

# MENTOR BASEBALL LEAGUE

## 2024 RULES OF PLAY – COLT

### A. OVERVIEW

The spirit of the Mentor Baseball League is to help youth play ball safely, while assisting them to learn about the game, team camaraderie, and good sportsmanship. Please encourage cooperation on and around the playing field, because this activity is conducted for the benefit and enjoyment of all participants: the players, managers, coaches, parents and fans.

Any injury during participation, other than a minor scratch or bruise, requires immediate treatment by a trained healthcare professional. Please call 911 if warranted, err on the side of caution. The injuries need to also be reported to the commissioner and league president immediately.

The rules presented herein have been established by the Mentor Baseball League Board of Trustees, based upon recommendations presented by the commissioners and managers from each of the divisions. Revisions to these rules must be presented to the board for consideration, approval and inclusion. Agreements between managers and commissioners do not signify a legal rule change.

With the exceptions listed herein, the official NFHS High School rulebook will be used as the governing instrument for game officiating. Interpretation or clarification of any rule contained herein or in the official High School rulebook shall be made by the Mentor Baseball League Board of Trustees.

- PERSONNEL

**B.1.** Players in this league shall be 15, 16, 17 or 18 years of age as of May 1 of the current season.

### C. CONDUCT

**C.1.** Players are not allowed to call to members of the opposing team in an attempt to distract them.

**C.2.** Managers are responsible for maintaining order, discipline and sportsmanship among the players, coaches, parents and fans.

**C.3.** Players, managers, coaches and fans must refrain from unsportsmanlike conduct. Throwing of equipment in anger or bad language will be sufficient grounds for ejection from the game.

**C.4.** Managers must have a copy of the rules with them during all games.

**C.5.** Alcohol and/or tobacco are not permitted on the playing field or in the bench area before, during or after the game.

**C.6.** Any player, manager or asst. coach ejected from a game will automatically be suspended from the teams next game. Depending on the severity of actions additional sanctions may be placed by the President or Vice President of the League.

**C.7.** Uniforms may not be altered by players, managers or coaches unless given permission by league officials. Example: the cutting or removal of sleeves is prohibited but adding the players name to the back is permitted.

**C.8** Turf Usage Rules: No gum, seeds or food are permitted in the dugouts or in field perimeter.

**C.9** No Metal or Rubber cleats allowed in Field Perimeter or dugouts

**C.10** Only Tennis and Turf shoes are permitted on the turf fields.

**C.11** Only Clear water is allowed in the dugout and field perimeter

#### **D. CALL-UPS**

**D.1.** When a manager knows there will less than 10 players at a game, the manager may use call-ups to field up to 10 players. The call-ups must be obtained through the Pony commissioner.

**D.2.** Players may not be requested by name. The Pony commissioner will maintain a list of call-ups (generally the top two draft rounds) and go through the list in order. All players on the list should be used before the first player can be used as a call-up again.

**D.3.** Travel team players may not be used as a call-up.

**D.4.** Call-ups may not play more innings than the minimum number of innings played by any regular team member.

**D.5.** Call-ups must bat after all regular team members in the batting order and play in the outfield when they are playing in the field.

**D.6.** If a team has 10 players including a call-up and the opposing team has seven or eight players, the call-up will play for the team with fewer players so the game can be played.

**D.7.** Failure to adhere to these rules may result in forfeiture of the game in which the rules were violated.

#### **1. PLAYING FIELD AND EQUIPMENT**

- Bases: The bases are set 90 feet apart.
- Pitcher's Mound: The pitching mound shall be in the center of the infield 60 feet from home plate.
- Cleats - Metal Cleats are permitted.
- Bats: No bat greater than a (Drop -5) may be used. A BBCOR -3 is recommended.
- Uniforms - Jerseys, caps and baseball pants must be worn during the games. Uniforms shall be tucked in. All players on the same team must have the same uniform during regular games. Exception: Call-ups must be in complete uniform, but it may be of a different color. A pitcher's undershirt may be exposed.
- Catchers: Any player crouching behind home plate must be wearing the proper protective equipment, including a cup, even when warming up between innings.
- Players: It is recommended all players wear a protective cup regardless of position played.

- **DEFINITION OF TERMS**

None

### **3. GAME PRELIMINARIES**

- A team must have at least eight (8) players present to start the game and finish with at least 7 players, in the event of injury, ejection or other circumstances.
- All players present will be in the batting order. The opposing manager must be notified in the event of any of the following:
  - A player arriving after the start of the game will be added to the end of the batting order.
  - If a player leaves the game for any reason, the vacated spot is simply skipped with no penalty.
  - If a player must leave the game for any justifiable reason and returns later, the player will resume in the same place in the batting order without penalty.
- No player may sit defensively more than 2 innings per game. In the 7<sup>th</sup> inning, if ALL players present have sat two innings defensively, players may sit a third inning defensively as needed. This will only be allowed when all 13 players are present for a game. In an extra inning game (8 innings or more), the number of rested innings is reset to zero, but no player may sit consecutive innings.
- The players should rotate positions and a rotation of the players between outfield and infield positions is strongly encouraged. Free rotation is allowed at all positions, except pitcher.
- Players may coach the bases, but must wear a batting helmet when coaching.

### **4. STARTING AND ENDING THE GAME – TIME LIMIT**

- A regulation game is 7 innings or 2 hours, whichever comes first. A new inning starts when the last out of the inning is made. A new inning cannot begin after 2 hours. Extra innings are permitted as long as the inning begins prior to the 2 hour time limit.
- A legal game lasts at least 4 innings or 3 ½ if the home team is winning.
- All games, including make-up games, must start within 15 minutes of the scheduled time or, if the previous game concludes after this 15 minute grace period, when the field is available. If a team is unable to field at least 8 players within the allowed time, a forfeit will be awarded to the opponent.
- If after 4 innings, or 3½ if the home team is winning, one team is ahead by 15 or more runs, the game is considered complete.
- If a game is rained out before 4 innings (3 ½ if the home team is leading) have been played, the game will be replayed from the start of the game.

- If a game is rained out after at least 4 innings have been played and the score is tied at the END of an inning, the game will be considered complete and recorded as a tie game.

## **5. PUTTING THE BALL IN PLAY**

- Time out may be called by an infielder in control of the ball and only when on the infield. The umpire must recognize and grant the time out to stop play. Time out will not be granted if runners are advancing.
- The hidden ball trick is illegal in all divisions.
- The manager of the team in the field must change the pitcher immediately after calling the second non-injury time-out of a half-inning.

## **6. THE PITCHER/CATCHER**

- The pitcher's glove must be of one color only and cannot be white or gray.
- A pitcher hitting three batters in one game must be removed as pitcher immediately upon hitting the third batter. The player may play any position other than pitcher for the remainder of the game.
- One pitch constitutes one inning pitched.
- The pitching week is from 00:01am Monday morning to midnight Sunday night.
- Each player is allowed to pitch up to 4 consecutive innings per game (no player may reenter as pitcher once they have been removed from the pitching position) and 8 innings per week.
- In the event three games must be played in a calendar week, the pitchers on that team will be allowed an additional 3 innings for the week. The game limit remains the same.
- In the event games must be played on consecutive days, a pitcher may pitch up to the game limit on both days. The game and week limits remain the same. (See 6.5 and 6.6)
- Each pitcher must have a full day of rest after pitching in a game with the exception given in 6.7.
- Managers must divulge to the opposing manager, upon request, the pitching eligibility of their players for the game.
- The strike zone will be from the top of the knees to the armpits, inclusive.
- Balk Warnings – Each pitcher may receive one (1) warning when there is a rule infraction resulting in a balk. Dead ball, any runners that advanced on the play will return to the previous base occupied. A balk will be called and the appropriate penalty will be enforced by the umpire on any subsequent violations:

## **7. THE BATTER**

- A league approved batting helmet must be worn while hitting.
- Only one player is allowed in the on-deck circle. The player must be wearing a league approved helmet while in the on-deck circle. The remaining offensive players should be on the bench.
- Although not encouraged in the house league, an intentional walk may be

issued to any batter by simply declaring the intention to the umpire. No pitches are required.

## **8. THE RUNNER**

- Batting helmets must be worn while running the bases.
- If there is a play on the runner at home plate or any base, the runner must slide or avoid contact. A play is when the defensive player is in the vicinity of the base with the ball or in the act of receiving the ball. If the runner does not slide and there is contact with the defensive player, the runner is called out. Deliberate barreling at any base will result in ejection from the game.
- Lead offs are allowed.

## **9. THE OFFICIAL SCORER**

- The home team scorebook is the official scorebook for the game.
- The managers must turn in the pitching cards to the commissioner to get credit for the game.
- The managers must keep a record of the innings pitched and caught by each player on his team for the complete season.

## **10. THE UMPIRE**

- The umpire is the accredited representative of the Mentor Baseball League.
- The umpire will have the authority to rule on any situation not specifically covered in the rules.
- The umpire will cover the ground rules and any other rules deemed necessary before each game.
- The umpire will halt play if there is visible lightning in the area.
- No manager may enter the field of play without asking for and receiving time out from the umpire.
- In the case of an injured player, the umpire will immediately call time (dead ball) to allow treatment of the injured player. The umpire will decide where the runner(s) would have been had the ball continued in play and position them accordingly.
- Any protest must be made at the time of the play. The plate umpire must sign the official (home team) scorebook at the point of the protest.
- Protests are allowed on rules infractions only. Judgment calls may not be protested.
- Protests must be presented in writing along with the \$25 filing fee to the league commissioner no later than 48 hours after the game. If the protest is rejected, the fee is forfeited. If the protest is upheld, the fee is returned.