

SHAKER YOUTH BASEBALL LEAGUE MAJOR LEAGUES

RULEBOOK

2022 EDITION



The Official Baseball Rules published by the National Baseball Congress Inc. with the following additions and exceptions shall govern Senior League play.

OBJECTIVE

To provide a supervised, recreational, and instructional summer baseball program for players from 3rd grade to 10th grade. No age exceptions will be made except under extremely unusual circumstances. Exceptions are within the sole discretion of the League commissioners.

LEAGUE STRUCTURE

- A. The Major League shall be divided into teams consisting of a maximum of 14 players, although the League may under special circumstances, allow a player limit of 15 players per team.
- B. Practices will start in May and the season will end in July. The season will conclude with a seeded, double-elimination playoff tournament, in which all teams will participate. The won-loss records will determine the seeding.
- C. The commissioners are responsible for the administration of the Major League. They will:
 - a. Handle any request for equipment replacement or repair
 - b. Handle protests, complaints, etc., and report as necessary to the SYBL Board of Directors
 - c. Make any necessary schedule changes
 - d. Resolve any disputes and have authority to suspend a manager, coach, or player
 - e. Have exclusive authority to determine if a player is to be placed on a different team

CALL UPS/ CALL DOWNS

Each Major League team has one or more SYBL AAA affiliates. If a Major League team will be unable to field a team of at least 10 players for a game, a request may be made to bring up a player from one of its AAA affiliates. That player may not pitch. Major League players may not play in SYBL AAA unless that player is reassigned by the commissioner for the purpose of remedial instruction.

GAME DAY PROCEDURES

- A. **Duration** - The Senior League games will be seven innings with a 2:15 hour time limit. This means that no new inning will be allowed to start after the 2:15 time limit is reached. All parties should agree on the start time as the first pitch is delivered. If the time limit is reached and the game is tied, there will be one (1) extra inning. If after this extra inning the game is tied, the game will be recorded as a tie and reported to the commissioner as such. Games start as per the official schedule. It may not be possible to reschedule all rainouts or otherwise postponed games due to limited field availability.
- B. **Warm-ups** - The visiting team shall conduct its pregame practice 40 minutes prior to the start of the game and the pregame practice shall be no longer than 15 minutes. The home team shall then conduct their practice 20 minutes prior to the start of the game and the practice shall not last longer than 15 minutes. The teams involved shall decide upon the use of the field prior to 40 minutes before the start of the game.
- C. **Suspension** - If a game is suspended due to weather, darkness, etc., it is a complete game if 5 innings have been completed with the visiting team in the lead or 4 1/2 innings have been completed with the home team in the lead.
- D. **Re-schedule** - If a game is suspended but is not a complete game (see above), the Commissioners will attempt to re-schedule it. The game shall be replayed in its entirety if less than 3 innings were completed. If 3 or more innings were completed, the game shall be resumed at the point at which play was suspended.
- E. **Pre-game Meeting** - The managers shall meet with the umpire prior to each game to review rules and ground rules. Managers should be prepared to provide the umpire with a copy of these rules. The League will provide the managers with funds to pay for the umpire in cash prior to each game.
- F. **Home Team** - The official schedule will indicate which is the home team. The home team is responsible for providing the official scorer and paying the umpire. Both teams should keep score and the scorers should consult with each other after each half inning to ensure that their scores agree. In the event of a disagreement, the official scorer's score shall be controlling.
- G. **Reporting** - The home team must report the score of the game that evening or the next day to the Commissioner's email.
- H. **Line-ups** - Teams shall exchange lineups prior to the start of each game. Players arriving late shall be inserted at the end of the batting order.
- I. **Minimums** - A minimum of 8 players must be present to field a team to begin a game. If a team fails to field at least 8 players by 10 minutes after the scheduled start of the game, that team shall forfeit the game. Borrowing players from the

opposing team or other teams in the league is prohibited. Please contact the commissioner for call-up players as soon as it becomes clear the roster will be short. There is no minimum number of players required to complete a game once it has started. However, a team with less than 8 players that is losing by more than 10 runs after 4 innings of play shall be declared the loser.

- J. **Schedule** - All games are to be played when scheduled. Only a commissioner may change the schedule.
- K. **Uniforms** - Players are to wear complete game uniforms, which shall include hats, jerseys, pants, and socks.
- L. **Helmets** - Batter must wear batting helmets. Base runners must wear helmets as well. Catchers must wear full catching gear and a protective cup. All boys should be encouraged to wear a protective cup regardless.
- M. **Spikes** - Metal spikes or cleats are PROHIBITED.
- N. **Participation** - A manager shall not put a player in the lineup if the manager knows that the player cannot participate in all aspects of the game—batting, running, fielding, and throwing. If a base runner is injured, that player can be replaced with the player who made the last batted out. If the injury occurs in the first inning before a batted out has been recorded, the replacement will be the last player in the batting order. The injured (replaced) base runner may not bat in the same offensive inning. Additionally, the injured (replaced) base runner must sit out, at a minimum, the next defensive inning. If the injured (replaced) player was pitching prior to the injury, that player may not pitch the remainder of the game. The injured (replaced) player may return to any defensive position except pitcher after sitting out at least one defensive inning. If the same player is replaced on the base paths for a second time during the same game, the injured (replaced) player cannot play for the remainder of the game.
- O. **Intentional Walk** - A pitcher may not intentionally walk a player on another team more than once per game. This is a recreational league and the team managers should exercise good sportsmanship and allow the players to participate in the outcome of the game. Violations of the intentional walk rule may, at the umpires discretion, lead to ejection of a player or manager.

TERMINATION OF PLAY

- A. **Suspension** - It is the responsibility of the managers to suspend play when weather, visibility, or other field conditions make play unsafe. Managers and the umpire should confer about the start of a new inning if it appears that darkness or weather will prevent the completion of that inning. If the managers cannot reach agreement, the umpire shall decide.
- B. **Lightning** - Lightning in the area of play shall cause immediate suspension or calling of the game. Light rain or scattered showers will not necessarily require the calling or postponement of a game. When in doubt about the start of a game due to weather conditions, teams should report to the field. If, in the opinion of the umpire, a field is playable and one of the teams has not shown up within the required time, a forfeit shall be declared.
- C. **Behavior** - If the umpire determines that he has lost control of the game, he shall have the authority to suspend play, instruct both managers to clear the field, and terminate the game.
- D. **Mercy Rule** - If a team is losing by 15 runs after 4 innings or 10 runs after 5 innings, its manager may (but is not obligated) to concede victory to the other team. However, because SYBL is an instructional league, the teams should consider continuing play and allowing players to field positions they usually do not play.

RULES OF PLAY

- A. **Sportsmanship** - Rules regarding sportsmanship are described in the Sportsmanship attachment. Distribute these rules to your players (and their parents) and discuss them. The SYBL Board has adopted a zero-tolerance standard for violation of these rules. Managers, coaches, and players who violate these rules are subject to being ejected from the game and suspended from future games. **BE WARNED - THIS IS A SERIOUS TOPIC!**
- B. **Bat Limits** - The Senior League allowance for bats is a differential of -5 ("Drop 5") from length to weight. (EG- 33 inches, 28 ounces is legal). For AAA Players being called up to the Major Leagues, the bat rules in place for the AAA player apply and supersede the Major League rules.
- C. **Field Dimensions** - Pitching Distance: 54 feet, Base Distance: 80 feet (bases should remain free)
- D. **Batting Order** - All participating players are listed in the batting order and shall bat in order regardless of when or where they play in the field.
- E. **Minimums** - All players are to play a minimum of three innings in the field. A player who is removed from defensive play may re-enter the game in subsequent innings. The three-inning rule is a minimum standard. **NOTE:** The Player Participation rule exists to ensure that less skilled players do not spend an inordinate time on the bench and that the player time is maximized. It is not intended to provide stringent guidelines governing the ability of a player to participate in the game when and if that player arrives late.
- F. **Sliding** - The intent of the rules regarding sliding is to prevent collisions and injuries to base runners and fielders.
- G. **Headfirst Sliding** - Headfirst sliding is prohibited. An infraction of this rule will require the runner to be called out. Exceptions: A runner returning (diving back) to base on a pick-off or scrambling a short distance back to a base.
- H. **Sliding Required** - If a fielder is in a position to make a tag and the ball is being thrown to that base, the runner must slide. An infraction of this rule will require the runner to be called out.
- I. **Fielder Safety** - Runners may NOT take out a fielder by running into him or by sliding into him with unnecessary roughness in order to break up a double play or to attempt to separate the ball from the fielder.
- J. **Basepath Blocking** - Fielders, including the catcher, may NOT block a runner's path to a base, even if in the act of making a tag. When receiving a throw or making a tag, a fielder may straddle the bag or otherwise maintain his share of the base area but may not block the runner's progress.
- K. **Leading Off and Stealing** - Runners may lead off and may steal any base, including home, and may advance to home on a passed ball.

- L. **Distractions** - A base runner may not intentionally try to distract the pitcher. The runner shall be called out if there is an infraction of this rule. It is the manager's responsibility to explain this rule to the umpire at the start of the game. The League stresses sportsmanship.
- M. **Pitching Limits** - Pitching limits are based on safety concerns. Weekly inning limits are to be observed even in the case of additional games or innings in a week due to make- up games, extra-inning games, etc.
- N. **Pitching Week** - A pitching week begins on Monday and ends on Sunday.
- O. **Innings Restrictions** - 4 innings per game and 9 innings per week during the regular season.
- P. **Innings** - A player is considered to have pitched an inning if he throws a pitch in the inning.
- Q. **Relief Pitcher** - Once a pitcher is replaced, he may not pitch again in that game.
- R. **Pitcher Development** - It is the Board's hope that all managers will develop at least 3 or 4 pitchers per team.
- S. **Pitching Rules** - Pitching rules are in accordance with 8.00 of the rule book including legal pitching deliveries, balks, pick-off attempts, managers trips to the mound, illegal pitches, etc. However, because SYBL is an instructional league, the umpire shall give each pitcher one warning prior to calling a balk, and shall instruct the pitcher how to comply with the pitching rules.
- T. **Warm-up Throws** - Rule 8.03 allows a pitcher up to 8 warm-up throws at the beginning of each inning or relieving another pitcher. However, a player shall be allowed additional warm- up throws when he relieves the pitcher from another position in the field without having the opportunity to warm-up.
- U. **Tiebreakers** - If at the end of the regular season two or more teams have identical records, the better seed(s) will go to the team with the better record in games played between the teams that are tied, secondly their record against common opponents. The final tiebreaker will be a coin toss.
- V. **Seeding** - The home team will typically be the team with the better seed. However, for the championship game, the team in the winner's bracket will be the home team. If the team coming out of the loser's bracket wins and forces a second championship game, the winner of the first game will be the home team.
- W. **Playoff Official Game** - All games must go at least 6 innings and must be played to a conclusion. Games that are suspended (due to weather, darkness, etc.) will be resumed at the point at which play was stopped (minimum 3 innings). Games with less than 3 innings will be started from the beginning. The Commissioners will determine when suspended games will be resumed.
- X. **Playoff Pitching Waiver** - The 9 innings per week pitching limitation is waived.

CITY OF SHAKER HEIGHTS ZERO TOLERANCE POLICY

To ensure a safe, enjoyable and positive experience for all who use the City's recreational facilities, the following policy was adopted in July 2001, and is fully enforceable by the City of Shaker Heights. This policy addresses inappropriate or disruptive behavior that interferes with the pleasure and peaceful atmosphere at all City recreational facilities by parents, participants, officials, spectators and employees. The policy emphasizes respect for others and responsible, mature behavior when responding to emotional or stressful situations. Our policy is that appropriate or disruptive behavior will not be allowed or tolerated on the grounds of City recreational facilities or fields.

Inappropriate or disruptive behavior shall include, but is not limited to: A. Using loud, obscene or vulgar language in a boisterous, combative or confrontational manner. B. Taunting of individuals, coaches, officials, employees or spectators by means of baiting, stalking, ridiculing, or threatening physical violence. C. Exhibiting behavior detrimental to the physical and/or emotional well-being of youth participants. Our staff has been instructed to contact the Shaker Heights Police Department when inappropriate or disruptive behavior occurs. Violators will be escorted from the facility and will not be allowed to return until the Department of Community Life conducts a hearing with all involved parties in attendance. Penalties will vary dependent upon severity of infraction and could include written warning, temporary suspension or permanent suspension from facilities and programs. Additionally, police reports and criminal charges may be filed. Please enjoy our facilities and program. Please support and respect players, coaches, officials, staff and all attendees in a positive, productive and mature manner. Thank you. The City of Shaker Heights Good Luck and Have Fun!