

**TEANECK BASEBALL ORGANIZATION**  
**4<sup>th</sup>/5<sup>th</sup> GRADES DIVISION BASEBALL RULES**  
**2020**

*Major League Baseball rules as played in the National League will be followed in all games with the exception of the following TBO league rules:*

- 1. Regulation game** is 6 innings. Official game is 4 innings (3 ½ if the home team is winning)
  
- 2. THE FIELD:**
  - a. Bases are set 60' apart. Before the game, umpires should determine the halfway points between bases.
  - b. The pitching rubber shall be set 46' from the rear point of home plate.
  
- 3. TEAMS:**
  - a. A team must have 7 players available by 15 minutes after game time to avoid a forfeit.
  - b. All available players must be in the batting order at the same time.
  - c. No more than 9 fielders permitted.
  - d. If a game goes a full six innings, no player can sit out more than two innings in the field. However, if a player comes late to the game, the manager may reduce the number of innings by the number of innings missed. That is, if a player comes in the second inning, the player may be limited to three innings; if the player comes in the 3<sup>rd</sup> inning, said player may be limited to 2 innings. If the player comes in the 4<sup>th</sup> inning, he may be limited to 1 inning. And if the player comes in the 5<sup>th</sup> inning or later, it is at the manager's discretion if that player plays during that game. During the playoffs, no player can sit for more than three innings. If he comes late to a game, the same changes as during the regular season may be applied.
  - e. Anyone reporting to the game after the game has begun will be added to the bottom of the lineup accordingly
  - f. No more than three adults in the field/dugout.
  
- 4. RUNS:**
  - a. During innings 1-5 there is a 4-run limit.
  - b. During the 6<sup>th</sup> and extra innings there is no run limit.

## 5. BASERUNNERS:

- a. May not leave the base until the ball crosses the front of home plate or the ball is hit. If a runner leaves the base before the ball crosses the front of home plate or the ball is hit, the runner is out, but it is not a dead ball and play shall continue. There is no warning.
- b. On overthrows that put the ball out of play, the runner will be awarded one extra base in addition to the base he was headed to.
- c. It shall be deemed an obstruction if a fielder, during a play, fakes a catch or tag that causes the runner to alter course of action. The umpire shall award the runner one additional base in addition to the one he was headed to.
- d. The runner is not out if, after making contact with a base, the base is displaced and the runner is tagged; as long as the runner stays where the base originally was. The runner shall remain in position until time is called, or may advance at own risk. If the runner attempts to "follow" the displaced base or proceeds to another base and is tagged, the runner is out.
- e. No head-first slides except when returning to a base. A runner who otherwise slides head first is out.
- f. Managers and coaches should encourage base runners to slide on close plays. The "slide or avoid" rule is in effect: if a fielder is in possession of the ball, and the runner attempts to reach that base without sliding or avoiding the fielder, the runner is out. If the fielder is not in possession of the ball, he/she must allow the runner access to the base; otherwise, it is obstruction and the runner is safe.
- g. After a play is over, runner may not lead from a base while the pitcher has the ball on the rubber.
- h. On plays initiated by a batted ball, play stops when the pitcher has the ball on the rubber. At that point, the ball is dead and play must stop. Until then, the ball is in play; runners may advance at their risk, and a play may be attempted on them. When the ball is dead, runners who are more than halfway to a base which is unoccupied are awarded that base. If they are less than halfway, or the next base is occupied, they must return to the base from which they came.
- i. Stealing is permitted; except that there shall be no more than one **successful** steal of home plate per inning. A runner taking a base on a wild pitch or passed ball constitutes a steal for the purposes of this rule. A pitcher cannot end a steal attempt by stepping on the rubber. If a player leaves third base in an attempt to steal home and the steal limit is used up, he is at risk of being tagged out and must attempt to return to his original base. He is also out (i) if his original base is tagged before he can return to the base as a force out, or (ii) if he passes home plate. There is no warning on this.
- j. Tagging up is permitted.
- k. May advance at own risk on wild pitches and passed balls.
- l. A courtesy runner may be inserted if a player is injured while batting or running the bases; or sustained an injury immediately before his/her at-bat. The pinch runner is the player who made the last batted out in the lineup. A

pinch runner can only be inserted once for any given player in any given game. A pinch runner may also be inserted for the catcher when there are two outs. If a pinch runner is used for a catcher, then the manager shall use the replaced runner as a catcher on defense for the entire inning immediately following.

- m. In those leagues using safety bases: the first baseperson must touch the white part of the base for the runner/batter to be out. If he/she touches the orange part, the batter/runner is not out. The batter/runner may touch either white or orange. However, if he touches white and makes contact with the first baseman, the batter/runner is out.
- n. If a pitch goes over, through or under the backstop, the ball is dead; and runners get the base they are going to, only.
- o. If a coach touches a runner during play in a manner deemed to assist the runner, the runner will be called out.

## 6. PITCHING:

- a. No curve, screw, fork or knuckle balls or sliders permitted. PENALTY: Umpire shall warn the pitcher on the first two occasions AND shall call a ball on the batter AND advance all runners one base AND upon the third occasion, the pitcher shall be removed as pitcher.
- b. Starting pitcher may have 8 warmup pitches before the first inning, and 5 warm up pitches before each subsequent inning unless the umpire permits more. Relief pitcher may have 8 warm ups unless the umpire permits more, and 5 in all subsequent innings. In the event that a pitcher is removed for injury, the relief pitcher shall have as many warm ups as the umpire deems necessary but no less than 8. .
- c. Two mound visits per pitcher per inning permitted, 3<sup>rd</sup> visit requires pitcher removal.
- d. A pitcher hitting 2 batters in one inning or three in a game shall be removed.
- e. Pitcher may not pitch more than 6 innings in a calendar week (Sunday through Saturday), nor more than 3 innings in a game. An inning shall mean at least 1 pitch. Upon removal of a pitcher from the mound, player may play any other position but may not return as a pitcher in that game. **Exception:** *If the game is suspended and resumed on a later date, a player removed from the pitcher position (but not from the game) may pitch in the resumed game in accordance with other applicable pitching rules.*
- f. Until a date certain to be determined by the Board which will be approximately 3 weeks into the regular season, pitchers may not throw more than 50 pitches in a game. After that date, pitchers may not throw more than 75 pitches in a game. If the pitcher reaches a pitch limit during an at-bat, the pitcher may finish pitching to that batter. however, a replacement pitcher must be brought in to pitch to the next batter. Throwing 20 or fewer pitches does not require any days of rest. Pitching 21-40 pitches requires one day of rest; throwing

41-60 pitches requires two days of rest; and throwing more than 60 pitches requires three days of rest. Pitches thrown as part of an intentional walk are not included in the pitch counts. Pitch count rules are maintained in the playoffs.

- g. Pitchers must maintain their days of rest even into the following week.
- h. If in the judgment of the umpire, a batter intentionally attempts to be hit by a pitch the batter is out and the pitcher will not be charged with a "hit batter". A pitch that bounces prior to hitting a batter is considered a hit batter. If a batter swings at a pitch that hits the batter; or if the batter is hit by a pitch in the strike zone, it is a strike; the pitcher is not charged with a hit batter.
- i. Intentional walks are permitted but must be pitched (i.e. four balls must be thrown to the batter).
- j. Immediately after the conclusion of each game, managers from both teams shall review together and agree on the pitch counts and number of innings pitched for each player that pitched in that game and mark the pitch counts and number of innings pitched for each pitcher in their respective scorebooks, which are to be signed by the umpire. Within 24 hours after a game (and before the next game), each manager shall then email to the Division Director the pitch counts and number of innings pitched for each of their respective players, copying the opposing manager from that game.
- k. The pitcher may not wear a white or grey long sleeved shirt.

## 7. **BATTING:**

- a. 4 balls, 3 strikes in effect.
- b. Batter must be in the batter's box when swinging. Except where the batter's swing carries him out of the batter's box, a strike shall be assessed against the batter if he leaves the batter's box to swing at a pitch. If such an occurrence puts the ball in play, the fielding team shall have the option to accept the result of the play or the strike.
- c. If the batter is called out for throwing the bat, the ball is dead and no runners may advance.
- d. The "Dropped third strike" rule is not in effect.
- e. There must be no attempt at distracting the pitcher once he has begun his motion. This includes, but is not limited to chanting or yelling. Any yells or cheers must end as soon as he begins his windup. Failure to comply results in that pitch being called a strike.
- f. No foul third strike, except when foul tip is caught and held by the catcher. Any foul exceeding the height of the batter shall be considered playable and if caught, the batter is out.
- g. **Bat Throwing:** During the preseason, the umpire shall issue warnings (reminders) only. Thereafter, the umpire shall issue one warning before the game. With each occurrence, the batter shall be called out in accordance with rule 7c.

- h. **Infield fly rule in effect;** An Infield Fly is a fair fly (not including a line drive or an attempted bunt), which can be caught by an infielder with ordinary effort; and provided the hit is made before two are out and at a time when 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> bases or all bases are occupied. When it seems apparent that a batted ball will be an infield fly, the plate umpire immediately announces it and the batter is called out. At this point, runners may advance at their own risk. If the hit should then prove to be foul, the decision is reversed and it is treated the same as any other foul.
- i. **Injured batter:** An injured batter may be replaced by the next player in the order, without penalty and without the injured player being prevented from returning. The replacement batter assumes the count of the injured batter.
- j. **Fake bunt.** If a batter squares around to bunt, or holds the bat out as if to bunt, he may not bring the bat back and swing away. The batter is out and the ball is dead.

## 8. EQUIPMENT:

- a. Catchers must wear full gear, including mask, chest protector, cup, shin guards and catcher's mitt.
- b. Pitchers must wear a chest protector.
- c. Players must wear Non-metal cleats and protective cups. **Players are to be checked prior to the start of the game. Any player attending a game and not wearing cleats and protective cups will be disallowed from playing.**
- d. Complete uniforms (TBO Recreational League hats, TBO Recreational League pants and the proper TBO shirt) must be worn by all players. Player not in uniform must bat at the end of the batting order. This rule may only be enforced until such time that the player has stepped into the batter's box and the first pitch has been thrown to the player. After that point the player may remain in the lineup at the same point in the batting order for the remainder of the game.
- e. No jewelry or combs. Medic Alert bracelets are permissible. Players with casts, hard splints or braces on extremities may not play. Braces on the trunk are permissible with a note from the child's physician other than a parent.
- f. Intentional throwing of equipment is prohibited and can mean ejection from the game.
- g. Caged helmets must be worn while batting.
- h. All team equipment must be kept in the dugout or in dead ball territory.

## 9. BATS:

**The bat must be a baseball bat which meets the USA Baseball Bat standard (USABat).** It shall be a smooth, rounded stick, and made of material and color tested and proved acceptable to the USA Baseball Bat standard (USABat).

A bat shall not be more than thirty-three (33) inches in length nor more than two and five-eighths (2 5/8) inches in diameter.

**10. HOME TEAM RESPONSIBILITIES:**

Winning team must enter results of the game on the Website. Home team is responsible for raking the field at the end of the game and putting away all equipment in the lockboxes.

**11. GAME CANCELLATION/RE-SCHEDULING:**

No game can be canceled or rescheduled for the convenience of the teams without the **prior** approval of the schedule coordinator. Failure to observe this rule will result in forfeiture of the game by both teams. **No exceptions.**

**12. TIME LIMIT:**

No inning may commence after play has reached 2 hours. Innings already under way after the two hour time limit shall be completed unless the umpire calls the game for darkness/weather, or 2 ½ hours of play have expired. If a game is called because of darkness or rain, and the game is not yet an official game, it will continue from the exact point at which it was stopped, with the same lineup, at a time to be determined by the Division President, in conjunction with the Scheduler. Pitching limits are in force are those of the week in which the game is continued. If the game is official at the time it is called, it reverts back to the last completed inning—unless the home team is now in the lead – in which case the home team wins. If a game is called because of darkness or weather, and the game is not yet an official game, at the subsequent finishing of the game, any player not present initially but who are at the game at the time the game is finishing, may be added to the bottom of the batting order.

**The time limit is not in force during the playoffs.**

**13. UMPIRES:**

- a. The umpire shall have the authority to call or suspend a game once the game has commenced. Managers, coaches, parents, etc, shall have no say. An executive member of the TBO board who is not a manager, coach, or parent in the division may end or suspend the game if he/she feels there is a safety issue.
- b. **NO UMPIRE:** If there is no umpire, the managers may agree to utilize anyone they deem suitable and the game will be official. *Please notify the Head Umpire and Head of Baseball if the umpire fails to show.*

- c. The umpire is responsible for putting out the bases prior to the game.
- d. Umpires must enforce the rules as written. A manager, coach, and/or umpire **may not** alter or suspend any rule.

**14. VERBAL ABUSE:**

Verbal abuse of any umpire, player, manager or coach by any other player, manager or coach will not be tolerated and shall be deemed unsportsmanlike conduct. The offender shall be subject to ejection at the discretion of the umpire or at the direction of a Member of the Board who observes the abuse. If the ejected party refuses to leave, the umpire may forfeit the game to the opposing team.

If the abuse is from a spectator, partisan to a team, the umpire shall direct the manager of that team to intervene to stop the abuse. If the manager refuses to or is unsuccessful in stopping the abuse, the umpire, after a warning, may declare a forfeit to the other team.

If the abuse is from a spectator who is not a partisan of either team, the umpire may request the assistance of either or both managers to intervene. If the intervention is unsuccessful, the umpire may suspend the game.

**15. PROTESTS:** Protests can be on a point of rule interpretation only, not on umpire's judgment call.

- a. Protesting manager must inform the umpire and opposing manager of the protest and the basis for it before the next pitch is thrown.
- b. The umpire must sign both managers' scorebooks at the point of protest and make a notation of the progress of the game (e.g. top of 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> batter, 1 out).
- c. The protested game must be completed.
- d. The protesting manager must submit in writing to the Division Director the basis for the protest within 24 hours of the completion of the game. The division director may seek assistance from any member of the Board in adjudicating the protest
- e. If the protest is ruled in favor of the protesting team, the game shall revert back to the time of the protest.
- f. All decisions are final.
- g. Failure to follow any of these rules shall result in a denial of the protest. **NO EXCEPTIONS.**