



# SOMBA

SOUTH OKANAGAN MINOR BASEBALL ASSOCIATION

Providing a Positive Baseball Experience for the Youth of the South Okanagan

## SOMBA 9U Spring Season League Rules

(Updated: June 3, 2025)

As per the BC Minor Baseball Association (BCMBA) Rules, it is up to each Association to set rules for the Spring Season that might be different than the BCMBA Rulebook. Below are the most common of the Spring Season Rules that we as SOMBA have adopted. Rules different than or added over and above BCMBA Rules are shown in **Blue**. For any rules not mentioned here, the 2025 BCMBA Rulebook will be the definitive document. **Email questions to the 9U Division Director at [9u@sombatigers.com](mailto:9u@sombatigers.com)**

### Rule 5: Age Requirements

#### 5.06 – Temporary Call Up

- 9U players may play in **3 games** plus 1 tournament at the 10U and/or 11U level only (not allowed to pitch). **The 9U & 11U Division Directors and the players' Coach must be notified of the name of the player being called up, to ensure that the player is eligible to be called up. The player must receive the same treatment as regular players and must not play more innings than a regular team player.**

### Rule 8: Spring Play

#### 8.06 - 9U

- Tiered teams not permitted. **Tiered teams not permitted for Summer Play.**

### Rule 10: Managing and Coaching

#### 10.03 – Field Decorum

- Managers and Coaches must display leadership and sportsmanlike conduct at all times. **Coaches are responsible for the behaviour of their team players, fans and parents during games and to make sure that there is no abuse of the equipment. Players are to be warned once about throwing of bats, helmets, etc. The second occurrence could result in being called out.**

### Rule 18: Playing Field Dimensions

#### 18.01 – Specific Dimensions by Division

- 60 feet between bases, 42-46 feet between home plate and rubber and 3 x 6 batter's box. **See Home Plate Layout Fig. 2 below.**

### Rule 19: Equipment

#### 19.01 – Athletic Support/Cup

- **Athletic support with cup (Jocks or Jills) are mandatory for all practices and games.** It is MANDATORY that catchers wear athletic support with cup in all divisions.

## 19.02 – Helmets

- Batters, on deck batter, base runners, players used as base coaches or bat people in all age categories shall wear double ear flap helmets which give protection to the temple, ears, base of skull and top of head.
- Skull caps and wraparound head gear are not to be used by any player as so defined.
- **Base runners, batter, and on-deck batter must wear batting helmets with chin straps properly attached.**

## 19.03 – Catchers Equipment

- It is mandatory that full catchers' helmets or skull caps shall be worn by all catchers, in addition to a normal chest protector, shin guards, face mask – with throat protector – and athletic support with cup.
- Catchers in all age categories must wear a protective helmet and mask while catching in practice and warm-up situations such as bullpen or between innings.
- Coaches must wear at least a mask in all practice and warm-up situations. Associations not enforcing this rule will be subject to a fine as determined by BCMBA.

## 19.04 – Bats

- 9U: 30 inch, 2-<sup>5</sup>/<sub>8</sub> inch max diameter, unlimited length/weight drop – bats with greater than 2-<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> inch barrel diameter must be marked "USABB" or stamped with BPF 1.15 inch (Bat Performance Factor).

## 19.06 – Uniforms

- **Team uniforms supplied by SOMBA must be worn to all games. Baseball jerseys are to be tucked in.**

## 19.07 – Footwear

- Metal cleats are not permitted.
- **Players may wear running shoes or molded rubber cleats.**

## 19.08 – Gloves

- It is recommended that all players wear fingered fielder's gloves.

## Rule 22: Administration of Games

- **The home team is responsible to prepare the diamond, line the field and fill in any depressions before the game. After the game, they are to make sure all equipment used during the game is returned to the storage bin and locked up.**
- **The home team occupies the dugout behind third base.**
- Before a game, each head coach must give a copy of their batting line-up to the opposing team and the home plate umpire. The batting line-up must contain the first and last name of each player and coach and each of their uniform numbers.
- **It is solely the home team coach's discretion when to call the game due to darkness or for field or weather conditions. Games postponed due to rain will be rescheduled by the participating Coaches and communicated to the Division Director & Fields Director.**
- **If the run differential is equal to or less than 8, the home team will take their last bats. If the run differential is more than 8, then the mercy rule will apply. The head coaches may mutually agree to allow the home team to bat in the interest of more experience for the players. If in their last bats the home team goes ahead by 1 or more runs, the game will end (walk off). Again, the coaches may agree to continue playing to a logical stopping point like the end of the batting order.**

## 22.01 – Length of Game

- 9U: 5 innings in length. After 1.5 hours the next inning started will be declared the open inning (8 run max inning). Score is kept at this level. If a game is a tie at the end of the game, it will remain a tie.

### Rule 23: Line-up & Substitutions

- All players will be included in the batting order. Players will be listed in the order they are to bat. Players arriving late will be added to the end of the batting order.

### Rule 24: Pitching Rules

#### 24.01 – Number of Pitches and Required Rest

- Sling Pitching machines are used for all games.
- All players may only pitch 1 inning per game to a maximum of 35 pitches & after delivering 1 pitch to a batter, that player shall not pitch in any other inning that game (does not apply to tournament play).
- A pitcher may pitch in 2 games in a single day so long as the total number of pitches in the first game is 25 or less & a pitcher may pitch in 2 consecutive days, so long as the total number of pitches in the previous day is 25 or less (does not apply to tournament play).
- A pitcher may not pitch 3 days in a row.
- Any pitcher who delivers 1 pitch to a batter shall be considered to have pitched 1 inning.
- All players should be given the opportunity to pitch if they are able. Pitchers may move closer to home plate with the agreement of both coaches and for reasons of distance only.

### Rule 25: Fair Play Rule

- Ten players are allowed on the field per inning. The 10th player must play an outfield position.
- It is highly recommended that at least one coach, while their team is playing on the defensive, be on the playing field providing guidance and training to their team in the fundamentals of baseball.
- All players must sit one inning before a player can sit a second inning and no healthy player can sit more than 2 innings per game.
- No player may play more than 2 innings in the same position in one game, except the catcher, who may play 3 innings. Players should rotate positions every inning for fair play. All players must play the infield for a minimum of 2 innings and outfield for a minimum of 1 inning per game. Any team that is proven to be in violation of this rule will forfeit the game.

### Rule 26: General Playing Rules

- The offensive team will operate the pitching machine. Never leave the pitching machine loaded.
- If a batted ball hits the pitching machine, pitching machine operator, or goes through the pitching machine, it is ruled a “dead ball” and the batter is given a new count. If a thrown ball hits the pitching machine during “live play” then the ball is ruled a “dead ball” and each runner advances one base.
- The player playing the “pitcher” position must stay outside the coned area surrounding the pitching machine –the player must have one foot on the mound and one foot in the grass.
- There is no bunting - a bunt is considered a strike.
- All players are to remain in the dugout at all times when their team is at bat, except the batter and on-deck batter.
- In the interest of playing all scheduled innings, take the field quickly when changing sides. Dress the catcher and warm-up the pitcher while on offence when possible.
- A ball overthrown at any base is live and runners may advance ONE BASE ONLY at their own risk. If the ball leaves the playing field, the ball will be called dead and the runners will automatically advance to the next base.

- Any base runner that overruns another base runner will be declared out.
- A batter or runner will advance and may continue to advance at their own risk when the ball is hit.
- When a ball is fielded by an outfielder and is returned to any infielder in the infield, the ball is considered “dead”. When the play becomes dead for this reason, a runner between bases may attempt to advance to the next base if it is unoccupied. Base runners must not leave their base once an infielder in the infield has possession of the ball.

#### 26.01 - Slide or Avoid

- The slide and avoid rule is in effect. **Runners should avoid contact with defensive players.** If a play is being made, or is about to be made, it is MANDATORY for players of all age groups to slide or make an effort to avoid a collision at all bases and home plate.

#### 26.03 - Headfirst Slides

- No intentional headfirst slides to a base or home plate are allowed.

#### 26.05 - Helmet Removal

- Any base runner who removes their helmet (ie. throws helmet off) while running the base paths, is subject to being put out. If in the judgement of the game official, a violation occurs, the player will receive one warning. A second occurrence will result in an automatic out.

#### 26.06 – Infield Fly

- The infield fly rule is not called in this division.

#### 26.07 – Minimum Players

- **Four complete innings with no less than 8 players on the field for each team will constitute a legal game. If a team is unable to field 8 players, the other team may lend that team players for the game to be played fairly. At no time should a game be cancelled due to lack of players.**

#### 26.08 - Run Limits

- **A team’s turn at bat will consist of 3 outs or when the run limit has been met for the inning.**

#### 26.09 - Leadoffs

- **Lead offs are not allowed. No player on the offensive team, while a base runner, will be allowed to leadoff from any base they are on until the batter has hit the ball fairly from the plate. If a base runner “leads-off” and a dead, foul, strike out or illegal batted ball situation occurs, the base runner must return to their original positions. If a base runner “leads-off” and a fair hit ball situation occurs, the base runner is automatically out. The batter will be allowed to advance as normal.**

#### 26.10 – Dropped Third Strike

- The batter cannot run on the third strike dropped by the catcher.

#### 26.12 - Balks/Failure to Deliver the Pitch

- No “Balk Balls” will be called against the pitcher in this division.

#### Rule 31: 9U Specific Rules

(See suggested 9U rule variations in the BCMBA Rulebook, some of which have been adopted elsewhere in this document, where appropriate for ease of reference)

### Start-of-Season to May 15th

- 5 innings, 4 run max except the last inning, which has an 8 run max (4, 4, 4, 4, 8).
- All players receive 5 pitches from the pitching machine regardless of strikes or balls. The ball must be held up before putting it into the machine so that the batter and the catcher know the ball is coming.
- Players will be given the opportunity to hit off a tee if they are unsuccessful at hitting the first 5 pitches from the pitching machine.
- Stealing is not permitted.
- The catcher is asked to throw the ball behind them to keep the pace of play up.

### May 16th to End-of-Season

- The first 2 innings will be live pitching – 2 run max innings only. The third and fourth innings - 4 run max innings. Last inning - 8 run max inning (2, 2, 4, 4, 8).
- Pitching shall be from 42 feet (players may pitch from 46 feet, but it is not mandatory. If a player elects to pitch from 46 feet, they must start and finish that inning from 46 feet).
- The STRIKE ZONE is that area over home plate and extends one ball width to the inside, and two ball widths to the outside of the plate. The upper limit of which is a horizontal line at the midpoint between the top of the shoulders and the top of the uniform pants. The lower level is a line at the hollow beneath the kneecap. The strike zone will be determined from the batter's stance as the batter is prepared to swing at a pitched ball. See Strike Zone Fig. 1 below.
- A "walk" only applies during the player pitching innings.
- A batter may not "foul" out and will continue to receive balls until they miss the ball.
- Stealing is only permitted to 2nd and 3rd base. The catcher is encouraged to make the throw to 2nd and 3rd as the runner will be held at 2nd on a steal and cannot advance home on an overthrow.
- It is mandatory for the catcher to throw the ball back to the pitcher in all innings.
- In the 3rd and 4th innings, players will receive 5 pitches from the pitching machine. If the player does not hit, the tee will be used.
- In the 5th inning, players will receive 5 pitches from the pitching machine. Failure to hit 5 machine pitches is deemed a strikeout.

