innings
- No stealing if the batting team is leading by 10 runs or more in the 5th or 6th inning.
- Any runner is limited to **ONE** stolen base per batter.
- If an **OVERTHROW** occurs during a steal, the runner **may** advance to the next base. This applies to runners on other bases as well. (i.e. if third base is occupied and a runner is stealing second, and the ball is overthrown into the outfield the runner on third base may advance home.)
- Runners may not steal on the throw back to the pitcher.
- Runners may not steal until the pitch has passed the home plate.
- There is no leading off permitted.

Base running (Sliding):

- Must slide rule is in effect, which is players must slide on close play or to avoid contact.
- Umpire's rule on must slide is final.
- NO head first sliding or diving while running the bases; runners may go back into a base head first. Runners are declared out if they perform a head first slide while advancing to a base.
- Plays at Home- Blocking of home plate while not in the act of fielding the ball is prohibited. If any field blocks home plate the runner shall avoid contact and be declared safe. The intent of this rule is to avoid contact at home plate. Umpires decision is final and will not be argued.

Overthrows:

- All runners must advance one base only on an overthrow, which is ruled out of play.
- If an overthrow remains in play, runners may advance at their own risk.

Trophies:

- Season champs (1st place only) will receive a large trophy.
- Tournament champs will receive a large trophy and the 2nd place tournament team will receive a trophy.