

Revised February 8, 2017



HOWARD COUNTY YOUTH PROGRAM INC.

BASEBALL RULES AND REGULATIONS

Rookie League

The Howard County Youth Program (HCYP) seeks to implant, in the youth of this community, ideals of good sportsmanship, honesty, loyalty, courage, and reverence, so that they may be finer, stronger and happier youths who will grow to be good, healthy adults. This objective can be reached by providing supervised, competitive sports. The manager, coaches, and other participants shall bear in mind at all times that the attainment of exceptional athletic skill or the winning of a particular game is secondary and that the molding of future citizens is of prime importance.

The Baseball Executive Committee is responsible for the overseeing of Rookie League, Pinto League, Little Leagues (International, Minor, Major), Pony League and Colt League baseball activities conducted under the sponsorship of the Howard County Youth Program.

The Baseball Executive Committee ensures continuity of HCYP's baseball programs and assures that the increasing demands of the program, because of population growth in the county, are acted upon.

HCYP INSTRUCTIONAL LEAGUE – ADVANCED DIVISION
BASEBALL RULES AND REGULATIONS

I. THE LEAGUES:

- A. The Howard County Youth Program, Inc. is the parent unit of the organization; its baseball program shall be divided into as many leagues and age groups as is deemed necessary, for a successful baseball program, by the Baseball Executive Committee and the Board of Directors of the HCYP Inc.
- B. The program shall be governed by the Board of Directors and administered by the Baseball Committee of the Howard County Youth Program Inc. in accordance with the corporation's charter, constitution, and by-laws.

II. LEAGUE BOUNDARIES:

- A. The Board of Directors shall determine the boundaries of the area from which it will select players. This has been determined to restrict participants to current residents of Howard County, Maryland.

III. THE TEAMS:

- A. The number of players for the teams in each league shall be designated by the Baseball Commissioner.
- B. If a team manager loses one or more of the players on his roster during the current season through illness, injury, change of address, or other justifiable reason, they can be assigned another player or players by the Baseball Commissioner, to replace those lost. A potential waiting list of available players shall be maintained only by the Baseball Commissioner and Vice Commissioner.
- C. If Players miss games without notification to the team manager, the team Manager shall remind the player of their courtesy obligation to inform the team Manager. It will be the responsibility of the player (and parent) to inform the manager that they will not be able to attend a game prior to the game. It is suggested that the manager give the telephone number of a coach as a secondary source if the manager is not available. Players will not be removed from rosters for failure to give notification and, or for missing games and practices. All players present must meet playing time guidelines during each game. The Baseball Commissioner may disqualify a player for one or more games for other disciplinary reasons involving the players' conduct and, or actions during a game or any time the player is at the ball park. Removal by the Baseball Commissioner will only occur in extreme conditions.

IV. THE PLAYERS:

- A. League Age is defined as; the age as of **August 31st** of that year.
- B. Unless granted an exemption by the Baseball Commissioner, a youth must have reached his or her 5th birthday on or before **August 31** to be eligible to play in the Rookie League.
- C. Each candidate must present acceptable proof of age in the form of a birth certificate, hospital record, or other written evidence as required by the Baseball Committee.
- D. Any exception to the age requirements must be approved by the Baseball Commissioner.
- G. No full time travel baseball player may play in the Recreational leagues.

V. SELECTION OF PLAYERS

- A. Rookie League teams will be assigned by the Rookie League Commissioner unless otherwise directed by the Baseball Commissioner. Teams will be organized to best accommodate player/parent wishes and not necessarily to achieve competitive balance between teams in this league.

VI. PITCHING

All pitching is performed by a team adult from the team at bat, to be designated by the team manager. This pitcher may pitch, in an overhead motion, from any location (on one knee) between the rubber (pitcher's mound) and home plate. This pitcher may be changed at any time during the game.

The defensive team will place a defensive pitcher beside the mound for the sole purpose of fielding batted balls and providing other defensive support.

The coach pitches to a batter a maximum of five pitches. If the batter does not put the ball in play during the coach's five pitches, the ball is placed on a tee for the batter. The batter is allowed as many swings necessary to put the ball in play.

There are no walks in this league.

Batters hit by a pitch do not advance to 1st base.

If the coach pitcher interferes with a batted ball, (inadvertently or not) the ball is ruled no pitch (dead ball).

VII. SCHEDULE:

- A. The Baseball Commissioner shall oversee the schedule of games for the season. There will be no suspended games in this league. Makeup will be scheduled if the seasons schedule permits.
- B. Forfeit time will be 15 minutes after the league scheduled start time for the game. However, for the Rookie League and as time allows, the game should be played for instructional purposes. It is to the discretion of the managers to substitute/swap players to allow the game to be played. Note: only other players registered in the HCYP Rookie League are permitted to play.
- C. Pre-game practice, if time allows, will be provided with the home team using the field first for 15 minutes, followed by the visiting team for 15 minutes. In instances where pre-game practice does not allow for a full 30 minute time for both teams, then the available time shall be divided equally between the two teams, prior to the start of any pre-game practice on the field. (Example: If twenty minutes are available prior to the league schedule start time for the game, then each team will be provided ten minutes for pre-game practice.) Mutual agreement between the two managers or their representative(s) may alter the order of practice. The league's intent is for cooperation between the teams to share the available time.
- D. All scheduled games must be played.
- E. No revision to the game schedule will be made unless prior approved by the Baseball Commissioner. Failure to adhere to this rule will result in a forfeit by both teams involved.
- F. The home team shall be in the Third (3rd) base dugout and the Visiting team in the First (1st) base dugout.
- G. There will be no Championship awarded for regular season play and there will be no post season tournament for this league.

VIII. SPECIAL GAMES:

- A. Team or individual participation in any game when they might be construed as representing the Howard County Youth Program must be approved in advance by the Baseball Commissioner. This is to include, but is not restricted to, any post-season play by regular teams and/or all-star teams against teams from other programs and any exhibition games before, during, and after the regular season, away from the HCYP regular playing fields

IX. AWARDS:

- A. The Baseball Commissioner will determine the value of awards and material gifts to the individual players. In general, each Rookie athlete will receive a participation trophy/medal at the end of the season.

X. FIELD DECORUM:

- A. The players, managers, coaches, and league officials actions at all times must be above reproach.
- B. Uniformed players, managers, coaches and umpires only shall be permitted within the confines of the playing field just prior to and during games. Except for the batter, base runners, the batter "on deck," and coaches, at first and third base, all players and other coaches, or parents shall be on their benches when the team is at bat. When the team is on defense, the manager, coaches and reserve players shall be on their benches (Two defensive coaches are permitted in the field and one behind the catcher during the game).
- C. All coaches, managers, and players should be in the proper uniform as determined by the Baseball Executive Committee. Proper dress for managers is the HCYP manager's shirt or team shirt and team hat. Proper dress for assistant coaches is the HCYP coach's shirt and team hat.
- D. Adult coaches on the team batting are permitted to be in the coaching boxes. They are not permitted beyond the fenced in area leading to the on-deck circle.
- E. Managers shall be responsible for controlling themselves and their players. This will include intentionally distracting opposing players from the bench or while on base, such as taunting of the pitcher by a base runner, coach, or other players. Any display of unsportsmanlike conduct may result in banishment from the game and suspension from the League. The Baseball Commissioner will initiate a Suspension if, after investigation, the facts indicate unsportsmanlike conduct.
- F. Swearing and the use of foul language shall be considered unsportsmanlike conduct.
- G. Anyone out of order may be asked to leave the grounds. All managers are responsible for controlling the behavior of parents and fans of their teams.
- H. Under no circumstances shall the use of alcoholic beverages be permitted during playing of any game.
- I. The use of tobacco in any form is prohibited on the playing fields, dugouts or benches.
- J. Any player or coaches throwing of bats or helmets or other abuse of any equipment will not be tolerated. The manager is responsible for their players actions at all times

XI. MANAGERS AND COACHES:

- A. Must be genuinely interested in each youth assigned to their team and endeavor to help teach everyone true sportsmanship and the game of baseball, to the best of their

ability.

- B. Must make every effort to be impartial and will play every youth on their team when present every game.
- C. Must endeavor to set a fine example to the youths and conduct themselves in a manner befitting an adult of good character and responsibility.
- D. Managers are responsible for reporting all accidents, injuries and other significant incidents to the League Cadre immediately. If deemed necessary by the League Cadre, the manager will promptly complete an Incident Report and give it to the League Commissioner.
- E. Managers are responsible for the equipment allotted to them. Broken, torn, or beaten-up equipment must be reported as soon as possible so it can be replaced. Care should be taken against unnecessary abuse.
- F. If a defensive outfield coach interferes with a batted ball the batter is awarded a triple. If a defensive outfield coach inadvertently interferes with a batted ball is considered part of the field and play continues.

XII. HCYP PLAYING RULES:

Unless altered, added or deleted by the HCYP Rules and Regulations below, the playing rules shall be in accordance with: Little League Official Rules

- 1.01: Teams will play ten (10) players on the field. The extra fielder must be used as a fourth outfielder and not as a fifth infielder. All outfielders must be twenty (20) feet behind the base path.
- 1.06: Home team manager is responsible for installing and removing bases.
- 1.10: Bats shall be no more than 2-1/4" in diameter and no more than 33 in length. Wooden bats are permitted.
- 1.11: No jewelry of any kind may be worn, except Medical Alert Identification bracelets and, or chains.
- 1.11g No metal spikes are allowed.
- 1.16: Each team must provide in its dugout, at least three protective helmets approved by the Baseball Committee. Use of the helmet by the batter, the on-deck batter and all base runners is mandatory. Refusal to comply will result in the player being removed from the game. Each team, while at bat, may borrow from the opposing team's three helmets in order to comply with this rule. Any team using a player as a coach must have the player/coach wear a batting helmet whenever the player is on the playing

field.

Each team will provided (upon request) one protective vest approved by the Baseball Committee. Use of the vest by the batter and on-deck batter is not mandatory.

1.17: Catchers must wear an approved chest protector, mask, helmet, and male catchers must wear a protective cup. A player must wear mask when warming up the pitcher. A Protective Cup is recommended for all male players, but is optional except for the catcher position.

3.03a The batting line-up will consist of all players present for a game, batting in continuous rotation throughout the entire game. Players arriving at any time after the start of the game will be added to the bottom of the batting order and will bat as their turn in the rotation comes up. The manager is responsible for insuring that each player plays the required amount of time, and that the batting line-up is strictly adhered to. Any violation to this rule may result in forfeiture of the game.

No player may sit out two consecutive defensive innings. In addition, no player may sit out two defensive innings until every team member has sat out at least one inning. The player who plays the most number of innings may not play more than one inning more than the player who plays the least number of innings. (Except for injuries and late arrivals).

Players that must leave early or players that are injured may be removed from the game. Their spot in the batting order may be skipped without consequence. If a player is planning to leave early, the player should advise their manager before the start of the game. The manager should then notify the opposing manager. If an injured player is removed from the game, the manager should immediately the opposing manager. An injured player can be removed from the playing field when necessary. The injured player once removed from the batting lineup is removed from playing in the game, both in the field and at bat.

Coaches must make every attempt for players to play an equal number of infield and outfield positions each game. No player shall play all innings in the infield or outfield unless safety factor indicate the player should not play in the infield - in which case the League Commissioner and opposing coach should be advised prior to the game.

3.03b Substitution of defensive players may not be made during an inning.

3.04: A substitute runner will be allowed for an injured player, or, with two outs, for a runner scheduled to catch the next defensive inning. The substitute runner shall be the nearest preceding player in the batting order previously making an out.

3.10.2 The Baseball Cadre shall determine the fitness of the playing fields before all game starts.

The Baseball Cadre shall determine whether and when play shall be suspended during a game because of rain, darkness, thunder or lightning; as to whether and when play shall resume after such suspension: and, as to whether and when a game shall be terminated after such suspension.

Any manager who observes lightning when at the baseball fields shall immediately halt the play of their game and notify the League Cadre. The League Cadre shall immediately halt play on all other fields via the PA system as it was determined that lightning is in the vicinity.

A manager failing to obey any announcement to immediately halt play and remove players from the fields may be suspended from the league. The decision to suspend a manager will be made by the Baseball Commissioner, if after investigation, these rules were not followed.

Players and parents are to leave the park as soon as game is terminated and are not to congregate under or near dugouts, the pavilion, trees, etc. If the game is temporarily suspended, player and parents must go to their cars and await word from their coach about the status of the game. They should not leave the park. Games played to regulation are considered as under Rule 4.10.

Regardless of the number of innings played, any game may be terminated because of darkness, lightning or rain. It shall be the responsibility of the Baseball Cadre or umpire to determine when play will be halted and if it can be restarted after changed weather conditions that same day.

Any game terminated under this rule shall be considered complete

- 3.13: The Baseball Commissioner will determine the ground rules for each diamond. Prior to each game the managers should meet and agree on the typical ground rules for their field.
- 3.13a Any fair ball crossing into foul territory after passing first or third base and remaining in the field of play until traveling beyond the extension of the outfield fence shall be a ground rule double.
- 4.06a No manager or coach shall at any time, whether from the bench or the playing field or elsewhere, intentionally confuse or attempt to influence any opposing player into making a play by any action or language. Teams shall only offer encouragement to their teammates. No player, coach or manager shall express derogatory remarks toward the opposing team. This behavior will be considered unsportsmanlike and will be subject to the unsportsmanlike penalties.
- 4.10a Games played shall have a time limit of ninety (90) Minutes. The Home Team Scorekeeper shall note the actual start time of the game in conjunction with both managers. This time represents the cutoff time beyond which a new inning may not

begin (a new inning is defined as started at the instant of the last out in the prior inning). This time is announced by the Home Team Scorekeeper. These games are further subject to being immediately stopped by the issuance of a hard-stop by the Baseball Cadre on duty.

4.17a A team requires a minimum of nine eligible before a game can begin. Failure to have nine players by the forfeit time will constitute a forfeit. At the Rookie level, if both managers agree and time allows, the game can be played for instructional purposes if possible even after a forfeit is determined.

4.17b A game in progress shall be forfeited to the opposing team when either team is unable or refuses to place at least nine players on the field. These players must come from the team's roster. At the Rookie level, if both managers agree and time allows, the game can continue to be played for instructional purposes if possible even after a forfeit is determined.

4.19a There will be no protests and the opposing managers are required to resolve any disputes before proceeding. If the managers involved can not come to an agreement, the Cadre will resolve the dispute.

7.05 Runners may not advance on an over throw from either an infielder or outfielder.

7.06 All runners including the batter may advance only one base on a ball hit in the infield. When a batted ball reaches the outfield, the runner may continue to advance until the ball is returned to the infield.

7.08b Any runner will be declared out if the player makes contact into a defensive player with the ball during a play near the home plate or any base. A runner may choose not to slide and instead use evasive maneuvers to avoid contact with the defensive player. If the player is not tagged out, the player will be called safe. A runner who slides into a defensive player, with the defensive player dropping the ball will be called safe. If a runner does not slide and makes contact with a defensive player when no play is being made, the runner is safe due to defensive interference.

7.13: Leads are not allowed. Base stealing is not allowed in this league.

A team will be limited to scoring a maximum of five (5) runs in any inning regardless of the number of outs accumulated.

7.14: Sliding is not allowed. Defensive players must not obstruct a path to any base at any time. Base runners must make every attempt to avoid contact with any defensive player attempting to make a play at any base. Coaches should award a base runner any base should their ability to reach each base be obstructed by any defensive player not making an attempt at an out.

XIII. ADDITIONAL RULES:

- 12.00: Each team will supply one new ball, approved by the Baseball Committee, for each game.
- 12.01: No bunting. Any attempt to bunt (successful or not) is a strike.
- 12.02: No infield fly rule.
- 12.03: Bases will be set at 50 feet
- 12.04: RIF "1" balls will be used at all times.
- 12.05: The league assigned "home team manager" will act as Cadre at all games not played at Kiwanis Park. If the league assigned "home team manager" is not present than the "visiting team manager" will act as Cadre. The Cadre will be responsible for reporting all disputes to League Commissioner within twenty-four hours after the completion of the game.

Rookie Guideline:

The goal of the HCYP Rookie league is to get the youth of Howard County playing the great game of baseball, providing instruction and a positive experience.

At this level, scores and records are not kept with the exception of the 5 run limit per inning. In general, games are 6 innings in length but are always limited to 90 minutes. If a game completes 6 innings before the end of 90 minutes, it is at the managers' discretions to play a little longer as long as it does not delay the game following.