

SOMERSET HILLS BALL CLUB

Local Rules – 2023

This document contains the local rules of the Somerset Hills Ball Club. The purpose of this document is to provide operational rules for both the recreational and travel programs that comprise SHBC.

I. ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

SHBC is a not-for-profit organization that offers baseball and softball programs structured to various levels of play for children ages 4 through 16. SHBC serves the communities of Bernardsville, Peapack and Gladstone, Bedminster, and Far Hills. Courage, character, and loyalty are the cornerstones of youth sports, and our programs adhere to these standards and believes participation in team sports provides children the opportunity to develop these valuable competencies.

SHBC shall be governed according to the rules established by this document. This organization shall be governed by the SHBC Board of Directors, comprised of the Executive Committee and the League Officers, described in subsections A and B below. The SHBC Board of Directors shall ensure adherence to these rules.

A. Executive Committee

The Executive Committee is composed of elected board leaders and acts as a steering committee for the full board. Its main purpose is to facilitate decision-making between board meetings. At the discretion of the President, the committee may include the following positions: President, Vice-President Baseball, Vice-President Softball, Treasurer, and Secretary. These positions are nominated by the Board, and then elected by a majority of a Board quorum.

1. **President:** The President is responsible for coordinating the baseball and softball leagues and their respective Vice-Presidents, managing the Executive Committee, and acts as the primary point of contact for the District.
2. **Vice-President, Baseball:** The Vice-President, Baseball is responsible for the operation of the recreational baseball league and travel baseball teams, participates in District baseball discussions and decisions, is a voting member of all baseball committees, and as appropriate, is responsible for tasks as delegated by the President.
3. **Vice-President, Softball:** The Vice-President, Softball is responsible for the operation of the recreational softball league and travel softball teams, participates in District softball discussions and decisions, is a voting member of all softball committees, as appropriate, and is responsible for tasks as delegated by the President.
4. **Treasurer:** The Treasurer is responsible for managing the League's finances. The Treasurer also reports financial statements to the Executive Committee on a monthly

basis. In addition, the Treasurer coordinates with the league's accountant regarding all tax and year end related items, maintains and approves the league's budgets, and authorizes payments not exceeding \$500.

5. **Secretary:** The Secretary maintains the register of members and directors, records and distributes minutes of Board meetings, maintains an official record of the league's activities, and records and administers league voting process and bylaws.

B. League Officers

These following Board positions are nominated by the Board, and then elected by a majority of a Board quorum:

1. **Coaching Recruitment & Development Coordinator:** The Coaching Coordinator coordinates coaches' clinics, and provides coaches' training and instruction. Additionally, this role will help advertise available Rutgers SAFETY coaching clinics for any new coaches. Lastly, they will work with the level coordinators on coaching recruitment so that the league has an optimal # of coaches per team and our levels.
2. **Safety Officer:** The Safety Officer supervises the league's adherence to the safety rules of Cal Ripken/Babe Ruth. The Safety Officer also conducts and coordinates the annual coaches' certification training. The Safety Officer also oversees the reporting of injuries, maintains safety and background checks for the league, and is a member of the League's Discipline Committee
3. **Level Coordinators:** Level coordinators are responsible for the preparation of team rosters in combination with coaches at certain levels. Level coordinators also are responsible for the creation of level-specific rules and the communication of those rules to level coaches. In addition, level coordinators manage the equipment needs in collaboration with the Equipment Manager. Finally, level coordinators mediate disputes between players and coaches, and set the practice schedules for each team.
4. **Player Agent:** There is one Player Agent for baseball and softball. A Player Agent oversees fairness across the league. The player agent is also a resource that a coach or parent can go to in reporting any issues throughout the season.
5. **Scheduling Officer:** The Scheduling Officer is responsible for the following for all levels: coordinating field use with the towns, creating a game schedule for the season (in coordination with level coordinators for baseball and other towns for softball), rescheduling rainouts and field allocation and communication of scheduling to teams of league wide field closures.
6. **Fields Superintendent:** The Fields Superintendent is responsible for field and facility maintenance and the coordination with the towns regarding same, field readiness and preparation, and equipment upkeep and purchase.

7. **Umpire Officer:** The Umpire Officer is responsible for the coordination of umpires through the arbiter system and oversees umpire cancelations and rescheduled games.
8. **Equipment Manager:** The Equipment Manager is responsible for the maintenance and distribution of league equipment. The Equipment Manager also orders necessary supplies and equipment for the league.
9. **Uniforms and Trophies Manager:** The Uniform and Trophies Manager orders uniforms and year end trophies.
10. **Sponsorship and Fundraising Officer:** The Sponsorship and Fundraising Officer is responsible for organizing and soliciting sponsorship and fundraising, including team-specific sponsorships, signage, and league fundraising events. The Sponsorship and Fundraising Officer also reports the receipt of funds to the Treasurer.
11. **League Event Officer:** The League Event Officer is responsible for the planning and coordination of league events, including but not limited to opening day activities, picture day, Somerset Patriots Day, and Championship Weekend.
12. **Webmaster:** The Webmaster is responsible for maintaining our league website, www.shballclub.org as well as the league's social media accounts. This role will help throughout the year in efforts in the marketing and communicating out certain league activities to our members.
13. **Registration Chair:** The Registration Chair is responsible for coordinating league registration and registration related communications leading up to each season. The Registration chair will also communicate with division coordinators
14. **Snack Shack Manager:** The Snack Shack Manager is responsible for operating the Snack Shack, including creating the menu and scheduling volunteer coverage.
15. **Travel Baseball & Softball Sub-committee:** This sub-committee helps to organize activities of our travel program and includes our VP, Baseball, VP, Softball and three other board members. The travel sub-committee will bring discuss our travel program and bring issues to the rest of the board to discuss and vote on.

II. POLICIES

A. Registration

All players must be registered before they can play in SHBC. All players must submit the requisite medical and liability forms, as well as agree to abide by the SHBC Code of Conduct, in order to be registered.

Registration fees are determined on an annual basis by the Board. Payment of registration fees is required before any player will be allowed to participate with his or her team. No child will be turned away from SHBC because of an inability to pay the registration fees, and the award of scholarships is determined by the Board on a confidential basis.

B. Managers and Coaches

A manager and/or coach shall be responsible for making sure that his/her individual team adheres to the rules set by the SHBC and Babe Ruth League, Inc. Specifically, managers' and coaches' responsibilities include ensuring that ample practice time is scheduled and that games are played in a timely fashion; providing instruction in the fundamentals of baseball or softball, including throwing, fielding, hitting, baserunning, dugout decorum, and sportsmanship; ensuring that the players and spectators comply with the rules set forth in the SHBC Code of Conduct; providing feedback to Level Coordinators; maintaining accurate records and statistics, where appropriate; establishing and utilizing a meaningful level of communication with team parents regarding scheduling and other league events and policies; distributing equipment and uniforms; returning all equipment to the Level Coordinator at the end of the season; attending all required coaching clinics; obtaining the requisite certifications, including Rutgers Safety certification; and assisting in the maintenance and preparation of the fields before and after games and practices.

Managers and coaches shall be approved by the SHBC Board prior to the start of the season.

Any existing manager or coach may be removed from his/her position by a majority vote of the SHBC Board.

C. Practices and Games

1. Only those practices and games officially sanctioned and scheduled by SHBC will be covered by the league's insurance policy

2. Canceling Games, Practices, and Events: When necessary for events to be cancelled, such as inclement weather, the league's VP of softball and baseball will make the decision to cancel games and/practices, with reasonable notice. They will advise the president, all level coordinators, umpire coordinators, scheduling, and field officers of their decision. If canceled, level coordinators will inform all coaches.

3. Rescheduling Games, Practices, and Events: In the event that inclement weather, player availability, or other causes force the cancellation of a league event, the Coordinator shall work with the affected managers to reschedule those events as expeditiously and as fairly as possible. The Coordinator will also work with managers to ensure that each team has the number of games necessary to satisfy the requirements for district play.

4. No child will be left unattended after the conclusion of a game or practice. A manager, coach, or an adult who has obtained Rutgers-Certification who is personally directed by the manager, shall stay behind until the last parent has claimed his/her child, particularly when a game or practice ends unexpectedly due to an injured player or a rainout.

5. All players, managers, and coaches will line up to shake hands or wave caps after the game.

6. Helmets must be worn by players when on deck, at bat, or on base. If a player chooses to use his own catcher's gear, the helmet must include an attached hanging throat plate protector.

7. No bats are to be brought into the dugout or bench area during game play.

8. Managers and coaches are responsible for controlling the atmosphere of the game. This includes players' and spectators' conduct. If conduct cannot be controlled, the managers of each team should meet in private to discuss whether to continue the game.

9. Games should be cancelled if either manager considers playing or field conditions to be unsafe.

10. Play will stop immediately in the event lightning is seen anywhere or when the sound of thunder indicates that a storm is coming.

11. Managers shall have medical forms for each of his/her players on-site for each practice and game. In an emergency, the medical forms will list emergency contact information as well as allergies or other medical conditions. Managers should carry cell phones to all games and practices.

12. While the team is batting, a coach must be in the dugout with the team at all times.

13. All managers or coaches shall enter the results of each game including pitch counts into TeamSnap in a timely manner. All are encouraged to submit positive game recaps to the team through the TeamSnap site so the players can read about the games.

14. Should a manager request that a player be removed from his/her team, the player and his/her parent(s) shall be afforded the opportunity to address the SHBC Board during a Special Meeting. A player may be removed from a team by a majority of the SHBC Board.

D. Attendance

All players are expected to make every effort to attend all regularly scheduled practices and games. Any player with excessive absences may, at the request of the manager and in the discretion of the SHBC Board, be removed from the team.

E. Play Ups

There will be no “play ups” in the baseball divisions. Players will be assigned by grade to their respective divisions unless they are playing down by request. The only exception to this rule is if a player has already completed two years at a specific level, they will have the option to advance to the next level if they are not eligible by grade.

F. Travel Teams

1. Manager Selection

Travel team managers will be chosen by way of open nomination and then voted upon by the SHBC Board. The travel team manager will then be able to select his/her own coaching staff, subject to approval by a majority of the SHBC Board. Once selected, no coach may be removed from the coaching staff without approval by a majority of the SHBC Board.

2. Team Selection

The travel teams shall be selected following a tryout of eligible players. Tryouts will include throwing, fielding, and hitting. Each player should be evaluated by coaches whose children are not trying out for the tournament team. The team roster will be selected by the travel team manager based on the evaluation results from the tryout. In order to remain eligible to participate on the roster of a travel team, a player must attend 75% of their team’s regular season Spring games played. A decision to select alternate members to travel team shall be left to the discretion of the respective Vice President, Baseball or Vice President, Softball. In exercising this discretion, the Vice President, Baseball or Softball shall consider the recommendations of the division managers, travel team manager and other applicable circumstances.

3. District Tournament (Tournament Teams)

The Babe Ruth District Tournament is played after the conclusion of the regular Spring season. Playing in the District Tournament requires a commitment from the player and their parents and is competitive in nature. Players should be available for most of June and July for practice and to play the district tournament games scheduled. Players’ parents will be required to assist the coaches in scoring games, running a score board, pitch counting, preparing fields and any other duties necessary to play the games. For teams participating in the District Tournament, final rosters may differ from Travel Team rosters based on rules set forth by Babe Ruth League, Inc. In order to remain eligible to participate on the roster of a travel team, a player must attend 75% of their team’s regular season Spring games played.

4. Voting Results

All voting results for Travel (Tournament) teams are to be kept confidential among those present at the meeting. A violation of this confidentiality rule may subject a member to discipline by the Board.

G. Field Maintenance

It shall be the responsibility of all SHBC members to ensure that all fields allocated to and used by the League are properly cared for.

1. All SHBC members must abide by the field closure decisions made by SHBC, Bernardsville, Peapack-Gladstone, Bedminster, and Somerset Hills School District, or other responsible authority. Failure to comply may result in disciplinary action by the League or other authorities.

2. Issues with field conditions such as overgrown grass or weeds, standing water, insect infestations, needed repairs, or other unsafe playing conditions shall be reported in writing to the Field Officer as soon as possible. Missing or damaged field equipment should be reported in writing to the Field Officer as soon as possible.

3. Field Maintenance Duties: Any field maintenance activities that will be required shall be coordinated through the Level Coordinators to the managers prior to the start of each season.

4. Each manager shall be responsible for ensuring that all players, coaches, parents and spectators adhere to all required field maintenance and upkeep duties.

5. Any manager, coach, player, or parent who does not follow the field maintenance protocol may be subject to discipline in accordance with the SHBC Code of Conduct.

H. Expectations

1. What should a manager/coach expect from his/her players?

- To practice good sportsmanship at all times, to win without boasting, lose without excuse and never quit.
- To always do his/her best whether on the field or on the bench, during games or practices.
- To treat fellow players, opponents, fans and umpires with respect.
- To understand that winning is only important if you can accept losing, as both are important parts of any sport.
- To win with dignity and respect and to lose with your head held high.
- To be on time for all practices and games. If you are going to miss a practice, please notify your coach 24 hours in advance. If you are going

to miss a game, please notify your coach at least 3 days in advance. Advance notice is critical to appropriately plan practices and importantly find replacement players for games.

- Openly communicate with the team in all manners as well be available for any discussions.

2. What can players and parents expect from the manager/coach?

- To be as fair as possible in giving playing time to all players.
- To do my best to teach the fundamentals of the game.
- To be positive and respect each child as an individual.
- To set reasonable expectations for each child and for the season.
- To monitor pitch counts where applicable and be mindful of a young pitchers' use and conditioning.
- To teach the players the value of winning and losing.
- To be open to ideas, suggestions or help.
- To treat players, opponents, fans and umpires with respect.
- To never raise my voice at any member of my team, the opposing team or umpires.
- To be on time for all practices and games.

3. What does SHBC expect from parents & family?

- To come out and enjoy the game. Provide positive support to all players.
- To try not to question coach's leadership. Remember, they are volunteers, giving their time to your son or daughter.
- To respect coaches' decisions regarding playing time, position and placement, and to refrain from coaching any players during games or practices.
- Refrain from approaching players or coaches before, during or immediately after games with anything other than support. All question and/or concerns regarding players or coaches should be addressed in an atmosphere conducive to problem solving.
- Do not raise your voice at coaches, the players or the umpires. We are all responsible for setting examples for our children. We must be the role models in society today. If we eliminate negative comments, the children will have an opportunity to play without any unnecessary pressures and will learn the value of sportsmanship.

I. Anti-Discrimination Statement

SHBC does not discriminate and does not limit participation in any of its activities on the basis of any criteria prohibited under federal, state or local law such as race, color, creed, religion, religious affiliation, ancestry or national origin, gender, age, marital status, domestic partner or civil union status, pregnancy, sexual orientation, physical or mental disability, gender

identity or expression, atypical cellular or blood trait, genetic information, veteran status, liability for services in the Armed Forces of the United States, or engaging in legally protected conduct.

III. CODE OF CONDUCT

Youth sports programs play an important role in promoting the physical, social and emotional development of children. It is therefore essential for parents, coaches, volunteers, officials and players to embrace the values of good sportsmanship. Moreover, adults involved in youth sports events should be models of good sportsmanship and should lead by example by demonstrating fairness, respect and self-control.

All parents, coaches, volunteers, officials and players (“Participants”) will be responsible for their words and actions while attending, coaching, officiating or participating in a Somerset Hills Ball Club event and shall conform their behavior to the following code of conduct:

1. All Participants will not engage in unsportsmanlike conduct with any coach, parent, player, volunteer, official or any other attendee.
2. Participants will not engage in any behavior that would endanger the health, safety or well-being of any coach, parent, player, volunteer, official or any other attendee.
3. Participants will not engage in the use of profanity.
4. Participants will treat any coach, parent, player, volunteer, umpire, official or any other attendee with respect regardless of race, creed, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation or ability.
5. Participants will not engage in verbal or physical threats or abuse aimed at any coach, parent, player, volunteer, official or any other attendee.
6. Participants will not initiate a physical altercation with any coach, parent, player, volunteer, official or any other attendee.
7. Should a parent, coach, volunteer or player be thrown out of (ejected from) a game by an official, that individual must leave the field complex right away.
8. Speed Limit 5 mph in roadways and parking lots while attending any Somerset Hills Ball Club League function. Watch for small children around parked cars.
9. Swinging bats is only permitted in the batter's box and on-deck circle of fields, in batting cages or other designated areas under the supervision of a coach. No throwing rocks. No horseplay in walkways at any time. No climbing fences.
10. During game, players must remain in the dugout area in an orderly fashion at all times. After each game, each team must clean up trash in dugout and around stands.

Any Participant who fails to conform his or her conduct to the foregoing while attending, coaching, officiating, volunteering or participating in a League event will be subject to disciplinary action, including but not limited to the following in any order or combination:

1. Verbal warning issued by SHBC Board.
2. Written warning issued by SHBC Board.
3. Suspension or immediate ejection from a League event issued by SHBC Board.
4. Suspension from multiple youth sports events issued by SHBC Board.
5. Season suspension or multiple season suspension issued by SHBC Board.

In the event that a Participant falls below the standards of the Code of Conduct, such behavior will be reviewed by the Discipline Committee. The Discipline Committee shall be comprised of the Vice-President, Baseball, the Vice-President, Softball, Safety Officer, Secretary and Treasurer. The Participant may issue a written statement to the Discipline Committee or can request a meeting with the Discipline Committee as long as it's requested in a timely manner. The Discipline Committee will make a recommendation to the SHBC Board, who will then determine the appropriate discipline by a majority vote. All SHBC Board decisions are binding and final.

At any time, an SHBC coach may choose to impose immediate discipline on a Participant if the coach determines that such discipline is necessary to ensure the safety of other Participants. Such discipline and any other discipline will be reviewed by the Discipline Committee and/or the SHBC Board.

This Code of Conduct has been approved by a majority vote of the SHBC Board and is subject to amendment at any time by the SHBC Board. The current Code of Conduct will be posted on the SHBC website at all times. If a Participant has any questions regarding the Code of Conduct, please direct same to any member of the SHBC Board.

IV. LOCAL DIVISIONAL RULES

1. All Instructional A games will consist of 5 innings or 1 1/2 hours of play, whichever comes first. If coaches feel a 6th inning of play can be completed within the 1 1/2 hour time frame, they may do so at their discretion.
2. All players at a game will bat each inning, regardless of the number of outs that are recorded.
3. In an effort to teach the game to players and to celebrate outs recorded in the field, if an out is made in the field, the runner will leave the base paths.
4. Coaches will pitch from a reasonable distance for each player. It's recommended that coaches pitch from one knee at a distance of approx. 35 feet for most players and standing from 35 feet for the most advanced players.
5. Each player will get a maximum of 8 pitches to hit at the beginning of the season and will hit off the tee after 8. By May 1st, each player will get 5 pitches, after which he/she will hit off a tee.

6. No extra bases can be taken on a hit or overthrow except for the last batter of the inning who may choose to take extra bases at his/her risk of being out.
7. Players are required to wear a helmet with a jaw guard when batting.
8. Score is not kept at the Instructional A Baseball level.
9. Season goals: Each player should be able to catch a ball, and each player should be able to make consistent contact when hitting.

B. Instructional AA Baseball (Second Year Instructional)

1. All Instructional AA games will consist of 5 innings or 1.5 hours of play, whichever comes first. If coaches feel a 6th inning of play can be completed within the 1.5 hour time frame, they may do so at their discretion.
2. An inning will be concluded when either 3 outs are made or a team has batted through its batting order, whichever comes first. Batting order consists of all players at the games.
3. Each player will get 8 pitches max in the beginning of the season and will be out if he/she does not put the ball in play on the 8th pitch. This number will be lowered to 5 pitches by May 1st.
4. Games are either machine pitch **OR** coach-pitch from approximately 45 feet until May 1st.
5. One extra base may be taken on a hit to the OF or overthrow of a base. If a team is batting through the order, the last batter and all base runners may attempt extra bases at his/her risk.
6. Each child should attempt to play catcher at least one time in the season.
7. By early May, the 3rd inning of every game should be player-pitched. Pitchers should start at 35 feet, with a goal of throwing from 40 feet by the end of the season. Strikes and balls will be called at this point in time.
8. By the end of May, the 3rd and 4th inning of every game should be player-pitched.
9. A pitcher cannot face more than 4 batters per inning or throw more than 30 pitches, whichever comes first.

10. During player-pitched innings, there are 3 outs per inning with a maximum of 5 runs.
11. Players are required to wear a helmet with a jaw guard when batting.
12. Season goals: Each player should attempt to pitch at least once during the season. Half of the players per team be able to throw strikes consistently.
13. Score is not kept at the Instructional AA Baseball Level.

C. Minors Baseball

1. Length of games: Games will consist of 6 innings or 2 hours of play, whichever comes first. If the game starts late, note the start time in your scorebook and confirm that time with the opposing manager and the umpire. No new inning can start after the one hour and 45 minute mark. If a new inning starts prior to the 1:45 mark, that inning is to be played to completion. Exception: if you have the last scheduled game of the day, you may play your game to its conclusion.

2. Division consists of 3rd and 4th grade students and select 5th graders.

3. Everybody Hits: if a player is at the game, he/she is in the batting order and takes his/her turn every time through the lineup. For example, if you have 10 players at a game, there should be 10 players in your batting order. There will only be a maximum nine players in the field

4. It is the responsibility of the offensive team's manager/coach to ensure the players are batting in the correct position in the batting order. If a player bats out of order and it is caught before completion of the at-bat, the correct player can take his/her spot in the box at any time before the out-of-order batter becomes a base runner or is put out. (The count is assumed by the proper batter.). When the out-of-order batter becomes a base runner or is put out, the defensive team must appeal to the umpire before the first pitch to the next batter. If successful in appealing, the batter will be out and any advancement of other base runners is nullified.

5. The manager must remove a pitcher when that pitcher reaches the limit below for his/her age group as noted below.

- a. Age 11-12: 85 pitches per day
- b. Age 9-10: 75 pitches per day
- c. Age 7-8: 50 pitches per day

6. One exception to the rule listed in no. 4 above is that if a pitcher reaches the above limit while facing a batter, the pitcher may continue to pitch until (1) that batter reaches base; (2) that batter is put out; or (3) the third out is made to complete the half-inning.

7. A pitcher removed from the pitching position may remain in the game at another position. However, a pitcher who delivers 41 or more pitches in a game cannot play the position of catcher for the remainder of that day.

8. A player who catches 3 or more innings cannot then be entered into that game as a pitcher.

9. Pitchers who are league-age 14 and under must adhere to the following rest requirements:

- a. If a player pitches 1-20 pitches in a day, no (0) calendar days of rest must be observed.
- b. If a player pitches 21 - 35 pitches in a day, one (1) calendar days of rest must be observed.
- c. If a player pitches 36 - 50 pitches in a day, two (2) calendar days of rest must be observed.
- d. If a player pitches 51 – 65 pitches in a day, three (3) calendar days of rest must be observed.
- e. If a player pitches 66 or more pitches in a day, four (4) calendar days of rest must be observed.

10. The infield fly rule is NOT to be used in Minors games. Managers/coaches must inform the umpires when going over the ground rules that the infield fly rule will not be in effect.

11. Stealing of second base and home are NOT permitted in Minors. Leading is also not permitted. Runners can only steal third base.

12. There is a 5 run per half-inning maximum. After the 5th run is scored, the inning is over. For example, if your team has scored 4 runs in an inning, and a player hits a grand slam, only the 5th run counts (but you can count the grand slam in your team's personal stats). The only inning in which runs are not capped is the final inning. Only the umpire can declare an inning other than the 5th to be the final frame. Only complete final innings can be unlimited. For example, if a team bats in the top of the 5th and scores 5 runs, but the umpire says it's getting too dark and the bottom half of that inning will be the end, the home team does not get unlimited scoring because the visiting team was capped.

13. Mercy rule: if one team is winning by 10 or more runs after the LOSING TEAM has batted 4 times and the inning is complete, the game is over. However, if the visiting team is

up by 15 or more runs after the top of the 4th inning, there is no need for the home team to bat because they cannot score more than 5 runs in the bottom of the 4th inning and would still be losing by at least 10 runs. Should the umpire officially declare the 4th inning to be the last inning, the home team would bat, because in that case the 5 run limit rule would be lifted. If the visiting team goes up by 10 or more runs in the top of the 5th inning then the home team will hit in the bottom of the 5th and the 5 run limit is still in effect unless the 5th inning is declared to be the last inning by the umpire.

14. Players arriving late for games must be inserted at the bottom of the batting order if they have already missed their first at-bat.

15. If a batter throws his/her bat, the umpire will warn the player that he/she will be ejected from the game if it happens again. The batter is ejected the second time the bat is thrown.

16. If a pitcher hits a total of 3 batters in one game, he/she must be removed from the mound.

17. Home team is responsible for preparing the field for the game including dragging the field if needed, lining the field, lining batter's boxes, watering the infield and , if a game was played before, watering the mound. They are also responsible to bring all equipment back to the snack shack and cover the mound after.

18. No hidden ball tricks or deception plays will be allowed.

19. Batting: Slashing will not be allowed. A player who slashes will be called out. The ball is dead. No baserunners may advance.

20. Trips to the Mound: When a manager or coach makes their 2nd mound visit for the same pitcher in an inning, that pitcher must be removed from the game. Calling a pitcher or catcher to the sideline will be considered a trip to the mound. Once a pitcher is removed from the mound they can be re-entered at any position (with consideration for rule #7 for a pitcher re-entering as a catcher)

21. Only USA stamped bats are allowed. USSSA bats are not approved. If a batter is found using a non-league approved bat, an out will be given to his team and the player will not bat. If he reaches while using the non-league approved bat, the player will be called out, and anyone on base reverts back to bases they were on prior to the hit.

22. Call Ups: While Minors team can play with 8 players, or borrow a right fielder from the opposing team. If ample time is given call ups will work in this fashion - A select group of board-approved Instructional AA players may be called up to fill in spots if needed to get to the minimum number of 9 players on a team. All call-ups require the approval of the appropriate Level Coordinator. Any call-up will bat last in the batting order and play outfield. If the Instructional AA players are not available, all 3rd grade Minors will be contacted to fill in.

The call-up/fill list will be first come, first serve and work like a waiver wire. Once a player fills in, he or she will move to the bottom of the list.

23. Players are required to wear a helmet with a jaw guard when batting.

D. Majors Baseball (50/70)

1. Games will consist of 6 innings or 2 hours of play, whichever comes first. If the game starts late, note the start time in your scorebook and confirm that time with the opposing manager and the umpire. A new inning can start after the 1:45 mark. If a new inning starts prior to the 1:45 mark, that inning is to be played to completion. Exception: Playoff games are played to completion. If you have the last scheduled game of the day, you may play your game to its conclusion.

2. Division consists of 5th through 7th grade students

3. The manager must remove a pitcher when that pitcher reaches the limit below for his/her age group as noted below.

- a. Age 11-14: 85 pitches per day

- b. Age 9-10: 75 pitches per day

- c. Age 7-8: 50 pitches per day

4. If a pitcher reaches the above limit while facing a batter, the pitcher may continue to pitch until (1) that batter reaches base; (2) that batter is put out; or (3) the third out is made to complete the half-inning.

5. A pitcher removed from the pitching position may remain in the game at another position. However, a pitcher who delivers 41 or more pitches in a game cannot play the position of catcher for the remainder of that day.

6. A player who catches 3 or more innings cannot then be entered into that game as a pitcher, and a pitcher who has thrown more than 40 pitches cannot re-enter the game as a catcher.

7. Pitchers league-age 14 and under must adhere to the following rest requirements:

- a. If a player pitches 1-20 pitches in a day, no (0) calendar days of rest must be observed.

- b. If a player pitches 21 - 35 pitches in a day, one (1) calendar day of rest must be observed.

- c. If a player pitches 36 - 50 pitches in a day, two (2) calendar days of rest must be observed.
- d. If a player pitches 51 – 65 pitches in a day, three (3) calendar days of rest must be observed.
- e. If a player pitches 66 or more pitches in a day, four (4) calendar days of rest must be observed.

8. Everybody Hits: if a player is at the game, he/she is in the batting order and takes his/her turn every time through the lineup. For example, if you have 10 players at a game, there should be 10 players in your batting order.

9. It is the responsibility of the offensive team's manager/coach to ensure the players are batting in the correct position in the batting order. If a player bats out of order and it is caught before completion of the at-bat, the correct player can take his/her spot in the box at any time before the out-of-order batter becomes a base runner or is put out. (The count is assumed by the proper batter.). When the out-of-order batter becomes a base runner or is put out, the defensive team must appeal to the umpire before the first pitch to the next batter. If successful in appealing, the batter will be out and any advancement of other base runners is nullified.

10. The infield fly rule will be in effect for Intermediate Baseball.. Managers/coaches must inform the umpires when going over the ground rules that the infield fly rule will be in effect.

11. There is no limit to the amount of runs that can be scored in any inning by either team.

12. Once a batter either looks at strike 3 or swings and misses at strike 3 and the ball is either not caught or dropped by the catcher, the batter becomes a runner and can attempt to make it to 1st base before either being tagged by the catcher or thrown out at 1st base. A batter can only advance when 1st base is unoccupied or there are two outs. A bounced pitch, one that the batter swings at and is caught by the catcher after the ball bounces, is not considered a legal catch. The catcher must tag or throw the batter out. On an attempted steal of 2nd base with less than 2 outs, 1st base is considered occupied and the batter is out.

13. Baserunners are allowed to steal any base including home. Runners can advance to the next base on catcher overthrows.

14. Mercy Rule: if one team is winning by 10 or more runs after the LOSING TEAM has batted four times and the inning is complete, the game is over.

15. Players arriving late for games must be inserted at the bottom of the batting order if they have already missed their first at-bat.

16. If a batter throws his/her bat, the umpire will warn the player that he/she will be ejected from the game if it happens again. The batter is ejected the second time the bat is thrown.
17. If a pitcher hits a total of 3 batters in one game, he/she must be removed from the mound.
18. No hidden ball tricks or deception plays will be allowed.
19. Batting: Slashing will not be allowed. A player who slashes will be called out. The ball is dead. No baserunners may advance.
20. Trips to the Mound: When a manager or coach makes their 2nd mound visit for the same pitcher in an inning, that pitcher must be removed from the game. Calling a pitcher or catcher to the sideline will be considered a trip to the mound. Once a pitcher is removed from the mound they can be re-entered at any position (with consideration for rule #6 for a pitcher re-entering as a catcher)
21. Balks: First offense – Play stops and pitcher is given a warning/training. Second offense and subsequent offenses – regular balk rules apply.
22. Call Ups: A select group of board approve minors players may be called up to fill in spots if needed to get to the minimum number of 9 players on a team. All call ups require the approval of the appropriate Level Coordinator. Any call up will bat last in the batting order and play outfield. If the minors players are not available, all 5th grade majors will be contacted to fill in. The call up/fill list will be first come, first serve and work like a waiver wire. Once a player fills in he or she will move to the bottom of the list.
23. Home field is responsible for field maintenance and lining the field
24. Bats – USA or BBCOR -3 bats are allowed. USSSA bats are not approved. If a batter is found using a non-league approved bat, an out will be given to his team and the player will not bat. If he reaches while using the non-league approved bat, the player will be called out, and anyone on base reverts back to bases they were on prior to the hit.
25. Helmets with a jaw guard are highly recommended.

E. Seniors Baseball (60/90)

1. 8th grade, 9th grade and age eligible 10th grade players can participate in this division.
2. Each Spring, Somerset Hills Ball Club will assess if we have enough players to form a team.

3. The rules for this division will be dictated by the league that the team participates in.

F. Softball Instructional (Pigtails)

1. The Pigtails League is an instructional league. Coaches will pitch to the players (or use a tee) and teach them the fundamentals of the game.
2. Eligible Players: Only players who are registered with the league and are on the official team roster are allowed to play in games.
3. Games have a time limit of one hour. At the beginning of the season, half of the time should be spent providing instruction and half the time should be spent playing a game. Teams can spend the full hour playing a game as the season progresses.
4. All girls should bat each inning. The batting order should be changed each game to give each girl a chance to bat at a different slot in the batting order.
5. No balls, strikes or outs will be called.
6. Scores will not be kept and there will be no playoffs.
7. Only one player is allowed in the on-deck area at any time. Swinging of bats is only permitted in the field and in the on-deck area. Players who are in the dugout must remain behind fences at all times. No ball throwing is allowed in the dugout.
8. Required Apparel & Equipment:
 - Helmets with a faceguard are required for each player.
 - A glove is required. A soft glove that allows players to close it easily is recommended.
 - 11-inch compression (softie) softballs will be used.
 - Bats are not supplied by the league, but can be shared amongst the players.
 - Cleats are not required, but strongly recommended for safety

G. Softball Minors

1. **Players:**
 - Players of the Minors Girls Softball team shall include girls from 2nd and 3rd grade. Any other participants require Warren Baseball and Softball Inc (WBSI), Long Hill Baseball and Softball Association (LHBSA), Ridge Youth Sports Inc (RYSI) and Somerset Hills Ball Club (SHBC) board approval.

2. **Safety and Equipment:**

- An 11 inch softball will be used for each game.
- Players must wear team uniforms for games.
- Steel/metal cleats are not allowed at any time.
- A batter may swing their bat only while in the on-deck batting area at any time.
- Only one player is allowed in the on-deck batting area at any time.
- Players who are in the dugout are to remain behind fences at all times and are not to stand in fence openings in order to watch the game.
- Tossing or throwing of balls is not allowed in the dugout.
- Helmets with face-guards must be worn by all batters and base-runners.
- Helmets are not to be removed until a player is off of the playing field.
- Face masks for fielding must be worn by infielders and outfielders at all times.
- Chest/heart guards while playing the infield and pitcher are recommended.
- When playing the position of catcher during a practice, warming up a pitcher, or game, the player must wear full body protection gear (catcher's helmet with faceguard, chest protector and shin-guards).
- No player will wear jewelry, including watches, earrings, or anything around their necks.
- If a defender is blocking a base without being in possession of the ball, thereby preventing a base-runner from successfully reaching the base without making contact, the umpire is to award that base to the base-runner.
- No fielder may play closer than 50 feet from home plate except for the pitcher.
- If there is a safety base, a defensive player at first must tag the white bag, not the safety bag to record an out.

3. **Game schedule and length:**

- Minor league games will consist of 6 innings, unless called for game time limit, weather, darkness, and thereby, subject to the rules below.
- In the event a game must end due to an unforeseen event (e.g. lightning), the game is considered "official" when three and one half innings are completed with the home team ahead or four complete innings with the visiting team ahead.
- A time limit is in effect. No new inning will begin after 1 hour and 45 minutes past the start time. Once that time limit is reached, the inning in progress is to be completed and the game will end at the conclusion of that inning. Extra innings will not be played in the event that a game concludes with a tie score.
- There is no time limit for playoffs. All playoff games must be played to completion (6 innings).
- In order to ensure a playoff game does not carry on for longer than necessary, when a playoff game ends with a tie after 6 innings, at the start of the 7th inning, and each inning thereafter, the offense will begin its turn at bat with the player who batted last the previous half inning, at 2nd base. The team that scores the most runs at the end of the inning will win the game.
- The official start time of the game should be established by the umpire during the pre-game meeting with the team coaches. Coaches should ask the umpires to

establish the official start and end time. As the 1 hour and 45 minute time limit approaches, the umpire should remind the coaches (or vice-versa) of the time limit and determine if the next inning played would be the final uncapped inning.

- Capped vs Uncapped innings: While there is no “mercy rule”, there is a “cap” on the number of runs allowed per inning. Each inning, except for the last inning, will be “capped” at 5 runs. The last inning (due to time constraint) or the 6th inning), whichever comes first, will be “uncapped” where-as there is no run limit.

4. **Game Rules:**

- The pitching distance will measure 32’ from apex or point of home plate to front center of pitching rubber.
- The distance between the bases is 60 feet.
- A maximum of 10 players on the field at one time (4 players in the outfield). If a team is short-handed (e.g. has only 6, 7 or 8 players at game time), the coaches should try to work out how to best help that short-handed team and attempt to still play the game as scheduled.
- All outfielders must be on the outfield grass when the ball is pitched, but can enter the infield once the ball is hit.

5. **Balls and Strikes:**

- The pitcher will pitch from the pitching rubber and shall have both feet on the rubber when they begin their delivery.
- At the start of each inning, the pitcher will pitch to the first five batters. The pitcher will be limited to 4 pitches to each batter.
- If pitcher hits three batters, she must be removed from the position for the remainder of the game. Any batter who is hit by a pitch, when she cannot get out of the way with reasonable effort, will be awarded first base. First base will not be awarded if the batter is hit by a coach pitching.
- If the batter has not struck out, been put-out, been hit by a pitch or put the ball into play after their first 4 pitches from the pitcher, the strike count (if any) will be maintained and the coach from the batting team will resume the pitching responsibility – only strikes will be counted, no balls will be called. The coach may begin their delivery from the rubber or up to 1 stride from the front of the pitching rubber.
- After the first five batters, the batting team’s coach will pitch the entire at bat to each batting that inning. The pitcher will continue to field the pitcher’s position and cannot be switched to another fielding position in that inning. When assuming the pitching position, the pitcher must remain a further distance from home player than the coach that is pitching.
- Note to coaches: Pitchers out to know that the ASA (American Softball Association) rules state that “Both feet must remain in contact with the pitching plate at all times prior to the forward step.” As part of this rule, pitchers should not step their foot back behind the mound during their wind-up/deliver. As a general rule, this will not be enforced in the minor league (or major league)

recreation program in order to foster an environment which encourages more girls to try pitching, one where pitchers don't have to worry about every pitching rule/restriction. However, if either the umpire or coaches believe that the pitcher, by stepping backwards, is generating additional velocity that is unsafe to the batter, they should work with the pitcher or a solution that keeps the batter safe.

- The strike zone is defined as the ball crossing over the plate plus 3 inches outside and from the shins to the shoulders. A ball that hits the plate is not a strike.
- The umpire will only call strikes. They will not call balls.
- Balks will not be called.
- No pitcher may pitch more than two innings in any one game. For purposes of this rule, a single pitch thrown in an inning constitutes an inning pitched. This rule applies for playoffs as well.

6. Batting and Base Running:

- No balls will be called by the umpire. As a result, no batters can walk.
- Bunting of a ball pitched to the batter is not permissible.
- The Infield Fly rule will not be called.
- Base stealing will not be permitted.
- A runner may not leave their base until the ball is hit or it crosses the plate.
- Tagging up is permitted when a fly ball is caught by an outfielder; if a fly ball is caught by an infielder, tagging up is not allowed.
- Base runners are limited to one base on all batted balls hit in the infield.
- Base runners may take additional bases on all batted balls hit into the outfield, as defined by any ball that is hit into the outfield grass or that is fielded by an outfielder.
 - a. The play ends once an infielder has secured the ball in the infield or the infielder returns to the infield with the ball.
 - b. If the base runner is not at the half way point between the bases once the ball is secured by the infielders, the runner will be sent back to the previous base.
 - c. If the runner is at the half way point or beyond once the ball is secured by an infielder, the runner may advance to the next base.
- No advances are allowed on overthrows to any base.
- If a player leaves the game and does not return (e.g., leaves for another commitment), the team shall skip that player's turn at bat in the batting order and not be penalized.
- If a player arrives late to the game, and their turn "at bat" has already passed, they shall be moved to the bottom of the batting order.

7. Fair playing time:

- The batting order should be rotated each game to ensure all girls have the chance to hit against kid and coach pitching.

- Rotate infield and outfield positions each inning, unless there are safety concerns with a particular player playing infield. All players should have equal infield and outfield playing time.
- a. For playoffs, all players must have an opportunity to play the infield at least once.
- All players in attendance at a game will be included in the batting order.

8. **Other Requirements:**

- Coach behind the catcher: A coach of the fielding team is permitted to stand behind the catcher and umpire to help retrieve balls to speed game along. That coach may and is encouraged to communicate with the pitcher, catcher, hitter and fielders as this is an instructional league.
- Coaches in the field: Coaches of the fielding team may be in the field while game is in play. They are encouraged to communicate with the pitcher, catcher, hitter and fielders as this is an instructional league. The relief Pitching Coach of the batting team may, if they choose to be, in the field behind the pitcher or they may wait in foul territory awaiting the time to relieve the pitcher. If a coach in the field is hit by a live ball, the umpire would decide how many bases the batter and baserunners should be awarded.
- Official Scores: For each game, scorebooks will be kept by both teams. The winning team will report the final score to the League Commission within 24 hours after the end of the game. After each game, both coaches should agree on the results of the game – including the final score because the runs in a game may be used to determine playoff seeding.
- Seeding: Seeding for playoffs will be determined by team points. Points will be awarded accordingly; Win = 3 points, Tie = 2 points, Loss = 1 point, Not played = 0 points. In the event of a tie, the tie breaker will be determined by, 1) head to head, 2) winning percentage, 3) runs scored against and 4) coin flip.

H. **Softball Majors**

1. **Players:**

- Players of the Majors Softball team shall include girls from 4th and 5th grade. Any other participants required WBSI, LHBSA, RYSI and SHBC board approval.

2. **Safety and Equipment:**

- An 11 inch softball will be used for each game.
- Players must wear team uniforms for games.
- Steel/metal cleats are not allowed at any time.
- A batter may swing their bat only while in the on-deck batting area or while they are at bat.
- Only one player is allowed in the on-deck batting area at any time.

- Players who are in the dugout are to remain behind fences at all times and are not to stand in fence openings in order to watch the game.
- Tossing or throwing of balls is not allowed in the dugout.
- Helmets with face-guards must be worn by all batters and base-runners. Helmets are not to be removed until a player is off of the playing field.
- Face masks for fielding must be worn by infielders and outfielders at all times.
- Chest/heart guards while playing the infield and pitcher are recommended.
- When playing the position of catcher during a practice, warming up a pitcher, or game, the player must wear full body protection gear (catcher's helmet with faceguard, chest protector and shin-guards).
- No player will wear jewelry, including watches, earrings, or anything around their necks.
- No fielder may play closer than 50 feet from home plate except for the pitcher.
- A defensive player at first must tag the white bag, not the safety bag, to record an out.
- Base coaches must adult coaches.

3. **Game schedule and length:**

- Games will consist of 6 innings, unless called for game time limit, weather, darkness, and thereby, subject to the rules below.
- In the event a game must end due to an unforeseen event (e.g. lightning), the game is considered "official" when three and one half innings are completed with the home team ahead or four complete innings with the visiting team ahead.
- A time limit is in effect. No new inning will begin after 1 hour and 45 minutes past the start time. Once that time limit is reached, the inning in progress is to be completed and the game will end at the conclusion of that inning. Extra innings will not be played in the event that a game concludes with a tie score.
 - a. There is no time limit for playoffs. All playoff games must be played to completion (6 innings).
 - b. In order to ensure a playoff game does not carry on for longer than necessary, when a playoff game ends with a tie after 6 innings, at the start of the 7th inning, and each inning thereafter, the offense will begin its turn at bat with the player who batted last the previous half inning, at 2nd base. The team that scores the most runs at the end of the inning will win the game.
- The official start time of the game should be established by the umpire during the pre-game meeting with the team coaches. Coaches should ask the umpires to establish the official start and end time. As the 1 hour and 45 minute time limit approaches, the umpire should remind the coaches (or vice-versa) of the time limit and determine if the next inning played would be the final uncapped inning.
- Capped vs Uncapped innings: While there is no "mercy rule", there is a "cap" on the number of runs allowed per inning. Each inning, except for the last inning,

will be “capped” at 5 runs. The last inning (due to time constraint) or the 6th inning), whichever comes first, will be “uncapped” where-as there is no run limit.

4. **Game Rules:**

- The pitching distance will measure 40’ from apex or point of home plate to front center of pitching rubber.
- The distance between the bases is 60 feet.
- A maximum of 10 players on the field at one time (4 players in the outfield). If a team is short-handed (e.g. has only 6, 7 or 8 players at game time), the coaches should try to work out how to best help that short-handed team and attempt to still play the game as scheduled.
- All outfielders must be on the outfield grass when the ball is pitched, but can enter the infield once the ball is hit.
- Coaches are not permitted to stand on field at any time unless coaching a base.
- No pitcher may pitch more than three innings in any one game.
 - a. For purposes of this rule, a single pitch thrown in an inning constitutes an inning pitched.
 - b. A pitcher may only re-enter once to pitch.
- If pitcher hits three batters, she must be removed from the position for the remainder of the game.
- The strike zone is defined as the plate plus 3 inches outside only and from the shins to shoulders. A ball that hits the plate is not a strike.
- No intentional walking is allowed (e.g., rolling the ball, throwing ball high in the air).
- There will only be five warm-up pitches for each pitcher between innings.
- A new pitcher may have 8 warm-up pitches.
- A coach shall be allowed to request time and visit the mound. A second trip by a coach to the mound in an inning shall require a pitching change.
- Walks will be limited to six total per inning. Thereafter, a pitching change is required.
 - a. HBP (hit by pitch) will be considered a walk and counted toward the total number of walks per inning.

5. **Batting and Base Running:**

- Each team bats the number of players playing that game.
- A pitch count will be maintained by the umpire; 3 strikes = out, 4 balls = walk.
- Bunting is allowed. Batters are not allowed to fake a bunt and then swing at a pitch.
- No dropped 3rd strike rule. If the ball is dropped by the catcher on the 3rd strike, the batter is out.
- The Infield Fly rule will not be called.

- A batter who is hit by a pitch will be awarded first base. If a ball hits the ground first and then hits the batter – provided the batter has made an attempt to get out of the way of the ball as determined by the umpire – the batter will be awarded first base.
- Catcher interference with the batter shall result in a warning from the umpire to the defensive team manager and the replaying of the pitch (unless it is to the batting team's advantage to allow the result of the play to stand). A second offense by the same catcher will result in a dead ball and the batter will be awarded first base.
- If a player does not bat in their batting position, the player is considered an out unless the player is injured or needed to leave the game. The injured player may return to the original batting position.
- If a rostered player leaves the game and does not return (e.g., leaves for another commitment), the team shall skip that player's turn at bat in the batting order and not be penalized.
- A player who arrives after the start of play is inserted at the end of the batting order. In the event a team began play with eight (or fewer) players, a player arriving late can enter the game immediately.

6. **Base Running:**

- When the ball is put into play, runners may advance.
- Runners advancing to next base must avoid contact with the fielder if there is a play at the base; by giving themselves up or sliding.
 - a. Sliding into first base is not allowed.
 - b. The judgment call as to whether or not a player should have slid will be decided by the umpire and is final.
 - c. If a defender is blocking a base without being in possession of the ball, thereby preventing a base-runner from successfully reaching the base without making contact, the umpire is to award that base to the base-runner.
 - d. No headfirst slides (no warning, runner will be called out). However, when player is returning to a base, player may dive back headfirst.
- Baserunners may leave the base as the ball is released by the pitcher.
- Stealing is allowed from second to third base upon release of the ball by the pitcher. The runner may not advance home on a defensive misplay on the steal.
 - a. Overthrows on pick off attempts to all bases are dead balls (i.e., the baserunner may not advance).
 - b. If the runner leaves the base early, play immediately ceases, and the runner is given one warning. The next time the runner leaves the base early, they will be called out. The batter's count will remain the same, or if the third out, the same batter will lead off the next inning with a clean count (0 and 0).

- A base runner may not advance after the ball is returned to the pitcher, as long as the pitcher is in the appropriate circle.
- Once the pitcher has control of the ball in the pitcher's circle, play is dead.
- Advance on overthrows to 1st: On overthrows to first base, the batter cannot advance to second base. However, if there are others runners on base, those runners may attempt to advance one additional base after the overthrow to first. They may not attempt to continue advancing if the first basemen makes a subsequent overthrow to one of the bases.
- Advancing on overthrows to any other base besides 1st: On overthrows to any other base besides 1st runners may attempt to advance as many bases as they can.
- A runner cannot advance when the ball is being returned to the pitcher. A runner cannot advance on an overthrow to the pitcher unless the runner is half-way to the next base or home plate. The umpire will make the decision if the runner advances or returns to the previous base.
- If less than two outs, if a play is made at a base other than home, run counts if the runner on 3rd base crosses home plate. If a runner was on 1st or 2nd base, and is more than halfway to home plate (in the umpire's discretion) before the ball goes back to the pitcher's circle, that run shall count also.
- Tagging up is permitted when a fly ball is caught by an outfielder; if a fly ball is caught by an infielder, tagging up is not allowed.
- To expedite play, with two outs, a courtesy runner for the catcher and pitcher shall be permitted; said runner shall be the player who made the last out.

7. **Fair playing time:**

- Every player present must have an opportunity to participate in the field during the game.
- All players must play at least three innings on defense, and cannot sit for more than 1 consecutive inning (e.g., free substitution).
- A minimum of eight (8) rostered players (from your team) are needed to play if you have 11 or more active players on your roster. If you only have 10 active players on your roster (e.g., you started season with 11 players, and one broke a limb and is out), a minimum of seven (7) players is needed.
- A player from the minor league, who is in third grade, may be called up to fulfill the minimum number of players required. If the minimum number of players are not available within 15 minutes of the schedule game start time, the game will be considered a forfeit (and be recorded as a 6-0 final score). The two teams are encouraged to play a scrimmage game in this scenario).

8. **Conduct Code:**

- Umpires should be at least two years older than the age group for which he/she is umpiring.

- A judgment call (fair, foul, safe, out, strike or ball) by an umpire is final. Coaches may not challenge judgment calls.
- Interpretations of rules may be appealed. The coach challenging an interpretation must be in possession of an Official Rule Book and cite the correct interpretation. Rule interpretation is final by the umpire.
- Unsportsmanlike language and/or behavior by players, coaches or spectators shall not be allowed. After one warning to the coach of the offending team, the umpire shall disqualify the player, manager or coach from the game, or in the case of a spectator, shall require that the spectator leave the game area.

9. **Stoppage of Play:**

- In the event of an injury, the play immediately stops. The play stands. The umpire may stop play in order for the player to receive attention.
- In the event of an injury resulting in a stoppage of play, the player must leave the playing field, but may return.

10. **Other:**

- Official Scores: For each game, scorebooks will be kept by both teams. The winning team will report the final score to the League Commission within 24 hours after the end of the game. After each game, both coaches should agree on the results of the game – including the final score because the runs in a game may be used to determine playoff seeding.
- Seeding: Seeding for playoffs will be determined by team points. Points will be awarded accordingly; Win = 3 points, Tie = 2 points, Loss = 1 point, Not played = 0 points. In the event of a tie, the tie breaker will be determined by, 1) head to head, 2) winning percentage, 3) runs scored against and 4) coin flip.

I. Softball – Seniors

1. **Players:** Seniors players include the following:
 - a. Girls in 6th to 8th grade, who meet 12U and 14U age requirements.
 - b. Any other participants require WBSI, LHBSA, RYSI and SHBC board approval.
2. **Game Schedule/Length** – Seniors League games will consist of six innings, unless called due to darkness, weather and subject to the rules below:
 - a. Official game: A game is considered official when the home team is ahead and three and one half inning innings have been completed. When the visiting team is ahead, a game is considered official when four innings have been completed.
 - b. Time Limit: No new inning can begin after 1 hour and 45 minutes from the scheduled game time or when the umpire is ready to play. Example: If a game begins at 8:00pm and the bottom of the fifth inning completes after 9:45pm, the sixth inning cannot begin. If the inning begins, that inning is played until

completion (unless the home team is winning after the visiting team completes its turn at bat).

- c. Start time: Will be the schedule game time or when the umpire is ready to play.
- d. Mercy Rule: There is no mercy rule in effect.
- e. All playoff games must be played to completion. Time limits do not apply.

3. Coaches on the field

- a. A coach shall be allowed to request time and visit the mound. A second trip by a coach to the mound in an inning shall require a pitching change.
- b. Base coaches must be adult coaches.
- c. Coaches are not permitted to stand on field at any time unless coaching a base.

4. Equipment

- a. Players must wear team uniforms.
- b. Steel/metal cleats are not allowed.
- c. Any player warming up a pitcher on or off the field or playing catcher during warmups shall wear a catcher's mask, or faceguard helmet.
- d. Both teams shall maintain scorebooks for each game. Both teams must report the final score to the League Commissioner after each game.
- e. All players shall be required to wear a faceguard helmet while at bat.
- f. Face masks for fielding must be worn by all infielders at all times. All outfielders are encouraged to wear them as well. Note to coaches: All girls will need to have a mask as this is Rec and generally girls will play both infield and outfield.
- g. No player will wear any jewelry, including watches, earrings or any chains.

5. Game Rules

- a. A maximum of 10 players on defense (4 players in the outfield)
- b. Every player present must participate in the field and must bat.
- c. All players must play at least three innings on defense, and cannot sit for more than 1 consecutive inning (e.g., free substitution).
- d. A minimum of eight (8) rostered players (from your team) are needed to play if you have 11 or more active players on your roster. If you only have 10 active players on your roster (e.g. you started season with 11 players, and one broke a limb and is out), a minimum of seven (7) players is needed.
- e. There are no replacement players. If the minimum number of rostered players are not available within 15 minutes of the scheduled game start time, the game will be considered a forfeit (and be recorded as a 6-0 final score). The two teams are encouraged to play a scrimmage game in this scenario.
- f. A player who arrives after the start of play is inserted at the end of the batting order. In the event a team began play with eight (or fewer) players, a player arriving late can enter the game immediately.
- g. If a rostered player leaves the game and will not return (e.g., leaves for another commitment), the team shall skip that player's turn at bat in the batting order and not be penalized.

6. Pitching

- a. A player shall not pitch more than three innings in a game.

- b. Throwing one pitch shall count as an inning for the purpose of determining how many innings a player has pitched.
- c. Modified pitching and windmill are allowed.
- d. This is a fastpitch league; therefore, no arc pitching is permitted.
- e. The umpire will determine if a pitch will be disallowed.
- f. Pitcher's foot should be in contact with the pitching rubber when ball is released.
- g. Pitching distance is 40 feet.
- h. If pitcher hits three batters, she must be removed from that position for the remainder of the game.
- i. A pitcher may only re-enter once to pitcher.
- j. Once the pitcher has control of the ball in the pitcher's circle, play is dead, including the last batter when a team has batted around.
- k. No intentional walking is allowed (e.g. rolling the ball, throwing ball high in the air).
- l. There will only be five warmup pitches for each pitcher between innings. A new pitcher may have 8 warmup pitches.

7. Batting

- a. Each team bats the number of players playing that game.
- b. In an inning, a team can bat a maximum of the number of players playing that game or the number of players the opposing team is playing that game (if one team has more players than the other team, the higher of the number of players shall be used for both teams). A maximum of **five** runs are allowed for one inning.
- c. These rules/limitations do NOT apply to the last inning, for which there are no restrictions to the number of batters or the number of runs scored.
- d. Bunting is allowed. Batters are not allowed to fake a bunt and then swing at a pitch.
- e. Only one player at a time shall be allowed in the designated on-deck area.
- f. The dropped ball third strike rule is in effect (will be re-evaluated by the administrators at the end of April 2023)
- g. A catcher interference with the batter shall result in a warning from the umpire to the defensive team manager and the replaying of the pitch (unless it is to the batting team's advantage to allow the result of the play to stand). A second offense by the same catcher will result in a dead ball and the batter will be awarded first base.
- h. If a player does not bat in the batting position, the player is considered out unless the player is injured or needed to leave the game. The injured player may return to the original batting order.

8. Base Running

- a. Runners advancing to next base must avoid contact with fielder if there is a play at the base, with the exception of first base. The judgment call as to whether or not a player should have slide will be decided by the umpire and is final.
- b. No headfirst slides (no warning, runner will be called out). However, when player is returning to a base, player may dive back headfirst.

- c. Sliding into first base is not allowed.
- d. If the ball is in play, runners may advance.
- e. Baserunners may leave the base as the ball is released by the pitcher.
- f. If less than two outs, if a play is made at a base other than home, run counts if the runner on 3rd base crosses home plate. If a runner was on 1st or 2nd base, and is more than halfway to home plate (in the umpire's discretion), before the ball goes back to the pitcher's circle, that run shall count also.
- g. Decoy tags for the purpose of delaying a base runner are not allowed. A second offense shall result in the objection from the game of the offending player.
- h. To expedite player, with two outs, a courtesy runner for the catcher and pitcher shall be permitted; said runner shall be the player who made the last out.
- i. Stealing is allowed. Runner may only steal one base per batter. After stealing a base, the runner must wait for the next batter before attempting another steal. Runners may steal home.

9. Conduct Code:

- a. Umpires should be at least two years older than the age group for which he/she is umpiring.
- b. A judgment call (fair, foul, safe, out, strike or ball) by an umpire is final. Coaches may not challenge judgment calls.
- c. Interpretations of rules may be appealed. The coach challenging an interpretation must be in possession of an Official Rule Book and cite the correct interpretation. Rule interpretation is final by the umpire.
- d. Unsportsmanlike language and/or behavior by players, coaches or spectators shall not be allowed. After one warning to the coach of the offending team, the umpire shall disqualify the player, manager or coach from the game, or in the case of a spectator, shall require that the spectator leave the game area.

10. Stoppage of Play:

- a. In the event of an injury, the play immediately stops. The play stands. The umpire may stop play in order for the player to received attention.
- b. In the event of an injury resulting in a stoppage of play, the player must leave the playing field, but may return.

11. Changes, modifications, alterations

- a. There shall be no changes, modifications or alterations of these aforementioned rules without the specific and expressed action of the WBSI, LHBSA, RYSI and SHBC.

J. Fall Ball – Baseball

SHBC offers fall ball as a developmental league for players. The Fall Season runs from early September through October. The intention of fall ball is to offer kids at every ability level another opportunity to play baseball. Scores are kept and games are umpired, but the games are intended to be instructional in nature and standings are not kept. The make-up of each team will

be mixed in terms of ability, but other considerations also will be taken into account, such as car pool requests, siblings, and children of coaches.

V. AMENDMENTS

The SHBC Board may amend these Bylaws by majority vote at any regular meeting. Written notice setting forth the proposed amendment or summary of the changes to be effected thereby shall be given to each Board member prior to the meeting.