

# SENIOR DIVISION GENERAL RULES

## 1. PLAYER ELIGIBILITY/GRADE

- 1.1. TBL SENIORS league is for high school aged players, eligible under OHSAA rules to participate in High School Baseball, during the past school year whom were in 9<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup> or 12<sup>th</sup> grade. Example a player that just graduated can participate.
- 1.2. TBL SENIORS league players with High School Varsity Baseball experience (on a varsity roster for a minimum of 1 game) can only pitch 2 innings per game, which constitutes 6 outs. Also, each team will be allowed a maximum of 2 innings of Varsity player(s) pitching per game (6 outs).

## 2. TEAM ROSTERS, PLAYERS AND POSITIONS

- 2.1. All teams must submit their final rosters before the first game of the season to the league commissioner.
  - 2.1.1. Failure to submit team roster to league commissioner by stated date, may result in team forfeiting games and/or removal from league with no refund.
  - 2.1.2. Once a player is rostered and roster is submitted, that player may not switch and play for another team. Tampering with players rostered on any SENIORS teams could result in forfeit and removal from the league.
- 2.2. A minimum of eight (8) players are needed to start a game or a forfeit will result.
  - 2.2.1. Call-ups may only be made to bring a team to nine (9) players. For example, a team with nine players may not call-up a tenth player.
  - 2.2.2. Call-ups must bat at the bottom of the batting order and can only play outfield positions defensively.
  - 2.2.3. If a call-up does end up being a tenth player at any point during a game, they may not play in the field defensively and can only bat (at the bottom of the lineup).
  - 2.2.4. Call-ups must not have or miss a scheduled game at the same time for their primary team in the lower age division.
  - 2.2.5. All call-ups must be coordinated through and approved by the commissioners of both divisions that are affected to ensure compliance with these call-up guidelines.
  - 2.2.6. In the case of an injury, a team may finish the game with 8 players. When the injured player's spot comes up in the batting order the batter is skipped, it is NOT an out.
  - 2.2.7. If a player is ejected when the ejected player's spot comes up in the batting order, it is an out. If the team has less than eight (8) players, the game is over.
- 2.3. Defensive Players: In the SENIORS Division, teams will field (9) defensive players (3 outfielders, 4 infielders, a pitcher and a catcher)

## 3. FIELD AND GROUND RULES

- 3.1. Where not covered by specific Twinsburg Baseball League Inc. amendments, NFHS rules will apply.
- 3.2. The HOME team will prepare the field for play and will practice 30 minutes before the game. The visitors will practice 15 minutes before the game and will put the bases away at the end of the game. Both teams will clean their respective areas and share in the cleaning of common areas after the game.
- 3.3. Only officially registered team members may participate. NO EXCEPTIONS.
- 3.4. All team members in attendance will play. Disciplinary actions will be allowable as long as competing coach is advised before the game.
- 3.5. Three outs made in the field (strikeouts included) will constitute an inning.
- 3.6. Substitution Rule
  - 3.6.1. The free and unlimited substitution of defensive players is permitted except for pitchers, but the batting order shall remain the same.
  - 3.6.2. If the STARTING PITCHER is removed from the mound they can return to pitch in that game or in the completion of a suspended game.
  - 3.6.3. If a RELIEF PITCHER is removed from the mound they CANNOT return to pitch in that game or in the completion of a suspended game, although he may play any other position.
  - 3.6.4. There is not a mandatory playing rule, but coaches should provide equal playing time for all players.
- 3.7. It will be the home team's responsibility to maintain the official score. Once the score has been agreed upon by both coaches, the head coach will be responsible for providing the score to the league commissioner to be entered on the TBL website.
- 3.8. It will be the league commissioner responsibility to maintain division standings for playoff seeding.  
The TBL uses a hockey style points system to determine the division standings:  
WIN= 3 points  
TIE = 2 points  
LOSS = 1 point  
GAME NOT MADE UP = 0 points

## 4. PITCHING

4.1. TBL follows the MLB Pitch Smart pitch count limits and required rest recommendation, see chart below:

Pitch Count Guidance		Examples
1 to 30 Pitches	0 Day Rest	25 pitches on Monday eligible to pitch on Tuesday
31 to 45 Pitches	1 Full Day Rest	40 pitches on Monday eligible to pitch on Wednesday (Tuesday Rest Day)
46 to 60 Pitches	2 Full Days Rest	55 pitches on Monday eligible to pitch on Thursday (Tuesday & Wednesday Rest Days)
61 to 75 Pitches	3 Full Days Rest	70 pitches on Monday eligible to pitch on Friday (Tuesday, Wednesday, & Thursday Rest Days)
76 to 95 Pitches	4 Full Days Rest	90 pitches on Monday eligible to pitch on Saturday (Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, & Friday Rest Days)
Daily Max Pitches	95	May not face a new hitter once the daily limit of 95 pitches is reached

4.2. One coach or parent from each team is responsible for keeping track of pitch counts for all pitchers. It is encouraged for coaches to confer on pitch count totals for players approaching daily limits.

4.3. In the case a game reaches the Drop Dead time limit and the score reverts back to the last complete inning, ALL pitches, even the pitches during the time period that is lost, will count towards a pitchers daily pitch count.

4.4. A pitcher may exceed the daily pitch count limit to finish an at bat, but may not face a new hitter once the daily limit of 95 pitches is exceeded.

4.5. Each pitcher may receive no more than ONE balk warnings. Following the first balk, any subsequent balks by a pitcher will be enforced as defined in the NFHS Rules.

4.6. Pitcher Substitution Rule

4.6.1. If the STARTING PITCHER is removed from the mound they CAN return to pitch in that game or in the completion of a suspended game.

4.6.2. If a RELIEF PITCHER is removed from the mound they CANNOT return to pitch in that game or in the completion of a suspended game.

4.7. The full MLB Pitch Smart Guidelines can be found at <http://m.mlb.com/pitchsmart/pitching-guidelines>.

4.8. FALL BALL EXCEPTION – A pitcher may not exceed 2 innings pitched, which constitutes of 6 outs.

## 5. BATTING

5.1. Teams will bat all players on their roster in a predetermined order, a copy of which will be provided to the opposing team. Late arrivals will be placed at the bottom of the order.

5.1.1. Each player of the offensive team shall bat in the order that his name appears in his team's batting order.

5.1.2. The first batter in each inning after the first inning shall be the player whose name follows that of the last player who legally completed his time at bat in the preceding inning.

5.1.3. A batter shall be called out, on appeal, when he fails to bat in proper turn after another batter has started an at bat in his place

5.2. A batter is out when –

5.2.1. His fair or foul fly ball (other than a foul tip) is legally caught by a fielder.

5.2.2. When a third strike is legally caught by the catcher.

5.2.3. A third strike is not caught by the catcher and first base is occupied with less than two outs.

5.2.4. He bunts foul on third strike.

5.2.5. An Infield Fly is declared.

5.2.6. He attempts to hit a third strike and the ball touches him.

5.2.7. His fair ball touches him before touching a fielder.

5.2.8. A third strike foul-tip is legally caught by the catcher.

5.3. The batter becomes a runner when –

5.3.1. He hits a fair ball

5.3.2. The third strike called by the umpire is not caught, providing (1) first base is unoccupied, or (2) first base is occupied with two outs. A batter who does not realize this situation on a third strike not caught, and whom is not in the process of running to first base, shall be declared out once he leaves the dirt home plate area.

5.4. Bunting is permitted.

## **6. BASE RUNNING**

- 6.1. A runner may leadoff at any base at his own risk.
- 6.2. Runners may tag up at their own risk on any fly ball, fair or foul, once the ball is caught.
- 6.3. Runners who inadvertently turn toward second after reaching first cannot be tagged out unless in the umpire's judgement they show intent to reach second base.
- 6.4. Infield fly rule will apply.
- 6.5. A runner must slide, or give up, or attempt to avoid being tagged while a play is being made on him. No runner will initiate any contact with another player. PENALTY: The runner is out, and if the umpire deems such contact is deemed to be flagrant, the offending player will be ejected.
- 6.6. On a force play, the runner shall slide on the ground in a direct line between the two bases, or away from the fielder, to avoid making contact with, or altering the play of, the fielder. PENALTY: With less than two outs, the runner is declared out as well as the batter-runner. Runners shall be returned to the bases they occupied at the time of the pitch. With two outs, the runner shall be declared out. Violations result in outs; flagrant violations will result in ejection.
- 6.7. In the event of an injury, a courtesy runner will be permitted. That runner will be the last player who was called out.
- 6.8. Runners may advance one (1) base on an overthrow out of play which is determined to be past the bench. It will still be at discretion of the umpire.
- 6.9. Speed-Up-Rule - Teams may elect to use a courtesy runner for the catcher of the upcoming inning (after two outs). The replacement runner must be the batter that made the last out. The sole purpose should be to speed up the start of the next inning. The player must be the catcher for the next inning

## **7. RUN LIMIT/MERCY RULE**

- 7.1. There is NO run limit per inning.
- 7.2. MERCY RULE - If the losing team is behind by 15 or more runs after the fourth inning, or 10 or more runs after the fifth inning, the game is over.

## **8. THE PLAYING FIELD AND EQUIPMENT**

- 8.1. Bases: The infield shall be 90-foot square (MLB).
- 8.2. Pitcher's mound: The distance between the front side of the pitcher's plate and home base (the rear point of home plate) shall be 60 feet 6 inches (MLB).
- 8.3. Each team will supply one (1) new baseball for each game.
- 8.4. Complete and proper equipment (by position) must be worn at all times. All male players should wear athletic supporters. Male catchers must wear cups and female catcher's appropriate chest protection.
- 8.5. Metal cleats are permitted.
- 8.6. Bats may not exceed 2 3/4 inches in diameter, may not exceed 34 inches in length, and the unit differential, namely the difference between bat length measured in inches and bat weight measured in ounces, may not exceed 3 units (-3). Bats must be BBCOR Certified. Wood bats are permitted.
- 8.7. All offensive players must wear batting helmets while outside the dugout. Runners who intentionally remove their helmets while on the base can be called out, umpire discretion.
- 8.8. All players will wear complete uniforms as issued by their respective leagues including baseball pants.
- 8.9. No shorts will be permitted.

## **9. BASE COACHES**

- 9.1. The offensive team shall station two (2) base coaches on the field during its time at bat, one at 1B and one near 3B.
- 9.2. Base coaches should be an adult manager or coach. If a base coach is a player, they MUST wear a batting helmet.
- 9.3. Base coaches shall:
  - 9.3.1. Remain within the base coaches' box at all times, except when necessary to provide space for a defensive player to make a play on a batted or thrown ball.
  - 9.3.2. Talk to members of their own team.
  - 9.3.3. An offending coach shall be removed from the base coach's box.

## **10. UMPIRES**

- 10.1. The decision of the umpire is final. Any umpire's decision which involves judgment, such as, but not limited to, whether a batted ball is fair or foul, whether a pitch is a strike or a ball, or whether a runner is safe or out, is final.
- 10.2. Umpires do not call appeal plays, the proper appeal must be made by the team.
- 10.3. No player, manager, coach or substitute shall object to any such judgment decisions.
- 10.4. Only a head coach or designated speaking coach may discuss plays with the umpire. The "designated speaking coach" shall be the team's representative during the pre-game conference with the umpiring crew.
- 10.5. In the event of an injury the umpire is to immediately call time. Any game related injury must be reported within 24 hours of the occurrence.
- 10.6. The HOME team is responsible to provide umpires for the game.

## 11. COACH, PLAYER AND SPECTATOR CONDUCT

- 11.1. Head coaches must be at all times, examples of good sportsmanship.
- 11.2. The head coaches are responsible for the conduct of their players and assistant coaches.
- 11.3. Head coaches shall, to the best of their ability, control the conduct of parents and spectators on their side of the field, making every reasonable effort to discourage any type of harassment of umpires and opposing players, coaches, and fans.
- 11.4. No manager, player, substitute, coach, trainer or bat boy shall at any time, whether from the bench, the coach's box or on the playing field, or elsewhere:
  - 11.4.1. Incite, or try to incite, by word or sign a demonstration by spectators.
  - 11.4.2. Use language which will in any manner refer to or reflect upon opposing players, a coach, an umpire, or any spectator.
  - 11.4.3. Call "Time," or employ any other word or phrase or commit any act while the ball is alive and in play for the obvious purpose of trying to make the pitcher commit a balk or to try to distract the pitcher in their pitching motion.
  - 11.4.4. Make intentional contact with any player, coach, umpire or spectator.
  - 11.4.5. Take a position in the batter's line of vision, and with deliberate unsportsmanlike intent, act in a manner to distract the batter. PENALTY: The offender shall be removed from the game and shall leave the playing field, and, if a balk is made, it shall be nullified
- 11.5. No coach or staff member will appear at any game or practice under the influence of alcohol or controlled substance.
- 11.6. Smoking and/or the use of any and all tobacco products is prohibited on the playing field and in the bench area.
- 11.7. Coaches are not to leave the field or bench area for the purpose of smoking. PENALTY: IMMEDIATE REMOVAL FROM THE LEAGUE for any coach, staff member and/or individual that violates Rules 11.4, 11.5, and/or 11.6.
- 11.8. All players must remain inside their respective dugouts unless fielding, batting, warming up, or on deck. Warning given for first offense. An out will be assessed for any further offense. Coaches may not stand behind the backstop.
  - 11.8.1. EXCEPTION - Only one batter may be "on deck" at a time. A batter may not be "on deck" directly behind the backstop.
  - 11.8.2. EXCEPTION - Only one pitcher may warm-up at a time.
- 11.9. Other than as defined in the BASE COACHES section of these rules, and the two exceptions noted in 11.8 above, all coaches are to remain in the dugout. A warning will be issued for the first offense. An ejection will be issued for any further offenses.
- 11.10. There will be no throwing of equipment such as helmets and bats. It will be in umpires' judgment to issue a warning and an out or an ejection for any infraction. If the third out has been completed, the out will be applied to the next inning. For the second offense, an out and ejection of thrower. For unintentional slipping of a bat, there will be a warning to both player and coach for first offense and an out assessed for subsequent offenses.

## 12. EJECTIONS

- 12.1. Any player or coach who is ejected from a game by an umpire is automatically suspended from the next game played, including playoff, championship and tournament games. There is no appeal.
- 12.2. A coach whom is ejected from a game must immediately leave the area in a sportsmanlike manner before play will resume. An assistant coach may be designated as head coach to resume play. If no other assistant is available, the umpire may designate a parent or player as head coach to resume play.
- 12.3. A player whom is ejected from a game MUST remain in the supervision of his coach and his turn in the batting order will count as an out.
- 12.4. Umpires will report all ejections to the Head Umpires and division commissioner who will report it to the Officers and Trustees of Twinsburg Baseball League Inc.
- 12.5. Anyone ejected from two (2) games during a season must meet with the Officers and Trustees of the League who may consider suspending the individual for the remainder of the season.

## 13. GAME TIMES AND DURATION

- 13.1. All games are scheduled for seven (7) innings and will begin within ten (10) minutes of scheduled starting times unless waiting for completion of an earlier game or clearing of inclement weather.
- 13.2. In the event of a tie, extra innings may be played as the time limit allows.
- 13.3. A game that is stopped for any reason with less than three and one half (3 ½) innings completed will be a suspended game and will be resumed at a later date from the point at which it was stopped.
- 13.4. All games will adhere to a strict time limit of 2 hours and 30 minutes.
  - 13.4.1. Time will officially start on the first pitch. This should be noted by the team scorekeepers and announced to both head coaches upon the delivery of the first pitch of the game.
  - 13.4.2. No new inning will be started after the 2 hour and 30 minute-time limit.
  - 13.4.3. An inning will be considered started after the final out of the previous inning is recorded.
  - 13.4.4. If the score is tied after the 2 hour and 30 minute-time limit and a new inning cannot be started, the game will be considered a tie.
- 13.5. A Drop Dead rule will take effect at 3 hours. The game will immediately end, regardless of the situation. The at-bat does not have to be completed if this occurs.
  - 13.5.1. When the Drop Dead rule takes effect, if the HOME team is batting and they have scored the go-ahead run, they will be declared the winner with the current score. If the game is tied or the HOME team is behind and have not had a chance to complete their at-bat, the game will revert back to the last complete inning.
- 13.6. Pitchers will be given 5 warm-up pitches between innings or pitching changes. The fifth pitch will be thrown down to second and then BATTER UP.\_

- 13.7. Speed-Up-Rule - Teams may elect to use a courtesy runner for the catcher of the upcoming inning (after two outs). The replacement runner must be the batter that made the last out. The sole purpose should be to speed up the start of the next inning. The player must be the catcher for the next inning.
- 13.8. Umpires have, at their discretion (after a mutual agreement), the option to stop a game because of darkness, even if the game has not reached its targeted number of innings played or time slot allowance. For games meeting the minimum number of innings needed (3 ½), the Drop Dead rule (13.4.4.1) will be utilized to determine the outcome of the game. Otherwise the game will be treated as a suspended game (13.3).

## 14. PROTESTS

- 14.1. Only the head coach or acting head coach may file protest.
- 14.2. Protests shall be made as follows:
  - 14.2.1. The protesting head coach shall immediately, and before any succeeding play begins, notify the umpire that his team is playing the game under protest.
  - 14.2.2. Within 48 hours, a formal protest must be submitted in writing to the Head Umpire, who will evaluate the validity of the protest and submit it to the Officers and Trustees of the League.
  - 14.2.3. The written protest must be accompanied by a Twenty-five dollar (\$25) cash deposit to be considered valid. The deposit will be returned only if the protest is upheld.
  - 14.2.4. All valid protests will receive a hearing with the division commissioner, the Head Umpire and the Officers and Trustees of the League.

## 15. PROCEDURES

- 15.1. Lightning and Inclement Weather Policy (OHSAA Policy)
  - 15.1.1. Recognition - Coaches, athletic trainers, athletes, administrators, commissioners and contest officials shall be educated regarding the signs indicating thunderstorm development. Since the average distance between successive lightning flashes is approximately two to three miles, ANYTIME that lightning can be seen or heard, the risk is already present. Weather can be monitored using the following methods:
    - 15.1.1.1. Monitor Weather Patterns – Be aware of potential thunderstorms by monitoring local weather forecasts the day before and morning of the competition, and by scanning the sky for signs of potential thunderstorm activity.
    - 15.1.1.2. National Weather Service – Weather can also be monitored using small, portable weather radios from the NWS. The NWS uses a system of severe storm watches and warnings. A watch indicates conditions are favorable for severe weather to develop in an area; a warning indicates severe weather has been reported in an area, and everyone should take proper precautions. Any thunderstorm poses a risk of injury or death even if it does not meet the criteria for severe weather. Therefore, anytime thunderstorms are in the forecast (even if it is only a 20 percent chance), event organizers shall be at a heightened level of awareness to the potential danger of lightning.
  - 15.1.2. Evacuation – If lightning is imminent or a thunderstorm is approaching, all personnel, athletes and spectators shall evacuate to available safe structures or shelters. A list of the closest safe structures should be announced and displayed on placards at all athletic venues. TBL Majors Rules Revised: February 2016
  - 15.1.3. THIRTY-MINUTE RULE – Competition or practice shall be suspended once lightning has been recognized or thunder is heard. It is required to wait at least 30 minutes after the last flash of lightning is witnessed or thunder is heard prior to resuming practice or competition. Given the average rates of thunderstorm travel, the storm should move 10-12 miles away from the area. This significantly reduces the risk of local lightning flashes. Any subsequent lightning or thunder after the beginning of the 30- minute count shall reset the clock, and another count shall begin.
- 15.2. General Weather/Rainouts Guidelines
  - 15.2.1. It is our standard practice to call games on account of weather AT THE FIELD.
  - 15.2.2. Therefore, all players, coaches and parents are expected to go to their appointed field at the appropriate time for their game, regardless of weather condition.
  - 15.2.3. If conditions permit, we will make every attempt to get scheduled games played.
  - 15.2.4. If conditions do not permit, the game will be cancelled and rescheduled.
  - 15.2.5. Occasionally, games will be cancelled in advance if a check of the fields determines that it/they are unplayable. Also, if conditions are poor for an extended period during the day on a game day, we will attempt to cancel the game(s) in advance.
  - 15.2.6. When in doubt, show up at the field.
- 15.3. Cancelled Games
  - 15.3.1. If your game is cancelled either beforehand or during the game (lightning, rain, unplayable field, etc.), please notify your Commissioner as soon as possible.
  - 15.3.2. The Commissioner will coordinate rescheduling your game.
- 15.4. Communications
  - 15.4.1. During the season, please contact your Commissioner with ANY questions you may have. The Commissioners attend weekly board meetings during the season and are update on virtually all issues.
  - 15.4.2. If you cannot contact your Commissioner, please contact the Trustee responsible for Coaches and Commissioners.
- 15.5. Playoffs
  - 15.5.1 For the SENIOR division the TBL will conduct a playoff tournament at the end of the regular season with the top six (6) teams with the most points from the regular season participating in the playoffs (WIN = 3 points, TIE = 2 points, LOSS = 1 point, & GAME NOT MADE UP = 0 points). The division standings tie-breaker are:

- 15.5.1.1. First - most points.
- 15.5.1.2. Second - head to head winner.
- 15.5.1.3. Third - winning percentage.
- 15.5.1.4. Fourth - a coin flip.
- 15.5.2. Commissioners reserve the right to tweak pitching rules for playoffs.
- 15.5.3. The winning coach of each game is responsible for notifying the Commissioner of the outcome of each game.