

PLAYING RULES AND POLICIES – 2019
(Including all Interlock games)

*This Document is an Approved Addendum to the 2018 ICBA Constitution and Bylaws
- See 2018 Constitution, Section 'Rules', Subsection 7a.*

Approved March 13, 2019

1. Team Contacts:

Each team shall provide to the Convenor, the names and contact information of the Team Manager and at least one Coach. Each team will also designate a person who will report game results on a timely basis to the Convenor.

2. Games:

The scheduling for all divisions, will be as follows: Minor Rookie 18 games per season, Rookie Ball 20-24 games per season; Mosquito, Peewee, and Bantam will be approximately 22- 28 games, and Midget will play up to 30 games starting early-May and running to early-August. The exact number of games to be played will depend on the number of teams within the league. Schedules will commence the 2nd week of May and end on the 1st Thursday in August. No games may be scheduled between the 1st Thursday and 2nd Thursday of August, only the Inter County and or convener may use this week for make-up games..

3. Regular Season Schedule:

- 3.1 Records of the wins and losses will be kept for the purposes of declaring a **Regular Season** League Champion. The team with the most points upon completion of the Regular Season Schedule will be declared the **Regular Season League Champion**.
- 3.2 Teams not completing their schedule may be subject to a fine of up to \$200 for each un-played game.
- 3.3 Final standings will be determined by total points accumulated by the second Thursday in August of the current year. This will be the end of the playing season for all divisions for total points accumulated. Teams that are tied will have the tie broken by the following:
 - I) head to head.
 - ii) Most wins,
 - iii) fewest runs allowed by teams tied, using games played against each other
 - iv) most runs scored in games involving tied teams, using games played against each other
 - v) sudden death games between teams that are tied.

These final standings will be used to determine play-off seeding, no matter whether the play-offs are a tournament format or series format. Total points will also determine seeding for any OBA classification or play down games.

4. Playoff Schedule:

A Playoff Champion will be determined in each division by either a best 2 of 3 series or double knock-out tournament format. If the division has 4 or more teams a double knock-out format will be used, divisions of 3 or less a best of 3 series will be held. Double knock-out tournaments will follow the ICBA tournament format. Final, Regular Season League standings will be used for playoff seeding purposes. Playoffs shall be held on the last weekend of August at the latest, with a rain date of the first weekend after Labour Day.

Teams from all Interlock partner centres must declare their intentions to participate in the ICBA playoff championships by the coaches meeting of the current playing season. This request is to be in writing to the ICBA secretary. Teams failing to notify the ICBA by this date will be excluded from the playoffs.

In 5 team divisions, the 4th and 5th place team will play a best 2 of 3 to gain entrance into the ICBA championship double knock-out tournament. The same format for 9 team divisions shall apply, the last 2 place teams (8 vs. 9) will play a 2 of 3 to gain entrance into the ICBA championship double knock-out tournament.

Inter County play-offs may start in the middle of the week prior to the weekend designated as the tournament weekend to accommodate playing field issues a host may have.

5. Specific Playing Rules:

The most current revision of the Ontario Baseball Association (OBA) rules, and the Official Rules of Baseball, shall be the rules to govern all games of the ICBA. Deviations and clarifications are noted below and have been approved by the ICBA Board of Directors. ICBA uses the approved playing rules for Rookie Ball as designated by Baseball Ontario

5.1 Wood Bats and Baseballs:

As per OBA rules, only wood or wood composite bats will be used in the Midget Tier 1 and Tier 2 divisions (both Minor and Major divisions) along with Bantam Tier 1 and Tier 2 divisions (both Minor and Major divisions). All other divisions may use either metal or wood bats as per OBA rule P2-5 subsection (g).

Only baseballs approved by the OBA may be used in ICBA play.

5.2 Pre-Game Warm Ups:

The Visiting Team may take the field 45 minutes prior to game time. The visiting team will be allowed 30 minutes to hit, and/or take their infield, after which the Home team will then take the infield for the next 10 minutes. The remaining 5 minutes is to be used for ground rules prior to commencement of the game. If the visiting team is not ready to take the field at the correct time, then the Home team may continue to use the field until the visiting team is ready.

5.3 Time Limits:

Game start times shall be 6:00 p.m. for all designated non-lit parks during the playing season.

Note: a "designated non lit" park is a park with no lights or a park with lights that are not used for game play and noted as such prior to the season."

In regular season games, Rookie Ball, Minor Mosquito T1, Mosquito T1 and all Tier 2 teams will play with the time limits listed below. The home team shall announce at Ground Rules, the game 'Time Limits'. The time limits may range up to the Maximum for each series, according to the chart below. Shorter time limits shall be allowed, but only for a valid reason such as city curfews on lights, or bylaws concerning noise etc.

	Rookie Ball Mosquito	Peewee	Bantam	Midget	Junior
Maximum	2:00	2:15	2:45	3:00	3:00

No new inning may commence once the time limit is reached. If no other time limit is declared, then the maximum time limit for the series is in effect. There will be no time limits during all classification or ICBA play-off series games.

In Minor Rookie Ball, the teams will adhere to the regular season time limit, with the exception of the final Championship game of the playoff series.

**** Please note that there are NO time limits for any games in Tier 1 played in Minor Peewee and above.**

5.4 Game Length:

- a) All games in all divisions* will be 7 innings in length unless the time limit applicable for that division has been reached or the game is tied and the time limit has not been reached.
 - * Midget Tier 1 will be 7 innings until the end of the school year and then revert back to 9 inning games for the remainder of the season.
- b) For Minor Rookie, Senior Rookie Ball, Minor Mosquito and Mosquito Tier 1 and **All** Tier 2: games tied after 7 innings the tie may be broken if there is time remaining under the time limit allowed for this division. Play will continue until tie is broken upon completion of a full inning or the time limit is reached upon which the tie will stand.
- c) Games that are played under a time limit and that reach the time limit will be considered an official game by either reaching the time limit regardless of the number of innings played or by completing 7 innings.
- d) A seven(7) inning game will be considered a complete game after 4 innings of play or 3 ½ innings if the home team is ahead. A nine (9) inning game will be considered a complete game after 5 innings or 4 ½ if the home team is ahead.

- e) **Double Headers:** Teams may setup Double Headers between themselves and other teams within their schedule provided both teams and the Convenors agree to the schedule change. All double headers will follow existing rules along with a maximum two (2) hour time limit per game.

5.5 Mercy Rule:

The Inter County Baseball association will revert to the OBA mercy rule in all games. OBA constitution RP2.7 (g).

In all OBA games an 18 run mercy rule will apply after 3 innings or 15 runs after 4 innings. A 10 run mercy rule will also apply after 5 innings or any subsequent inning thereafter. If the home team leads after the top half of any such inning, the game shall be considered a mercy and the home team will not bat. If the home team takes the lead by the above mentioned runs, the will end at that point.

A team that is ahead by 10 runs or more may not start its turn at bat after 2 hours from the time of the first pitch, by the umpire's time. The team that is ahead will be declared the winner by mercy rule, regardless of the inning. ** This time limit on mercy games does not apply to Tier 1 play from Minor Peewee and up.

5.6 Catcher's Safety Gear:

All catchers are required to wear an approved catcher's mask with throat protector, helmet, and chest protector, shin-guards, cup and cup-type supporter. Any person warming up a pitcher at home plate, or in the bullpen area, must also wears an approved catcher's mask with throat protector. This applies at any time before, or during, a game. Throat protectors are not required on CSA approved, 'goalie-style' catcher's masks.

5.7 Pitching Rules:

All teams must adhere to OBA pitching rule RP2-10 regarding maximum allowable pitches in a calendar day.

ICBA will use rule RP2-10 section p) at Minor Mosquito, Mosquito, Minor Peewee and Peewee a player may not be a pitcher and catcher in the same game for all ICBA games.

5.8 Re-Entry Rule:

The Re-Entry Rule per OBA Rule RP2-9 b) will apply in all series Minor Pee Wee to Midget.

5.9 Player Call-ups for Tier 1 & Tier 2 teams:

- a. Teams in Tier 1 may call-up players rostered on Tier 2 teams within the same division (i.e. Bantam T1 and Bantam T2) to play in ICBA scheduled games provided the team the player is rostered with doesn't have a scheduled game at the same time. This rule may be used in Regular season and Play-off Inter County games only, OBA call-up rules are used in all other circumstances. (I.e. Classification games and OBA tournaments.)

- b. Tier 2 teams may call up Tier 1 players from the division below theirs (i.e. Bantam T2 and Peewee T1) providing the team the player is rostered with is not scheduled to play at the same time. These call-ups are eligible to play in OBA sanctioned games provided the call-up player's team is not playing at the same time. Also a Minor division call-up to a Major division team is acceptable. (i.e. Minor Bantam to Major Bantam)
- c. Inter County will allow minor aged players who are rostered to a Tier 2 Major team to play as a call up to their age appropriate Tier 1 or Tier 2 Minor Team during the ICBA regular season and not classifications, playoffs or OBA tournaments, provided the team they are rostered is not scheduled to play at the same time. All age appropriate pitching limitations will apply to the player's eligibility.

6. Team Duties:

6.1 Line-up Cards:

In all series, teams engaged in Inter County regular schedule or playoff games must use Inter County Batting order cards (Line-up cards). Only players eligible to participate in the game shall be listed on the batting order cards, and only players listed on the official batting order cards may participate in the games. Players' last name and number are to be listed on the batting order cards, pitch count and score sheet. Coach's last name and number are also to be listed on the line-up card. Umpires are instructed to not accept line up card until properly filled out. Failure to abide by this rule will result in a fine of not less than \$100 or more than \$200. (ICBA constitution Series Rules). Substitutes may be added to the line-up card at anytime during the game.

All Coaches/Manager/Players under suspension must be indicated on the line-up card as being under suspension (i.e. Smith #10, serving 1 of 2).

Official ICBA Score sheets will be used in Tier #1 and Tier #2 Divisions. Home teams are responsible for keeping score on the score sheets and having them available if required by the divisional convenor. A copy of the score sheet is to be given to the visiting team at game end. Visiting teams do not use the official ICBA score sheet for team scoring.

6.2 Umpire's Reports:

If an umpire needs to record important comments in an Umpire's Game Report due to an incident in the game, the documentation must be emailed or faxed to the respective Convenor within 24 hours of the game.

6.3 Reporting Game Results:

It shall be the responsibility of both teams to confirm the game score with the convenor by e-mail, fax, or phone within 24 hours of the game being played. In addition, the offending team must report any ejections and any suspensions served (e.g. Smith #10, served game 1 of 2). Failure to comply may result in fines and/or forfeits.

6.4 Postponing/Cancelling Games:

The Home team must notify the Visiting team three (3) hours before game time, by phone in case of a rainout game.

Rainouts must be rescheduled according to the procedures outlined below, unless the teams have the Convenor's consent not to re-schedule.

If a team wishes to re-schedule a game for any other reason than weather or unplayable grounds, it must give the other team at least 7 days notice **and** obtain the consent of the Convenor. The teams must then comply with the re-scheduling procedures outlined below.

Should a team wish to re-schedule and cannot meet the 7 days notice requirement, it is at the Convenor's discretion to declare a win by forfeit for the non-offending team, or to re-schedule the game.

6.5 Rescheduling/Make-up Games:

- a) When a game is postponed, the Home Team must advise the Division Convenor within 24 hours from the original game time, the reason for the postponement.
- b) Within 7 days, the home team must propose a suitable date for the game to be played. Once a re-scheduled date is agreed on, the Division Convenor must be notified. During the last two weeks of the schedule, the date MUST be set within 24 hours of the postponed game. If the two teams do not agree on a date. The date will be picked by the convenor after consideration of the playing schedule of both teams.
- c) If, within 1 week from the scheduled date of the postponed game, the teams have not set a re-scheduled date, then the Division Convenor will at their sole discretion determine the time and place for the game to be played. This timing may be compressed at the end of the season and during playoffs. Violation of this section or failure to comply with the Division Convenor will result in forfeiture by the offending team or teams.
- d) Each team must fulfill as much of its regular season commitment as possible to qualify for Classification in the OBA Championship and to qualify for the ICBA Playoff Championship. The Division Convenor and the ICBA Committee will review questionable situations. A team completing less than 90% of its regular season commitment, including Interlock games, will be automatically reviewed at the Affiliate Classification meeting and at the end of the regular season. Both forfeits and non-played games will be considered.
- e) If a team forfeits games three (3) times, by failing to field a team at the beginning of a scheduled game, it shall be suspended for the remainder of the season and fined \$200.00. The Local Association has 7 days to pay the fine. The ICBA Board must review teams suspended for the season, before they will be accepted to play in the next year's playing schedule.

7. Ejections, Discipline and Suspensions:

- 7.1 Any player, coach or manager ejected by an umpire during an ICBA regular season, ICBA tournament or ICBA playoff game is automatically suspended for one additional game. This is to be the very next ICBA game played by the team (regular season, playoff or ICBA tournament game).
- 7.2 All ejections must be noted on the ICBA Umpire's Report, with an explanation from the umpire. The home team must send the Umpire's Report to the Convenor within (48) hours.

- 7.3 The player, coach, manager and Local Association may be subject to further suspension or discipline by its Affiliate Association and/or the Interlock Committee, depending on the severity of the circumstances leading to the ejection.
- 7.4 If the Local Association wishes to appeal any additional discipline (cannot appeal the automatic one game suspension), it may do so by notifying the Convenor and posting a \$50 cheque. Should the matter only involve teams, coaches or players from one Affiliate, then the disciplinary and appeal procedures of that Affiliate will be used. Should the matter involve teams, coaches or players from more than one Affiliate centre, then reports from the various parties will be heard by 3 neutral ICBA members (at least one to be an Executive committee member) and the Committee's decision will be final.
- 7.5 Any ejection from OBA sanctioned play (tournaments and Championships) must be reported to the Division Convenor. The Affiliate and/or the ICBA Committee reserve the right to further suspend or discipline a player, coach or manager as a result of an ejection at an OBA sanctioned game.
- 7.6 A Player, Manager or Coach ejected from their last ball game of the season or play-offs will have their actions reviewed by the Affiliate and/or the ICBA disciplinary committee for any further suspensions.

8. **Convenor's Reports:**

Convenors shall report (via e-mail) game results and updated League Standings to each team and to the Secretary (or designate) of each Affiliate Association at least every two weeks during the season. ICBA website updates are expected to be more frequent and timely than this 2 week interval.

9. **Signing Of Players, Managers and Coaches:**

- 9.1 All players, managers and coaches shall sign OBA rosters and these must be in the hands of the ICBA Registrar before said player may participate in any ICBA games
- 9.2 All players advancing to a higher series must be so indicated on the lineup card. (I.e.: - any bantam players playing with a midget team must be so indicated.)
- 9.3 Each team shall have at least one manager and one coach signed to an OBA card.
- 9.4 Signing deadline for all ICBA series shall be May 1st. Birth Certificates shall be sent to the ICBA Secretary with the OBA roster. Where a player has been registered previously with the ICBA and OBA, a birth certificate will not be required (photo copies of birth certificates will be accepted, **Baptismal certificates will NOT be accepted. Team rosters may add Alternate players or edit team personnel, up to and including June 30 of current playing season.**

10. Umpires

- 10.1** For all ICBA games, including Interlock games, the home team is responsible to ensure 2 properly carded umpires are at the game. The Umpires must show their cards to the managers of the clubs prior to the start of the game if asked for. Failure by the umpires to produce their cards will give the teams the right to lodge a protest with the home plate umpire, prior to the start of the game. The protesting team shall, as soon as possible after completion of the game, inform the Convenors of that division (in any case not later than 24 hours and indicate if they wish to proceed with the protest (without deposit). If so, the Convenor shall consider the protest, and will have the right to rule on the protested game. The Convenor shall inform the Affiliate or ICBA Secretary of their actions. (Only on a question of carded umpires, may a Convenor rule on a protest).
- 10.2** Any verbal abuse of an umpire by any player or other team personnel (i.e.: - trainer, coach, etc.) at any time during a game shall result in immediate ejection of that person from the game. If such a confrontation occurs, it shall be the field manger and coaches' responsibility to immediately remove any team member upon request by the umpire. Failure to do so will result in the ejection of the field manager/or coach as well as the team member.
- 10.3** Only the field manager or coaches as listed on the line-up cards shall be entitled to ask the umpire for an explanation or interpretation of a call made by an umpire.
- 10.4** Physical abuse or threatening of umpires by any team personnel will not be tolerated in any manner. Any such incident, at the umpires' discretion occurring before, during or after a game will result in an automatic indefinite suspension. The ICBA Board of Directors or their delegates will review the case for the purpose of establishing any further penalty, and the review will be completed within 7 days after the suspension is reported.
- 10.5** An association that fails to ensure that 2 properly carded umpires work any home game will be subject to a fine of up to \$150 dollars. The fine may be appealed to the Protest and Discipline Committee, which will require documentation of any extenuating circumstances.
- 10.6** In the event that only 1 properly carded umpire is available to work a game this shall not be grounds for cancellation at the rookie or mosquito level. At all other levels, the visiting team manager may refuse to take the field if only 1 properly carded umpire is available to work the game. If the visiting team chooses not to play under these circumstances, they must split park costs with the home team for the rescheduled game. The home team's association would be responsible for all umpiring costs.
- 10.7** If there are no properly carded umpires available to work a game it shall be cancelled. The home team must demonstrate to the Protest and Discipline Committee why the game should not be forfeited. If the game is rescheduled, the non-offending team has the option of hosting this game at its own expense.
- 10.8** The above sections (10.1 through 10.7) do not apply to situations where an umpire is forced to leave a game due to illness or injury after it has started. No fines would apply under these circumstances. Teams are expected to use their best judgment in determining how to proceed under these circumstances. In all situations, *both* teams are expected to be flexible and make every reasonable effort to start a game.

10.9 **Lightening and Thunder**

When Thunder roars go indoors!

If you can hear thunder, you can be hit by lightning. Take shelter immediately. If you cannot find a sturdy or enclosed building with wiring or plumbing, get into a metal roofed building or car. Stay inside until 30 minutes has passed since the last rumble of thunder.

The following links will provide more information in dealing with Thunder and Lightning

[Lightning Safety and Preparedness Fact Sheet](#)

[Video: Lightning Safety on the Field](#)

[Lightning Safety](#)

11. **OBA Qualifiers:**

- 11.1 For the purposes of pitching eligibility all OBA qualifiers will be considered played over 3 days regardless of when the tournament starts.

OBA Classification tournaments will use a draw to determine pairings. Final standings will be used to determine home team if teams from same tier. A coin toss will be used for teams from different tiers to determine home team.

- 11.2 In 2/3 series with 2 teams from the different tiers, a coin flip will take place at the classification meeting to determine who has home field advantage for the series (I.e. the team winning the coin flip will have the 1st game at home and the 3rd game at home if necessary.)

- 11.3 In a 2/3 series involving 3 teams from the different tiers, a draw will take place with the team drawn first having the bye for the first round. If the 2 remaining teams are from the same tier, then their final regular season records will dictate home field advantage. If they are tied, then refer to the tie breaking procedure under ICBA Playing Rules and Policies Section 3, Regular Season Schedule. In the second round if the two remaining teams are from different tiers then a coin flip will determine home field advantage. If the remaining teams are from the same tier then the same procedure used in the first round will be applied to the 2nd round

- 11.4 In a tournament style classification, with teams from the two (2) tiers involved, the teams will be drawn, paired and ranked during the draw. (To be done at the classification meeting) (I.e. first team drawn will be seeded number 1 and so on). OBA double knock-out formats are to be used. If there is a bye in the format then the first team drawn will receive the bye. Home team will be decided by a coin flip for every game with the team travelling the furthest making the call.

- 11.5 If OBA Awards the ICBA two (2) teams to play at the OBA Championships we will use the following format when teams are from different Tiers. We draw for the bye "A" and teams "B" and "C" play the first round. The winner of "B/C" moves forward to play team "A" who had the bye. If Team "A" the bye team wins that series then the ICBA sends Team "A" and the Winner of "B/C". If the winner of the "B/C" series beats the bye team "A" then the loser of the "B/C" series shall play the bye "A" team for the 2nd spot awarded to the ICBA.

- 11.6** When OBA allows two teams to attend the provincials and they are from the same Tier then the Regular Season standings will determine how the ICBA will determine their selections. Based on standings the first place team will be awarded one spot and the other two teams will play a best 2 of 3 to determine who will attend in the second spot.
- i. In a tournament style classification with teams from the same tier then final standings will determine team seeding,
 - ii. No information will be sent out to the participating teams until the OBA classification meeting is completed the last Sunday in July.
- 11.7** OBA classification games will be played to their completion or mercy rule applies Games will not be considered final if suspended due to weather or darkness.

When in doubt about any matter, please contact your Convener.

Appendix A

ICBA Playoff Double – Knockout seeding chart.



Tournament
Schedules for ICBA p