

# NORTH HILLS ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION

## 2015 Bronco League Rules

### 1. GAME PRELIMINARIES

- A. Weekday games will begin at 6:00 pm. Weekend games will begin according to their scheduled time, or 15 minutes after the prior game finishes.
- B. If the field is available, each team will have use of the field for fifteen (15) minutes prior to the start of the game. The away team first, followed by the home team.
- C. Each team must have nine (9) players to start a game. A 15-minute grace period (15 minutes after the game is scheduled start time) will be given to a team with less than nine (9) players. If a team still has less than nine (9) players after the grace period expires, that team will forfeit.
- D. It is permissible to call-up Minor League players if a Manager cannot field a team. The following restrictions apply:
  - A Bronco League player will NOT sit while a Minor League player plays in the field.
  - Minor League players must play right field and bat in the last position.
  - If 10 players are present and one is a Minor League player, he is not permitted to play.
  - Minor League players may not be inserted into a game after the 1<sup>st</sup> pitch.
  - The Commissioner of Bronco League - not the Managers – will call the Minor League call-ups.
- E. If a team is reduced to eight (8) players due to injury, play can continue and an out is not charged. However, if a team is reduced to eight (8) players due to an ejection, the open position in the order will be an automatic out. If a team is further reduced to seven (7) players, the game is suspended and will be resumed later.

### 2. GENERAL PLAYING RULES

- A. A regular game will consist of six (6) innings.
- B. Each player must play a minimum of four (4) innings on defense. There is free substitution on defense except for the pitcher.
- C. No batting out of order will be charged due to an injury. An injured player can return to his original position in the batting order and his position on the field.
- D. Courtesy runners are permitted due to an injury only. The courtesy runner must be a player not in the game on defense. If a team has no reserves, the player who made the last out will be the courtesy runner.
- E. Managers and Coaches are permitted to Coach bases – not players.
- F. If a Coach or Manager touches a runner with the intent to assist or restrain a runner, that runner is out.
- G. A base runner must go back to the base he is occupying when the pitcher has the ball and is in contact with the pitching rubber. The pitcher may not use the rubber to stop play already in progress.
- H. The infield fly rule will be enforced.
- I. Catchers are not permitted to talk to batters for the purpose of distraction or intimidation.
- J. Slug bunting is NOT permitted. If a batter does attempt to slug bunt, the batter is out, the ball is dead, and all runners return to the base they last occupied. Contact does not need to be made.
- K. “Suicide Squeeze” plays are prohibited. This keeps safety in mind and avoids having the possibility of a runner coming home while a batter is swinging. A runner on 3<sup>rd</sup> can attempt to advance on a wild pitch, passed ball, an errant throw from the catcher to the pitcher, or an errant pick-off attempt to another base. The runner at 3<sup>rd</sup> can take as large of a lead as desired, but will not be awarded home base on a pick-off attempt. If caught in a run-

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down, the runner can attempt to get to either base, home or 3<sup>rd</sup>, but will be required to return to 3<sup>rd</sup> if ruled safe at home.

- L. Base runners should attempt to avoid all contact and are encouraged to slide into all bases. A headfirst slide to advance a base is illegal, and an automatic out. A head first slide to return to a base is legal. If the umpire deems that a player did not attempt to avoid contact or intentionally makes contact on a play, the offending player is subject to ejection from the game.
- M. Base runners may only advance one (1) base on a walk.
- N. The first accidental throwing of a bat constitutes a team warning. The second throwing of the bat, and all incidents after that, will result in an out with all runners returning to their original bases.
- O. There will be continuous batting.
- P. **Dropped Third Strike:** a batter may run to first base when a third strike is swung at and missed by the batter, but is not caught, provided first base is unoccupied. A batter who does not realize his situation on a third strike not caught, and who is not in the process of running to first base, shall be declared out once he leaves the batting area surrounding home plate.
- Q. Any player or Coach may call a timeout. However, granting of the timeout is at the umpire's discretion.
- R. The HOME team will have the third base dugout, and will be responsible for supplying two (2) new game balls.
- S. Both HOME and AWAY teams are responsible for preparing the field for play. Both teams are also responsible for field clean-up and general field maintenance to preserve the field quality for future games.
- T. There is no straight stealing from third base on a pitched ball. This is to avoid a collision between the runner and a swinging bat. A runner on third can attempt to advance on a passed ball or a wild pitch, a pickoff attempt at any base, or a return to the pitcher.

### 3. PITCHING RULES

- A. Pitchers shall be allowed to pitch in no more than six (6) innings in any one-calendar week. A calendar week is from 12:01 a.m. Monday to 12 midnight the following Sunday.
- B. Pitchers shall not pitch in more than six (6) innings on the same calendar day.
- C. **11 Year old Pitchers:** a Manager must pitch an 11 year –old for nine (9) outs per week. The only exception being if a team is only scheduled to play one (1) game within a week.
- D. A pitcher pitching four (4) innings or more in a game must be given at least forty (40) hours rest prior to pitching again.  
**Example:** A pitcher pitches three (3) complete innings and one (1) pitch in the 4<sup>th</sup> inning on Thursday at 6:00 pm. He is not permitted to pitch again until Saturday at 10: am.
- E. Once a pitcher is removed as a pitcher, he cannot pitch again in that game.
- F. As soon as a pitcher delivers one pitch to a batter, the pitcher shall be considered as having pitched in one inning.
- G. A pitcher is allowed a maximum on five (5) warm-up pitches between innings. If a relief pitcher comes in “cold”, the umpire shall allow the pitcher to warm up properly with at least ten (10) warm-up pitches.

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- H. Balks will not be called. However, an umpire may warn and provide instruction to a pitcher if his motion is not consistent with a normal pitch motion and delivery. Base runners, whether advancing or returning to a base, will not be called out if a pitcher balks on that specific play.
- I. Use of an illegal pitcher (over 6- innings for week or 4 innings pitched with less than 40 hours rest) will result in a forfeit. Each Manager has the sole responsibility to adhere to this rule.
- J. A Manager or Coach must replace a pitch on their 2<sup>nd</sup> trip to the mound in a half inning.
- K. Intentional walks are prohibited.
- L. A pitcher hitting two (2) batters in the same inning or three (3) in a game must be immediately removed from the game as a pitcher.
- M. Both Managers must call in or email their scores and their pitching innings after each game to the Bronco League Commissioner within (24) hours. Both Managers must also report any Minor League call-up players used to the Bronco League Commissioner. Failure to adhere to these rules will result in a forfeit.
- N. A Manager is not allowed to play the same player no more than five (5) innings in one game at the Catcher position.

#### 4. UNIFORMS AND EQUIPMENT

- A. All Bronco League players must be in full uniform, including their hat and matching team socks. Managers are strongly recommended to enforce this rule in its entirety.
- B. Minor League call-up players are to wear their Minor League uniform.
- C. Hats are mandatory for all defensive players. Only NHAA approved hats may be worn.
- D. All catchers must wear a cup as well as a full protective mask/helmet combination.
- E. The home and away Managers are both responsible for all equipment, field liners, drags, tees, rakes, shovels, etc. Any lost equipment due to not locking gang boxes, batting cages, or dugout doors will be the financial responsibility of BOTH Managers of said game. NHAA will pursue restitution to recoup funds for lost or stolen equipment.
- F. Only Little League bats (maximum of 2-1/4" diameter and 33" long) will be allowed. "Big Barrel" bats are not permitted.

#### 5. DISCIPLINE

- A. Unsportsmanlike conduct, including vulgarity or violence directed at another person by a Manager, Coach, or player will result in immediate ejection from the game by the umpire without warning. This behavior is subject to league discipline and suspension.
- B. The league has the right to suspend a player, Manager, or Coach for repetitive unsportsmanlike conduct. This suspension requires the unanimous approval of the President, the Director of Baseball, and the league Commissioner.
- C. A Manager has the right to request a suspension of a player to the Commissioner.
- D. Intentional throwing of a bat, helmet, or glove by a player will result in an automatic ejection from the game by the umpire.
- E. Tobacco and alcohol are NOT permitted on or near the field at any time.

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### 6. SUSPENDED OR POSTPONED GAMES

- A. The home team has the responsibility of assessing field conditions prior to the game.
- B. The home Manager must call the umpire in chief and visiting Manager 1 hour before game time when possible to report a rainout.
- C. A rainout, suspended, or postponed game will be rescheduled by the Commissioner.
- D. Once the game begins, the umpire has the responsibility to call a game due to darkness or inclement weather.
- E. A regulation game will be declared when:
  - Five (5) innings have been completed.
  - The home team has scored more runs in 4 or 4+ half innings at bat than the visiting team has scored in 5 complete half innings at bat.
- F. If a game is called before it has become a regulation game, the umpire shall declare it a postponed game. All innings pitched count towards the total pitching innings for the current week.
- G. A postponed game must be played over in its entirety.
- H. If a regulation game is halted by the umpire due to inclement weather or darkness, the score reverts to the last complete inning and the game is over.

**Example:** The home team is ahead 5-4 after (5) complete innings. The visitor score two (2) runs in the top of the 6<sup>th</sup> to make the score 6-5 in the visitor's favor. The game is then called due to rain or darkness. The score reverts to the score at the end of the 5<sup>th</sup> inning and the home team wins the game 4-5. If this situation results in a tie, the game will be resumed at the top of the next inning with the score tied.
- I. If a regulation game ends in a tie, the umpire shall declare it a suspended game.
- J. Suspended games must be played from the exact point of suspension. The exact batting order as well as the exact defense must be used when the suspended game is resumed. Players that were not present for the suspended game are permitted to play in the game, but must bat last in the line-up and play right field.

### 7. PROTESTS

- A. No protest can be submitted on a judgment call.
- B. A protested game must be played to its completion once the protest is recorded.
- C. If the protesting team wins the game, the protest is dropped.
- D. Any protest due to misinterpretation of a rule must be submitted to the Commissioner within 24 hours.
- E. Before ruling on a protest, the Commissioner must contact the umpire, both Managers, the Director of Baseball, and the President.
- F. The protesting Manager must inform the opposing Manager and the umpire that he is protesting the game at the time of the dispute. At that time and prior to the next pitch, the protesting Manager must have the umpire sign his name in the scorebook and underline a description of the dispute.
- G. If a protest is upheld, the game will be treated as a suspended game and resumed from the point of protest.
- H. All protests will be decided by the Commissioner. The Commissioner's decision is final!

### 8. PLAYOFFS

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- A. All teams in the league will participate in the playoffs, regardless of their regular season record. A team's playoff seeding will be decided by their regular season record. Playoff pairings will differ each year based on the number of teams in the league and the numbers of divisions the teams are divided. The #1 seed will always play the lowest seed in the 1<sup>st</sup> round unless the #1 seed receives a bye. After each round, the remaining teams will be re-seeded. This means that the highest remaining seed will continue to play the lowest remaining seed throughout the playoffs into the championship game. In certain instances (i.e. a league with one division and either 5 or 9 teams), the 1<sup>st</sup> round of the playoffs may consist of the two lowest seeds playing to determine which team will face the #1 seed in the 2<sup>nd</sup> round.
- B. The start of the playoffs will constitute a new pitching week.
- C. The pitching rules for the playoffs are the same as for the regular season.
- D. In the event of a one-game tiebreaker, all innings pitched will be subject to regular season pitching rules and will count for the week in question.
- E. Managers must report their pitching, Minor League call-ups, and scores to the Commissioner that same day of the playoff game.

### 9. MISCELLANEOUS RULES

- A. Playing field
  - a. Distance between bases: 70-feet
  - b. Pitching distance: 48-feet
  - c. Home plate to center of second base: 99- feet
- B. **10-Run Rule:** If a team is leading an opponent by at least 10 runs after five or more complete innings have been played or after four and one half innings if the home team shall have a 10 run lead at the end of its fourth inning, or before the completion of its fifth innings, the game shall be terminated and the team in the lead shall be declared the winner
- C. No game shall begin after **8:30 pm**, nor shall any inning should begin after **10:15 pm**. Games will have a **2-hour time limit**. No inning shall start after the 2-hour time limit has expired. The umpire will verify start time with the home team scorebook.
- D. Players or adult volunteers who engage in unsportsmanlike conduct, such as fighting, abusive language or similarly derogatory activity may be suspended for one or more games.
- E. Metal spikes are not permitted.