



**THIRD AND FOURTH GRADE INTOWN BASEBALL
OFFICIAL RULES AND REGULATIONS**
(Revised June 2014)

ELIGIBILITY:

- Third and fourth graders who reside in Berkeley Heights are eligible to participate in this program. All travel players must play in 75% of their team's in town games.

EQUIPMENT:

- Each player will be given and is expected to wear a complete team uniform consisting of a hat, shirt, baseball pants and baseball socks.
- Shoes with metal cleats are prohibited; however, rubber cleats are allowed.
- A protective helmet must be worn by the batter, "on-deck" batter and base runner(s).
- All players must wear a protective cup.
- Between innings, any player who warms up a pitcher must wear a mask.

GAME TIME:

- Games shall begin promptly at 6:00pm. All players are expected to arrive at or before 6pm to warm-up.
- Two complete innings shall constitute a complete game prior to May 15th. After May 15th, three complete innings shall constitute a complete game.
- Six innings shall constitute a regular game.

DARKNESS:

- No inning shall start after 7:45pm until May 21st. After June 1st it will be 8:00PM. In the event a game is called because of darkness, the score reverts back to the last full inning. The umpire and two "head" coaches will decide if the game should be "called". Each individual has a vote.
- **During the playoffs no top half of the inning shall start after 8:15PM. In the event a game is called because of darkness, the score reverts back to the last full inning (see above example). The umpire shall have final decision whether a game is to be called due to darkness**
- **These time/daylight restrictions, do not apply to lighted fields.**

RAIN-OUTS and/or WET GROUNDS:

- In the event of unplayable field conditions, the decision to play must be made and agreed to by both “head” coaches. Coaches and players should call the BH Recreation Department tape at 464-0625 or log onto www.bhpal.org first to see if games are cancelled.

RUN RULES: Playoff Update

- A team may score no more than 5 runs in any given inning. When the 5 run total is reached, the inning will end and the opposing team will resume batting. The exception to this rule would be the losing team may score as many runs as the deficit at the beginning of the half inning (i.e. team A is leading team B 13-2 after the top of the 3rd inning, team B may score up to 11 runs. Upon the score being tied the half inning will be over).
- The 5 run rule will be suspended in the 6th inning. A team will not be limited to a run limit in either the top or bottom of the 6th inning.
- There will be a 10-run rule in effect. The game is officially over if one team is ahead by 10 or more runs after the losing team has batted at least four times. Of course, if the visiting team is up by 10 or more runs, the home team will always get an opportunity to bat in the bottom of the inning. If both coaches agree, play can continue, but cannot alter the outcome and the score will be recorded when the margin is 10 or more runs and the losing team has batted four or more times

BALKS:

- The balk rule will NOT be enforced; however, the pitcher must pitch with his foot on the rubber (step and throw is not permitted). The balk rule will be taught by the coaches.

BUNTING:

- Bunting is NOT permitted.

BATTING:

- Players must bat in rotation, with all the players batting whether they are members of the defensive unit or not. Each player shall bat in his assigned order.
- *There will be only ONE “on-deck” batter at a time. That batter MUST be located within the “on-deck” cage at all times.*
- Players that arrive late shall be placed at the end of the batting order.

FIELDERS:

- Nine fielders may play on defense.

WARM-UP:

- Pitchers may warm-up between innings well away from field of play.

FORFEITURES:

- Forfeiture of a game will be declared in the event a team cannot field 7 players by 6:30pm. The two teams may still play a game if agreed upon by both “head” coaches and the team with more players may send additional players to the other team.

EXTRA-INNINGS:

- A tie game may go into extra innings, provided that time and weather permit.

OVERTHROWN BALL:

- When a ball is ruled dead on an overthrow, a player is entitled to the base he is going to, plus one additional base.
- When the ball is returned to the pitcher, it is ruled dead and players in progress from base to base are entitled to the next base.

PITCHING:

- A player shall not pitch:
- **In more than 2 innings per game or three innings total in consecutive games.**

Updated for playoffs

- **A player shall pitch a maximum of 5 innings maximum in a playoff week (Monday-Sunday), no more than 2 innings in a game and no more than 3 innings in consecutive games (i.e. 2 innings in quarters, 1 inning in Semis, 2 in Finals, etc.)**
- A single official pitch shall constitute having pitched an inning.
- A pitcher may not pitch in more than one game per day.
- Once a pitcher is removed from the mound, he may not return to the mound; however, he may participate at any other position.
- Breaking pitches may not be thrown.
- The count starts on either the first strike or the fifth pitch, whichever occurs first. The coach will change pitchers if the pitcher walks 5 consecutive batters in a row.
- Each Sunday during the season, head coaches must provide the 3rd/4th grade league director with a list of pitchers who pitched during the previous week and how many innings each pitcher pitched

STRIKE ZONE:

- The strike zone shall be from the top of the batter’s shoulders to his knees, while taking a natural batting stance.

STEALING:

- **The stealing of second base is permitted; however, a team will only be allowed 2 successful steals per inning.**

BASE RUNNING:

- A base runner may not leave a base until the ball has reached the batter. No advance by the runner can be made except on a batted ball, walk, steal or hit batter. NO pick-off plays are permitted.

INFIELD FLY:

- The infield fly rule will not be enforced.

DROPPED THIRD STRIKE:

- The batter is out on a third strike even if the catcher drops the ball.

WALKS:

- A runner may be forced home by a walk.

HIT BATTER:

- A hit batter may take first base at any time, even with the bases loaded; however, the coach of the team at bat reserves the right to permit the batter to remain at bat or take his base.

PARTICIPATION:

- All travel baseball players must participate in 75% of their teams played games to be eligible for Travel baseball, if a player does not meet this requirement in order to be eligible for travel the player will need to show the In Town and Travel Baseball Commissioner that the absence was warranted (injury, family emergency, etc)
- Each player MUST be given a batting order position and must bat whether he is in the game defensively or not as his turn arises
- **No player is permitted to remain out of play more than one inning in a row defensively and no more than two innings per game**
- Defensively, all players should have the opportunity to experience various positions. Unless a legitimate safety issue exists, players should be rotated among all infield and outfield positions. **A player shall not play any the infield for more than 3 innings per game.** *This rule excludes the skill positions of pitcher and catcher.*

RETIRED SIDE:

- The side is retired when there are 3 outs or 5 runs have been scored, whichever comes first. The only exception to the 5 run rule is the final inning.

SPORTSMANSHIP:

- Such acts as “riding” other ball players, belittling batters, etc. are STRICTLY PROHIBITED and have no place in this league. Coaches are responsible for enforcing these rules.

SUBSTITUTIONS:

- A player may not be substituted during an inning except for disciplinary reasons (not an error) or an injury.
- Pitchers may be replaced as needed, however, the rules governing pitching shall govern the pitcher.

OTHER RULES:

- The book Official Rules-Little League Baseball will apply except as stated otherwise.

ACCIDENTS:

- All accidents and injuries must be reported to Tom Barton, BH Recreation Director, within 24 hours of the incident at 464-0550. The following information should be provided: name of injured player, address, telephone number, age, extent of injury, at what field the accident occurred and names of witnesses. . Additionally, an email of the incident must be sent as soon as possible to cdpierce09@gmail.com (Chris Pierce, PAL In Town Baseball Commissioner).

INSURANCE COVERAGE:

- Accidents must be covered by the player's parents/guardians own insurance policy.

UMPIRES:

- Proper conduct towards umpires is essential always keeping in mind that they are trying their best. Not every call will be correct nor will every pitch be called perfectly. Coaches *may not* request that an umpire change his call. Berating, belittling or otherwise verbally abusing the umpires will not be condoned or tolerated. This also applies to players and fans, as their conduct is the coaches' responsibility. If an issue does arise, the umpire should be called aside *after the* conclusion of the inning to discuss a particular situation. Coaches are encouraged to report to the BH Umpire Coordinator any umpire that is not deemed capable.

OTHER – to be shared by coaches with parents/guardians:

- Players are to notify their coaches if they will not be able to attend a game or practice.
- In the event of rain or suspected poor field conditions, players should call the BH Recreation Department tape at 464-0625.
- Parents/guardians are not to leave players off at the field unless the coach is already there.
- Parents/guardians must pick up players immediately after a game is over. Coaches are not expected to stay with the players more then 10 minutes after a game is over.
- **Parents/guardians are encouraged to attend all games.**

STANDINGS/ PLAYOFFS

- By 8pm each Sunday during the season, head coaches must provide the 3rd/4th grade League Director with the scores of each game played during the previous week.
- The 3rd/4th grade League Director will maintain "standings" throughout the entire in town season.
- Teams will be divided into two divisions; the National and American Leagues. At the conclusion of the regular in town season, all teams will participate in a year-end tournament. Teams will be seeded according to regular season finish and as directed by league director and baseball commissioner. Any team found to break the pitching rules during the season will be denied entry into the tournament.