

**Michigan District Six Little League**  
**Rules Discussion Topics**  
*Revisions in bold and italics*

**Common Rules**

Regulation VI – Pitchers

- Baseball
  - Calendar Days rest is determined by age and number of pitches thrown in game
  - Umpire role is to understand the rule, but not to enforce it during a game (protestable offense)
  - Note - A pitcher who delivers 41 or more pitches in a game cannot play the position of catcher for the remainder of the day. Comment – this would include the 2<sup>nd</sup> game of a double header if the pitches were thrown in the 1<sup>st</sup> game.
  - Note – Rules also prohibits the catcher from pitching if he/she caught in (4) four or more innings
- Softball
  - Calendar Days rest is determined by number of innings pitched
  - Umpire role is to understand the rule, but not to enforce it during a game (protestable offense)

Rule 1.08 – Note 1: The on-deck position is not allowed in Tee Ball, Minor League, or Little League (Majors) Division

- Comment: For better safety the on-deck batter for Intermediate, Senior, and Big League divisions shall stand behind the batter and not necessarily in front of their bench. (i.e. stand on the home dugout side for right-handed batters and on the visitor side for left-handed batters).  
***This may change depending on the 2020 LL round table discussions.***

Rule 1.08 – Note 2: Only the 1<sup>st</sup> batter of each half inning will be permitted outside the dugout between half innings in Tee Ball, Minor League, or Little League (Majors) Division. A/R: The next batter shall be ready with a helmet on, but may not pick up a bat until it is his/her turn at bat.

Rule 1.10 – Note 2: The traditional batting donut is not permissible

Rule 1.15 (b): The pitcher may wear a batting glove under the pitcher's glove provided the batting glove is not white or gray or optic yellow (softball)

Rule 1.15 (c): No pitcher shall wear sweat bands on either wrist

Rule 1.17: All catchers must wear a mask, dangling type throat protector and a catcher's helmet during infield/outfield practice, pitcher warm-ups, and games

Rule 2:00 - Ball: If a ball bounces and touches the batter, the batter shall be awarded 1<sup>st</sup> base

Rule 3.04: "Courtesy Runner" is not permitted

Rule 3.17: No one except eligible players in uniform, a manager, or coaches shall occupy the bench or dugout

Rule 4.05 (2): Base coaches shall be an adult manager or coach ONLY if there is at least one (1) other adult manager or coach in the dugout

Rule 4.07: A manager or coach ejected from a game must not be present at the game site for the remainder of the game

Rule 4.19 (b): The manager or acting manager may not leave the dugout until permission is granted from an umpire

Rule 5.10 (d) – Note: One (1) offensive time-out, for the purpose of a visit or conference, will be permitted each inning

Rule 7.08 (b) – Note: A runner who is adjudged to have hindered a fielder who is attempting to make a play on a batted ball is out whether it was intentional or not. (The runners should try to go behind the fielder at all costs)

Rule 8.01: Legal Pitching Delivery

- Baseball
  - Windup Position
  - Set Position
  - Signs must be taken while pitcher is on the rubber
  - Major and below – signs can be from the coach if game is not being delayed – Penalty is that the coaches can't provide signs anymore and/or a ball is called
  - Intermediate/Senior/Big – signs must be from the catcher – Penalty is a ball called or a balk with runners on base
- Softball
  - Pitcher has the choice of 1 OR 2 feet on the pitcher's plate
  - 1 must be the pivot foot
  - Shoulders shall be in line with 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> bases
  - Signs must be taken while on the rubber with hands separated and the ball in either the glove or the hand
  - Ball shall be held in one or both hands in front of the body for not less than 1 second and no more than 10 seconds before starting the delivery
  - A backward step may be taken before or simultaneous with the hands being brought together and the pivot foot must remain in contact with the rubber at all times
  - Pitchers may not "crow hop" or "leap" as defined in Rule 2.00

Rule 9.01 (b): Each umpire is a representative of the league and of Little League Baseball and is authorized and required to enforce all of the rules. Each umpire has authority to order a player, coach, manager, or league officer to do or refrain from doing anything which affects the administering of the rules or enforcement of the described penalties

Rule 9.01 (c): Each umpire has the authority to rule on any point not specifically covered in these rules

Rule 9.01 (d): Each umpire has authority to disqualify any player, coach, manager, or substitute for objecting to decisions or for unsportsmanlike conduct or language and to eject such disqualified person from the playing field. If an umpire disqualifies a player while a play is in progress, the disqualification shall not take effect until no further action is possible in that play.

**NOTE: *The local league has the option to adopt this rule application. The stealing and relaying of signs to alert the batter of pitch selection and/or location is unsportsmanlike behavior. If, in the judgment of the umpire this behavior is occurring, the team manager and those responsible including any player(s) and/or coach(es) shall be warned after the first offense. Those responsible including any player(s), coach(es), and/or manager shall be ejected from the game for a team's subsequent offense.***

Rule 9.01 (f): Each umpire may order both teams into their dugouts and suspend play until such time a League Officials deal with unruly spectators. Failure of League Officials to adequately handle an unruly spectator can result in the game remaining suspended until a later date.

Rule 9.02 (a): Any umpire's decision which involves judgment, such as, but not limited to, whether a batted ball is fair or foul, whether a pitch is a strike or a ball, or whether a runner is safe or out, is final. No player, manager, coach, or substitute shall object to any such judgment decisions

Rule 9.02 (b): If there is reasonable doubt that any umpire's decision may be in conflict with the rules, the manager may appeal the decision and ask that a correct ruling be made. Such appeal shall be made only to the umpire who made the protested decision

Rule 9.02 (c): If a decision is appealed, the umpire making the decision may ask another umpire for information before making a final decision. No umpire shall criticize, seek to reverse, or interfere with another umpire's decision unless asked to do so by the umpire making it

### **Clarification of Rules**

Rule 2:00 – Base on Balls: An award of 1<sup>st</sup> base granted to batters who, during their time at bat, receives four pitches outside of the strike zone

- Comment 1: The ball is live
- Comment 2: Do not grant a request for time out until the batter-runner reaches 1<sup>st</sup> base, forward movement has stopped, and no attempt is being made to proceed to second base

Rule 2:00 – Bunt: A bunt is a batted not swung at, but intentionally met with the bat

- Comment 1: The key words are "*intentionally met with the bat*"

- Comment 2: If no attempt is made to make contact with a ball outside the strike zone while in the bunting stance, it should be called a ball. An effort must be made to intentionally meet the ball with the bat - **baseball only**
- Comment 3: The batter is out when an attempted bunt on the 3<sup>rd</sup> strike is a foul ball
- Comment 4: A “slap bunt” is considered a “swing” and not a “bunt” So if an attempted “slap bunt” on the 3<sup>rd</sup> strike is a foul ball then it is a foul ball and the batter continues to bat

Rule 2:00 – Foul Ball (Note): A foul fly should be judged according to the relative position of the ball and the foul line, including the foul pole, and not as to whether the fielder is on the foul line or fair territory at the time that the fielder touches the ball

- Comment 1: Remember when you call “*foul*”, you live with that call. You cannot change a foul call after it is made

Rule 2:00 – Foul Tip: A batted ball that goes sharp and direct from the bat to the catcher’s hands and is legally caught. It is not a foul tip unless caught and any foul tip that is caught is a strike, and the ball is in play. It is not a catch if it is a rebound, unless the ball has first touched the catcher’s glove or hand.

- Comment #1: A foul tip can only be caught by the catcher
- Comment #2: Runners may advance at their own risk

Rule 2:00 – Infield Fly:

- An infield fly is a “*fair*” ball (not including a line drive or an attempted bunt) which can be caught by an infielder with “*ordinary effort*”, when 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> or 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and 3<sup>rd</sup> are occupied, before two are out. The pitcher, catcher, or any outfielder stationed in the infield on the play shall be considered infielders for the purpose of this rule
- Comment #1: Make sure it is a pop fly and make sure that it can be caught with ordinary effort before calling out “Infield fly the batter is out”
- Comment #2: If the ball is close to the foul line call out “Infield fly if fair”
- Comment #3: The infield dirt and the outfield grass do not form a boundary line for infield fly purposes
- Comment #4: The ball is live and runners may advance at the risk of that ball being caught, or retouch and advance after the ball is touched, the same as any other fly ball.
- Comment#5: If the hit becomes a foul ball, it is treated the same as any foul
- An inning starts the moment the third out is made completing the preceding inning
- Comment: This is critical in relation to time limits and curfews and needs to be clearly discussed during the pre-game conference with the coaches

#### Rule 2:00 – Interference:

- Offensive interference is an act by a member of the team at bat which interferes with, obstructs, impedes, hinders, or confuses any fielder attempting to make a play. If the umpire declares the batter, batter-runner, or a runner out for interference, all other runners shall return to the last base that was, in the judgment of the umpire, legally touched at the time of the interference
- Defensive interference is an act by a fielder which hinders or prevents a batter from hitting a pitch
- Umpire's interference occurs (1) when an umpire hinders, impedes, or prevents a catcher's throw attempting to prevent a stolen base, or (2) when a fair ball touches an umpire in fair territory before passing a fielder
- Spectator interference occurs when a spectator reaches out of the stands or goes on the playing field, and touches the ball
- Comment: A ball is not always dead on interference (i.e. catcher's interference, batter's interference, and plate umpire's interference)

#### Rule 2:00 – Obstruction: Obstruction is the act of:

- A defensive player or team member which hinders or prevents a batter from striking or hitting a pitched ball
- A fielder who, while not in possession of the ball, impedes the progress of a base-runner or batter-runner who is legally running bases
- A fielder doing a fake tag
- Examples of obstruction
  - The first basemen using their foot or sometimes dropping down and using their leg from the knee down to block the runner's dive/step back into first base on a pick-off throw
  - The shortstop, 2<sup>nd</sup> basemen, or center fielder, without the ball, coming in behind the runner leading off 2<sup>nd</sup> base and blocking the runner's path back to the base on pick off throws
  - The catcher standing up the 3<sup>rd</sup> baseline waiting for a throw to the plate and causing the runner to either stop short of the plate or in their slide attempt to the plate
- Comment #1: Obstruction shall be called on a defensive player who blocks off a base, base line, or home plate from a base runner while not in possession of the ball.
- Comment #2: The play where the throw takes a fielder into the path of a runner is still incidental contact and would only be obstruction if the umpire determined the contact was intentional
- Comment #3: The defensive player should be taught that without the ball they must stay out of the baseline and once they have made the catch, they may now go into the baseline to make the tag

#### Rule 2:00 – Strike Zone

Rule 7.08 a (3): Any runner is out when the runner does not slide or attempt to get around a fielder who has the ball and is waiting to make a tag

- Comment #1: There is no “*must slide*” rule in Little League, it is “*slide or attempt to get around*”
- Comment #2: If the fielder does not have the ball and there is a collision, you cannot call the runner out. However, if the umpire determines that the runner deliberately attempted to injure the fielder, the umpire could eject the runner for unsportsmanlike conduct

Rule 7.08 (a) (4): Any runner is out when the runner slides head first while advancing (Little League (Major) Division and below)

- Comment #1: When to call a runner out for sliding head first as soon as you determine the act is in fact head first slide and not a stumble, trip, or hook slide

Rule 7:10 (b): Any runner shall be called out on appeal with the ball in play while advancing or returning to a base, the runner fails to touch each base in order before said runner, or a missed base is tagged.

Approved ruling: (1) No runner may return to touch a missed base after a following runner has scored.

(2) When the ball is dead, no runner may return to touch a missed base or one abandoned after said runner has advanced to and touched a base beyond the missed base

- Comment: How to make a proper appeal; First the umpire must make sure that the ball is live, if does not have to go back to the pitcher. The ball may be taken straight to the base missed, or to the runner who missed the base or left early. The base or the runner can be tagged. The defense then tells the umpire what they are doing.

Rule 7:13 (Baseball Divisions – Little League (Major) and Below): When a pitcher is in contact with the pitcher’s plate and in possession of the ball and the catcher is in the catcher’s box ready to receive delivery of the ball, base runners shall not leave their bases until the ball has been delivered and has reached the batter. The violation by one base runner shall affect all other runners.

- Comment #1: This includes a runner who was trying to draw a pick-off throw on the previous pitch
- Comment #2: Any runs that are scored by the runners being forced to advance by a hit or error shall count, except when bases are loaded and there is an infield hit, bunt single, or error where the ball does not leave the infield. In the latter case the runner who occupied 3<sup>rd</sup> base at the start of the play will be removed from the base and the run shall not count
- Review the examples in the rule book

Rule 8.02 (Baseball): The pitcher shall not;

- Bring the pitching hand in contact with the with the mouth or lips while in contact with the pitcher’s plate and must distinctly wipe off the pitching hand before contacting the ball.
  - Penalty: Umpire shall immediately call a ball and warn the pitcher if that repeated violations could result in being removed from the game

- Note: If a pitch is made and the batter reaches first safety, and no other runner is put out and advances at least one base then the play shall proceed without reference to the violation
- Rub the ball on the glove, person, or clothing
- Comment #1: The pitcher is allowed to rub off the ball between the bare hands
- Comment #2: The pitcher use a rosin bag in order to apply the rosin to the bare hand(s) and not the ball or glove of any player and the rosin bag must stay on the field for both teams to use

Rule 8.05 (Baseball) – An illegal pitch (a balk for intermediate/Senior/Big Leagues) when a runner or runners are on base is when;

- The pitcher, while touching the plate, make any motion naturally associated with the pitch and fails to make such delivery
- The pitcher, while touching the plate, feints a throw to 1<sup>st</sup> base and fails to complete the throw
- The pitcher, while touching the plate, fails to step directly toward a base before throwing to that base
- The pitcher makes a quick pitch (a ball with no runners on base)
- The pitcher delivers the ball to the batter while not facing the batter
- The pitcher makes any motion naturally associated with the pitch while not touching the pitcher's plate
- The pitcher unnecessarily delays the game
- The pitcher, without having the ball, stands on or astride the pitcher's plate or while off the plate feints a pitch
- The pitcher, while touching the plate, accidentally or intentionally drops the ball
- The pitcher, while giving an intentional base on balls, pitches when the catcher is not in the catcher's box
- The pitcher, after coming to a legal position, removes one hand from the ball other than in an actual pitch, or in throwing to a base (intermediate/Senior/Big Leagues Only)
- The pitcher delivers the pitch from the set position without coming to a stop (intermediate/Senior/Big Leagues Only)
- Comment #1: There is no balk in Major and below divisions – the pitch is called a ball
  - Note #1: If a play follows the illegal pitch the manager of the offense may advise the umpire of a decision to decline the illegal pitch and accept the play
  - Note #2: If the batter hits the ball and reaches 1<sup>st</sup> base safely, and all runners advance at least one base on the action resulting from the batted ball, the play proceeds without reference to the illegal pitch
  - Note #3: We do not call "illegal pitches" for the Major and below divisions during the regular season and league playoffs. We only enforce it during the District Tournaments. The umpire should explain to the pitcher and manger of the team the violation being performed by the pitcher and use it as a learning tool

- Comment #2: (intermediate/ Senior/ Big Leagues Only) The ball is dead (but time is not out) and each runner shall advance one base without liability to be put unless the batter reaches 1<sup>st</sup> on a hit, an error, a base on balls, a hit batter, or otherwise, and all other runners advance at least one base in which case the play proceeds without reference to the balk
- Comment #3: (intermediate/ Senior/ Big Leagues Only) If a pitcher swings any part of the free foot past the back edge of the pitcher's rubber, the pitcher is required to pitch to the batter except to throw to second base on a pick-off play
- Comment #4: (intermediate/ Senior/ Big Leagues Only) Umpires should bear in mind that the purpose of the balk rule is to prevent the pitcher from deliberately deceiving the base runner. If there is doubt in the umpire's mind, the "intent" of the pitcher should govern

Rule 8.05 (Softball): Examples of an illegal pitch are;

- Pushing of with the pivot foot from a place other than the pitcher's plate (i.e. – Crow hop or leap)
- The pitcher makes a quick pitch
- The pitcher makes a throw to a base while the pivot foot is in contact with the pitcher's plate
- Comment #1: There is no balk in softball - penalty for all illegal pitches is the pitch being called a ball
- Comment #2: We do not call "illegal pitches" for the Major and below divisions during the regular season and league playoffs. We only enforce it during the District Tournaments. The umpire should explain to the pitcher and manager of the team the violation being performed by the pitcher and use it as a learning tool

Rule 8.07 (Softball): Dropped Ball

- If a ball slips from the pitcher's hand before, during, or up to the delivery of a pitch, a ball is declared on the batter. The ball will remain in play and the runner(s) may advance at their own risk.

### ***Throwing of the bat***

- ***A player cannot be called out for throwing a bat while in the act of hitting the ball (where it hits the catcher or the umpire or flies past both of you and hits the backstop)***
- ***If a child throws the bat while in the act of hitting the ball then the manager is to informed that the player is being given a warning for safety.***
- ***It is not a warning for the entire team when the 1<sup>st</sup> player does it. Warn every player as it occurs***