

SHAKER YOUTH BASEBALL LEAGUE AAA AND AA LEAGUES

RULEBOOK

2023 EDITION



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*Please Note: Deleted rules are marked with ~~strike through text~~. New language is marked with **highlighted text**. In this version, all references to “Major(s)” have been replaced with “AAA” and all references to “Minor(s)” have been replaced with “AA.”*

OBJECTIVE

Shaker Youth Baseball is a coeducational League. Its goal is to provide a supervised recreational and instructional summer baseball program for players ~~currently in the 3rd and 4th grade~~ **9 and 10 year-olds** (AA League), ~~5th and 6th grade~~ **11 and 12 year olds** (AAA League) ~~and 7th through 10th grade (Senior League)~~. **Team participation, sportsmanship, enjoyment and the learning of baseball skills are to be stressed at all times.**

LEAGUE STRUCTURE

Each league will be divided into a maximum of 14 teams and two divisions. Each team will have a maximum of 15 players. The practice season will start at the beginning of May. Unless decided differently in advance of the season, the regular season will start the Saturday after Memorial Day, and run through the end of July. The post season for each league will consist of a seeded single or double elimination playoff tournament. All teams will participate in the tournament. Every effort will be made to end the tournament by the end of July, weather permitting.

CALL UPS/ CALL DOWNS

~~In the event that a AAA or Seniors team is unable to field nine players, that team may select a player from the Call Up List of the next youngest league.~~

~~Each AA and AAA manager shall compile a list of players that are skilled enough to participate in games at the next age level. Those Call Ups will be reported to the Commissioners. The Commissioners and the Board will create a Call-Up List with all potential players. The Call-Up List will be made available to the managers of the next oldest league. There are no team affiliations and Managers may select any player from the next youngest league's Call Up List. Call Up players shall not be called up if their regular team has a game that conflicts.~~

~~Call Up Players may not pitch or play catcher. With the exception of pitching and playing catcher, the Call Up Player is to be treated exactly as any other player for the duration of the game. In the event of a dispute between managers, the Commissioners reserve the right to make the final determination.~~

~~A manager who needs a Call Down player should contact his Commissioner for assistance. Call Downs require approval of the Commissioner of the younger league. Call Down players may not pitch.~~

If a Colt or Pony team is unable to field 11 players for a game they may draw from a team below them. Colt can draw from Pony if the Pony team is not playing. Pony can draw from AAA if the AAA team is not playing.

If a AAA or AA team is unable to field 11 players, that team may select a player from an inactive team in their same league or from a call up list to complete a roster.

AAA & AA, in a season when there is an odd number of teams in a league: coaches who are in need of players are to reach out to a coach of a team in his league that is not playing and draw players from that team.

AAA and AA, In a season when there is an even number of teams: Affiliate teams will be formed to allow players to be available for teams who are in need of players. AAA will draw from AA and AA will draw from coach pitch.

When a call up list is needed, each AA and AAA manager shall compile a list of players that are skilled enough to participate in games at the next age level. Those call ups will be reported to the Commissioners. The Commissioners will create a call up list with all potential players and forward the list to all coaches. Call up players shall not be called up if their regular team has a game that conflicts with the call up game.

Call up players are allowed to use a bat that is correct for the league they play in.

Call up players may not pitch or play catcher. Other than those two positions, Call up players are to be treated exactly as any other player for the duration of the game. In the event of a dispute between managers, the Commissioners reserve the right to make the final determination.

COMMISSIONERS

Each league has two commissioners who are directly responsible for the supervision and administration of their league. It is their responsibility to report to the league Board of Directors concerning the conduct of this league.

The commissioners will:

1. Handle any and all protests, complaints, etc.
2. Make any changes necessary to complete the schedule. Only a league commissioner may make a change to the schedule.
3. Resolve all disputes and have the authority to suspend a manager or coach for just cause and remove a manager or coach if the league Board of Directors approves such action.
4. Exclusively determine if a player is to be placed on a different team or in a different league.
5. If a decision is made to play in one, select the coaches for an All-star Tournament Team. The team will play around 4th of July. There may be an additional fee charged to participants of the Tournament Teams.
6. Determine the selection procedures for the in-house league All-Star game.

RULES

AAA League Baseball Rules shall apply, unless modified by SYBL Rules.

1.0 Game Length

1.1 Innings

1.1.1 The AAA and AA Leagues play six (6) inning games.

1.2 Start Time/Schedule

1.2.1 Games start precisely at 6:15 p.m. during the week and at 9:00 a.m., 2:00 p.m. or 4:30 p.m. on Saturdays. AA normally play on Monday, Wednesday and Saturdays. AAA normally play on Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday. There may be an occasional Friday or Sunday game depending on rainouts and scheduling constraints. Umpires will enforce game starting times.

1.3 Time Limits-AAA

1.3.1 ~~No new inning may start after 2 hours and 20 minutes have passed.~~
No new inning may start after 1 hour and 45 minutes have passed after the start of the game.

1.4 Time Limits-AA

1.4.1 ~~No new inning may start after 2 hours and 20 minutes have passed.~~
No new inning may start after 1 hour and 45 minutes have passed from the official start time. In the event that a game cannot be completed due to sunset or time, the coaches from both teams will meet and agree if the inning will be the last inning. If the coaches cannot agree the umpire can declare that the upcoming inning will be the final inning. Both teams shall have the ability to score unlimited runs during the declared final inning.

~~1.5 Last Inning- AA and AAA~~

~~Although it may not be the 6th inning, if an inning starts after 2 hours, the umpire will determine if it is the last inning.~~

1.6 Extra-Innings

- 1.6.1 Games that end in a tie at the end of six (6) innings may go to extra innings, time, weather and visibility permitting. ~~The maximum number of extra innings allowed is two.~~

2.0 Mercy Rules

2.1 AA

- 2.1.1 Each team may only score a maximum of ~~6 runs~~ 5 runs per inning unless it is the final inning. When the ~~6th run~~ 5th run scores before the play ends, the additional runs will not count, and the umpire will call time to end the play. Unlimited runs are allowed in the sixth inning, the declared final inning, and extra-innings.

2.2 AAA

- 2.2.1 A AAA League game will be declared to be over when one team leads another team by **10** or more runs and the losing team has batted in the fifth inning.

2.3 Short-handed

- 2.3.1 In either AAA or AA, A team competing with fewer than eight (8) players which is losing by more than 10 runs after completing the fourth (4th) inning will be declared to have lost the game. (see, Rule 3.0)

3.0 Complete game

3.1 Official Game

- 3.1.1 A game is counted as official when the losing team has completed its at bat in the 4th inning.

4.0 Official Scorekeeper

4.1 Responsibilities

- 4.1.1 The home team is designated on the schedule and is responsible for providing the official scorer. Both teams should keep score, but in the event of a disagreement, the official scorer's records shall be controlling. While using GameChanger is recommended, it is not required when keeping score.

5.0 Field Setup

5.1 Responsibilities

5.1.1 The home team shall provide and install the bases and the pitching rubber.

5.2 Field dimensions

5.2.1 AA-Pitching distance: 46 feet -Distance between bases: 60 feet (Bases are not to be tied down.)

5.2.2 AAA-Pitching distance: 50 feet -Distance between bases: 70 feet (Bases are not to be tied down.)

6.0 Tardy Players

6.1 Procedure

6.1.1 Teams should exchange line-up cards and provide them to the official scorer prior to the start of the game. Players arriving after the first pitch must be inserted at the end of the batting order. Scores will be reported to the commissioners at the end of the game.

7.0 Umpire Responsibilities

7.1 Pre-game Meeting

7.1.1 The umpire will meet with both managers before the start of each game to discuss the ground rules. A discussion should be had with the coaches about pace of play for each game. Pitchers should generally get 5 warm-up pitches, the catchers should be helped to don their equipment if necessary, and players should be urged to get on and off the field in a timely manner.

7.2 Rules

7.2.1 Except for special rules specific to the AAA and/or AA leagues, the rule book published by AAA League Baseball will govern play.

8.0 Fielding a team

8.1 Minimum players

8.1.1 A minimum of eight (8) players must be present to field a team to begin a game. The game must immediately begin when the eighth player arrives. If a team fails to have eight (8) players within 10 minutes of the scheduled game time, the game is then forfeited. The forfeiting team's manager must notify a commissioner immediately. There is no minimum number of players required to complete a game.

once it has started. No automatic outs will be called for teams playing with insufficient players.

8.2 Injuries

8.2.1 If a pinch runner is requested for an injured player, the pinch runner will be the last batter to record an out. If no outs have been recorded, that runner will be the last hitter in the batting rotation for that inning.

8.2.2 An injured player who cannot participate in all aspects of the game cannot play.

8.2.3 Return to play after injury. 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. 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.

9.0 Equipment

9.1 Responsibilities

9.1.1 Managers are responsible for the supervision of the mandatory use of safety equipment.

9.2 Game Balls

9.2.1 Each team shall supply the umpire with one new game ball. AA shall use RIF #5 training balls, AAA shall use regulation hardballs.

9.3 Uniforms

9.3.1 Players are to wear full game uniforms (hat, tucked in shirt, pants, and socks).

9.4 Footwear

9.4.1 Metal cleats are prohibited. Molded cleats and athletic shoes are permitted.

9.5 Helmets

9.5.1 All batters and base runners must wear protective helmets. The umpire will call a batter or base runner out for intentionally removing their helmet while on the playing field without time being granted by the umpire. There will be one warning per team before the batter or runner is called out.

9.6 Catchers

9.6.1 Catchers must wear protective helmets with a face mask, chest protector, shin guards, and a protective cup (required for boys and girls).

9.7 Bats

9.7.1 Softball and T-Ball bats are prohibited.

9.7.2 Bats cannot exceed 33 inches in length.

9.7.3 Bats must 1) Be a single-piece wood bat; or 2) Bats must be sanctioned by and bear the mark of USA Baseball (see below); or 3) have a maximum barrel diameter of 2 ¼ inches.



9.7.4 Bat rule(s) enforcement. There will be one warning per team and the illegal bat will be confiscated (until the end of the game) if an infraction of this rule presents itself. A second infraction by either side will lead to the batter being out and the second bat being confiscated (till the end of the game)

9.7.5 Future bat rules: SYBL intends to transition to only USA Baseball certified bats. There is no timetable for the transition at this time, but if you are purchasing a bat for use over several seasons a USA Baseball bat is recommended.

10.0 Termination of Play

10.1 Safety

10.1.1 It is the responsibility of both team managers and the umpire to suspend play when weather, visibility, or field conditions make play unsafe. Managers and the umpire should confer about the start of a new inning if darkness or weather may prevent completing that inning. If the managers cannot agree, then the umpire shall decide factoring the safety of the players into the final decision.

10.2 Lightning

10.2.1 Lightning in the area will cause an immediate 15-minute suspension of the game. The game will not restart for 15 minutes since the lightning was last seen. Players, coaches and parents should immediately seek cover in vehicles until lightning has safely cleared the area.

10.3 Playability

10.3.1 If the managers cannot agree as to the condition of the field, the umpire will have the deciding vote. If the Shaker Heights Community Life Department decides that the fields are not playable, then the game shall not be played and will be rescheduled, if possible.

10.4 Field Maintenance

10.4.1 No field maintenance should be conducted by any Manager, Parent, Player or Umpire on any field.

10.5 Weather Cancellation

10.5.1 Rainouts will not automatically be rescheduled. The League Commissioners will designate games for make-up play.

10.6 Poor conduct

10.6.1 If the umpire believes that he has lost control of the game, he is empowered to suspend the game. He is to instruct both managers to clear the field and immediately leave the vicinity of the playing field. An umpire may not remove a manager or player from a game but can suspend a game. The field umpire will notify the Head Umpire who will contact the League Commissioners. The League Commissioners will determine the final outcome of the game and what other actions are required.

11.0 General Field Rules

11.1 Field Permissions

11.1.1 The only individuals permitted on the playing field during the game are players, managers, coaches, umpires and scorers. Managers are responsible for enforcing this rule.

11.2 Batting sticks

11.2.1 Batting sticks are forbidden.

11.3 Bench

11.3.1 All players on the batting team are to be seated on the bench, except for the batter, batter on deck and players permitted by the coach to be warming up to enter the game. No one should be permitted to sit on the bench other than team members or managers.

11.4 On-deck batter

11.4.1 The on-deck batter must be in his/her place behind the batter, in the on-deck circle, before the first pitch is thrown, or must wait until his/her at bat to enter the field. (He or she has thus forfeited the right to take warm up swings since they are not on the field of play.)

11.5 Defensive players

11.5.1 All defensive players not in the field are to be seated on the bench unless expressly permitted by the manager to be warming up.

11.6 Coaches

11.6.1 Only one coach may be used at first base and one coach at third base. Players in uniform, wearing a helmet, may also be used as base coaches.

11.7 Interference

11.7.1 If a coach interferes with a player running the base paths in any way, the umpire shall immediately call the runner out.

11.8 Time Outs

11.8.1 Each manager is permitted to call one brief (one-minute) time out during his offensive or defensive half of an inning to talk to a player. This does not include time-outs due to injury. Only the umpire may grant the request for a time-out. The second trip to the pitcher's mound, or the calling of a second time out to talk to a position player, will require a pitching change. The second time-out when batting will

result in an automatic strike being called on the player at or coming to bat, but not a third strike.

11.9 Courtesy Runner

11.9.1 With two outs, a courtesy runner will be allowed to pinch run for the player who will be pitching or catching the next inning. The courtesy runner must be the last batted out.

11.10 AAA Leading Off

11.10.1 ~~Leading Off is permitted in AAA.~~ Leading off is permitted in AAA after the pitch leaves the pitcher's hand.. Any runner may leave their base when the ball leaves the pitcher's hand in order to take a secondary lead or to steal **THIRD BASE ONLY**. Base runner must return to the base when the pitcher returns to the rubber. A throw to the base that goes out of play will move the runner up one base, except no runner may advance home from third on a throw out play, except a play that begins as a batted ball.

11.11 AA League-Limited Stealing

11.11.1 ~~There are no lead offs permitted from any base. Stealing is allowed, but the runner may not steal until after the pitch has passed the plate. A base runner may steal on a foul tip caught by the catcher. If the runner leaves early when attempting to steal, the umpire will call no pitch, and the base runner will be called out.~~ **No lead offs or stealing in AA. If a runner leaves a base before a pitch is released, the umpire will call NO PITCH and a team warning will be given. If any subsequent runner from that team leaves a base early, no pitch will be declared and the runner will be called OUT. Each team will get one warning for leaving a base early, and "NO PITCH" will be called by the umpire when a runner leaves a base early. Subsequent infractions for leaving a base early will cause the runner to be called OUT.**

11.12 AA League May Not Steal Home

11.12.1 ~~A base runner may not advance past 3rd base on any stealing play. When a base runner reaches 3rd base, he may not advance past 3rd base on a live ball, unless the play began as a hit, or there is a walk or hit batsman with the bases loaded. If on a stealing play a run-down occurs between 1st and 2nd, or 2nd and 3rd, the runner on 3rd must hold his base. If he attempts to draw a throw by leaving~~

~~his base, he will be called out. He may be awarded home on a dead ball if the ball is thrown out of play.~~ No stealing in AA. No runner may score on a pitched ball that goes out of play.

11.13 AAA League

11.13.1 ~~A base runner may steal without limitation.~~ A base runner may not steal second or home. When a base runner reaches 3rd base, he may not advance past 3rd on a live ball unless the play begins as a hit. The runner on third cannot advance to home on a wild pitch that goes out of play.

11.14 Balks

11.14.1 ~~Balks will be called in the AAA. There will be one balk warning for each pitcher. Runners shall not advance home on a Balk.~~ No balks will be called in AAA.

11.14.2 No balks will be called in AA.

11.15 Dropped Third Strike

11.15.1 The batter may not advance to first on a dropped third strike.

11.16 Infield Fly - AAA Only

11.16.1 The infield fly rule will be in effect, but it is not automatic and must be called by the umpire. There is no infield fly rule in AA.

11.17 Intentional Walks

11.17.1 Intentional walks are allowed. Each batter may only be intentionally walked once per game. If the umpire perceives that a batter, who was intentionally walked previously, is intentionally walked again, the umpire will alert the commissioner of the league for further discussion.

11.18 Bunting

11.18.1 There are no restrictions on bunting. (REMINDER: If a batter steps on home plate and then contacts the ball he is out.)

11.19 No appeals

11.19.1 Umpire calls are final and may not be appealed. Managers can alert umpires if the opposition bats out of order.

11.20 Thrown Bat

11.20.1 Each team is allowed one warning for throwing a bat. After the first occurrence, the umpire will issue a team warning. Following the warning, subsequent throwing of the bat by any player on the same team will result in the umpire calling that player immediately out.

11.21 Slide Rule

11.21.1 If a fielder is in position to make a tag and is in possession of the ball, the base runner must slide. An infraction of this rule will require the runner to be called out by the umpire. The intent of the rules regarding sliding is to prevent collisions and injuries to base runners and fielders. 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. 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.

11.22 No Headfirst Sliding

11.22.1 Absolutely no headfirst sliding is allowed. All slides must be feet first. Note: Dive backs are allowed if the runner has not exceeded four or five steps toward the next base, this is at the discretion of the umpire. Slides must be on the ground and not in the air. Base runners may be awarded extra bases by the umpire if in his judgment that base would have been reached had the base blocking not occurred. Sliding into 1st base, feet first, is allowed.

12.0 Player Participation

12.1 Ten Defensive Players

12.1.1 AAA and AA play with 10 defensive players with 4 outfielders (LF, LCF, RCF, and RF) equally spaced across the outfield a minimum of 30 feet behind the baseline. If only 3 outfielders are being played, they are to be stationed in LF, CF, and RF equally spaced across the outfield a minimum of 30 feet beyond the baseline. If fewer than 3 outfielders are being played, the manager may space them as he

deems appropriate. Failure to comply with the spirit of this rule will result in first, a league warning followed by further league action.

12.1.2 No defensive shifts are allowed in the infield. Infielders must position themselves, two on each side of the infield, within a reasonable distance from their assigned position. No shifts will be allowed in AA or AAA.

12.2 Pitching Limits

12.2.1 A player may pitch no more than three (3) innings per game and a total of six (6) innings per week (Monday through Sunday). This includes extra-inning games. One pitch in any inning counts as a full inning pitched. Innings pitched in a game that is suspended count towards the six (6) inning weekly maximum. Pitchers must pitch consecutive innings. After completing their pitching, the player may rotate to other positions in the field.

12.2.2 All Players Bat

12.2.2.1 All players are in the batting order for the entire game. Players arriving after the first pitch are added to the end of the original written batting order.

12.3 AA League

12.3.1 Defense Positions. All players present for the entire game are to play a minimum of four (4) innings in the field.

12.3.2 Position Rotation. Each player present must play at least 1 inning per game in both the infield and outfield. Pitching and catching are considered infield positions.

12.3.3 No player may play more than three innings per game at the same position.

12.4 AAA League

12.4.1 No player should play at the same position for more than 4 innings of every game.

12.4.2 AAA League Playoffs. All players present for the entire game are to play a minimum of three (3) innings in the field.

13.0 Playoff Rules

13.1 Seeding

13.1.1 Commissioners will outline how playoff seeds are determined 45. In the playoffs, the team with the higher seed will be the home team.

13.2 Pitchers

13.2.1 For pitchers during the playoffs, the three (3) innings per game rule will be enforced, but there will be no weekly maximum on innings pitched.

13.3 No ties

13.3.1 A playoff game that is tied after six innings will continue into extra innings until a winner is declared. The maximum three (2) extra innings rule will not apply during the playoffs.

13.4 Suspension of Play

13.4.1 If a playoff game is suspended for any reason, and it is not an official game or the score is tied when suspended, the game will be resumed at the exact point where play was suspended at a time and place designated by the Commissioners.

14.0 **Adult Conduct**

14.1 Substance Use

14.1.1 The use of tobacco, alcohol, or any illegal drugs is prohibited on or around the playing field by any adult directly involved with SYBL teams or games. This includes commissioners, managers, assistants and umpires.

14.2 Sportsmanship

14.2.1 Sportsmanship is to be taken seriously and stressed at all times during the season. Positive cheering is encouraged. Any comments, including any razzing of the batters by the catchers, are strictly prohibited. All fans, coaches, Umpires, and players are expected to be respectful to each other. No yelling at the umpire. Catchers are to be instructed not to make any negative comments to the batter.

14.3 Responsibilities

14.3.1 Managers are responsible for the conduct of their players, assistants and spectators.

14.3.2 SYBL participants and spectators are expected to abide by the City of Shaker Heights Zero Tolerance Policy, July 2001, attached to these rules and available from Shaker Recreation.

14.4 Reporting

14.4.1 Any unsportsmanlike conduct should be reported immediately to the League Commissioner.

MLB Rules to Know

- I. Infield fly rule
- II. Two base runners on the same base
- III. Number of bases allowed on an overthrow
- IV. Batting out of order
- V. Base runner passes another runner
- VI. Strike zone
- VII. Interference in the base path
- VIII. Sliding rule
- IX. Stealing rule
- X. Pitched ball hits the ground before crossing the plate
- XI. Batted ball hits home plate, or stops on home plate
- XII. ~~Balks~~

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 inappropriate 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 depending 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!