

Mustang American Division

Rules and Guidelines

The Mustang league includes two divisions, the American and National. The American Division will follow generally accepted baseball rules except those superseded by MYBSA mandate. Emphasis will continue to promote player development while building a solid foundation of baseball fundamentals. Points of emphasis for the upcoming season:

1. Coaches are required to give each player ample opportunity to play all positions and vary their batting order throughout the season.
2. Each team should develop as many pitchers as possible while still maintaining a quality flow of the game.
3. Teams will use a continuous batting order.
4. Enhanced Strike Zone: The strike zone is A FIST OFF THE PLATE, TOP OF SHOULDERS AND BOTTOM OF KNEES.
5. No individual player will sit on the bench for two innings before every other player sits one. This rotation will be maintained from game to game. It is the coaching staff's responsibility to maintain the integrity of player rotations. Parents will be encouraged to report any violations to the MYBSA.
6. Coaches are NOT to argue balls and strikes with umpires. If concerns occur, they are to contact either the Umpire Director or League President.
7. Only Team Managers are permitted to discuss with umpires any ruling on the field including clarification of MYBSA-specific rules. Any discussion must be conducted in a respectful manner.
8. Unless otherwise superseded by MYBSA Mustang League Rules and Guidelines, the league will follow USSSA rules. The MYBSA Coaching Code of Conduct will be strictly enforced. Any violations will be addressed by the MYBSA Board. Please refer to the MYBSA Code of Conduct Sanctions for additional details.

I. SAFETY

- A. Batters, on-deck batters, and runners must wear helmets at all times.
- B. All catchers must wear full catching equipment and a protective cup at all times while playing the catcher position. All other players are strongly encouraged to wear a protective cup.
- C. **Bat Throwing:** A batter that wildly throws the bat will receive a warning from umpire. A second instance of bat throwing by the same player will result in a called out.
- D. The MYBSA Coaching Code of Conduct will be strictly enforced. Any violations will be addressed by the MYBSA Board. Please refer to the MYBSA Code of Conduct Sanctions for additional details.

II. PITCHING

- A. Each pitcher may pitch a maximum of 5 innings per week.
- B. A pitcher can throw a maximum of 3 innings per day.
- C. A pitcher can throw a maximum of 3 innings in one game.
- D. A pitcher's innings count will follow a calendar week and will reset at 12:00am each Monday morning of the season.
- E. A pitcher will have pitched one inning after only one pitch is thrown.
- F. **Warm Up Pitches** – At the beginning of each half-inning or when a pitcher relieves another, no more than one minute of play may be used to deliver no more than five balls to the catcher or other teammate. Exception: A pitcher is allowed 8 warm-up pitches at the beginning of a game.
- G. Strike zone will be A FIST OFF THE PLATE, TOP OF SHOULDERS AND BOTTOM OF KNEES.
- H. When removed from mound, a pitcher can NOT re-enter the same game as a pitcher.
- I. Coaches must include a pitchers' report on their lineup card. This report must include the number of innings remaining during the calendar week for each pitcher.
- J. An **Intentional Walk** may be issued upon request. Four (4) pitches need not be thrown.
- K. **General Statement Concerning Balks:** 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. However, certain specifics should be kept in mind: 1) Pitchers should be allowed some leniency in regards to balks. 1) Pitchers should be warned for initial violations and subsequently penalized for major violations that directly affect the outcome of a play. 2) An umpire should approach minor violations as a teaching opportunity when the infraction doesn't affect the outcome of the play.
- L. **Dead Ball Situation:** Once the 1) pitcher has reached the mound **and** 2) has control of the ball, play is considered dead until the pitcher makes contact with the pitching rubber prior to the next pitch or there is an attempt by the defense to make a play on a base runner. Runners who have advanced less than half way towards the next base must return to the previously occupied base once the pitcher has control of ball on the mound.

III. Batting

- A. **Legal Bat:** A bat is considered legal when the following conditions are met;
 - 1) Barrel size does not exceed 2 1/4 inches.
 - 2) Bat Performance Factor does not exceed 1.15.
 - 3) Is clearly identified by stamp or seal as being sanctioned by at least one of the following baseball governing bodies; Little League International, USSSA, Pony, Cal Ripken, Dixie Youth, Babe Ruth League, NFHS or Baseball Players Association.

*A bat that is not clearly marked with a BPF and sanctioning body stamp will be considered an illegal bat.

Penalties for Use of Illegal Bat: A batter is out for illegal action when a batter enters the batter's box with one or both feet entirely on the ground with an illegal bat or is discovered having used an illegal bat prior to the next player entering the batter's box. In addition, all base runners must return to their previously occupied base prior to the infraction. The bat will also be immediately removed from play.

Note: If the infraction is discovered before the next player enters the batter's box following the turn at bat of the player who used an illegal bat the manager of the defense may advise the plate umpire of a decision to decline the penalty and accept the play. Such election shall be made immediately at the end of the play.
- B. Bunting is allowed.

- C. All teams must use a continuous batting order. The batting order for each team shall consist of all players present, and they will bat in turn either until three (3) outs are recorded or until the maximum runs per inning have been scored.
- ➡ D. Batters **CAN NOT** advance to first base on a dropped third strike.
- E. All players arriving (in dugout) after the first pitch will be placed at the end of the batting order, in the order of arrival.
- F. **Run rule limit per Inning:** Maximum of 5 runs per inning, except the final inning (4th or 5th inning, depending on time of season). However, if the time limit has been reached prior to the final inning, there will be no unlimited run inning.

IV. Base Running

- A. Infield fly rule **WILL NOT** be in effect.
- B. Batters **ARE NOT** allowed to advance to first base on a dropped third strike.
- C. **Leadoffs:** A base runner **CAN NOT** leave an occupied base until the ball reaches the plate.
 - ➡ **Penalty:** 1) If the runner(s) is ruled to have left early, the runner(s) may not advance and is at risk of being put out. If the runner advances safely, the umpire shall call “time” and the runner must return to the base last legally occupied at the time of the pitch. If the runner is called out, the call shall stand and the runner is out. If the ball is hit, the defensive team shall have the option of the result of the play or a no pitch.
 - 2) As a result, the team will receive one warning from the umpire. If another violation occurs, a base runner will be called out.
 - 3) This ruling cannot be challenged.
- D. **Base Stealing:** “Traditional base stealing is NOT permitted, however a runner can advance if a pitched ball passes either of the marked line behind the catcher, at any time during the pitch.
- E. ➡ **Dead Ball Situation:** Once the 1) pitcher has reached the mound **and** 2) has control of the ball, play is considered dead until the pitcher makes contact with the pitching rubber prior to the next pitch or there is an attempt by the defense to make a play on a base runner. Once a dead ball situation has occurred, runners who’ve advanced less than half way towards the next base must return to the previously occupied base.
- F. The base runner **must not attempt to ‘bait’ the pitcher or catcher** into making a throw to a base.
- G. **Courtesy Runners** - Courtesy runners are only allowed for the catcher of record from previous or next inning. The substitute runner must be the last batter not on base.
- H. **Accident to Batter or Runner:** The substitute runner will be the last batter not on base.
- I. Runners may advance from third (3rd) base to home in a stealing situation.
- J. **Sliding Rule:** Whenever a tag play is evident, a runner must slide or seek to avoid contact with the fielder and / or catcher. Attempting to jump, leap, or dive over the fielder and / or catcher is not interpreted as seeking to avoid contact. Malicious contact shall supersede all obstruction penalties.
 - ➡ **1)Penalty:** The runner shall be called out and may be ejected from the game at the umpire’s discretion. When enforcing this rule, the umpire should judge the runner’s intent. If the umpire feels that the contact was unintentional, then the runner should only be declared out. If the umpire feels that the contact was intentional and / or malicious, then the runner should be declared out and ejected.

V. Fielding

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- A. No player will sit out more than one (1) consecutive inning, except in the case of injury.
 - B. No player will sit out two (2) innings in one game before all other players have set for one (1) inning in that game.
 - C. Team parents will be encouraged to monitor their child's playing time.
 - D. Infield fly rule **WILL NOT** be in effect.
 - E. Catchers must wear full equipment including throat and cup protection. NO exceptions.
 - F. Nine (9) players will play in the field.
 - G. **Obstruction:** If the fielder does NOT have the ball or is not attempting to make the initial play on the ball, the fielder cannot occupy either the base path or base.

VI. Game

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- A. **Innings:** During the Month of May (or until both local school districts' school year has ended, an official game will be **four (4)** innings. After both local districts' have dismissed for the summer, an official game will be **five (5)** innings.

Extra-Innings: Extra-inning games will only be played in the following situations: 1) After local schools have dismissed for the summer, 2) Games played on a weekend or 3) Postseason tournament. During the regular season, only one extra inning will be played, starting with a base runner occupying second base. The base runner must be the player who made the last out from the prior inning. If, after one extra inning the game remains tied, the game will end in a tie. Each team will earn a ½ win for tie breaking purposes. Post season games will continue until a winner is decided.

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- B. **Time Limit:** Time limit is 1 hour and 20 minutes or innings limit. Official start time will be announced by the umpire and recorded in the official book. For time limit purposes, the official in-game time will be when the final out of the previous inning was made. No more than 10 minutes will elapse between games, including warm-ups.
 - C. A game is official when each team can field a minimum of 8 players. However an automatic out will be called for an absent 9th batter. No temporary players are allowed when a team has eight players in the lineup.
 - D. **Forfeited Games:** A team must forfeit the game if they are unable to have 8 players available 10 minutes past the game's official start time.
 - E. In the spirit of NOT having to forfeit a game due to having seven players or less, a "Temporary Player Rule" has been implemented. If a team has less than the required 8 players, a coach can secure a player(s) from another team from the same league. A 'temporary' player must meet certain requirements. Those requirements are; 1) the temporary player's draft position may not exceed the cumulative average draft position, rounded to the higher number, of all missing players. For example, a 10 player team is missing 3 players. The missing players were 10th, 7th and 6th round draft picks. The average draft round of the three missing players is 7.67, which must always be rounded up, in this case to the 8th round. The temporary player must have been drafted no higher than the 8th round. When replacing multiple players the same rules apply.
 - A team can only add temporary player(s) to bring their game roster up to 8 players, which is the minimum number to be considered an official game.
 - Temporary players cannot pitch.
 - F. **Substitutions:** Free defensive substitutions are allowed at any time.
 - G. **Rain Outs:** Games in progress will be an official game when 3 full innings (or 2 ½ if home team is ahead) while schools are in session (4 Inning games), or 4 full innings (or 3 ½ innings if home team is ahead)

after schools are dismissed (5 Inning games). If the game has not reached the minimum amount of innings then it will be rescheduled and start from the beginning. The innings pitched from an unofficial game **will** be counted.

- 1) If possible, rainouts will be rescheduled in the order of occurrence.
- 2) All attempts will be made to avoid teams playing more than 3 games in a week or more than a doubleheader in one day.

H. **Home team will occupy third base dugout.**

- I. All players must adhere to high standards of good sportsmanship and fair play during games and practice sessions. No razzing, heckling, taunting or "riding" of opposing players will be allowed by players, managers, or coaches. Penalties can include a warning, an out for the offending team and ejection.
- J. Any player, coach, or umpire who is visibly bleeding must leave the field of play to stop the bleeding. When the bleeding has stopped and the injury is bandaged (if necessary), the player may return. No penalty applies to any missed at bats.
- K. If a player is removed from the game for illness or injury there will be no out recorded for his spot in the batting order, his place in the lineup will simply be skipped.
- L. If a team drops below nine eligible players in a game due to an ejection or any reason other than illness or injury and leaves the game, an automatic out is declared in the batting order position of the player that left the game.
- M. **Run rule limit per Inning:** Maximum of 5 runs per inning, except the final inning (4th or 5th inning, depending on time of season). However, if the time limit has been reached prior to the final inning, there will be no unlimited run inning.
- N. **Mercy Rule:** If a team is leading its opponent by at least ten (10) runs prior to the final scheduled inning to be played, or if the home team is ahead by at least ten (10) runs in the bottom ½ of the inning just prior to the final inning, the game shall be terminated and the team in front declared the winner.

VII. Post Season Rules

- A. **Length and Time:** 5 inning games (No time limit)
- B. Depending on the number of teams in the league, consideration will be given for a single or double elimination format. Final format will be at the discretion of the MYBSA Board.
- C. Team seed is determined by:
 - 1) Regular season record
 - 2) Ties are determined by head to head competition
 - 3) If tied after head to head competition, seed is determined by coin toss.
 - 4) Highest seed of each tournament game will be home team.
- D. **Extra innings will be played.** Each extra inning will begin with a runner occupying second base. The base runner must be the player who made the last out from the prior inning.
- E. Coaches must file an innings pitched report for each player to the home plate umpire at the conclusion of each game. The pitcher reports will be given to the tournament director and shared with the coaches during the tournament.

VIII. Miscellaneous

- A. No metal cleats. Any player who violates this rule will be immediately removed for the remainder of the game.
- B. Game officials and the MYBSA reserve the right to amend these rules and/or render a final decision on any game situation it deems necessary.

- C. Teams must clean up their respective dugouts and the surrounding area after each game. Failure to comply with this rule could result in forfeiture of game.
- B. Home team is responsible for maintaining the official scorebook.
- C. Visiting team is responsible for maintaining the scoreboard.
- D. All players and coaches should wear appropriate hat and uniform during MYBSA games.
- E. **Protests:** There will be NO protests regardless of the circumstances.
- F. **Assignment of Wait-List Players** – In general, wait-listed player assignments will follow these guidelines: 1) Placement will follow in order of the waiting list and 2) All 10 year old players will be placed in the National League. 3) 8 year olds with at least 3 years of prior playing experience or 9 year olds with at least two years of experience will have option to play in either division and 4) All 8 year olds and any 9 year olds with less than 2 years of prior experience will be placed in American League. The MYBSA does reserve the right to place players in a specific league or division, regardless of age or experience.