

American Division Rules Supplement



The following rules have been accepted and adopted by the Board of Directors of Tosa Baseball League, Inc. (the "League") and are effective for the League's American Division.

0.00 APPLICATION AND INTERPRETATION OF THE RULES

- 0.01 The primary rules used by the League are those established by the National Federation of State High School Associations, as set forth in the most recent edition of the NFHS Baseball Rules Book (the "NFHS Rules"). All Coaches and Umpires in the League are expected to be familiar with the NFHS Rules.
- 0.02 The League Rules as stated in this Supplement are additions, revisions or modifications to the NFHS Rules, reflecting the League's policies and goals, as well as the ages and abilities of the players. The League Rules always supersede the NFHS Rules. Whenever there is an inconsistency between the provisions of a League Rule and a corresponding NFHS Rule, the League Rule shall govern.
- 0.03 To the extent possible, the NFHS Rules and the League Rules should be interpreted in a way that promotes the League's policies of safety, instruction and sportsmanship. However, rules that are clearly stated and applicable to a particular situation may not be modified, overruled or limited by a general reference to League policy. Coaches and Umpires do not have authority to change or disregard the NFHS Rules or League Rules by mutual agreement.
- 0.04 From time to time the League may publish official "Rules Interpretations" addressing certain NFHS Rules or League Rules that have generated confusion or controversy. Rules Interpretations are considered by the League to be authoritative, but they are not intended to establish new rules or change existing ones. Instead, the Rules Interpretations are designed to help Umpires and Coaches locate and understand the actual rules, and provide useful examples for their application.
- 0.05 For purposes of these League Rules, the following definitions shall apply:
 - a. "League Umpire" means an Umpire hired or provided by the league who is not affiliated with the teams, Coaches or players involved in a game.
 - b. "Umpire in Charge" means the Umpire who is calling balls and strikes.
 - c. A player is considered "present" only if the player is actually able to participate in the game (*i.e.* is in uniform, has no medical condition preventing play such as a cast or splint, etc.)

1.00 TIME

- 1.01 Starting and Forfeit Times
 - a. "Game Time" means the starting time indicated on the published game schedule. For make-up or rescheduled games, "Game Time" means the starting time assigned by the Head of Coaches.
 - b. The second team listed on the game schedule is the home team and shall occupy the third base bench. The field is open to all players one hour prior to game time for warm up activities, but at least one coach from each team must be present for a player from that team to participate. The visiting team shall take the field 35 minutes prior to Game Time for warm up. The home team shall take the field 20 minutes prior to Game Time for warm up. Both teams shall return to their benches no more than 5 minutes prior to Game Time to ensure an on time start.
 - c. If both teams have at least 8 players present, the game must start at Game Time.
 - d. At 10 minutes after Game Time, the Umpire in Charge shall declare the game forfeited by a team

that does not have at least 8 players present. (NOTE: A forfeit may also be declared at any time as provided in Rules 5.02, 6.01, 9.03, 13.04 and 13.05).

- e. If neither team has enough players present at forfeit time, the game shall be rescheduled .

1.02 Time Limits

- a. No new inning may begin more than 1 hour 45 minutes after Game Time (the "New Inning Limit") for any reason.
- b. No game may continue beyond 2 hours after Game Time (the "Time Limit") for any reason. When the Time Limit for a game is reached, the Umpire in Charge shall immediately stop play. The winning team and final score shall be determined according to Rule 2.04
- c. Note that the New Inning Limit (1 hour 45 minutes) and the Time Limit (2) are both measured from Game Time, which means the scheduled starting time (see Rule 1.01.a). They are not measured from the time that a game actually starts. These limits may not be extended or waived by the Umpires or Coaches, regardless of the circumstances. Any delays experienced before or during a game (for example, due to another team or organization occupying the field, too few players or umpires, the need to correct field conditions, rules conferences, equipment problems, rain delay, player injuries, etc.) may not be added to the New Inning Limit or the Time Limit.

1.03 Official Time

- a. The timepiece of the Umpire in Charge shall be the official time.
- b. Prior to Game Time. Coaches should synchronize their watches with the timepiece of the Umpire in Charge.

2.00 THE GAME

2.01 Cancellation Due to Weather or Playing Condition*

- a. Will be determined by League administration. The decision is final even if the Coaches and Umpires believe the field to be in playable condition.
- b. During the hour prior to Game Time and during a game, the Umpires will be sole judges as to whether the field is playable or not, and their decision is final. The Umpires should try to reach an agreement about whether to cancel, play or continue playing a game, but if they are unable to agree then the decision of the Umpire in Charge shall govern. If possible, the Umpires should notify the Coaches for both teams simultaneously of the decision to cancel a game.
- c. At the first sign of lightning flash during a game, the game shall be canceled immediately with no possibility for a restart that day. (The game must be canceled even though the sun may be shining brilliantly behind a fast-moving storm). During the 30 minutes prior to Game Time, the same rule applies but shall require the agreement of an official representative from both teams, such as an Umpire, Coach, or Team Manager.

2.02 Rescheduling for Other Reasons

- a. The league will reschedule games according to league policy.

2.03 Regulation Game and Extra innings

- a. A regulation game is 7 Innings within the Time Limit.
- b. A game that is played without interruption or delay until at least the New Inning Limit will constitute a complete game regardless of the number of innings played.
- c. In all other situations, 4 innings shall qualify as a complete game, or 3^{1/2} innings if the home team has the lead.
- d. If 7 full innings are completed before the New Inning Limit and the score is tied, the teams may play one extra inning, subject to the Time Limit.
- e. There will be no suspended games. Games that begin but are canceled before qualifying as a complete game will be rescheduled and replayed from the start.

2.04 Determining Winner and Final Score; Ties

- a. If an inning is completed after the New Inning Limit, the game shall end and all runs scored by either team shall be included in the final score. The winner shall be the team that has the lead or, if neither team has a lead, the game shall be declared a tie.
- b. If the home team has the lead after the New Inning Limit and completion of 1/2 inning, or gains the lead while batting after the New Inning Limit, the game shall immediately end. The home team shall be the winner and all runs scored by either team (including any runs scored during an incomplete inning) shall be included in the final score.
- c. Whenever a game ends during an inning due to the Time Limit, the following rules shall apply:
 - (i) If the visiting team is leading at the Time Limit, all runs scored during an incomplete inning shall be disregarded. The score at the end of the last complete inning shall be the final score. The team that held the lead at that point shall be the winner or, if neither team had a lead at the end of the last complete inning, the game shall be declared a tie.
 - (ii) If neither team has the lead at the Time Limit, all runs scored by either team (including any runs scored during an incomplete inning) shall be included in the final score and the game shall be declared a tie. EXCEPTION: If the home team held a lead at the end of the last complete inning but the game is tied at the Time Limit, the home team shall be the winner. All runs scored during the incomplete inning shall be disregarded and the score at the end of the last complete inning shall be the final score.
- d. Ties represent 1/2 game won and 1/2 game lost.

2.05 Protests

- a. Only possible misapplication of rules may be protested. No protests will be allowed on judgment calls (ball/strike, fair/foul, tag/miss, catch/trap, etc.)
- b. A Coach wishing to protest a play must (i) ask for time and a conference at the completion of the play, and (ii) notify the Umpire in Charge and the opposing Coach before the next pitch that the game is being played under protest.
- c. A protest must be made in writing to the League's Executive Board within 48 hours after the game. A protest fee of \$15.00 must be submitted, which will be retained by the League only if the protest is denied.
- d. The Umpire in Charge of a protested game shall submit a formal written report to the Executive Board within 48 hours after the game.
- e. The protesting Coach and Umpires involved may be invited to attend a Protest Review Meeting to answer questions that may arise.

3.00 INJURIES

- 3.01 Coaches are in charge of any player on their team who is injured. It is the duty of the Coaches to get assistance and medical treatment for players as required, until the injured player is in the custody of a parent or other guardian. Coaches must report all injuries to the League within 24 hours.
- 3.02 In the event of an injury where a player needs immediate assistance — that is, an injury which is so severe that treatment should not wait until completion of the play — Umpires have the authority to stop the game so that the player can receive immediate medical attention. After the player has been tended to, the Umpires will use their judgment to position base runners.
- 3.03 A player or Coach who is bleeding or who has an open wound shall be prohibited from participating further in the game until appropriate treatment has been administered. A Coach may insert a substitute (including a

pinch runner) at any time for a bleeding player. Once the bleeding has been stopped and the wound has been covered, the player may re-enter the game with permission of the Umpire in Charge, but must play his or her positions as listed on the line-up sheet from the inning of re-entry.

4.00 PITCHER, RUNNERS, BATTERS, FIELDERS

4.01 Pitcher

- a. A player may pitch only 3 innings per game; 1 retired batter constitutes an inning. A player removed as a pitcher may pitch again in the same game (including in the same inning), provided the player does not exceed 3 innings of pitching.
- b. A player may throw a maximum of 60 pitches per game. A player that reaches 40 pitches in one inning may complete the current at-bat but may not pitch to another batter.
- c. After a pitcher hits 2 batters in the same game, the pitcher must be removed from pitching for the remainder of the game, but is eligible to play at any other position (subject to Rule 5.03).
- d. If in the Umpire's opinion a pitcher deliberately throws close to a batter, the pitcher shall be ejected from the game. In the case of doubt, the Umpire may first warn the pitcher.
- e. Pitchers may not throw lob pitches at any time. A lob pitch is defined as a thrown ball having an upward trajectory over 2 feet. A lob pitch will be called a ball, and the Umpire's decision is final.
- f. No more than 6 warm-up pitches shall be allowed between half innings or for a player who is replacing a pitcher removed during an inning.
- g. No balks can be called.

4.02 Runners

- a. Runners may lead from their base only after the pitch leaves the pitcher's hand. A runner is out if a violation is called by the Umpire.
- b. With 2 outs and the next scheduled catcher on base, the catcher may have a substitute runner.
- c. A runner who runs into a defensive player who is legally blocking the base line or home plate, unless the runner is sliding, shall be out, and the ball shall be declared dead. The call shall be at the sole discretion of the Umpire and may not be challenged.
- d. During any half inning in which 2 runs have scored by stealing home (including overthrows to third, passed balls and wild pitches), runners may thereafter advance to home only on a hit ball, the continuation of a play started by a hit ball, if forced to advance, or if awarded home as a result of an overthrow. When this rule is in effect, defensive players may attempt to retire runners who are leading off or stealing, but runners may not advance to home as a result of such an attempt, unless the ball is thrown or deflected out of play (in which case, the overthrow rules will apply).

4.03 Batter

- a. A batter shall not be called out for failing to stay in the "three-foot running lane" (outside the foul line) on the way to first base unless, in the Umpire's judgment, the defensive team would actually have retired the batter at first base if the batter had stayed in that running lane.
- b. The infield fly rule applies.
- c. During a hitter's at-bat, only one other player may warm up "on deck." The on-deck batter may warm up either inside the backstop or in an area outside the backstop that is safely distant from all player and spectator traffic and is designated by the Coach as the team's on-deck area. If an on-deck batter warms up inside the backstop, he/she shall be positioned at least 15 feet from home plate .

4.04 Fielders

- a. A defensive player may not block home plate from a runner unless he/she is in possession of the ball; however, the defensive player may without penalty cross the base path in the act of fielding the ball. Penalty: A runner who attempts to reach home and is illegally blocked by the defensive player is safe at home; ball remains live and play continues.
- b. A defensive player who is part of a rundown between third base and home may block the plate and the base line only when in possession of the ball or when the ball is being thrown in that player's direction. Penalty: A runner who attempts to reach home and is illegally blocked by the defensive player is safe at home; ball remains live and play continues.
- c. A fielder may not kneel between the base and an approaching runner for the purpose of blocking access to a base. Penalty: The runner shall be safe and the fielder shall be subject to a warning; ball remains live and play continues.
- d. The calls in Rules 4.04a, 4.04b and 4.04c are at the sole discretion of the Umpire and may not be challenged.

5.00 PLAYERS

5.01 Age Group During Calendar Year

- a. Children at least 11 years old as of September 1st are eligible.
- b. Children 13 years old or older as of September 1st are ineligible.

5.02 On the Field

- a. In every inning for which a team has at least 10 players present, 10 players shall play in the field, including 4 in the outfield. Each outfielder must play one of the four quadrants (LF, LC, RC or RF) for the entire inning. Rovers or overlapping outfield positions are not permitted.
- b. In every inning for which a team has only 8 or 9 players present, they shall all play in the field.
- c. If at any point during a game one team has fewer than 8 players present, the Umpire in Charge shall declare the game ended and a forfeit shall be awarded against the team having fewer than 8 players. (See Rule 0.0.5.c for the definition of "present").

5.03 Fair Playing Time

- a. All players present at the beginning of a game must be scheduled on the line-up sheet to play an equal number of innings during the course of that game. "Equal" means that there must not be more than a one-inning difference in the number of innings played during a game between any players on the same team. No player may sit out 2 innings in a row. No player may sit out a second inning until all players have sat out one inning.
- b. All players present at a game must be scheduled on the line-up sheet to play at least one infield position and one outfield position before the end of the fifth inning. Catcher is considered a neutral position, representing either an infield or outfield position.
- c. No player may play the same position for more than 3 innings in a regulation game.
- d. All players present at the game will bat in regular rotation, but only 10 players may play in the field at one time.
- e. A Coach may bench a player at any point in the game if, in the Coach's judgment, the player is not conforming to the League's Rules or Code of Ethics. The Coach must notify the Umpires at that time, and must also promptly notify the Executive Board in writing of such action.
- f. A player who has sustained an injury that requires a cast, splint, or sling to be worn shall not be allowed to play in a game.
- g. If a player is removed from the game because of injury, illness or disciplinary action their place in the batting order will be skipped without penalty. Their place(s) in the fielding lineup sheet may be filled according to the fair playing time rules of 5.03.

5.04 Limits on Substitutions

- a. Players must play their defensive positions each inning as written on the line-up sheet. Except for pitchers, substitutions are permitted only if a player is injured, absent, ill or benched under Rule 5.03e.
- b. A Coach may substitute for a pitcher at any time during a game, but the substitution must comply with the Fair Playing Time requirements of Rule 5.03. A substitute pitcher must:
 - (i) be playing (or be scheduled on the line-up sheet to play) a defensive position at the time of the substitution - *i.e.*, players may not be substitute pitchers in an inning for which they were scheduled to sit out; and
 - (ii) have already played one full inning (consisting of 3 consecutive outs) in the outfield, or be scheduled on the line-up sheet to play an outfield inning after the substitution and not later than the 5th inning.
- c. When a player substitutes for a scheduled or existing pitcher, the replaced pitcher must move to the defensive position vacated by the substitute.
- d. A Coach must notify the Umpire in Charge and the opposing Coach prior to making any substitutions, including (except for pitching changes) the reason why the substitution is necessary.

6.00 COACHES

- 6.01 At least 10 minutes prior to the start of each game, Coaches shall provide to the Umpire in Charge and opposing Coach batting order line-ups on the official League form, listing their players' names, uniform numbers and defensive positions for the entire game. Failure to provide a line-up sheet that complies with the Fair Playing Time requirements of Rule 5.03 shall result in a forfeit.
- 6.02 Coaches from each team shall give a new ball to the Umpire in Charge before the start of each game.
- 6.03 Coaches are responsible to see that batters, runners and catchers have proper protection.
- 6.04 A Coach may visit each different pitcher on the mound once per inning, with a one-minute limit per visit. The second time a pitcher is visited by a Coach during an inning, that pitcher must be replaced.
- 6.05 Only a player in uniform (wearing a helmet) or an adult may be used as 1st and 3rd base coaches.
- 6.06 At the end of a game, the winning Coach (or in the event of a tie, the Coach of the home team) must collect the pink copies of the line-up sheets from the Umpire in Charge and turn those copies over to the Head of Coaches as soon as possible.

7.00 TEAM MANAGERS

- 7.01 Each team Manager is responsible for maintaining a pitch count for each individual pitcher on their team, keeping a score card and checking with the Umpire in Charge to verify the score at the end of every half inning. Coaches may designate a substitute for these responsibilities as needed. See Rule 4.01b for pitch count guidelines.
- 7.02 Managers for both teams shall report the final score and game highlights to the person(s) designated by the League.

8.00 UMPIRES

- 8.01 For every game, the League will attempt to field two League Umpires.
If only one League Umpire is unavailable at Game Time, a parent or other adult volunteer may, with the consent of both teams' Coaches, serve as the base Umpire. Otherwise the League Umpire will serve as both the Umpire in Charge and the base Umpire. (When no League Umpire or team Umpires are available see rule 2.02.a).
- 8.02 Umpires shall make every effort to keep the game moving quickly, including for example the following actions: Starting the game on time; strictly enforcing Rules relating to warm-up pitches (4.01e) and mound visits (6.04); encouraging batters to promptly enter and stay in the batter's box for their turn at bat; requiring pitchers to pitch within a reasonable time after they receive the ball (the NFHS Rules set a limit of 20 seconds); prohibiting "around-the-horn" throws by the defensive team following a put-out or a strike out; and always having a spare game ball ready to put into play after a foul ball.

- 8.03 In the event of persistent delay by a team or a player despite a prior warning, an Umpire may impose an appropriate penalty, such as charging the batter with a strike, the pitcher with a ball, or the team with an out. Extreme cases of intentional delay are covered by Rules 13.03 and 13.05.
- 8.04 If, in the Umpire's opinion, any unsafe conditions exist, the Umpire shall take the necessary steps to correct those conditions.
- 8.05 The Umpire in Charge is responsible for reporting, in writing to the Executive Board within 48 hours, any player or coach ejected from a game, any suspension or forfeiture of a game, or any protest.
- 8.06 Umpire guidelines that have been issued in the past or in connection with any training program shall be interpreted only as guidelines and not as League Rules.

9.00 SPECTATORS

- 9.01 All spectators must remain behind the screen or team benches.
- 9.02 For each team a maximum of three adults (Coaches, team Managers or, if necessary to maintain discipline, another adult helper) may be on the field or bench (combined) during the game. No unauthorized people are allowed on the team bench, including parents.
- 9.03 If spectators' actions or conduct interfere with the game, the Umpire in Charge shall instruct Coaches for both teams to warn the spectators that the game is in danger of being called or forfeited. If the actions persist after that warning, the Umpire in Charge may first suspend play for no more than 10 minutes, to allow the offending spectators an opportunity voluntarily to leave the area. If the offending spectators decline to leave the area and they are clearly all associated with one of the teams, the Umpire in Charge may declare the game forfeited by that team. Otherwise, the Umpire in Charge shall call the game without declaring a winner, and refer the matter to the League for resolution.

10.00 UNIFORMS AND PLAYING EQUIPMENT

- 10.01 All players must wear complete uniforms, including hats. Uniforms may not be altered except for size and fit. Players' shirts must be kept tucked in during a game. Any player without a uniform will not be permitted to play.
- 10.02 Catchers are required to wear the safety equipment provided by the League, including shin guards, a chest protector and a catcher's mask with throat protector. Catchers must also use a catcher's mitt, which the League will provide for players who do not have their own. Protective cups are mandatory for all players while catching. Players not wearing safety equipment will not be permitted to catch.
- 10.03 Players are required to wear a catcher's mask when receiving practice pitches.
- 10.04 Shoes with metal spikes are not allowed.
- 10.05 Players may not wear watches or jewelry on the field of play, other than for medical alert or religious reasons.
- 10.06 Only bats and helmets issued by the League may be used in scheduled League games. Bats must be round, without dents or flat surfaces. The Umpire's decision is final. Each team will be issued 4 bats, each with a maximum diameter of 2 1/4 inches.
- 10.07 Any equipment issued by the League must be shared by the teams playing a game, if requested.
- 10.08 All equipment must be kept behind the out-of-play lines at all times during a game.
- 10.09 Use of batting sticks and other noise-creating equipment is prohibited during the game.

11.00 PLAYING FIELD AND GROUND RULES

- 11.01 The center-line distance between the bases shall be 60 feet. The distance from the front side of the pitcher's rubber to the "tip" (back) of home plate shall be 46 feet. In the interest of player safety, all players in infield positions may begin a play inside the baseline prior to the ball leaving the pitcher's hand. If a player is inside the baseline prior to a pitch the field umpire should direct the player to return to the normal fielding position and no penalty is applied. EXCEPTION: For games played at Helfaer Field, it is acceptable for the center-line distance between the bases to be 60 feet and the distance from the front side of the pitcher's rubber to the "tip" (back) of home plate to be 43 feet. The same safety rule applies.
- 11.02 The "field of play" shall be between the imaginary lines formed by extending the backstop. The area

- outside of those lines shall be out of play.
- 11.03 In separate documents, the League may establish different ground rules or dimensions for specific field locations.
- 11.04 Prior to the start of the game, the Umpires and Coaches from both teams shall meet at home plate to discuss and reach agreement on the ground rules applicable to the field at which they are playing.

12.00 INTERFERENCE WITH A LIVE BALL

- 12.01 Whenever a Coach, team Manager or player on the defensive team (other than a fielder) *intentionally* interferes with a live ball or a fielder's attempt to make a play within the field of play (including foul territory), the ball shall immediately be dead. All runners shall be awarded one base from the base they occupied at the time of the interference. If the play began with a fair batted ball, the batter shall be awarded at least first base; otherwise, the batter shall have the same ball-strike count as before the act of interference.
- 12.02 Whenever a Coach, team Manager or player on the offensive team (other than the batter or a runner) *intentionally* interferes with a live ball or a fielder's attempt to make a play within the field of play (including foul territory), the ball shall immediately be dead. The batter shall be declared out, even if the play did not begin with a fair batted ball. All runners shall return to the bases they occupied at the time of the last pitch, unless there are three outs.
- 12.03 If a spectator interferes with a live ball or a fielder's attempt to make a play within the field of play (including foul territory), the Umpire in Charge shall have the authority and discretion to apply either Rule 12.01 or 12.02, or some other penalty of no greater benefit to the team disadvantaged by the interference.
- 12.04 Instances of interference (intentional or unintentional) by a runner or batter, or obstruction by a fielder, are covered by the NFHS Rules and explained in a Rules Interpretation issued by the League. The League publishes a Code of Ethics with which all Coaches and players are required to comply.

13.00 ETHICS AND PENALTIES

- 13.01 An Umpire may eject a player or Coach from a game, without prior warning, for any of the following actions: deliberately throwing a bat, helmet or other equipment in a fit of anger; initiating malicious contact; using profanity or other foul language; using tobacco products on the bench or field; fighting; charging an Umpire; leaving one's bench or playing position for the purpose of fighting or physical confrontation; or any other flagrant violation of these Rules or the Code of Ethics. The Umpires may, but need not, issue a warning to the offending player or Coach after any such action.
- 13.02 An Umpire may eject a player or Coach from a game if, after having received a prior warning, the player or Coach engages in any of the actions identified in Rule 13.01 or any of the following actions: carelessly throwing a bat; making a fake tag; arguing excessively with an Umpire; using any tactics or language intended or likely to intimidate an opposing player or Coach or an Umpire; taunting or baiting an opposing player or Coach; attempting to incite unsportsmanlike conduct by fans; intentionally delaying the game; or any other conduct not in accordance with these Rules, the spirit of fair play or the League's Code of Ethics.
- 13.03 A Coach who is ejected from a game shall leave the playing area immediately and is prohibited from further contact, direct or indirect, with the team during the remainder of the game. A player who is ejected from a game may remain on the team's bench, but must refrain from any further violations of the Rules or Code of Ethics. Failure to comply with this Rule shall result in the game being declared a forfeit against the team of the ejected Coach or player.
- 13.04 If the Rules or the Code of Ethics are repeatedly violated by one team during a game, the Umpires may, after an appropriate warning, declare the game a forfeit against the offending team.