



HOWARD COUNTY YOUTH PROGRAM INC.

BASEBALL RULES AND REGULATIONS

International - Minor – Major - Pony Leagues

The Howard County Youth Program (HCYP) seeks to implant, in the youth of this community, ideals of good sportsmanship, honesty, loyalty, courage, and reverence, so that they may be finer, stronger and happier youths who will grow to be good, clean, healthy adults. This objective can be reached by providing supervised, competitive sports. The manager, coaches, and other participants shall bear in mind at all times that the attainment of exceptional athletic skill or the winning of a particular game is secondary, and that the molding of future citizens is of prime importance.

The Baseball Executive Committee is responsible for overseeing the International League, Minor League, Major League, and Pony League baseball activities conducted under the sponsorship of the Howard County Youth Program.

The Baseball Executive Committee ensures continuity of HCYP's baseball programs and assures that the increasing demands of the program, because of population growth in the County, are acted upon.

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I. THE LEAGUES:

- A. The Howard County Youth Program, Inc. (HCYP) is the parent unit of the organization; its baseball program shall be divided into as many leagues and age groups as is deemed necessary, for a successful baseball program, by the Baseball Executive Committee and the Board of Directors of HCYP.
- B. The program shall be governed by the Board of Directors and administered by the Baseball Committee of the Howard County Youth Program, Inc. in accordance with the corporation's charter, constitution, and by-laws.

II. LEAGUE BOUNDARIES:

- A. The Board of Directors shall determine the boundaries of the area from which it will select players.

III. THE TEAMS:

- A. The number of players for the teams in each league shall be designated by the Baseball Commissioner.
- B. If a team manager loses one or more of the players from the roster during the current season through illness, injury, change of address, or other justifiable reason, the manager can be assigned another player or players by the Baseball Commissioner, to replace those lost. A waiting list of potential available players shall be maintained only by the Baseball Commissioner and Vice Commissioner.
- C. If players miss games without notification to the team manager, the team manager shall remind the player of their courtesy obligation to inform the team manager. It will be the responsibility of the player (and parent) to inform the manager that they will not be able to attend a game prior to the game. It is suggested that the manager give the contact information of a coach as a secondary source if the manager is not available. Players will not be removed from rosters for failure to give notification and/ or for missing games and practices. All game-day present players must meet playing time guidelines during each game. The Baseball Commissioner may disqualify a player for one or more games for other disciplinary reasons involving the players' conduct and/or actions during a game or any time the player is at the ballpark. Removal by the Baseball Commissioner will only occur in extreme conditions.
- D. A manager may require a player as a substitute to complete the team lineup for a game to avoid a forfeit by calling up a player in that system (Pinto through Pony). The manager requiring a substitute player must make every effort to notify the lower league manager at least 48 hours prior the upcoming game. The manager must notify the opposing manager of the substitution up. The lower league manager shall determine which player will play at the higher level, as long as the player can safely play at the next level and that the player wants to compete at that next level. Any one player may be moved up to the next higher league, as a substitute, only twice each season (exceptions may be granted by the commissioner upon request). "Playing up" is a great opportunity for lower league players and as many players as possible should be selected over the course of the season. A player may not be substituted down a league level. Players who are called up as replacements may not pitch.

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IV. THE PLAYERS: (9-14 PROGRAM)

- A. League Age is defined as the age as of August 31st of that year.
- B. Unless granted an exemption by the Baseball Commissioner, a player must be 9 years-old on or before August 31 to be eligible to play in the International League. Generally 9 and 10 year old youth play in the International League, 10 and 11 year old youth play in the Minor League, 11 and 12 year old youth play in the Major League, and 13 and 14 year old youth play in the Pony League. No player older than 12 as of August 31 shall be assigned to the Major League unless specifically granted an exemption by the Baseball Commissioner. Any such player who has previously been on an HCYP Major league team roster, may either remain on the same Major team roster or be placed back into the draft at the discretion of the Major Commissioner and/or the Baseball Commissioner. Any request to play in a league that does not meet the stated age guidelines, must obtain permission from the Baseball Commissioner, after a meeting with managers, parents and/or league Commissioner(s). High School Varsity Baseball players must play in the Colt League.
- C. Each player, if requested by the Baseball Commissioner, must present acceptable proof of age in the form of a birth certificate, hospital record, or other written evidence as required by the Baseball Executive Committee.
- D. Any exception to the age requirements must be approved by the Baseball Commissioner.
- E. No player may skip a league (e.g., skip Minor by going from International to Major, etc.) unless approval is granted by the Baseball Commissioner.
- F. In order to be considered to play up in an age group above the player's actual age (8 y/o for International, 9 y/o for Minor at current age limits) the player would be required to be evaluated the preceding Fall/Winter regardless of if they had been evaluated in previous years.
- G. No full-time travel baseball player may play in the Spring Recreational leagues. Travel players are only allowed to play in the fall league upon approval of the Commissioner.

V. SELECTION OF PLAYERS

- A. The Baseball Commissioner shall determine the procedure for the selection of players for the various teams in the leagues.

VI. PITCHERS

- A. A pitcher may pitch a maximum of two (2) innings per game in International through Major Leagues AND only two pitchers may pitch two innings in a game, unless a game requires extra innings. Pony League – a team may elect to have one pitcher per game pitch up to a maximum of three (3) innings per game. All other pitchers may pitch a maximum of two (2) innings per game. In the case of extra innings, any number of additional players may pitch two innings, including the pitcher that pitched in the last regulation inning. A player may pitch up to 5 total innings during 3 consecutive days, including Pony. A player may never pitch on more than three consecutive days. For example, a player who pitches 2 innings on Friday and then pitches 2 innings on Saturday may only pitch 1 inning on Sunday. This player may not pitch on Monday. Managers must maintain in their score book a record of innings pitched in each game. The penalty for breaking any of these rules will incur a penalty decided by the league commissioner.

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- B. A player does not officially enter a game as a pitcher until the first pitch is delivered to a batter.
- C. Delivery of a single pitch constitutes having pitched an inning.
- D. A player once removed as a pitcher may not pitch again in the same game, including the resumption of suspended games.
- E. The goal for number of warm-up pitches for a pitcher is (5) between innings and eight (8) for a new pitcher after a pitching change, but shall be regulated at the sole discretion of the umpire. If the warmup pitches are not completed within 90 seconds of the pitching change or from the time of the last out in an inning, the umpire may reduce the number of warmups and resume play.
- F. International through Major - No pitcher shall intentionally throw a curve ball requiring a twisting of any part of the arm. Intentionally thrown curve balls as a result of the twisting of any part of the arm will be called balls regardless of whether the batter swings. The pitcher will be warned on the 1st occurrence and both managers will be informed. After 3 occurrences, the pitcher must be removed. Pony League only - Pitchers are allowed to throw a curve ball and other breaking pitches requiring a twisting of parts of the arm.
- G. For International through Major, a pitcher must be removed from pitching upon hitting three (3) batters in the same inning or four (4) batters in a game. For Pony, a pitcher must be removed upon hitting three (3) batters in the same inning or five (5) batters in a game. The pitcher may be removed for hitting batters intentionally at any time at the discretion of the umpire. A hit batter is defined as per the rules of baseball (i.e., a batter who is struck by the baseball despite making some attempt to avoid being hit) and is determined at the discretion of the umpire.
- H. Balks will only be called in the Pony, Major and Minor Leagues.
1. Pony and Major League: Balks will be limited to any of the violations listed in Official Major League Baseball Rules. The umpire will grant one warning for a balk to each pitcher during the first eight games of the season. The second incident (per pitcher) and all incidents (per pitcher) after the first warning will be considered a balk with the penalty of all runners advancing one base. Beginning with the 9th game of the season, no warnings will be granted.
 2. Minor League: Once a pitch delivery has started, it cannot be stopped without penalty of a balk. The first incident is a warning (one warning per pitcher). The second incident (per pitcher) and all incidents (per pitcher) after the first warning will be considered a balk with the penalty of all runners advancing one base.
- I. The withdrawal of an ineligible pitcher after being announced, but before delivering a pitch, shall not be considered a violation. HCYP officials, managers, umpires, and coaches are urged to take precautions to prevent protests. When a protest situation is imminent, the potential offender should be notified immediately.
- J. Any violation of these rules must be brought to the attention of the umpire by the opposing manager during the game, at the time of the violation. At that time any previous results from the pitcher in violation will stand, but the umpire shall have the manager of the violating team remove the pitcher in violation and the game will resume with a new eligible pitcher. Protests after the game for violating pitching rules will not be allowed.

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K. INTERNATIONAL, MINOR and MAJOR: A pitcher that gives up the maximum number of runs in an inning cannot pitch the next inning.

VII. SCHEDULE:

A. The Baseball Commissioner shall oversee the schedule of games for the season and league playoffs. Make-up games, including rain-outs and suspended games, shall be scheduled and approved by the Baseball Commissioner.

B. Forfeit due to an insufficient number of players occurs 15 minutes after the league scheduled start time for the game.

C. Pre-game practice, if time allows, will be provided with the home team using the field first for 15 minutes, followed by the visiting team for 15 minutes. In instances where pre-game practice does not allow for a full 30-minute time for both teams, then the available time shall be divided equally between the two teams, prior to the start of any pre-game practice on the field. (Example: If twenty minutes are available prior to the league schedule start time for the game, then each team will be provided ten minutes for pre-game practice.) Mutual agreement between the two managers or their representative(s) may alter the order of practice. The league's intent is for cooperation between the teams to share the available time.

D. All scheduled games must be played regardless of the effect on the standings. Due to circumstances, some rainouts and suspended games may not be rescheduled. There will be an attempt by the Baseball Commissioner to even out the number of games played by each team whenever weather or other reason causes a shortened schedule.

E. No revision to the game schedule will be made unless approved by the Baseball Commissioner. Failure to adhere to this rule will result in a forfeit by both teams involved.

F. The home team shall be in the 3rd base dugout and the visiting team in the 1st base dugout.

VIII. SPECIAL GAMES:

A. Team or individual participation in any game when they might be construed as representing the Howard County Youth Program must be approved in advance by the Baseball Commissioner. This is to include, but is not restricted to, any post-season play by regular teams and/or all-star teams against teams from other programs and any exhibition games before, during, and after the regular season, away from the HCYP regular playing fields

IX. FIELD DECORUM:

A. The players', managers', coaches', and league officials' actions at all times must be above reproach.

B. Uniformed players, managers, a maximum of four (4) coaches/scorekeeper and umpires only shall be permitted within the confines of the playing field, including dugouts, just prior to and during games. Except for the batter, base runners, the batter "on deck," and coaches, at 1st and 3rd base, all players and other coaches shall be on their benches and off the playing field when the

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team is at bat. When the team is on defense, the manager, coaches and reserve players shall be on their benches and off the playing field.

C. All coaches, managers, and players should be in the proper uniform as determined by the Baseball Executive Committee. Proper dress for managers is the HCYP manager's shirt or team shirt and team hat. Proper dress for coaches is the HCYP coach's shirt and team hat.

D. Coaches on the team batting are permitted to be in the coaching boxes. They are not permitted beyond the fenced in area leading to the on-deck circle.

E. Managers shall be responsible for controlling themselves, their assistant coaches, their players' parents and their players. This will include intentionally distracting opposing players from the bench or while on base, such as taunting of the pitcher by a base runner, coach, or other players. Any action that is not in the spirit of good sportsmanship, such as intentionally delaying the game to reach the hard stop (e.g., excessive mound visits, frequently calling time out, instructing batters, faking injuries, etc.), is also considered unsportsmanlike conduct. Any display of unsportsmanlike conduct may result in banishment from, or forfeit of, the game and suspension from the League. The Baseball Commissioner will initiate a suspension if, after investigation, the facts indicate unsportsmanlike conduct.

F. Swearing and the use of foul language shall be considered unsportsmanlike conduct.

G. Umpires, along with the appropriate team manager(s), will be responsible for keeping the area behind home plate clear of "hecklers", etc. Anyone out of order may be asked to leave the grounds. All managers are responsible for controlling the behavior of parents of their teams.

H. Under no circumstances shall the use of alcoholic beverages be permitted in the park or fields permitted for use by HCYP during playing of any game or conduct of a team practice.

I. The use of tobacco in any form is prohibited anywhere within the confines of Kiwanis Wal-las Park.

J. Throwing of bats or helmets or other abuse of any equipment by any player or coach will not be tolerated. The manager is responsible for the actions of their players at all times. If any abuse is observed, the umpire shall initially warn the manager of the offending individual. Any subsequent incident by any member of that team shall be grounds for the umpire to eject the player involved.

X. MANAGERS AND COACHES:

A. Must be genuinely interested in each youth assigned to their team and endeavor to help teach each player true sportsmanship and the game of baseball, to the best of their ability.

B. Must make every effort to be impartial and will play every player on their team who is in attendance, in uniform and physically able to play.

C. Must endeavor to set a fine example for their players and conduct themselves in a manner befitting an adult of good character and responsibility.

D. Managers are responsible for immediately reporting all accidents, injuries and other significant incidents to the Cadre on duty. If deemed necessary by the Cadre on duty, the manager will promptly complete an Incident Report and give it to the Cadre on duty.

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E. Managers are responsible for the equipment allotted to them. Broken, non-functional , or beaten-up equipment must be reported as soon as possible to the League Commissioner, so arrangements can be made to quickly replace it. Care should be taken against unnecessary abuse.

F. Managers and coaches are expected to cooperate and help young or inexperienced umpires. Threatening, intimidating behavior or comments will not be tolerated and will be an automatic ejection from the game. The Baseball Commissioner will determine if additional suspensions, including possible removal from a coaching position, will be administered.

G. International League only - During the first three (3) weeks of the season, International teams may position one (1) coach in the outfield while their team is in the field.

XI. HCYP PLAYING RULES:

Unless altered, added or deleted by the HCYP Rules and Regulations below, the playing rules shall be in accordance with Official Baseball Rules and will apply to International through Major Leagues, unless otherwise specifically indicated.

- 1: International League teams will play ten (10) players on the field. The extra fielder must be used as an outfielder and not as a fifth infielder. In ALL leagues, all outfielders must be at least twenty (20) feet behind the base path.
- 2: In International and Minor leagues, bats shall be no more than 2-3/4" in diameter and no more than 33 in length. Wooden bats are permitted. In Major, bats shall be no more than 2-3/4" in diameter and the bat size/weight rule is a maximum -10 drop. This means that the difference (i.e., drop) when you subtract the weight in ounces from the length in inches cannot be greater than 10. In Pony, the bat size/weight rule is a maximum -8.5 drop. The barrel cannot be bigger than 2-3/4" in diameter.

	Shirt / Hat	Pants / Socks	Glove	** Athletic Supporter	Bat (Not Provided)			
					Max Size Barrel	Max Weight	Max Drop	Wooden Permitted
Rookie	Provided	*NOT Provided	NOT Provided	Recommended	2 ¼"	33	n/a	Y
Pinto	Provided	Provided	NOT Provided	Recommended	2 ¼"	33	n/a	Y
International	Provided	Provided	NOT Provided	Required	2 ¾"	33	n/a	N
Minor	Provided	Provided	NOT Provided	Required	2 ¾"	33	n/a	N
Major	Provided	Provided	NOT Provided	Required	2 ¾"	n/a	-10	Y
Pony	Provided	Provided	NOT Provided	Required	2 ¾"	n/a	-8.5	Y
Colt	Provided	Provided	NOT Provided	Required	2 5/8"	n/a	-3	Y

3: Pitching Rubber Distances: International – 42'; Minor – 46'; Major – 50'; Pony – '54.

4: Basepath Distances: International and Minor – 60'; Major – 70'; Pony – 80'.

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- 5: No jewelry of any kind may be worn, except Medical Alert Identification bracelets or chains.
- 6: No metal spikes are allowed.
- 7: Pitchers may not wear wrist bands on either hand, or batting gloves on their throwing hand. Pitchers must not wear white long or short sleeve shirts, sweatshirts or compression sleeves under their uniform shirts. It is recommended to wear a matching color to the team's uniform shirt.
- 8: Use of a helmet by the batter, the on-deck batter and all base runners is mandatory. Refusal to comply will result in the player being removed from the game. Any team using a player as a coach must have the player/coach wear a batting helmet whenever the player is on the playing field.
- 9: Catchers must wear an approved chest protector, mask, helmet, and shin guards. A player must wear a mask when warming up the pitcher, including in the bullpen.
- 10: All male players must wear a protective cup, regardless of position.
- 11: International through Major (Pony) Each player present for a game must play at least three (four for Pony) full defensive innings including at least one (two) inning at an infield position, which could include 1B, 2B, SS, 3B, P or C, unless it is determined that for safety reasons the player should not play in the infield. Each player must also play at least one (one) inning at an outfield position which could include RF, CF (RC, LC for International), or LF. The team manager shall notify the League Commissioner as early as possible at the beginning of the season if the manager believes a player cannot play the infield due to safety reasons. The League Commissioner will make arrangements for a League Official to evaluate the player during a team practice to make a final determination. If the League Official confirms such a case exists, the team manager shall advise the opposing coach prior to the game. These three (four for Pony) defensive innings do not have to be continuous. The batting line-up will consist of all players present for a game, batting in continuous rotation throughout the entire game. Players arriving at any time after the start of the game will be added to the bottom of the batting order and will bat as their turn in the rotation comes up. The manager is responsible for ensuring that each player plays the required amount of time, and that the batting line-up is strictly adhered to. There shall not be more than one inning difference between any two players in the number of innings they were in the field at any point during a game. Any player (i.e. a pitcher) who replaces another player constitutes playing in that inning and counts towards the number of innings played. Exceptions will be made for injuries and discipline issues. This rule shall apply from the time of arrival for late arriving players. Players arriving after conclusion of the 2nd inning must play at least two (three for Pony) full defensive innings at any position. Players arriving after conclusion of the 3rd inning must play at least one full defensive inning at any position. Players arriving after conclusion of the 4th (5th for Pony) inning are not required to play any defensive innings. No player can play 3, 4, 5, 6, or 7 defensive innings until each player on the team (present before the start of the 2nd inning) has played or is playing his 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, or 5th defensive inning respectively – i.e. no player can play his 3rd inning until every player has played or is playing his 1st inning, no player can play his 4th inning until every player has played or is playing his 2nd inning, etc. Any violation to this rule may incur a penalty as determined by the Commissioner.

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Players that must leave early or players that are injured may be removed from the game. Their spot in the batting order may be skipped without consequence. If a player is planning to leave early, the player should advise their manager before the start of the game. The manager should then notify the opposing manager. If an injured player is removed from the game, the manager should immediately advise the umpire and the opposing manager. An injured player can be removed from the playing field when necessary. The injured player once removed from the batting lineup is removed from playing in the game, both in the field and at bat.

- 12: Substitution of defensive players, other than for the pitcher, an injured player or for disciplinary reasons, may not be made during an inning. A pitcher who is substituted for from the bench must return to the bench. Defensive position changes may be made as necessary when the pitcher is substituted for by a player from the field, but only the former pitcher may be removed from the game. If a pitcher is removed using a player in the field, the same players must remain on the field.
- 13: A substitute runner will be allowed for an injured player, or, with two outs, for a runner scheduled to catch the next defensive inning. The substitute runner shall be the nearest preceding player in the batting order previously making an out.
- 14: A player does not officially enter a game as a pitcher until the first pitch is delivered to a batter.
- 15: If a player on the field becomes injured during a play, the umpire shall immediately call time out and allow the injured player to be given the medical attention required. The umpire shall award the number of bases to each runner that, in the umpire's opinion, the runners would have advanced to safely had the injury not occurred.
- 16: The Baseball Commissioner will determine the ground rules for each diamond. Prior to each game the managers and umpire(s) will review these as required by the umpire(s).
- 17: Any fair ball crossing into foul territory after passing 1st or 3rd base and remaining in the field of play until traveling beyond the extension of the outfield fence shall be a ground rule double.
- 18: No manager or coach shall at any time, whether from the bench or the playing field or elsewhere, intentionally confuse or attempt to influence any opposing player into making a play by any action or language. Teams shall only offer encouragement to their teammates. No player, coach, manager or parent shall express derogatory remarks toward the opposing team. This behavior will be considered unsportsmanlike conduct and will be subject to the unsportsmanlike conduct penalties.
- 19: For International through Major leagues, a regulation game consists of six (6) innings (Pony is 7 innings), unless extended because of a tie score, or shortened: (1) because the home team needs none of its half of the 6th inning (7th for Pony) or only a fraction of it; or (2) because the umpire or Cadre on duty calls the game. Note: Each umpire is responsible for their own game. The Cadre on duty has responsibility for the entire park.
- 20: If the score is tied after six (seven for Pony) complete innings, play shall continue until: (1) the visiting team has scored more total runs than the home team at the end of a completed inning; or (2) the home team scores the winning run in an uncompleted inning; or (3) hard stop or no new inning is reached.

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21: A game is a complete game if: (1) the hard stop time limit defined in Rule 23 is reached, or (2) four complete innings have been played, or (3) the home team has scored more runs than the visiting team after three and a half innings have been completed, or (4) the home team scores one or more runs in its half of the fourth inning to tie the score and the half inning was not completed. If this last scenario occurs during a regular season game, the tied score will be reported to the League Commissioner and the league standings will reflect a tie for the two teams involved.

22: The Cadre on duty and/or League Officials on-site shall determine the fitness of the playing fields before all games start. The Cadre on duty or the umpire shall determine whether and when play shall be suspended during a game because of rain, darkness or lightning (all HCYP personnel, including managers, have the responsibility to immediately notify the umpire if they see lightning or hear thunder); as to whether and when play shall resume after such suspension; and, as to whether and when a game shall be terminated after such suspension. All games are subject to HCYP's Lightning Policy. Games played to regulation are considered as complete games under Rule 21. Games that have not been played to regulation shall be considered "Incomplete" and shall be rescheduled by the Baseball Commissioner. If at least one full inning has been played, these games will resume from the exact point of the game at the time of the suspension. Each manager shall agree on and note in their scorebooks the exact situation at the time play was suspended (e.g., inning, number of outs, batter, count on batter, runners on base, etc.). Suspended games that did not complete one full inning will be started over. The innings pitched in a game affected by this rule shall be included when determining the eligibility of a pitcher as defined in Section VI.

23: The following time limits shall apply:

i. No New Innings (International thru Pony): No new inning shall start after a maximum of the following times:

- a. INTERNATIONAL – 1 Hour and 45 Minutes
- b. MINOR – 2 Hours
- c. MAJOR – 2 Hours and 15 Minutes
- d. PONY – 2 Hours and 30 Minutes

A new inning is defined as started at the instant of the last out in the prior inning.

ii. Games with Another Game Immediately Following: If shorter than the limit imposed in 23.i., no new inning shall start 30 minutes prior to the start of the following game, AND games shall not continue past a hard stop of 15 minutes prior to the following game.

iii. School Night Curfew (Sunday through Thursday): INTERNATIONAL and MINOR: Play shall not continue past a hard stop of 9:00 p.m. regardless of start time or innings played. If shorter than the limit imposed in 23.i, no new inning shall start after 8:45 p.m.

iv. Park curfew: Play shall not continue past a hard stop of 9:55 p.m. regardless of start time or innings played. If shorter than the limit imposed in 23.i, no new inning shall start after 9:40 p.m. NOTE: There is a strict enforcement of lights out at 10:00 p.m.

v. Maximum length of Game (hard stop):

- a. INTERNATIONAL – 2 hours
- b. MINOR – 2 Hours and 15 Minutes

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- c. MAJOR – 2 Hours and 30 Minutes
 - d. PONY – 2 Hours and 45 Minutes
- vi. Games that are ended by a hard stop will revert to the score at the end of the previous full inning to determine the winning team, unless the home team has tied the game or taken the lead. If that results in a tie score, refer to Rule 21.
- vii. Declaration of last batter: In cases where a hard stop is imminent, in order to avoid stoppage in the middle of an at bat, the umpire shall declare “last batter” at a time they judge will lead to the at bat completing at or near the hard stop time. While it is best practice to declare last batter prior to the at bat, declaration can be made in the middle of an at bat if necessary (e.g. an existing at bat is taking longer than anticipated).
- viii. Others: All games are further subject to immediate stoppage by the umpire or Cadre on duty. In these cases the games will either become official or be suspended, subject to Rule 21.
- 24: Unlimited runs will ONLY apply to the last scheduled inning (6 for International through Major and 7 for Pony) or beyond (i.e., extra innings). The no new inning rule will not automatically trigger the unlimited runs rule in the subsequent inning (innings less than 6 for International through Major and 7 for Pony).
- 25: A team requires a minimum of eight eligible players (nine for the International League) before a game can begin. Failure to have the required number of players by the forfeit time will constitute a forfeit.
- 26: A game in progress shall be forfeited to the opposing team when a team is unable or refuses to place the required number players on the field at any time during the game. These players must come from the team's roster, and/or borrowing a player from within their organization. It must not include players from outside the organization.
- 27: Any protest of a game must be put in writing to the Baseball Commissioner within twenty-four (24) hours after the incident. The fee for protesting shall be \$50, which will be returned if the protest is upheld. Protests will only be upheld in the case of rule interpretation. No protests of a judgment call by an umpire will be upheld. To protest, the manager must "immediately" inform the umpire of the protest before the next pitch. Both managers must also then note the exact situation in their respective scorebooks before the next pitch.
- 28: A committee composed of the Baseball Commissioner, Umpire Commissioner or Umpire Director, and one or more of the League Commissioners shall hear and resolve any such protest. If a protest is allowed, resumption of the game at the exact point of the infraction will occur.
- 29: (Major and Pony Leagues Only) The batter becomes a runner when the third strike is called by the umpire and the ball is not caught providing: (1) first base is unoccupied or (2) first base is occupied and there are two (2) outs. The batter does not lose the right to run to first base until the batter leaves the field of play (i.e., passes through the opening in the fence normally used to enter or exit the field).
- 30: In addition to the cases stated, each runner, including the batter-runner, may advance two bases, if a ball thrown by an infielder or outfielder passes through the opening in the

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protective fence, which normally is used by the players to enter or leave the field. Major and Pony Leagues only – when a pitcher attempts to pick-off a runner taking a lead without stepping off the back of the pitching rubber and the thrown ball goes out of play, each runner may advance only one base. If the pitcher steps off the back of the pitching rubber, then throws the ball out of play, each runner may advance two bases. This is a clarification of an existing Major League Baseball rule.

- 31: Any runner shall be declared out if the runner does not slide AND the runner makes contact with a defensive player holding the ball during a play near home plate or any base.

A runner may choose not to slide and instead use evasive maneuvers to avoid contact with the defensive player. If the player is not tagged out, the player shall be called safe. We do not have a “must slide” rule, only an “avoid contact” rule.

A runner who slides into a defensive player, with the defensive player dropping the ball shall be called safe.

If a runner does not slide and makes contact with a defensive player when no play is being made, the runner is safe due to defensive obstruction.

All managers need to encourage and only teach feet first sliding. Headfirst slides are NOT permitted at any base and any runner sliding headfirst will be called out. The only exception is a runner diving back to a base. Headfirst slides by runners involved in a run-down are also prohibited and the player will be called out unless the player is considered diving back to the base. A dive is considered to be a move preceded by only 2-3 steps.

- 32: INTERNATIONAL LEAGUE ONLY:

1. A team will be limited to scoring a maximum of four (4) runs in any inning regardless of the number of outs accumulated, except in the 6th inning or any extra inning thereafter.
2. If a team is leading by ten (10) runs or more after three (3) innings at the beginning of batting, the maximum number of runs that team may score is reduced to three (3). This applies until the losing team has reduced the run differential below ten (10) runs. This includes the 6th inning.
3. NO STEALING. Base runners are NOT PERMITTED to leave their base until the ball is hit; or the batter is walked or hit by a pitch. Leads are not permitted and runners are not permitted to leave the base until the ball crosses the plate.
4. A runner may advance to home and score only as a result of:
 - a. A batted ball - play continues until the umpire calls time.
 - b. The runner is forced to go home (e.g. walk, hit batter with bases loaded, etc.)
5. The "infield fly rule" shall not be utilized.
6. The ball is dead when the pitcher has the ball anywhere on the dirt surrounding the pitching rubber. If a runner has not at least reached half-way to the next base, the runner must return to the previous base.
7. No intentional walks are permitted
8. Batters who are walked are ONLY permitted to advance to first base. They are NOT permitted to steal second base due to the pitcher not having the ball on the rubber.
9. Following the third total walk/hit-by-pitch of the inning, if any subsequent batter receives 4 balls, a coach from the batting team will come in to pitch to the batter from a distance of not less than 40'0". A maximum of six (6) pitches will be thrown in which the batter must put the ball in play. If the batter does not put one (1) of those six (6) pitches in play an out will be recorded and scored as a strike out. If the ball put in play by the batter strikes the coach pitching the play is dead and the pitch will be considered a no-

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pitch, and the base runners may not advance. This rule is in effect during the regular season. Beginning on the 1st day of the playoffs normal play resumes with no limits on the number of walks granted in an inning.

33: MINOR LEAGUE ONLY

1. A team will be limited to scoring a maximum of five (5) runs in any inning regardless of the number of outs accumulated, except in the 6th inning or any extra inning thereafter.
2. If a team is leading by ten (10) runs or more after three (3) innings at the beginning of batting, the maximum number of runs that team may score is reduced to three (3). This applies until the trailing team has reduced the run differential below ten (10) runs. This includes the 6th inning.
3. If the reduced maximum run rule is in effect, the team that is limited to the lower run maximum total may NOT steal home.
4. Leads are not allowed. Runners may leave the base and/or steal only after the ball crosses the plate.
5. The ball is dead when the pitcher has the ball on the dirt surrounding the pitching rubber.
6. No intentional walks are permitted.
7. Batters who are walked are ONLY permitted to advance to first base. They are NOT permitted to steal second base due to the pitcher not having the ball on the dirt surrounding the pitching rubber.

34: MAJOR LEAGUE ONLY

1. A team will be limited to scoring a maximum of five (5) runs in any inning regardless of the number of outs accumulated, except in the 6th inning or any extra inning thereafter.
2. If a team is leading by ten (10) runs or more after three (3) innings at the beginning of batting, the maximum number of runs that team may score is reduced to three (3). This applies until the trailing team has reduced the run differential below ten (10) runs. This includes the 6th inning.

35: PONY LEAGUE ONLY

1. A team will be limited to scoring a maximum of six (6) runs in any inning regardless of the number of outs accumulated, except in the 7th inning or any extra inning thereafter.
2. If a team is leading by twelve (12) runs or more after four (3) innings at the beginning of batting, the maximum number of runs that team may score is reduced to four (4). This applies until the trailing team has reduced the run differential below twelve (12) runs. This includes the 7th inning.

36: ALL LEAGUES

1. Unlimited runs will ONLY apply to the last scheduled inning (6 for International through Major and 7 for Pony) or beyond (i.e., extra innings). The no new inning rule will not automatically trigger the unlimited runs rule in the following inning (innings less than 6 for International – Major and 7 for Pony). This rule is also impacted by the reduced maximum run rule for each league if it has been invoked.
2. A manager or coach may make only two visits to any one pitcher in one inning. The 2nd trip to the same pitcher in the same inning will cause this pitcher's automatic removal. The manager or coach is prohibited from making a 2nd visit to the mound while the same batter is at bat. A manager or coach is considered to have concluded a visit to the mound when he leaves the 18-foot circle surrounding the pitcher's rubber.

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- 37: The home team is responsible for keeping the official score sheet. Winning team managers are responsible for reporting the score to the league commissioner to their League Commissioner as soon after the game as possible.

XII. ADDITIONAL RULES:

- 1: (Major through Pony Leagues) Other than on an attempted bunt, the batter may not swing on any attempted steal of home plate by a runner on third base. The batter will be called OUT under all circumstances as a judgment call by the umpire. If the runner scores, the player is sent back. If the runner makes an out, that out counts. The ball is dead. If any other runner is put out by a defensive play, the out counts, otherwise all other runners must return to their previous base on an attempted steal.
- 2: Each team will supply one new ball, approved by the Baseball Executive Committee, for each game.
- 3: INTERNATIONAL LEAGUE ONLY: The use of the double base at 1st base will be used for the International League. The base on the inside of the baseline will be called the fair portion. The base on the outside of the baseline will be called the foul portion.
- a. If a play is being made on any batted ball and there is a throw to first base, the batter-runner must attempt to touch only the foul portion of first base. If he does not, interference rules will apply.
 - b. A batted ball hitting the fair portion is declared fair, and a batted ball hitting the foul portion only is declared foul.
 - c. A defensive player must use only the fair portion of the base at all times.
 - d. On balls hit to the outfield, when there is no play being made at the double base, the batter-runner may touch either portion of the base.
 - e. When tagging up on a fly ball, the fair portion must be used.
 - f. Once the batter has established himself as a runner, the foul portion is no longer used.
- 4: At any time during the game, the hitting team has the option to declare three (3) outs in order to finish a half-inning. At that time, the half inning ends and the teams will switch sides. This declaration can occur at any time during the at-bat. The player that was scheduled to bat next for the team declaring three (3) outs shall lead off the next inning (if applicable).

XIII. SPRING LEAGUE WINNERS AND PLAYOFFS

At the conclusion of the Spring Season, league winners and runners up are determined for Intl through Colt, and the league also conducts a post season, double elimination playoff tournament (format may be reduced to single elimination at any time if not enough calendar days remain in the season). If two or more teams possess the same overall record after completing the regular season, the following sequence of tiebreakers will be used to determine the league winner and runner-up, and to seed the teams for playoffs:

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- a) Overall win percentage (a tie counts a 0.5 wins)
- b) Head-to-Head record
- c) Runs Allowed
- d) Coin Toss or random draw, at the discretion of the Commissioner

Where warranted by the total number of teams, a division will have an A bracket and B bracket. The Baseball Commissioner and League Commissioner will jointly determine the number of teams in each playoff bracket for Leagues.

All league rules will be in effect except as noted below:

- a) No warnings for balks
- b) Coach ejection will result in ejection for the remainder of the playoffs.
- c) Balls will be provided by the umpires.

The following adjustments are also made to the time limits and definitions of a complete game:

- a) For games other than a championship game
 - a. Section XI Rule 23 i through vii do not apply
 - b. All games for all divisions shall have a no new inning time limit of 2 hours
 - c. For a game that reaches the no new inning time limit regardless of innings played
 - i. If game not tied, game is over after completing current inning
 - ii. If game is tied, continue playing until a winner is determined
 - 1. If darkness (unlit field), curfew or inclement weather occurs, move to an unoccupied lighted field if available and applicable, or resume game as soon as practical and/or necessary.
 - d. For a game that does not reach no new inning time limit (due to darkness, curfew or weather)
 - i. If a lighted field is available – move to the lighted field and play to completion (clock is stopped between the last pitch on the unlit field and the first pitch on the lighted field)
 - ii. If a lighted field is not available and/or curfew or inclement weather occur:
 - 1. If 4 full innings are completed:
 - a. If the home team is ahead, the game is over
 - b. If the game is tied or the visiting team is ahead
 - i. The game is over if visiting team was ahead at the completion of the last full inning
 - ii. The game is suspended if the visiting team has taken the lead in the current and uncompleted inning, and will be resumed the next possible day (clock is stopped between the last pitch when the game was suspended due to darkness, weather, or curfew and the first pitch on the following day)
 - 2. If 4 full innings are not completed:
 - a. The game is suspended, and will be resumed the following day (clock is stopped between the last pitch when the game was suspended due to darkness, weather, or curfew and the first pitch on the following day)
- b) For championship games
 - a. Games are played to completion of the full number of innings (no new inning limit is removed)
 - b. If a game cannot be completed in a given day
 - i. If the game is prior to last school day for HCPSS, the game will resume the following day and play to completion.

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- ii. If the game is on the last school day for HCPSS, the winner will be determined as the team who is ahead at the completion of the last full inning played.

XIV. MEMORIAL DAY TOURNAMENT RULES:

Each year in International through Pony, a Memorial Day Tournament (MDT) is played Memorial Day Weekend consisting of selected players from teams in the respective leagues. League rules should generally apply to these games, except as noted below:

Game Schedules

Teams will be formed from players available for the weekend in each of the leagues or by age groups (i.e. 9-10 year-olds, 11-12 year-olds, and Pony Division). The number of teams per age group shall be determined by the number of players and coaches available, but should not be more than five (5). No MDT team can have more than four (4) players from any one regular season team. Each team will play all the other teams in their Division. A Championship game will be typically played on Monday between the two teams with the best record after pool play. Weather conditions may alter the schedule (reduce the number of pool games) or eliminate the Championship game (if that happens, the Champion and runner-up will be based on the record of all games played).

Seedings are determined as follows:

1. Highest win percentage
2. Head-to-head record
3. Fewest runs allowed
4. Coin Toss or random draw

Game Procedures

All League rules are in effect unless otherwise stated herein to include player participation.

Pool play games will have a no new inning time limit, however there will not be a hard stop limit. If a pool game is tied after completion of the inning when the no new inning limit was reached, the game will end in a tie.

When divisions are combined, the following rule modifications are in effect:

10U:

Minor rules are in effect with the following exceptions:

- 1) Four outfielders are permitted.
- 2) The pitching distance shall be 44'.
- 3) No steals of home are allowed.
- 4) Balks will only receive a warning.

12U:

Major rules are in effect.

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Pony:

Pony rules are in effect. If Colt players are participating, they are permitted to pitch from 60'6", while Pony players shall pitch from 54'. 80' bases are used.

Home team for the Championship game will be the number one seed. The Championship game will not be restricted by the limits and hard stops and will play the maximum number of innings (6 for International through Major, 7 for Pony).

The umpires will provide the first 3 game balls, with the coaches providing more if needed.

Winning coach must post game results and both coaches must post pitching details on the pavilion tournament board immediately after each game. Forfeits may occur if the winning coach does not report the results of the game.

Pitching Rules

Intl, Minor, Major (10U, 12U):

Any pitcher is allowed 2 innings per game, 3 innings per day, with a maximum of 6 in three consecutive days with no pitcher allowed to pitch more than 3 consecutive days

Pony:

Any pitcher is allowed 2 innings per game, 4 innings per day, with a maximum of 6 in three consecutive days with no pitcher allowed to pitch more than 3 consecutive days

The maximum number of innings can be altered at the discretion of the Rec Baseball Commissioner depending on how many teams play in the tournament.

XV. FALL BASEBALL LEAGUE:

HCYP offers a Fall baseball season for International through Pony players. Fall Ball is a developmental season with the purpose of providing players opportunities to play positions not normally available in the Spring season. As such, no scores and standings are kept during the Fall. All rules will be in effect with the following exceptions:

- A. Runs are limited to four for International per inning and five for Minor through Pony.
- B. Since scores are not kept, the no new inning rule will not be in effect and the game will stop at a hard stop time of 2 hours 15 minutes to allow teams to play as long as possible. Score boards shall not be used.
- C. It is encouraged to limit pitchers to pitch only one inning. No Pony pitcher may pitch three innings.
- D. Age is determined by Aug 31 of the following year.

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XVI. INTERPRETATION OF RULES:

- A. The "hidden ball" play is allowed.
- B. On appeal plays, no out can be called if time is out.
- C. Only the umpire can call "Time". Players or managers desiring interruption of play shall request the same from the umpire. "Time" will not be granted until the umpire declares it after determining that play has been completed.
- D. No player may impede a runner by blocking any base or home plate unless the defensive player has the ball and is attempting to make a play. Should a defensive player obstruct or interfere with the runner at 1st, 2nd, or 3rd base, the umpire shall award the runner an additional base or bases as they deem appropriate. Should a defensive player obstruct home plate, the umpire shall declare the player safe at home. Managers are strongly encouraged to instruct defensive players to refrain from "covering" a base when there is no play at that base. For example, for a base hit to left field, the 1st baseman should not cover 1st base in a manner that impedes the baserunner from making a turn around 1st base.
- E. Base runners shall make every attempt to avoid contact with the defensive player at any base. The umpire shall call a player out for not attempting to avoid contact with a defensive player attempting to make a play at any base. However, if a runner slides into any base, the runner (or he/she) shall not be called out solely due to making contact with a defensive player.

XVII. LIGHTNING AND THUNDER POLICY

Thunder and/or lightning necessitates that all outdoor activities at Kiwanis Wallas Park be suspended immediately. The occurrence of either thunder and/or lightning is not subject to interpretation or discussion. The updated recommendations for Lightning Safety published by the National Severe Storms Laboratory, NOAA states: "If an individual can see lightning and/or hear thunder, he/she is already at risk. Louder or more frequent thunder indicates that lightning activity is approaching, increasing the risk for lightning injury or death. High winds, rainfall, and cloud cover often act as precursors to actual cloud-to-ground strikes notifying individuals to take action. Many lightning casualties occur in the beginning, as the storm approaches, because people ignore these precursors. Also, many lightning casualties occur after the perceived threat has passed. Generally, the lightning threat diminishes with time after the last sound of thunder, but may persist for more than 30 minutes. When thunderstorms are in the area but not overhead, the lightning threat can exist even when it is sunny, not raining, or when clear sky is visible."

To repeat, if thunder and/or lightning is observed, it is HCYP policy that all outdoor activities will be suspended immediately. Coaches are not to wait for either the Cadre or umpires on this matter. They are to remove team members immediately if thunder is heard or lightning is seen. Neither the coaches nor their team can be penalized in any manner for doing so. However, failure to obey this safety rule will be dealt with in a serious manner. The Cadre/coaches shall wait a minimum of thirty (30) minutes from the time of interruption before considering the resumption of play. The Cadre shall then make every reasonable effort to resume and complete interrupted contests with full consideration of weather and site conditions as they affect safety and playing conditions.

Further, if thunder and/or lightning is observed at Kiwanis Wallas Park by coaches or Cadre, 30 or fewer minutes prior to the scheduled start of a contest, the Cadre/coaches shall not permit the contest to begin until the weather has cleared or the conditions become playable.

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When a decision is made to halt play, the Cadre on duty shall proceed to an area adjacent to field #6 and give two blasts of an air horn in the direction of Field #1 and another two blasts in the direction of Field #11.

The Cadre should ensure that the following has occurred:

- The concession stand will close immediately and remain closed without any waiting line until the all clear is given and play can resume;
 - The pavilion will be immediately evacuated and remain off limits until the all clear is given and play can resume;
 - Every person (manager, coach, parent, player, and spectator) must immediately leave the park grounds and move into a closed motor vehicle. Managers may move into the Meeting Room or the Umpire Room. Each team is responsible to establish a vehicle assignment plan for players that do not have a family vehicle present in the park.

The bottom line for this policy, which is also the current policy of the Howard County Public School System, is the safety of our children.

The person designated as baseball Cadre for any date shall always sign in at the Umpire Room with phone number. During Fall Ball, if the Cadre is also acting as a coach they must immediately leave their coaching positions if the presence of a Cadre is required. If for any reason a designated Cadre is unable to assume the appropriate duties when scheduled for any reason, said Cadre shall immediately contact the HCYP Executive Director so that a suitable replacement Cadre can be found.

Further, a list of all the current officers of HCYP and their telephone numbers shall always be posted prominently next to the Cadre sign-in sheet. It is HCYP policy that any decision made by any HCYP officer regarding any matter dealing with Kiwanis Wallas Park, especially those issues dealing with safety, shall always supersede any decision of any other person.