

# Somerville Baseball Inc. Rules of Play

## Minors Division (Updated March 2025)

The intent of these rules is to clarify rules specific to Somerville Baseball (SBI), including those town baseball programs participating with SBI. Games shall be governed by “The Standard Playing Rules” and “Cal Ripken” and modified as specified below. Matters of contention should be addressed solely for the purpose of better educating the players on the correct way to play the game of baseball.

All participants, players, coaches, managers, as well as parents, are required to read and sign the Code of Conduct prior to playing baseball. Each participating town should have their own Code of Conduct.

### Leagues / Age Requirements

Leagues are divided by player age as of April 30 of the current year. The date is consistent with age requirements for tournament play. If a player requests to “play up” one age level, approval from the appropriate league commissioner is required. The player must demonstrate skills necessary to compete in the league which they will be playing.

- Rookie League: Ages 7 and 8
- Minor League: Ages 9 and 10
- Major League: Ages 11 and 12

### Playing Field

Games will be played on a 46/60 field. Bases will be 60 feet apart in a diamond shape. The pitchers plate should be 46 feet from the back point of home plate.

### Official Game

- A) The forfeit time will be 20 minutes after the scheduled start time.
- B) No full inning shall start 1 hour and 45 minutes after start of game.
- C) The umpire shall have the official time.
- D) There will be an eight (8) player minimum allowed before a forfeit is decided.

- E) When a team cannot conclude a game because an injury provides that team with less than eight (8) players, the game will be suspended and continued from that point at a future date.
- F) An official game shall consist of:
  - a. A full game consists of six innings. A game is considered official after four innings if stopped due to rain and/or darkness (3 ½ innings if home team is leading).
- G) If the umpire calls the game due to darkness, and official game length has been met, the final score will revert back to the last full inning
- H) All games that are suspended or rained out will be made up at the first available date. Managers must contact the appropriate league commissioner to get available field time.
- I) Once a game has completed one full inning, and the game ends due to weather, darkness, etc., the game will be considered suspended, and scheduled for a later date, continuing from the moment the game was called.
- J) If a game has completed less than one full inning before being stopped, the game will start over completely when rescheduled. However, pitching will count toward inning limits.

## Pitching

- A) The manager must remove a pitcher when said pitcher reaches the limit for his/her age group as noted below. When removed, pitchers may remain in the game at another position.

Ages 11/12 – 85 pitches per day

Ages 9/10 – 75 pitches per day or a maximum of three innings. One pitch thrown in an inning counts as an inning pitched.

Ages 7/8 – 50 pitches per day

Exception: If a pitcher reaches the limit imposed for his/her league age while facing a batter, the pitcher may continue to pitch until any of the following conditions occur; batter reaches base, batter is put out, the third out is made to complete the half-inning.

- B) Pitchers must adhere to the following rest requirements:
  - a. If a player pitches 66 or more pitches in a day, four (4) calendar days of rest must be observed.
  - b. If a player pitches 51-65 pitches in a day, three (3) 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 21-35 pitches in a day, one (1) calendar day of rest must be observed.
  - e. If a player pitches 1-20 pitches in a day, zero (0) calendar days of rest must be observed.

- C) The team manager, or designee, will be responsible for keeping the pitch count for both teams. Counts should be communicated between teams after each inning.
- D) The team manager is responsible for knowing when his/her pitcher must be removed.
- E) A player may not pitch in more than one game in a day.
- F) Once a pitcher is removed from that position in a game, he/she may not return to pitch during the same game.
- G) Managers will be required to record the pitchers pitch count for each game. This information must be available for review throughout the season if asked for (by managers, umpires, or league commissioners) (Managers must keep pitching records in their scorebook).
- H) Pitchers will be allowed between 5 and 8 warm-up pitches before each inning. New pitchers will be allowed 8 warm-up pitches. The umpire may limit the number of warm-up pitches to speed up the game.
- I) A pitcher that hits batters two (2) times in an inning or three (3) times in a game may be asked to leave the pitching mound. The umpire should use discretion based on the speed and related danger of the pitches, the attempt by the batter to move, etc, before removing the pitcher.
- J) No balks shall be called. Umpires may issue warnings and explain to the pitcher what they did wrong.
- K) Intentional walks are not allowed under any circumstances. An intentional walk is a judgement call by the umpire. Violation will result in the batter and each base runner advancing two (2) bases.
- L) The withdrawal of an ineligible pitcher after that pitcher is announced, or after a warm-up pitch is delivered, but before that player has pitched a ball to a batter, shall not be considered a violation.
- M) Pitches delivered in games declared "Regulation Tie Games" or "Suspended Games" shall be charged against pitcher's eligibility during the week in which it is being played. Those limits do not revert back to the original game week.
- N) In suspended games resumed on another day, the pitchers of record at the time the game was halted may continue to pitch to the extent of their eligibility for that day, provided said pitcher has observed the required days of rest.

## **Batting & Base Running**

- A) Every player on a team bats the entire game. Batting order stays the same throughout the whole game, with late arriving players being inserted at the bottom of the line-up.
- B) All bats must be USA Approved and show the approval stamp. All non-wood USA bats can be either 2 1/4" or 2 5/8" with a maximum of 31" in length.
- C) Each half inning will consist of three (3) outs or the scoring of a maximum of five (5) runs. This rule applies to all innings except the inning deemed the last inning of the game, where the "Five Runs an Inning Rule" will be waived and the inning will be played to three (3) outs.

- D) The next inning starting after 7:35pm shall be the final inning of the day, thereby waiving the “Five Runs an Inning Rule.”
- E) Umpires will determine which inning to be the final inning and must announce prior to the top half of an inning for the five-run rule to be waived. Coaches will NOT decide which inning is the last.
- F) The manager or score keeper shall announce to the umpire when the fifth run of the inning has scored. If there were any additional runs scored as a result of the continuation of the play, those runs will not count.
- G) Any player who over slides a base due to movement of the base and has reached the base safely will be safe unless in the umpire’s judgement, the runner attempts to advance to the next base. If a moveable base is pushed away during a slide, the player is to remain where the base was and not chase after the base to be considered safe.
- H) Any base runner purposely running into a fielder will be called out and ejected from the game.
- I) Only one stolen base is permitted per runner per batter. No advancement on errant or late throws. No delayed stealing is allowed.
- J) A base runner is not allowed to dance off their base after a pitch is in control of the catcher. Violation of this rule shall result in the base runner being sent back to the previous base.
- K) No base runner may leave base until the pitched ball passes home plate. Base runners must be on the base when the pitcher is on the pitchers plate and the catcher is in the catchers box ready to receive delivery of the ball. Violations of this rule shall result in the base runner being sent back to the previous base
- L) On any third strike, the batter is out whether the catcher catches the ball or not. However, base runners can advance at their own discretion, provided they are still permitted a steal during that at-bat.
- M) Base runner may only slide feet first in the base. Additionally, base runners must slide into any base (except 1<sup>st</sup> base) where a play is being made. Violation of this sliding rule will result in the base runner being called out. (Umpire may issue a warning for the first offense). Runners may dive back to a base headfirst if he/she overran the bag and is trying to get back to the base.
- N) No Infield fly rule will be called in this league.
- O) Runners may tag up on a fly ball.

## Defensive Positions

- Ten (10) defensive players will be allowed in the field. The tenth defensive player must be in the outfield, where the positions are to be right field, right center, left center, and left field. The extra outfielder should NOT be positioned as a short fielder).

## Ground Rules & Live/Dead Ball Play

- Ground rules are governed by field conditions and layout and must be discussed by both managers as well as the umpire prior to the game.
- When a thrown ball enters a dead ball area, play is stopped. Umpires will award all runners two (2) bases from the last base reached safely prior to the release of the throw.
- The ball is considered “live” when the umpire calls “play ball” or signals for the pitcher to pitch and the ball will be considered in play until the umpire calls “time”, or when the pitcher with the ball in his/her possession takes position on the pitchers plate, at which time the ball becomes “dead.”

## Substitution / Equal Play

- Every player must meet the minimum playing time requirements. Substitutions are the manager’s responsibility. Violation of this rule will result in an automatic forfeit, which will be strictly enforced by the league commissioner.
- All players must play a minimum of six defensive outs in the field, per game.
- Players not starting in the field, must be substituted into the game by the third inning.

## Non-Roster Players / Fill-In Players

- If a team needs to add a player to their team, they must first receive approval from the league commissioner, and all teams will be notified of the roster change.
- Teams may “borrow” players from other teams within the same league level in order to field a full team for play. Players may not “play down” from a higher level. Players from a lower level are permitted to “play up” in order to field a team.
- A player being borrowed from another team, may not pitch.
- Not following these rules for non-roster players will result in a forfeit.

## Postponements / Make-Up Games

- League must be notified of any game cancellations and rescheduled games.
- All postponed games should be made up at the earliest available date.

- Managers must show an attempt to reschedule games at the earliest available date, with every possible attempt to be made up within 15 days of the postponement, or both teams will forfeit. If one manager is not making a reasonable attempt to reschedule, their team will be forced to forfeit.
- Commissioners/town reps are responsible for making sure umpires are notified of the rescheduled date.
- Home managers are to notify visiting managers from other towns of postponements prior to 5:00pm, or a reasonable time. If weather is uncertain, assume there will be a game.

## Miscellaneous

- All non-players in the dugout must be certified and approved coaches.
- Home team is to provide two (2) game balls.
- No manager or coach shall cross a baseline to protest a call. Managers must request time out from the head umpire and the time out must be granted before the manager may approach the umpire. All discussions concerning umpire's calls or rules interpretations will be conducted by the managers and head umpires only and should be done in a private manner.
- No jewelry shall be worn by players
- Catchers must wear protective gear, including neck and groin protectors.
- No metal spikes are allowed. Any player wearing metal spikes will be asked to remove them. If the player does not comply, they will be ejected from the game.
- If a player is ejected from the game, their spot in the lineup remains empty and is recorded as an automatic out when that spot is due up to bat.
- All male players must wear a protective cup in order to play.
- Any member of a team's roster may warm up a pitcher at home plate or in the bullpen. Any player warming up a pitcher must wear catcher's protective equipment when in the crouch position.
- Managers are allowed two (2) visits to the foul line or the mound. A third visit will result in the mandatory removal of the pitcher.
- Harassment of any player or coach by either team shall be cause for ejection. Taunting (deliberate distraction, belittling opponent) shall not be allowed. Clapping while on the bases (as a distraction to the fielders) will not be permitted.
- Winning teams must report game result to league once game has been completed.
- Playoff seeds will be determined by regular season results.

## Game Results – Score Reporting

- Winning team is responsible for reporting scores to League Commissioner, Gregg Snyder, at [greggsnyderjr@gmail.com](mailto:greggsnyderjr@gmail.com) or through text at 908-210-6252. Scores should be reported no later than the morning after the game has been completed.