



MAJORS DIVISION



1) Overall Governing Rules

Rules governing the Baseball – Majors are in accordance with the 2023 NFHS Rule as published. Any exception, additions, deletions, or alteration of the Little League rules are listed in this document and shall supersede the Little League rules.

2) Players Age

The Black River Major League is intended for youths of qualifying age in accordance with each community's League age requirements. Once registered within an age group you are required to stay there for the season.

3) Discipline

Umpires will have full discretion to call a stoppage to a game if a situation warrants such, up to and including declaring the game in question is forfeited. A stoppage would occur when either a coach, player, and/or parent is acting in a manner that is not safe for anyone playing or in attendance at the game where incident occurs.

If there is an ejection during a game (whether or not a stoppage occurs) the party ejected will be served a suspension of (1) game for the next scheduled game for that team. The umpire is then required to file a report on the situation with the home teams Umpire Director to be reviewed by him. Umpire director has opportunity to escalate issue to the Black River ruling committee. That committee will be comprised of a representative from each participating community in the Black River league. Once the report is reviewed and investigation completed, disciplinary action may or may not be imposed at the discretion of the committee, in conjunction with the governing bodies of the communities involved. The ruling is final and cannot be protested.

4) Field and Equipment

• Field Dimensions

- Base length: 70 feet
- Pitcher's rubber to home: 50 feet
- Ball type - Balls should be marked **Little League Approved**

• Bats

- Bats no greater than 2 3/4 inch in diameter. (2 5/8 would be a preferred barrel size)
- There is no weight drop limit
- Little League approved bats are allowed (grandfathering previously allowable bats for the 2018 season).
- True Wood bats are not required to be certified and are allowed.

• Catchers Gear

- Catchers are required to wear a facemask, padded chest protector, shin guards, protective cup, and head gear that protects the entire head when catching behind the plate. No "skull caps" are permitted.
THROAT PROTECTION GEAR FOR CATCHERS MASK IS ENCOURAGED
- A mask is required for players to warm up the pitcher.

• Cleats

- The use of metal cleats is forbidden.
 - **PENALTY:** if player is caught by umpire the player will be ejected from the game

• Head Gear

- Batters and base runners are required to wear protective headgear, which give protection to the head, temples, ears, and the base of the skull.
- **PENALTY:** Base runners may be called out for willfully removing a helmet while on the base paths at the discretion of the umpire(s).
- **Electronic Equipment**
 - No electronic equipment shall be used on the field or the dugout during the game.
 - Players are not allowed to review videos of gameplay during the game.
 - **PENALTY** - head coach will be kicked out of game and asked to leave the park.
 - If found during the teams at bat, the batter will be called out.
 - If it occurs when the team is playing defense, the batter will be awarded first and runners will advance one base.

5) In-Game Appeal Process

- If the ball is live the appeal must be made by player on the field and directed towards the ruling umpire.
- If the ball is dead the appeal can be made by a player on the field or the coach. The appeal must be directed towards the umpire that made the call.
- Please note that an umpire **is not required** to ask their partner for an appeal and the coaches may not ask the other umpire to overturn the umpire that made the call.

6) Pre-Game Rules

- **Coaches**
 - Batting order must be exchanged prior to the start of the game.
 - Each team allowed 1 head coach; assistant coaches are required to be inside dugout.
 - Each team batting is permitted a coach at 1st and 3rd base.
- **Players**
 - If a player shows up late, that player goes to the bottom of the batting order. If batting order has cycled through, then it is at the coaches' discretion whether the player plays.
 - Jewelry – No player shall wear jewelry of any kind.
- **Call ups**
 - Coaches may call-up players from the Minor League at any time
 - Call-up players may play anywhere on the field except for pitcher.
- **Minimum number to play**
 - Teams must field at least eight (8) registered players to start a game and must maintain at least eight (8) players throughout the game. The ninth batter in this scenario is **NOT** an out
- **Rain outs**
 - Rainouts are determined by the home teams governing body
 - Managers will be notified by league of cancelled games and then Managers are responsible to notify their team.
 - For games where rain outs may occur just prior to the start of the game, the umpire(s) have final say on whether a game can occur.
- **Reciting the Pledge of Allegiance**
 - Three minutes prior to the start of the game both teams will line up on the foul line on the side of their dugout.
 - They will remove their hats and home team will start the Pledge.
- **Dugout and warmup times**
 - In the event that field dugouts **ARE NOT** labeled HOME/AWAY, the HOME team shall occupy the 3rd base dugout.
 - Each team is permitted on-field warmups.
 - If there is a shortened warmup time, the time is to be divided equally.
 - Coaches shall not make a gentlemen's agreement to change rules.
- **Game Length**

- No inning shall start after 1:45 min of the official recorded starting time.
 - Umpires will determine official start time. – **The home plate umpire will make each team aware of start time before first pitch – AND – also write the start time on the scorecard in the appropriate box**
- The start of a new inning is the completion of the final out of the previous inning.
- Regulation games shall be seven (7) innings in duration.
- A game tied at the end of regulation results in a tie, except in playoff games.
- A game is official if three (3) innings have been completed or time limit has been reached.
- **Keeping score**
 - The home team is responsible for keeping the official score.
 - The game schedule will indicate which team will act as home team.
 - **The WINNING teams head coach will be responsible for making sure scorecards are filled out complete before sending in to baseballgamescores@gmail.com**
- **Minimum playing time**
 - A player must not sit more than (1) consecutive inning
 - The only acceptable grounds for not playing an individual are disciplinary action, injury, or illness.
- **Start time**
 - All games shall start on time per the schedule distributed.
 - Forfeit time shall be 15 minutes after originally scheduled start time.
- **Suspended Games**
 - If a game is called for any reason before it is official, that game shall be considered a “suspended game” and shall be completed from the point of suspension at a later date.
 - If a game is called for any reason after becoming official during an uncompleted inning, the final game score will revert back to the previously completed inning-if that results in the game ending in a tie, the game shall remain a tie.
- **Championship Rules – same rules as stated above with the following exceptions**
 - **NO REVERT BACK RULE – games called for weather or darkness after becoming official will not have score reverted back. Game will begin at next opportunity to play where it was suspended, with same scorebook in play – recorded lineup and pitching stat lines still apply for that game.**
 - **See Section 6 Game Length– no new inning after 1:45 mark.**

7) In-Game Rules

- **Bat Boys**
 - Bat boys are allowed in the Major League. Bat boy/girl **MUST WEAR HELMETS AT ALL TIMES.**
- **Continuous Batting Order**
 - All team members will bat in a continuous batting rotation
 - Equal number of bats unless the lead is by the home team
- **Courtesy Runner**
 - May be used to speed up the game for when the catcher or pitcher is on base and there are (1) one or more outs and must be the player who recorded the last out for your team
 - If the player removed for the courtesy runner does not catch or pitch in the next inning (for one complete at bat by the opposing team) the team will forfeit. Excludes an injury.
- **Defensive Positions**
 - 9 players with 3 outfielders
 - Defensive substitutions are free
- **Dropped Third Strike** – Applies in the Major League. Same as MLB. With (1) no runner on first base, or (2) with a runner on first base and two outs, the batter immediately becomes a runner. The strike is called, but the umpire does not call the batter out. The umpire may also signal that there is "no catch" of the pitch. The batter may then attempt to reach first base and must be tagged or forced out
- **Infield Fly Rule** – Applies in the Major League. Same as MLB. The rule applies only when there are fewer than two outs, and there is a force play at third base (i.e., when there are runners at first and second base, or

the bases are loaded).[1] In these situations, if a fair fly ball is in play, and in the umpire's judgment is catchable by an infielder with ordinary effort, the umpire shall call "infield fly" (or more often, "infield fly, batter is out") and the batter will be out[2] regardless of whether the ball is actually caught. Umpires typically raise the right arm straight up, index finger pointing up, to signal the rule is in effect.

- **Balks – DOES APPLY** in the Major League
- **Intentional Walks** – Coach may walk batter without pitching. Coach must inform Home-Plate Umpire that they are intentionally walking a batter.
- **Lead-offs / Steals** – Applies in the Major League. Same as MLB.
- **Maximum Batters** – There is no maximum number of batters per inning in the Major League and unlimited scoring per inning
- **Mercy Rule** - If a team is leading by at least fifteen (15) runs after 3 innings or ten (10) runs or more after 4 or more innings have been played, the game shall be terminated, and the leading team declared the winner.
 - The bottom half of the third, fourth, fifth or sixth inning need not be played or completed if the home team achieves such a lead.
- **On-Deck Batters** – On-deck batters are allowed in the Major League. No offensive players not on base or batting are permitted on the field other than those performing bat-boy duties.
- **Pitching** – A first year league player must pitch **ONE** complete innings. This rule is defined as (3) consecutive batters regardless of how many outs there are. **THIS RULE DOES NOT APPLY DURING PLAYOFFS**
 - Note: Multiple first years may be used but it must be consecutive batters.
 - First year is defined as a player in the first year of the two-year league
 - **MUST BE ABIDED BY IN A REGULATION GAME. DOES NOT HAVE TO BE FULL 7 INNINGS**
 - **PENALTY:** Failure to abide by this rule will result in the forfeiture of the game.
 - Pitchers are allowed 8 preparatory pitches in their first inning of work and 5 in subsequent innings.
 - A player once removed as a pitcher may not pitch again in the same game under any circumstances. Said pitcher may play another position in the game except catcher in the inning removed.
 - Pitchers will be held to a pitch count (see pitch count chart below)

Major League Pitch Count Chart

Age	Daily Max (pitches)	Rest 0 Days	Rest 1 Day	Rest 2 Days	Rest 3 Days	Rest 4 Days
Majors	95	1-40	41-55	56-70	71-85	86+

- In cases where games are started but not completed, such as rain, the individual pitch count and required rest is still enforced even if the game isn't resumed but restarted.
- If a pitcher reaches the limit imposed for the league age while facing a batter, the pitcher may continue until any one of the following conditions occurs: 1) batter reaches base; 2) batter is put out; 3) the 3rd out is made to complete the half-inning.
- The pitch count recorder must provide the current pitch count for any pitcher when requested by either manager or any umpire. However, the Manager is responsible for knowing when the pitcher must be removed.
- Discrepancies between recorded pitch counts between opposing managers will be decided by averaging the counts for both teams together.
- Coaches may visit the mound only once per pitcher per inning. If a second trip to the mound is made, in the same inning for the same pitcher, a coach **MUST** make a pitching change.

- **Sliding** - Runners are never required to slide, but to avoid interference or malicious contact the runner elects to slide, the slide must be legal.
 - Diving or hurdling a player or jumping over the outstretched glove of a fielder at any base is prohibited.
 - Any infraction of the above results in the runner being called out.
 - **No head first sliding, unless sliding back from a lead-off. Player will be called out.**
 - Umpire determines whether a slide is legal or not.
- **Stealing** - Stealing is permitted.

8) Post-Game Rules

- Both teams shall line up on the baseline closest to their dugout and shake hands with opposing team and coaches.
- All teams shall leave the dugout as clean as or cleaner than when they arrived.

9) Protests

- Protest fee is \$75 total, with \$25 due at time of protest. Balance owed due at time protest is heard.
- Protest shall involve rule interpretations only. Judgement calls made by umpires are final and cannot be protested.
- The head coach must notify the Home-Plate Umpire he intends to protest the game and fill out Protest Form. Which will be provided by a league official after the game
- Umpire will notify opposing Manager that protest is occurring and what is being protested.
- Protesting Manager is to provide \$25.00 to the umpire at that time, at which time the game umpire will notify the Umpire Director that protest protocol has begun, and initial payment has been received. Umpire Director (or other league official) will come to the field to collect that payment by the end of the game.
- **Both** scorebooks should also be signed by **BOTH** managers.
- Protesting manager must email the league director of the protest with supporting evidence. (after protested game is completed). Protest must be heard within 7 days of being initiated. A committee involving the communities represented within the league will hear the protest.

10) League Standings

- **Standings points will be awarded as follows:**
 - **Win** = 2 pts; **Tie** = 1 pt; **Game played** = 1 pt; **Loss** = 0 pts
- **Tie Breakers:**
 - **Standings Points**
 - **Head-to-Head**
 - **Runs ALLOWED**
 - **Runs SCORED**

11) Score Reporting

- After each both game Managers will be required to sign the scorecard for that game. Signing this card is confirming to the league that all information is correct and will be logged as such. **Umpire keeping the scorecard will keep accurate information by checking with coaches throughout the game and then give to WINNING COACH to email/text score to baseballgamescores@gmail.com. It will be the UMPIRES responsibility to provide a new scorecard for each game**

12) Playoffs

- Regular season rules apply in the playoffs **EXCEPT WHERE NOTED**