

**Bethesda Chevy Chase Baseball, Inc.**

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***National League***  
**Rules and**  
**Regulations**

***For the 2020 Season***

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# National League Rules and Regulations

**Except as specified below the normal rules of Major League Baseball shall apply.**

## Purpose

The purpose of the National League is instruction. It is intended to constitute an introduction to the game of baseball for children who have never played before. Children must be encouraged, assisted, and supported. It is the manager's responsibility to channel the children's natural talents and competitiveness in a positive manner. There is time enough for competitive play in later years. Managers are encouraged not to keep score and to de-emphasize the "winner" of the game. It is also the manager's responsibility to make sure that the parents on the team do not become overly competitive, overly excited or carried away by the situation. There should never be negative comments about the opposing team's players. Children in this division must not be criticized; they need to be coached in a constructive and positive manner. Except as set out herein, all regular rules of baseball shall apply.

## I. General

### A. League Policies

Professional coaches are not permitted to coach a recreational team in any capacity while the team is playing a game. However, professional coaches may be hired by parents of players on a recreational team to assist the parent head coach at practice to help develop players' skills.

Recreational teams / rosters are not permitted to hold informal or formal try outs to form the team. Further, recreational teams may not be comprised in whole or in part of teams created via tryouts.

All team rosters and coaches must be reviewed and approved by the BCC Director for acceptance into the league, in order to ensure consistency with league rules and meet the goals and objectives of the league.

BCC Baseball reserves the right to refuse acceptance of any team and/or expel a team at any time if we feel that the team is not in compliance with the spirit and/or substance of the above mentioned policies.

Coaches are encouraged to meet before each game to review these Rules and discuss ground rules.

### B. Age

Kindergarten and first graders, generally 6 and 7 year olds.

### C. Official Players

All players must be officially registered and assigned by the League management. No one who is not registered, and whose name does not appear on the official League roster, may ever play in a League game, or practice with a team. Use of a non-registered/non-officially rostered player in a game will cause suspension of the manager.

### D. Official Game

An official game consists of three complete innings, however, games must be started on time, and completed within the time scheduled for the game (unless there is no other game scheduled after the instant game). An "inning" consists of each team batting through their entire line-up once, regardless of the number of outs. If three innings cannot be completed within the scheduled time and if there is a game scheduled to begin after your game, the game is ended regardless of the state of play at the end of the scheduled period. Managers are instructed to educate their teams that the opportunity to play a third inning...in part or in whole...is a "bonus" for efficient play. Note, if there are less than 15 minutes remaining in the scheduled period at the end of the second inning the managers ought not begin a third inning if there is a game scheduled to begin after their game.

### E. Start Time

Players should be at the field at least 15 minutes before the game is scheduled to begin and warm ups should take place before that scheduled start time to maximize the chance to play three full innings.

The League expects that all managers, players, and parents should be entitled to rely upon the official schedule of games. As a result, managers are expected to have their teams prepared to play at the time/date/place indicated on the official League schedule. Therefore, it is generally NOT appropriate for a manager to rearrange games in derogation of the official League schedule. Where games must be postponed due to adverse weather, managers are expected to

make best efforts to arrange suitable time/date/place to make the game up.

## II. Administrative Matters Before the Game

### A. Line-ups

Prior to the start of each game, the managers of each team must prepare a written batting order (line-up).

### B. Specific Field Rules

Prior to the game, the managers shall agree to necessary and reasonable ground rules not inconsistent with these rules, including agreement as to areas that are "out of play". The ability to set ground rules does not permit agreement to waive or modify these "rules and regulations". Managers shall be responsible for keeping spectators, players, equipment and other objects behind fencing or backstops and out of areas that are deemed to be "in play" in order to prevent interference with players, thrown balls, etc.

### C. Team Representative

Prior to every baseball game, each team must identify an adult (likely a parent) as that team's "Team Representative" for that particular game. The Team Representative will be responsible for enforcing player safety rules, with an emphasis on compliance with the Bat Safety Rule. The Team Representative shall be involved in the pregame meeting at home plate with the coaches and umpires (in leagues that use umpires). Unless no other adult is available, the head coach and assistant coach may not also be deemed the Team Representative. It is strongly advised by BCC Baseball that the Team Representative be someone other than one of the base coaches.

## III. Offensive, Defensive and Minimum Play Requirements

### A. Batting Order

All players must bat and play the field in every inning of every game that they attend for which they are available.

### B. Fielding Positions

Players assume all fielding positions except pitcher and catcher.

#### i. Infielders

No more than seven players may take up positions in the infield (that is, closer to home plate than the start of the outfield grass). These seven infield positions shall be the first baseman, the second baseman (who may stand directly in front of the base), the third baseman, the left

shortstop who shall stand behind the base runner's path between second and third base, the right shortstop who shall stand behind the base runner's path between first and second base, the left pitcher's helper on the third base side of the adult pitcher, and the right pitcher's helper on the first base side of the adult pitcher. The pitcher's helpers must be positioned at least 3 feet laterally from the pitcher and at least 3 feet further from the plate than the pitcher. A pitcher's helper may not "charge" the plate during the pitch but must stand in place until the ball is hit.

#### ii. Outfielders

Where there is no dirt "skin" to delineate the start of the outfield grass, at the time of the pitch the outfielders shall be positioned at least 50 feet from the base paths. All players other than the seven infielders shall play in the outfield.

## IV. Batting

### A. Number of Batters

Regardless of the number of players the teams may have in their respective lineups, each team only bats through its lineup once in each inning.

### B. Balls and Strikes

There are no walks, no strikeouts, no bunts and no called balls or strikes. A batter hit by a pitch does not go to first base. However, batters are not entitled to an unlimited number of pitches until they hit the ball. Each batter is entitled to a maximum of four (4) pitches regardless of the number of swinging strikes. A foul ball on the fourth pitch shall not be counted as a pitch for purposes of the 4 pitch limit and the batter gets another pitch. If the adult catcher catches a fouled-off pitch, even if it is the fourth pitch, the batter is not declared out but is given another pitch. If the batter does not hit the ball onto the field of play during this 4 pitch limit, the batter is required to use the batting tee, without exception. The batter in this case will have two attempts to hit the ball onto the field of play from the tee.

### C. Batting Tees

At any time during his/her four pitches a batter may elect to use a batting tee instead of swinging at a pitched ball. The batter may elect to begin his/her "at bat" with the tee, or after any number of pitches, the batter may switch to the tee. In such case the batter has as many swings using the tee as he/she would otherwise have had remaining pitches with a minimum of 2 swings off the tee (for example, if the batter has taken 3 pitches and then opts for the tee, the batter gets 2 swing from the tee. If the batter has taken 1 pitch, the batter will get three swing from the tee).

#### **D. Batter Assistance**

If assistance is needed, the adult catcher may assist the batter with stance or swing. The adult catcher shall keep track of the number of pitches thrown (or swings from the tee) and shall inform the pitcher and the batter when 3 pitches remain, 2 pitches remain, and 1 pitch remains.

#### **E. Bat Safety**

Where there is no safe (fenced-off) on-deck batting location, the on-deck batter shall only be permitted to swing a bat while standing on the field between the dugout (or the bench) and home plate on the side of the field facing the back side of the batter at the plate (e.g., with a right-handed batter at the plate, the on-deck batter will stand on the third-base side of the field). No other player is permitted to swing a bat, including the batter in the hole.

### **V. Base Running**

#### **A. Base Path**

The base paths shall be 50 feet in length (as opposed to 60 feet in more senior divisions).

#### **B. Play Termination**

After a ball is hit, the play is terminated and runners must cease advancing when the defensive team has returned the ball to an infielder who exercises control over the ball within the confines of the infield. Runners who have not reached the next bases at that time must return to the base from which they came; runners who, in the opinion of the appropriate base umpire, have attained or passed the next base may occupy that next base but must stop there even if the ball is thrown by the infielder.

To reward defensive plays, if a defensive player makes a force play at a base for an out or tags a baserunner in the base path, the baserunner who is out must leave the field of play.

#### **C. Base Stealing and Leading**

There is no stealing or leading. Base runners must remain in contact with the base until the ball is hit by the batter. If runners leave the base early, they must return to the base and any ball hit on that pitch is rendered a nullity.

#### **D. Overthrows**

Overthrows at home plate, first or third base resulting in the ball going out of play will cause the runners to be awarded one base in addition to the base on which they were standing, or to which they were already running. If the ball does not go out of play, runners may advance at their own risk, and there is no limit on the number of bases they may advance.

#### **E. Bowling Over**

At no time and under no circumstances may a runner either "bowl over" a defensive player in pursuit of a base or slide head first into a base. Sliding may only be done "feet first" at any base. So too, at no time shall a defensive player purposefully "bowl over" a runner in pursuit of a hit or thrown ball.

#### **F. Last Batter**

The last batter for each team must make a complete run of the bases to score. After the ball is put into play by the last batter, the end of the play constitutes the end of the inning regardless of the number of outs.

### **VI. Pitching and Catching By Adults**

#### **A. Participation in defensive game**

The offensive team fields its own adult pitcher and catcher. Under no circumstances shall a child (of any age) be permitted to serve as a catcher due to risk of injury from thrown bats. Except to avoid interfering with play, the adult pitcher must always remain in close proximity to the chosen pitching position (see section B below). The pitcher will pitch underhand only to his own team. The adult serving as the pitcher must use maximum effort to avoid interfering with the fielding of the ball. A hit ball which strikes the adult pitcher shall not count and the batter shall return to the plate with the same number of pitches as existed before the pitch.

Neither the adult pitcher nor the adult catcher may field a batted ball (except in self-defense); neither the pitcher nor the catcher may throw a ball to a player (including the catcher) for a defensive out. However, the catcher shall record a defensive out on a force or tag at home plate on a throw made by a fielder. It is emphasized that extraordinary efforts by the catcher in fielding a throw or applying a tag are not encouraged; reasonable effort by the catcher is appropriate and expected in order to reward the quality of the throw made by the defensive player who fielded the ball. The catcher must never come forward of the plate onto the field of play to field a throw, nor stand on or in front of home plate so as to block or endanger a runner.

#### **B. Pitcher Positions**

The adult pitchers shall pitch from a point no closer than 25 feet from the plate. Each adult pitcher may decide the point from which to pitch to his/her own team as long as the point is at least 25 feet from the plate.

## VII. Coaching

### A. Offensive

The manager/coach or other adults designated by the manager simultaneously shall serve as both coaches and umpires at first and third bases during their respective team's "at bat". These adults are responsible for making fair/foul and safe/out calls. The first base coach shall have responsibility for calls at home and first; the third base coach shall have responsibility for calls at second and third.

Note: managers, coaches and spectators who are not serving as coach/umpires shall refrain from making anticipatory safe/out or fair/foul "calls" of plays to intimidate or influence the adults serving as base coach/umpires. Managers shall take reasonable action with their players, parents and fans of the team to secure their cooperation with this rule. Upon receipt of a complaint from an opposing manager regarding compliance with this rule, a manager shall ask the offending coach, player, parent or fan associated with his/her team to comply or to leave the vicinity of the field.

### B. Defensive

In general all coaching of the defensive fielders must be by the manager/coach who must stay in the vicinity of his/her team's bench/dugout. However, each team may designate one defensive coach who may assist that team's outfielders during their defensive half of the inning. The coach may stand in the outfield beyond the outfielders. The defensive coach must avoid interfering with any hit or thrown ball.

## VIII. Mandatory & Prohibited Equipment

### A. Equipment

The official game ball for the National League is the RIF #1. Managers are responsible for insuring that the RIF #1 ball is always used and that non-complying balls (especially a standard baseball) are not used in games or practice.

While on the field during a game all players are required to wear their official uniform, which at a minimum, consists of League-issued hat and shirt.

#### Notes:

## IX. Adverse Weather Conditions

### A. Thunder & Lighting

At the first instance of lightning or thunder managers shall halt the game and remove their teams from the field to the security of cars or buildings that offer protection. Should field conditions permit, and where otherwise reasonable consistent with protection of the players and others in attendance, the game may resume 15 minutes after the last instance of lightning or thunder.

## X. Other

### A. Hectoring

Managers shall not permit their players, fans or parents to purposely hector or distract the opponent's players, either directly by comment or indirectly by the playing of music, singing, chanting or excessive cheering, even if ostensibly for your own batter. Upon the opposing Manager's complaint in this regard, a manager shall take action to terminate the distracting behavior of his/her team.

### B. Familiarity with Rules

All managers are expected to be fully familiar with these Rules and to carefully instruct their coaches and players on these Rules. Managers are also expected to bring the Rules to the game and to go over them with the umpires before the game to maximize efficient and orderly administration of the game.

### C. Disputes

Any disputes over the Rules or judgment calls by the umpires shall be conducted in a brief, calm and dignified manner. If satisfaction is not obtained after such effort, the manager should simply note an appeal of the situation to the umpire and continue the game in a sportsmanlike manner. Appeals at this level of competition are strongly discouraged; however reports of problems with rules and other bona fide operational or sportsmanship issues are encouraged. Appeals or reports shall be filed after the game with the National League Commissioner.