## Softball/Baseball Scorekeeping for First Timers

Written for novice scorekeeper volunteers scoring CHAA Softball/Baseball


## Thanks for keeping score!

This series of pages attempts to make "keeping the book" for a CHAA Softball/Baseball division game easy. We've tried to be comprehensive while also simplifying the most basic scorekeeping skills and describe them in terms that even our players can understand.

The Scorebook is important. It is the official game record and is used to record every pitch, at bat, and defensive play. The book is used during the game to confirm who is next to bat, how many pitches the pitcher has thrown and where runners were on base before the last play. The book is used after games to calculate player and team statistics.

What does being a scorekeeper mean?
Keeping score means that you fill an important role both for your team and the league. Scorebooks provide evidence of all league games and strengthen HMBLL's affiliation and reputation within Little League District 52.

What are the benefits of score keeping?
There are many, but the feeling you will have after learning something new and contributing to your team will be - well, you'll feel like a stud!

You will deepen your understanding of the game and learn something new every week.

You will get support from the coaches and other parents.

## Are there any downsides?

Not really. But to be honest, you will need to really pay attention to the game. If you're a social butterfly in the stands, then keeping score may not be for you.

The Scorebook

## INTRODUCTION:

This is what a page of the scorebook looks like.

There are a lot of abbreviations and spaces to collect every action that occurs on the field during play. It looks like a complicated mess and you're probably saying, "why did I sign up to do this?"

Don't panic. We'll break this down together and you will see that it is actually easy to understand.

Let's start by understanding how this page is structured.


## Simplify

First, let's identify a whole bunch of stuff we can ignore.

For our purposes in AAA, we can ignore a lot of this page.

All the areas covered in red, are areas that we do not have to keep track of.

Why can we ignore some parts? Most of the highlighted parts are pieces of information that can be completed after the game (by someone else). Some of the highlighted space tracks pitching information. Since AAA is coach pitch, we don't need to track pitchers and pitch counts.

Feel any better?


## Batting Order

Now let's look at the parts we do need to pay attention to and how they're structured.

The left-hand column is where the batting order is listed. There is room for 15 players in the batting order.

There are three spaces for each position in the batting order. One for the starting player and two for substitute players.

## We can ignore substitutes.

The manager from each team will provide the scorekeeper the batting order.

The scorekeeper adds the names of the players, in order, in the spaces provided.


## Inning Columns

There is an individual column for each inning.

Columns tell the "story of the game." They tell us who did what and in what order things happened.


## Player Rows

There is an individual row for each player.

Rows tell the "player's achievements" during the game. They tell us what a specific player did, how it affected the game, and when they did it.


## Recap

If you've been paying attention, you can now ignore quite a bit of this page.

## So far we've learned:

1) That we can ignore a lot of this page.
2) Where to put player's names in the batting order.
3) What the inning columns are for.
4) What the player rows are for.

## Comment:

Each game will have two pages. One for our team and one for the other team.


## The Lineup and Scoring Sequence

## Sample Lineup

Basically, all we're interested in is the lineup (batting order) and the innings to be played.

After you have entered the batting order for both teams (each team gets a page), you are ready for the game to begin.

|  | PLAYERS |  |  | P | 1 | 2 |  | 3 |  | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
|  | NO | LAST | FIRST |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 1 | 24 | Henderson, $R$. |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | SUB |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | SUB |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 2 | 5 | Robinson, $B$. |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | SUB |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | SUB |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 3 | 24 | Mays, W. |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | SUB |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | SUB |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 4 | 44 | McCovey, W. |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | SUB |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | SUB |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 5 | 19 | Gwynn, 7 . |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | SUB |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | SUB |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 6 | 15 | Alomar Jr., S. |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | SUB |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | SUB |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 7 | 13 | Vizquel., 0 . |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
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| 8 | 26 | Boggs, W. |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
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|  |  | SUB |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 9 | 44 | Aaron, H. |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | SUB |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | SUB |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 10 | 31 | Maddux, $G$. |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | SUB |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | SUB |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 11 | 27 | Marichal, J. |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | P: ? $\cdot \cdots$ |  |
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## Lineup Tips

1) Jersey numbers are important. Be sure you have them in the lineup for both teams.
2) If you have not been given a batting order for a team or haven't been given enough time to fill in the names before the game begins, just enter the player's jersey number as they come to bat. You can fill in names later.

NOTE: This example lineup includes two pairs of players that have the same jersey number (\#s 24 and 44). This won't happen in actual games.


## The Sequence of the Game

The game sequence flows down the inning column

Every time a new batter begins a new at bat, you use a new box. We'll describe the box later.

The first batter in the first inning gets the first box (highlighted by a red square). Each subsequent batter gets a new square as you work down the $1^{\text {st }}$ inning column.

Remember, the box captures what the batter did and when he did it. So the box you use is determined by who is batting and what inning it is.

Since players bat in order, you just move to the next box in the order.


## End of a Half-inning

When a player makes the third out the other team comes to bat.

Remember that you created a page for the other team too. At this point, you turn to the other team's page and continue scoring the other team's at bats according the their lineup.

Let's say that \#15, Alomar made the $3^{\text {rd }}$ out. After you finish noting what occurred in his box, you can make a diagonal mark in the lower right hand corner of his box to indicate that he made the last out (see example).

Some scorekeepers, will add a squiggly line to remind themselves that the remaining players did not bat in the inning (see example).


## New Inning

When a player makes the third out the other team comes to bat.

Remember that Alomar made the $3^{\text {rd }}$ out in the first inning. This means that Vizquel will bat first (lead off) in the second inning (see the red square).

Just remember to match the lead off batter to the proper inning to determine what box to start in.

|  | PLAYERS |  |  | S |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
|  | NO | LAST | FIRST |  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 1 | 24 | Henderson, $R$. |  |  |  | $6^{\text {th }}$ <br> Batter |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | SUB |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | SUB |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 2 | 5 | Robinson, B. |  |  | OUT 1 | $7^{\text {th }}$ Batter |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | SUB |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | SUB |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 3 | 24 | Mays, W. |  |  | HIT | $8^{\text {th }}$ Batter |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | SUB |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | SUB |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 4 | 44 | McCovey, W. |  |  | OUT <br> 2 | $9^{\text {th }}$ Batter |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | SUB |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | SUB |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 5 | 19 | Gwynn, 7. |  |  | HIT | $10^{\text {th }}$ <br> Batter |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | SUB |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | SUB |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 6 | 5 | Alomar Jr., S. |  | OUT 3 |  | $.11^{\text {th }}$ <br> Batter |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | SUB |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | SUB |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 7 | 13 | Vizquel., 0 . |  |  |  | LEADS OFF |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | SUB |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | SUB |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 8 | 26 | Boggs, W. |  |  |  | $2^{\text {nd }}$ <br> Batter |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | SUB |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | SUB |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 9 | 44 | Aaron, H . |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | SUB |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | SUB |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 10 | 31 | Maddux, $G$. |  |  |  | $4^{\text {th }}$ <br> Batter |  |  |  | P : ${ }_{\text {c }}$ |
|  |  | SUB |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | SUB |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 11 | 27 | Marichal, J. |  |  |  | $5^{\text {th }}$ Batter |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | SUB |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
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## Recap

We've covered lineups and game sequence.

## So far we've learned:

1) The lineup is the same thing as the batting order.
2) Jersey numbers are important.
3) Where to begin scoring and how the scoring sequence flows.
4) How a half-inning ends.
5) How to begin a new inning in the right place.

## QUIZ:

Using the score sheet to the right, who will lead off the third inning?

The Box

## The Box

The box is where all the game detail is captured.

It's a tiny piece of real estate that requires scorekeepers to make quick and accurate notes about the game.

The notes scorekeepers need to make are both logical and require some baseball shorthand.

Let's start by looking at the box more closely.


## Box Anatomy

There are several things already in the box. Let's understand what each thing is and what scorekeepers need to do.

What is it (see red circle)?
It's a way to keep track of the pitches to the batter. There are three squares for balls and two squares for strikes.

What do you do?
Add a mark in each box according to whether a pitch was a ball or strike.


## Box Anatomy (continued)

What is it (see red circle)?
It's a way to note special ways a batter reaches base that is not a hit.

BB = Base on Balls (a Walk)
HP = Hit by Pitch
SAC = Sacrifice (bunt or fly)

## What do you do?

Circle the appropriate one based on how the batter reached base.


## Box Anatomy (continued)

What is it (see red square)?
This area is where we record the jersey number of the player that will be credited with a run-batted-in (RBI).

## What do you do?

Write the jersey number of the player that caused this player to score.

We will review this in a little bit when we discuss how to record a play.


## Box Anatomy (continued)

What is it (see red highlights)?

1) Type of hit; single, double , triple, or home run.
2) A baseball diamond with 4 bases (dots) and a pitcher's plate (line).

What do you do?
Step 1 - Circle the one that corresponds to the type of hit the batter got.

Step 2 - Connect the bases that the batter touched on his hit.


## Box Anatomy (continued)

## For example:

John hit a double.

What do you do?
Step 1 - Circle the "2"

Step 2 - Draw a line that connects home-to- $1^{\text {stt-to }}-2^{\text {nd }}$.


## Box Anatomy (continued)

## What is it?

The space in the lower right-hand corner of the box is a space for recording an out.

## What do you do?

1) Write in a number 1,2 , or 3 corresponding to the out made; first, second, or third out.
2) Record the play that resulted in an out.


## Box Anatomy (continued)

## For example

Marcus is at bat with no outs. Marcus hits a ground ball to the second baseman. The second baseman caught the ball and threw to the first baseman to force Marcus out at first base. 1 out.

## What do you do?

Step 1 - Write a number 1 in the lower right hand corner of the box.

Step 2 - Record the play ("4-3"). We'll describe this in a little bit.


## Recap

We've covered the anatomy of the box.

## So far we've learned:

1) We can ignore balls and strikes.
2) We can ignore $B B, H P$, and $S A C$.
3) The triangle at the bottom has something to do with RBIs.
4) How to record a hit.
5) How to keep track of outs.

## We have not covered:

1) How to record a play.

So far, we have covered the basics about the score sheet and how it works, the lineup and game sequence and the basic anatomy of the box.

Let's move to our last topic about how to record a play.


## Record a Play

## Record a Play

If there is a tricky part to score keeping, it's how to record a play.

If you recall, the last example described a play where Marcus was at bat with no outs and hit a ground ball to the second baseman. The second baseman caught the ball and threw to the first baseman to force Marcus out at first base.

You'll see the notation of the play in the box as " $4-3$ " with out number 1 recorded.

How in the world did we come up with that?

Let's find out. It's actually not that difficult.


## How Parents See the Field

As parents we tend to see the field according to the names of the players.

Imagine Marcus' hit one more time. He hit the ball to Chris. Chris caught it and threw it to Jackson who touched first base and forced Marcus out.

In shorthand, we could write "Chris-to-Jackson, for 1 out."

How could we possibly write all that inside the teeny tiny box?

We can't. There just isn't enough space.

Let's look at how scorekeepers do it.

## How Scorekeepers See the Field

Scorekeepers simplify the view of the field by replacing player's names with a unique number. The number represents the player's position.

8

7

9

10

1 = Pitcher
2 = Catcher
$3=1^{\text {st }}$ Base
$4=2^{\text {nd }}$ Base
$5=3^{\text {rd }}$ Base
6 = Shortstop
7 = Left Field
8 = Left Centerfield
9 = Right Centerfield
$10=$ Right Field
These numeric representations are always the same and do not change.

## No Need to Memorize

Each page in the scorebook has a helpful reminder of the position's numeric representations.


## Summary

To summarize Marcus's at bat one last time.

Marcus was at bat with no outs and hit a ground ball (dashed line) to the second baseman. The second baseman caught the ball and threw (solid line) to the first baseman to force Marcus out at first base.

The scorekeeper will record the play as a 4-3 putout (putout is implied).

Basically, scorekeepers document the play as it happened using position numbers instead of player's names.


## Recording Sequential Plays

## Recording Sequential Plays

Let's walk through a half-inning to illustrate how scorekeeping works during a game.


## Recording Sequential Plays

Play Ball!
Now batting, Rickey Henderson.

Henderson leads off with a single.

Record Henderson's hit (see big box).


## Recording Sequential Plays

Now batting, Brooks Robinson.
Robinson hits a single and advances Henderson to $2^{\text {nd }}$ base.

Step 1 - Record Robinson's hit (big box)

Step 2 - Add a line (see red line) that shows Henderson advancing from $1^{\text {st }}$ to $2^{\text {nd }}$ base.


## Recording Sequential Plays

Now batting, Willie Mays.
Mays hits a double that scores Henderson and advances Robinson to $3^{\text {rd }}$ base.

Step 1 - Record Mays' double (big box)

Step 2 - Advance Robinson to $3^{\text {rd }}$ base (red lines)

Step 3 - Advance Henderson to Home and note the score (red edits).

When a player scores, scorekeepers color in the diamond (see red scribble). This makes it easy to tally runs at the end of the inning.

We add Mays jersey \#24 to Henderson's box because Mays got the hit that scored Henderson.


## Recording Sequential Plays

Now batting, Willie McCovey.
McCovey flies out (FO) to rightcenterfield. Robinson scores and Mays advances to $3^{\text {rd }}$ base.

Score McCovey's fly out (big box) and then update Robinson's and May's boxes (see edits in red).

Do you see how McCovey (\#44) is given credit for scoring Robinson? This is called a "run batted in" or RBI.

By the way - McCovey's fly out could also be scored as a sacrifice fly. It's a sacrifice because McCovey
"sacrificed" himself (an out) for a run scored.


## Recording Sequential Plays

Now batting, Tony Gwynn.
Tony Gwynn grounds to shortstop who throws to first for the out. Mays does not advance.

Score Gwynn's ground out using the numeric positions. Recall, the shortstop is position 6 and the first baseman is position 3. So the play is scored 6-3.


## Recording Sequential Plays

Now batting, Sandy Alomar Jr.
Alomar strikes out swinging.
Score Alomar's strikeout by using the capital letter "K" and noting the third out (in red). In scorekeeping parlance, $K$ means strikeout. It comes from there being a letter $K$ in the word strike.

Because this is the third out in the half-inning, we can add that diagonal mark and a squiggly line (in red) to remind us the first inning is complete.

|  | PLAYERS |  |  | P | P |  |  |  |  |  |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
|  | NO | LAST | FIRST |  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 1 | 24 | Henderson, $R$ |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | SUB |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | SUB |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 2 | 5 | Robinson, B. |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | SUB |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
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| 3 | 24 | Mays, W. |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | SUB |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | SUB |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 4 | 44 | McCovey, W. |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | SUB |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
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| 5 | 19 | Gwynn, 7. |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | SUB |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
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| 6 | 15 | Alomar Jr., S. |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
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| 7 | 13 | Vizquel., 0 . |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
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| 8 | 26 | Boggs, W. |  |  |  |  | $\begin{array}{\|c} \hline \\ \hline \\ \vdots \\ \hline \end{array}$ |  |  |  |
|  |  | SUB |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
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| 9 | 44 | Aaron, H . |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
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| 10 | 31 | Maddux, G. |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
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| 11 | 27 | Marichal, J. |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
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## Congratulations!

You made it all the way through! By now you should have a good sense of how this scorekeeping thing works.

We're hopeful this information has given you enough information and you feel confident to score a game.

Here are a couple parting tips:

1) Try your best.
2) Learn something every time you score.

- Ask questions
- Engage other parents sitting nearby

3) Mistakes are OK. After all, it's not the World Series.

- Use a pencil and have an eraser handy.

4) Have fun and reward yourself with a treat from the snack bar.
