

# MENTOR BASEBALL LEAGUE 2024 RULES OF PLAY – SENIOR

## 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 at least 18 years of age as of May 1 of the current season.

**B.2.** The rosters must be made up of at least 75% Mentor residents.

**B.3.** All players who have played in the Mentor Baseball League previously are eligible.

## 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 and spectators.

**C.3.** Players, managers, coaches and spectators 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, stands, and surrounding area before, during or after the game.

**C.6.** Ejections – Any player or coach ejected from a game will be automatically suspended from the next game played by his team. A 2<sup>nd</sup> ejection requires board approval for reinstatement.

**C.7** Turf Usage Rules: No gum, seeds or food are permitted in the dugouts or in field perimeter.

**C.8** No Metal or Rubber cleats allowed in Field Perimeter or dugouts

**C.9** Only Tennis and Turf shoes are permitted on the turf fields.

**C.10** Only Clear water is allowed in the dugout and field perimeter

#### **D. CALL-UPS/CALL-OVERS**

**D.1.** There are no call-ups in this league. This is replaced by the Call-Over guidelines.

**D.2.** Only players registered in the league may play.

**D.3.** If one team does not have enough players to start a game and their opponent has additional players, sufficient players must be provided to bring the team up to the playable limit, 9, if possible.

**D.4.** As players arrive on the team using the call-overs, the regular team member will replace the call-over at the earliest possible time.

**D.5.** Failure to adhere to these rules may result in forfeiture of the game(s) in which the rules were violated.

#### **E. PLAY-OFFS AND AWARDS**

**E.1.** The division commissioner will ensure team records are maintained to establish the final overall standings. The team with the better record will have the choice of batting first or last. Tie games will be treated as a ½ win and ½ loss.

**E.2.** All teams advance to the single elimination play-offs and are seeded based on the regular season record (win-loss percentage).

**E.3.** Throughout the play-offs, the top remaining seed will always play the lowest remaining seed, the second seed will play the second lowest seed, etc.

**E.4.** In the case of a tie in the regular season win-loss percentage, the following criteria will be used in order until the tie is broken:

**E.4.1.** Head to head record

**E.4.2.** Average runs surrendered between teams tied.

**E.4.3.** Average runs scored between teams tied.

**E.4.4.** Single toss of a coin

#### **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.
- Uniforms - Jerseys, caps and baseball pants must be worn during the games. All players on the same team must have the same jersey, socks and cap during all games. The players must be wearing appropriate baseball pants. A pitcher's undershirt may be exposed.
- Catchers: Any player crouching behind home plate should be wearing the proper protective equipment, including a cup, even when warming up between innings.
- Bats - The BBCOR (-3) bat rule applies.
- Players: It is recommended all players wear a protective cup regardless of

position.

- **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 8 players, in the event of injury, ejection or other circumstances.
- All players present at the start of a game must: (a) have at least one plate appearance and (b) play in the field for at least two innings. (only exception is player-manager).
- If a player is injured during the game and all players have been used, a substitute player previously used in the game may be re-inserted without penalty. The injured player may not return to the line-up in this case.
- Reentry rule is in effect.
- AH can be used at the manager's discretion. This does not dismiss the rule that a player must play 2 innings in the field.
- Players may coach the bases, but must wear a batting helmet.

### **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 3 innings or 2-1/2 innings if the home team is ahead.
- 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**

- The umpire must recognize and grant the requested time out to stop play. Time out will not be granted if runners are advancing or the pitcher is in their delivery.
- The hidden ball trick is illegal.
- 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.

## **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, 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.

## **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.

## **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.