



# Northwoods League Rules

(Updated 03-24-17)

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# **1 Behavior and Conduct:**

## **1.1 Unsportsmanlike Conduct.**

1.1.1 This league strives to promote good sportsmanship by its players, coaches, umpires, and fans. Any unsportsmanlike conduct will not be tolerated. Occurrences can result in the suspension of a player or coach at the discretion of the AABA board.

1.1.2 Foul language or unsportsmanlike conduct will not be permitted. If a player or coach is heard using it, they will be reprimanded and warned by the umpire. If a second offense occurs during the same game, the player or coach will be ejected from that game. Continued use of foul language or unsportsmanlike conduct during league play by that person shall receive appropriate discipline from the director of the league.

*Coaches have a significant responsibility to keep this "in check" as our umpires, who are usually youthful and less experienced, already have their hands full umpiring the game. Board members, coaches, umpires and fans are expected to be able to police themselves on this issue.*

1.1.3 There will be no unnecessary throwing of bats or other equipment at anytime for any reason during the game. The first violation will result in a warning to that player by the home plate umpire. The second violation during the same game will result in AUTOMATIC ejection from that game. Two AUTOMATIC ejections during a season will result in that player forfeiting his/her playing eligibility for the balance of the season. An umpire will make these calls. A gross violation will result in AUTOMATIC ejection. The Association President or director of the league may also make these calls.

1.1.4 If a coach or player is ejected from a game (exception rule 1.1.3) they will receive a one game suspension. If a second violation occurs they will be suspended for the season.

1.1.5 Badgering (direct or indirect) of the opposing teams players (such as a pitcher) will not be tolerated. Example: Making loud comments to your batter that the pitcher can't throw strikes and that once he walks someone, he will be rattled enough to start walking everyone.

## **1.2 Tobacco, Alcohol or Other Drugs.**

1.2.1 There shall be no use of tobacco, alcohol or other drugs on the field by fans, coaches or players. The offender shall be removed from the game. A second violation will result in termination from the league for that year. Note: This rule applies to fans, as such substances are not allowed on school grounds.

## **1.3 League Rules and Regulations.**

1.3.1 Rules and regulations are not to be changed during the regular playing season. However, suggestions for the modifications or revisions of these rules for future years are welcome if submitted in writing along with the reasons for the proposed change(s). In the event that temporary emergency changes must be made, they must have Board approval and written notification will be given to the managers involved one week prior to their enforcement.

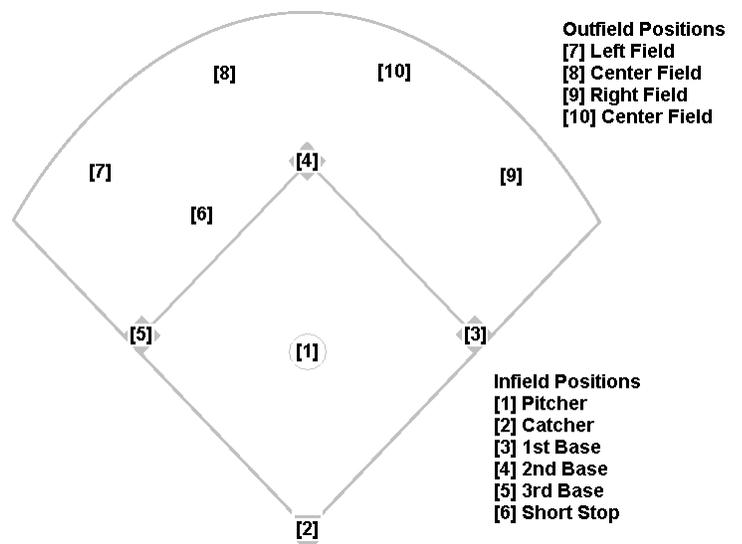
1.3.2 When not clarified, the association will default to the national high school rules governing baseball prior to making a ruling / interpretation.

## 2 Coaches & Players:

### 2.1 Coaches.

- 2.1.1 Coaches shall be responsible for the collection and return of league issued uniforms. Returned uniforms should be cleaned & ready for storage.
- 2.1.2 Dugout personnel shall consist of not more than: 1 manager, 2 coaches, 1 scorekeeper, and 1 bat person.
- 2.1.3 No delay tactics will be tolerated; i.e. throwing the ball around the horn or taking infield after designated start time. It is the responsibility of the umpire and coaches to keep the game moving. Any attempt to delay a game shall be considered unsportsmanlike.
- 2.1.4 Do not pitch with sore-armed pitchers. No game this season is worth a lifetime injury.
- 2.1.5 No player may sit more than one inning unless all players have sat at least one inning (exception being an injury or illness).
- 2.1.6 Soft toss (a training method used during batting practice) utilizing baseballs while having your players hitting into the fencing is no longer permitted. The league will be providing whiffle balls for this activity. This association will no longer contribute to the fencing being damaged as a result of this activity when using baseballs.
- 2.1.7 It is required that all players play at least one inning per game in both the infield and outfield; unless, due to a parental request or player request that the player's safety would be compromised.
- 2.1.8 First and foremost, it's the umpire's game to control. The Umpire is not to be unruly questioned by any player, coach or fan. Coaches are entitled to a conference as warranted. Consideration regarding having each of the head coaches involved in the conference will be at the umpire's discretion (pending the circumstances).
- 2.1.9 The association enforces a zero tolerance policy in addressing any out bursts, confrontations, or other forms of intimidation being employed by our participants within the league (which includes our fans). These kinds of actions negatively affect the AABA as a whole and as such, the coaches are asked to keep this "in check".

**NOTE:** Players in the pitching and catching positions are to be considered playing infield positions.



## 2.2 Player Eligibility.

- 2.2.1 Players should notify their coach if they are going to miss a game or practice. If notice is not given, the coach may choose not to play that player at the next game. This is totally at the coaches' discretion. This is the only circumstance where the "everybody plays" rule may be lifted. If this is to be done during a play-off game, the director of the league shall first be notified.
- 2.2.2 Except for cases of injury or illness, a player must play in at least half of the team's regularly scheduled games in order to be eligible to participate in the league play-offs. Coaches shall notify the director of the league of any player's ineligibility prior to the team's first play-off game.

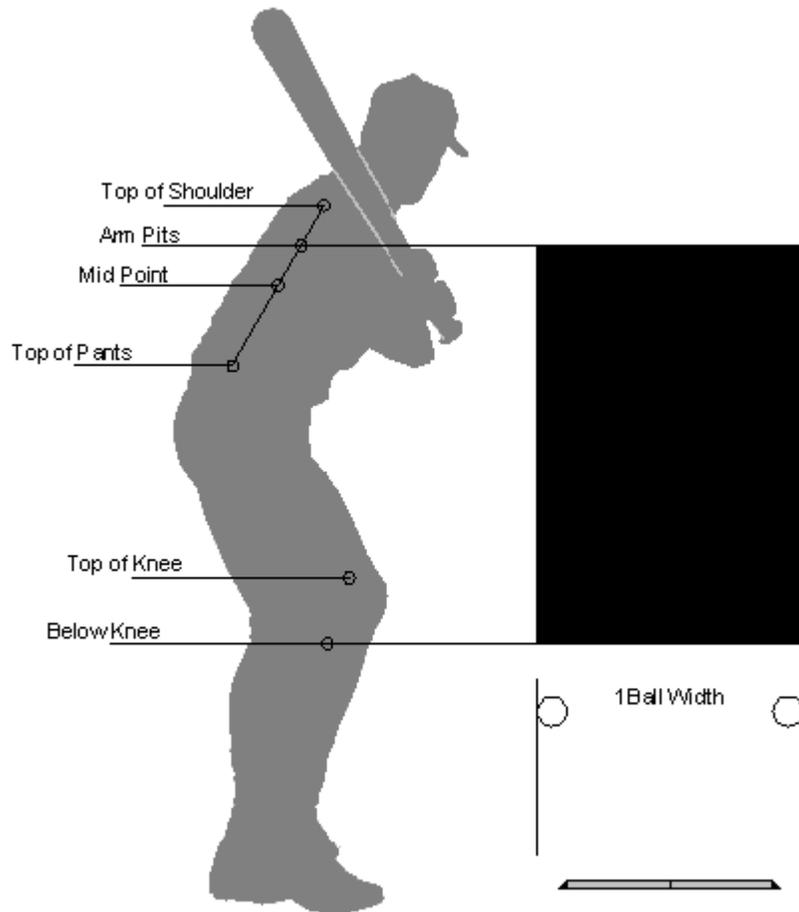
## 2.3 Dress Code (Uniforms).

- 2.3.1 Full uniforms are required at all times during the game. If a uniform has been issued and is not being worn, the player will not play.
- 2.3.2 Uniforms will include proper caps during games.
- 2.3.3 Earrings, necklaces, or bracelets will not be allowed.
- 2.3.4 Players may not wear metal spikes.
- 2.3.5 The league recommends that all players wear an athletic supporter. **Note:** Catchers must wear a protective cup.

## 2.4 Pitchers.

- 2.4.1 The league strongly encourages prospective pitchers to attend all league sponsored pitching clinics.
- 2.4.2 Pitchers will not be allowed to wear a long sleeve white shirt on their throwing arm nor will they be allowed to wear sun glasses while pitching.
- 2.4.3 The pitching mound will be 45 feet from the leading edge of home plate, as arranged by the grounds keeper.
- 2.4.4 There shall be no intentional walks. All Batters need to be pitched to.
- 2.4.5 Curve balls are not permitted unless perceived by the umpire to be a form of natural delivery. Any pitch perceived by the umpire to be an attempt to throw a curve will be called a ball unless it is hit. In that event, the manager shall have the choice of accepting the result of the play or the pitch being called a ball. The umpire shall notify both managers if a ball is called on a curve ball pitch.
- 2.4.6 The maximum number of warm-up pitches allowed between innings is five (5) unless, at the sole discretion of the umpire, additional warm-ups are warranted due to weather or other conditions.
- 2.4.7 Pitchers may not pitch more than 2 innings in one game and not more than 4 innings a week (Sunday – Saturday)
- 2.4.8 If a pitcher delivers as few as one pitch during an inning that shall constitute an inning pitched.

- 2.4.9 A pitcher that has already pitched in a game may not reenter that game in a pitching position.
- 2.4.10 Trips to the Mound: Three (3) trips to the mound are allowed PER PITCHER, PER GAME. On the third trip, the pitcher must be removed from the pitcher position.
- 2.4.11 The Strike Zone.



## 2.5 Catchers.

- 2.5.1 Catchers are required to wear masks, chest protectors, shin guards, protective headgear, throat protector and a protective cup. **NO EXCEPTIONS.**
- 2.5.2 Any player warming up a pitcher shall wear a mask if on the playing field and in a crouched position.

## 2.6 Batters.

- 2.6.1 Batters are required to wear AABA furnished protective headgear, which will include facemasks. Failure to do so results in an automatic out.
- 2.6.2 All players will be in the batting order. Batting order cannot be changed regardless of field substitutions.
- 2.6.3 Bats must be compliance with the USSSA or BBCOR and have the appropriate stamp.
- 2.6.4 The diameter of the bat may not exceed 2 3/4 inches. Any bat that does not comply with this rule is prohibited.
- 2.6.5 No souvenir wood bats are allowed.
- 2.6.6 Any illegal bat used will be an automatic out. **NO EXCEPTIONS.**
- 2.6.7 A batter is automatically out after 3 strikes and may not advance to first on a dropped ball or passed ball by the catcher.
- 2.6.8 There will be no unnecessary throwing of bats or other equipment at anytime for any reason during the game (see rule 1.1.3 regarding unsportsmanlike conduct).

## 2.7 Base Runners.

- 2.7.1 Base runners are required to wear AABA furnished protective headgear, which will include facemasks. Failure to do so results in an automatic out.
- 2.7.2 A ball being thrown back to the pitcher by the catcher is a dead ball.
- 2.7.3 Base runners can steal 2<sup>nd</sup> base only. They may not lead off or leave the base until after the pitched ball crosses the plate. Upon a violation, the pitched ball will immediately be considered a dead ball (as if it was not pitched) and all base runners will return to their original positions prior to the violation. The first violation will result in a warning by the home plate umpire. The second violation will result in the base runner being called out. Delayed steals are not allowed.
- 2.7.4 Base runners can advance as far as possible while the ball remains "in play".  
**Exception:** A base runner may **not** advance to third base after successfully stealing second should the ball be overthrown (not caught) by the defense during a pick off attempt. It is the intention of this league to encourage catchers (following their coaches guidance) to develop the proper form and technique required to effectively make their throws to second base while a base runner is attempting the steal.
- 2.7.5 Balls being overthrown or passed (not caught) which result in the ball going "out of play" will entitle the base runners to the base they were advancing to (at the time of the ball traveling "out of play") plus (+) an additional base.
- 2.7.6 During a close play at 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, or home plate the base runner must avoid contact. Any runner that does not avoid contact and creates or potentially causes a safety concern may be called out at the discretion of the umpire. Head first sliding is discouraged.
- 2.7.7 Base runners missing a base shall be called "out" only after the opposing coach makes an appeal. This appeal must be made to the umpire before the next play is commenced.

## 2.8 League Property.

- 2.8.1 If league property is not returned by player or parent when personally contacted, a registered letter will be sent requesting return of equipment or payment for it.

# 3 League Games:

## 3.1 General.

- 3.1.1 All players are required to stay in the dugout unless they are on defense, at bat, or in the on deck circle. There will be no running in and out of the field area or standing by the fence during play.
- 3.1.2 Non-rostered players will not be allowed to compete in official scheduled games.

## 3.2 Schedule

- 3.2.1 All games will be played as per the schedule. Only games canceled due to weather or premature darkness may be rescheduled.
- 3.2.2 The director of the league will reschedule make-up games.
- 3.2.3 Games shall begin promptly as scheduled. If a team has at least eight players present but is not ready to play at the time the umpire announces "Play Ball", the umpire shall impose a penalty on the offending teaming by calling either "ball" or "strike" (as appropriate) for each 15 seconds which elapses after the game is to have started.  
**Note:** If a first game has run late so that the second game cannot start as scheduled, the second game shall start five minutes after the conclusion of the first game.
- 3.2.4 Inclement weather related concerns. Prior to the start of game, the director of the league (or board member) will be responsible for suspending or postponing a scheduled game due to inclement weather or premature darkness.
- After the start of a game, this becomes the responsibility of the umpire to suspend or postpone the game immediately upon inclement weather or premature darkness.

## 3.3 Teams.

- 3.3.1 It is the intention of this league to field teams composed of 11 to 12 players. The league board reserves the right to modify the quantity of teams being fielded in an effort to provide the most positive playing experience for the players and create the most functional organization possible. Maximum number of players on a team is 13.
- 3.3.2 Home team is the 2nd team listed on the league schedule & home team will occupy the 3rd base dugout.
- 3.3.3 Teams must be able to field eight rostered players (see rule 3.7.1 regarding forfeitures).
- 3.3.4 In cases where a team can field only 8 players, the ninth batter is automatically out. Next player to show goes at the line up bottom.

## 3.4 The Game.

- 3.4.1 Games shall be 6 innings (exception: no new innings shall begin 1 hour and 45 minutes from start time). It is not at the umpire's discretion to rule on this issue.
- 3.4.2 1 hour and 45 minutes from start time shall constitute a full game.
- 3.4.1 It is the responsibility of the umpire to suspend or postpone the game immediately upon inclement weather or premature darkness. Continuing to play in light rain is acceptable (umpire's discretion) pending the conditions of the field.
- 3.4.2 Waiting at least 30 minutes after the last lightning flash or sound of thunder is expected. Each time lightning is seen or thunder is heard the 30-minute clock should be reset. The safety of our players, parents, coaches and spectators is of utmost importance.
- 3.4.3 If an inning cannot be completed due to darkness or weather, the game will revert back to the last full inning.
- 3.4.4 Should a game be "called" due to weather or premature darkness, a minimum of 3 ½ - 4 innings shall constitute a full game. Example: If the home team were currently in the lead after 3 ½ innings, then the game would be called a completed game without having to play the bottom of the inning. Games called earlier than 3 ½ innings must be replayed as a new game (see rule 3.2.2 regarding rescheduling of make-up games).
- 3.4.5 If the game is tied at the end of 6 innings or a duly "called" game, it shall remain tied (see rule 3.8.2 regarding tiebreakers).

## 3.5 Run Limits Per Inning.

- 3.5.1 The home plate umpire will call the game after 4 innings on a 12 run spread and 5 innings on a 10 run spread. (This is not at the discretion of the coaches.).
- 3.5.2 There will be a 5 run limit per inning, per team for the first 5 innings.

## 3.6 Injuries.

- 3.6.1 In the event of an injury incurred after the start of the game which (temporarily) prevents a player from running the bases, a courtesy runner may be used.
- 3.6.2 The courtesy runner shall be the player making the team's last previous out, or if no outs have been recorded in the game, it shall be the last player in the batting order.
- 3.6.3 Each player may be run for only once during the game. If a player is unable to play in the field or run the bases in subsequent opportunities in the same game, the player shall be removed from the game. No other use of a courtesy runner shall be allowed.
- 3.6.4 If during the game a player is injured and cannot return to play the game, the game can continue if the team can still field 8 players (see rule 3.7.1 regarding forfeitures).
- 3.6.5 When a team can field only 8 players after an injury, the ninth batter is automatically out rule shall apply (see rule 3.3.4). **Note:** Opposing teams cannot intentionally walk a player to get to the ninth batter to achieve the automatic out (see rule 2.5.4 regarding intentional walks).

### 3.7 Forfeitures.

- 3.7.1 The game shall be forfeited if a team is unable to field at least eight registered and rostered players.
- 3.7.2 The game shall be forfeited if a team does not show for a "V-P rescheduled" game.

### 3.8 League Standings.

- 3.8.1 League standings will be determined by a point system. Each win will be worth 2 pts. A tie will be worth 1 pt. A loss will be worth 0.
- 3.8.2 The following End-Of-The-Season tiebreaker will be in effect:
  - A]** Head to Head Competition.
  - B]** Total runs differential between teams affected teams.
  - C]** Compare won/loss record against common opponents' starting at top of the league and working down through standings.
  - D]** Total run differential common opponents' starting at top of the league and working down through standings.
  - E]** Coin toss.

### 3.9 League Playoffs.

- 3.9.1 There shall be no tie games during the playoffs. Games will continue into extra innings.
- 3.9.2 Tied games that are called because of weather or premature darkness shall be played out from the point play was suspended at a time scheduled by the director of the league. Resumed games shall play until the end of 6 innings or a duly "called" game.
- 3.9.3 The 12/10 run rule is in effect during the play-offs (see section 3.5 regarding run limits per inning).