



HVABSA Baseball Rules

Governed by the Official Baseball Rules (MLB), with the following exceptions:

General Rules – Last Revised January 2018

Note: These rules govern games during seasons for which teams are NOT interlocking with other associations. If an age group is playing in an interlock league, the interlock rules with govern all games for that season including games between two HVABSA teams.

1. Participation:

- 1.1. Failure to comply with player participation rules, per age division, will result in the player starting the team's next game and receiving a minimum of four innings in the field.
- 1.2. Players can play up to next age group if player is within one year of that age group. There can be exceptions to this rule, only with board approval.
- 1.3. No player is allowed to play on a HVABSA Rec. Division roster and be on any other baseball roster in any league at anytime, anywhere. Players will be removed from the Rec. team's roster and not allowed to participate in any HVABSA rec. games if it is determined that this is the case.
- 1.4. In the 7u – 10u age levels, no player may sit out a second defensive inning until all players have sat out at least once.

2. Guest Playing –Rec. league/Select

- 2.1 If a HVA Rec. league team does not have enough players to play a game, **less than 8**, they may pick up a substitute player/players from the preceding age division to play in that game (for instance, a 14u team will pick up players from a 12u team, etc). These substitutes must play outfield positions and bat last in the lineup. In no instance will the player from the preceding age group play while a league age player is on the bench.

Note: There are no exceptions to the league's roster rules and requirements.

- 2.1.1 If a team has less than six (6) roster players available, it will be considered a forfeit.
- 2.1.2 As long as the team has 6 roster players available and ready to play, that team may pick up enough players to play with a full outfield.
- 2.1.3 At no time may a player currently on a Storm roster be used as a pick-up player for an HVABSA rec-level team. Being on a Storm (or other select team) roster at any time during the season disqualifies the player from participating in a rec-level game in the same season. The spring and fall seasons are separate seasons for the purposes of this rule.

Penalty: Should an ineligible player be confirmed as having played in a rec-level game, the offending team will forfeit the game. Further, the offending coach will be subject to the same penalties as detailed in Rule 8.5:

- 1st Offense = 1 In-season game suspension
- 2nd Offense = Season long ban
- 3rd Offense = League ban

- 2.2 If a HVA Select team (Storm) does not have enough players to play a game, **9 or less**, they may pick up substitute players from the HVA Rec. division to play in that game.
 - 2.2.1 A player that guests play for a HVA Select team (Storm), can only do so twice (2) per season and cannot interfere with HVA's Rec. division schedule.
 - 2.2.2 A season (Fall & Spring) is determined from the first game played until the final game of that season, including all HVA rec. leagues post season tournament play.
- 2.3 Teams playing in an interlock league may pick up a substitute from the same age division. This may only be done if the team will have **less than 8** for a game.
 - 2.3.1 Any player who has been on a Select roster at any time during the season is not eligible to participate in an interlock game.

3. Attire:

- 3.1. Metal cleats are allowed only for players age 13 and older at Unity Park.
- 3.2. No jewelry, except that use to alert a medical condition, may be worn during a game.
- 3.3. The Catcher position is required to wear full protective headgear, mask, shin guards, and a chest protector. Ages 7U and above must wear a protective cup at the catcher position.
- 3.4. In tee ball and coach pitch, the player in the pitcher position must wear a protective helmet with a mask.
Players may not take the helmet at any time while the ball is in play.
- 3.5. Players may wear sunglasses. However, in 10u and older the pitcher may not wear sunglasses if they are deemed distracting by the umpire. Prescription glasses / sports goggles are always permitted.

4. Bats:

- 4.1. All bats used in games must conform to one of the nationally approved bat standards:
 - 4.1.1. The USSSA 1.15 bpf standard (we do not have drop limits for rec level play)
 - 4.1.2. The USA Baseball standard (approved for use beginning in January 2018)
- 4.2. Bats must have the appropriate logo on the bat handle. These will be stamps on the handle. Bats with post-manufacture stickers applied will not be allowed for use.
- 4.3. Approved logos are:



5. Coaches Responsibilities:

- 5.1. A coach may not act as the commissioner for the age group for which (s)he coaches.
- 5.2. HVABSA board members who also coach teams will not wear a shirt, hat, badge, or anything else that identifies them as a board member while on the field. The only responsibility a board member has while on the field is that of 'coach'.
- 5.3. For all age groups, no more than 4 coaches may be inside the fences during play. Note: "Inside the fences" is defined as the field of play in addition to the dugout area.
 - 5.3.1. All on-field coaches must be registered with the league as a coach.
 - 5.3.2. All Defensive Coaches must remain in the dugout during play except as noted in Rules Exceptions by Age Group for BlastBall, T-Ball, and Coach Pitch (7u & 8u)
 - 5.3.3. Offensive Coaches will position themselves in either coaching box or at the opening of the dugout. No exceptions.
 - 5.3.4. Adult photographers are allowed on the field. Photographers are not allowed any closer to the plate than the on-deck circle and enter the field of play at their own risk. Photographers will not in any way act as an additional coach on the field.

Note: Simply holding a camera does not allow an adult to be on the field in a photographer's capacity. To be on the field, a photographer must be actively taking pictures.

Penalty: Removal from the field of play (they may remain in the stands).

- 5.4. At least one adult, other than the head coach, must attend each practice.
- 5.5. Game responsibilities
 - 5.5.1. The home team is responsible for keeping the official scorebook.
 - 5.5.2. The visiting team is responsible for providing someone to run the scoreboard.

Note: If the home team neglects to maintain the game's official score book, the visiting team's book will substitute as the official book for that game. In the event neither team is keeping a book, decisions made by the umpire regarding outs, batting order, and score will be final and are non-protetable.
- 5.6. Chatter Rule - Players should be encouraged to cheer for their team either while batting or in the field. However, comments and/or actions aimed at distracting the opposing team's pitchers and batters are not allowed.
- 5.7. Anyone (non-player) under 18 years of age (batboy, base coach, etc) must wear a helmet while on the field of play.
- 5.8. Head Coaches are responsible for reporting game scores at the conclusion of **each** game.

6. Pre-game Field Use

- 6.1. At no time may any team use the infield to warm-up. Pre-game warm-ups will be in the outfield grass only.
- 6.2. Teams may not use the pitcher's mound to warm-up prior to the game beginning.
- 6.3. No game will start late to allow for warmups. Teams are expected to have their players ready to go at the scheduled game time, or when the umpires are present and ready to start the game in instances when the game is starting later than the scheduled time.

7. Game Management:

7.1. Game Lengths and Field Dimensions

<u>Age Group</u>	<u>Max Innings</u>	<u>Time Limit</u>	<u>Bases Distance</u>	<u>Mound Distance</u>	<u>Run Rules</u>
3/4 (BlastBall)	6	45 Minutes	30 Feet	-	-
5/6 (T-Ball)	6	55 Minutes	50 Feet	-	-
7u (Coach Pitch)	6	60 Minutes	60 Feet	40 Feet	-
8u (Coach Pitch)	6	60 Minutes			
9 - 10	6	1 hr 30 Minutes	65 Feet	46 Feet	15 Runs/3 Innings 10 Runs/4 Innings 8 Runs/5 Innings
11 - 12	6	1 hr 40 Minutes	70 Feet	50 Feet	
13 - 14	7	1 hr 45 Minutes	80 Feet	54 Feet	
15 - 18	7	1 hr 45 Minutes	90 Feet	60 Ft, 6 Inches	

- 7.2. The pre-game meeting will take place at home plate five minutes prior to the scheduled game time, or as soon as possible after the end of the previous game. Each team's head coach is expected to attend this meeting with the umpires.
- 7.3. The clock will start at the conclusion of the pre-game meeting between the umpires and coaches, The Official Time is kept by the Home Plate Umpire.
Note: the scoreboard is not official. If there is a discrepancy between the home plate umpire and scoreboard, the home plate umpire is official.
- 7.4. When time expires, the umpire will call "Time has expired". The inning will be completed as required, except as noted in Rules Exceptions by Age Group. Mathematical elimination applies for those age

levels with maximum runs per inning limitations.

Note: The top of the next inning begins immediately when the 3rd out is made in the bottom of the previous inning. It does not matter when the home team takes the field for the top of the next inning or when play resumes; the inning has begun.

- 7.5. Once the run rule has been reached with the home team ahead, the game is over even though the inning may not be finished. For example, if after the visiting team bats in the 4th inning the home team is ahead by 11 runs, the run rule is in effect and the game is over even though only 3.5 innings have been played.
- 7.6. New pitchers (whether entering the game at the beginning of an inning or mid-inning) will be allowed no more than 6 preparatory pitches. Pitchers remaining in the game at the beginning of the inning will be allowed no more than 4 preparatory pitches. Warm-up pitches are at the discretion of the umpire.

8. Suspended, Postponed games or called games:

- 8.1. A game is called due to rain, weather or light failure it will either be suspended or postponed. If a game has completed an entire 3 innings (2 ½ if the Home team is leading), it will be an official game. If the game has completed 2 full innings before being called, it will be considered "Suspended". If the game has completed less than 2 full innings before being called, it will be considered "Postponed".
- 8.2. A SUSPENDED GAME WILL BE RE-SCHEDULED AND PLAY WILL RESUME AT THE EXACT POINT WHERE THE GAME WAS CALLED. Suspended games will be re-scheduled and resume at the exact point when it was called. The home team is responsible for recording all aspects of play (e.g. game start time, time of delay, score, position of runners, player at bat, balls/strikes, outs, etc.)
- 8.3. Postponed games will be re-scheduled and be played in its entirety. This is in accordance with HVABSA Bylaws and Rules.

9. Coach / Parent Behavior & Ejections

Please see the appendix on page 18 for more on coach and parent behavior

- 9.1. The decisions made by the on-field umpires are final. Coaches shall not argue balls & strikes or any other judgment call made on the field. Further, judgment calls are not subject to appeal or over-rule from an on-site league official.
- 9.2. Only the head coach may approach an umpire to discuss a call or rule interpretation. Base and/or dugout coaches may not leave their position to approach an umpire.
- 9.3. Coaches, parents, and players are expected to conduct themselves in a manner consistent with the HVABSA Code of Conduct.
 - 9.3.1. Coaches are responsible for the conduct of their parents and fans. If a fan becomes unruly, the umpire will warn the head coach to control his fans. If the fan continues to be disruptive, the umpire may eject both the head coach and fan from the game.
 - 9.3.2. Any harassment of an HVA umpire before or after a game will subject a coach or parent to disciplinary action.
 - 9.3.3. Coaches will not, at any time, instruct their players to make physical contact with an opposing player. Phrases such as "run him over", if heard by the umpire, may subject the coach to ejection.
- 9.4. Coaches and parents need not be ejected from the game to subject themselves to league discipline. League members may subject themselves to discipline should belligerent behavior be observed by league officials.

Further, HVABSA members represent the league when travelling to other associations. Coaches and parents subject themselves to league discipline as a result of being ejected from games held on non HVABSA fields.
- 9.5. When a manager, coach, or parent is ejected from a game, he shall leave the field immediately and take no further part in the game. He shall not remain in the grandstand area and must leave the Ball Park. The penalty for ejection for a coach or player will be suspension from the remainder of that game and then the next scheduled game played. Any player ejected from the game shall leave the field immediately and placed under the supervision of parent or adult present. If there is no parent or adult supervisor present, the ejected player shall be placed under the supervision of a coach, and remain in the dugout. He may remain in the Ball Park, but shall not make any comments concerning the ejection.

- 9.5.1. 1st Offense = 1 In-season game(s) suspension, minimum
- 9.5.2. 2nd Offense = Season long ban
- 9.5.3. 3rd Offense = League ban

First offenses can result in a one game ban, multiple game ban, or more severe penalties. When deciding on discipline, the league's Executive Board will determine the number of games suspension for first offenders. Should the offense occur towards the end of the season, the suspension may be served in the subsequent season. In extreme cases where more than a multi-game ban may be warranted for first offenders the circumstances of the incident will be forwarded to the full Board for review, who will vote on the length of the ban.

Coaches or parents receiving a suspension may submit a written appeal to the Board. The Board will consider and vote on the appeal. The Board at this point may either amend the member's suspension or deny the appeal.

Rules Exceptions by Age Group

BlastBall (age 3 - 4): Tee Only

1. Participation:

- 1.1. Each team will bat its entire roster in each inning one complete time, which will constitute a half inning of play. Each turn at bat the batting order will be reversed. All teams will bat throughout the roster each inning. When the last batter has batted, the inning is over. The next inning, the lineup will bat in reverse order.
- 1.2. No player shall wear a baseball/softball glove. The game ball is foam rubber. WE PLAY WITH AN "INCREDIBALL" NOW.
- 1.3. When at bat, the object is to hit a fair ball, reach the base and sound the horn before the defensive team fields the ball, holds it above their head and yells "Blastball". Each batter will return to the dugout after running to 1st base.
- 1.4. There is no maximum number of swings allowed to a batter while the ball is on the tee, but the coach's discretion should be used as to not hold up the game.
 - 1.4.1. A fair ball is any ball between the foul lines and past the ten foot fair arc in front of home plate.
 - 1.4.2. If a player is struggling, the coach may call a batted ball fair using his discretion.
- 1.5. When on defense, all players will play a defensive position at least 35 feet from home plate. No player shall play catcher. Defensive positions will be marked with squares and placed in the infield before the game.
- 1.6. No offensive player will be allowed on the field unless he/she is wearing a batting helmet.

2. Coaches Responsibilities:

- 2.1. The home team will keep the official time of the game. When the official 45-minute time limit expires, the batter at the plate will finish the at bat, and the game is over.
- 2.2. Each Blast-Ball team must have two (2) coaches on the field of play at all times.
- 2.3. The home team will be responsible for setting up the field for the game.
- 2.4. Coaches will also serve as umpires while on the field.

3. General:

- 3.1. Playing field will consist of 1st base loaded with a horn, home plate where batter will hit from a "Tee" and all defensive players will line up at least 30 feet away from home plate.
- 3.2. No score or win/loss records will be kept.

T-Ball (age 5): Tee Only

1. Participation:

- 1.1. All teams will bat throughout the roster each inning. When the last batter has batted, the inning is over. The next inning, the lineup will bat in reverse order.
- 1.2. Base running will be base to base and no outs will be given.
- 1.3. The game will be played if five or more players are present from each team. Adjustments can be made to place opposing players on a team to fill out the playing field.
- 1.4. All players will play the field. Infielders will take normal infield positions. Extra players will be placed in the outfield. The pitcher and catcher positions must wear a helmet with a mask at all times on the field.
- 1.5. There is no maximum a batter can swing while the ball is on the tee, but a coach's discretion should be used here not to hold the game up.

2. Coaches Responsibilities:

- 2.1. Defensive coaches will be allowed on the field.
- 2.2. The home team will keep the official time of the game. When the official 55-minute time limit expires, the batter at the plate will finish the at bat, and the game is over. **NO EXCEPTIONS.** The field must be cleared for the next game.
- 2.3. The home team in each game is to provide the batting tee.
- 2.4. No score or win/loss records will be kept.

T-Ball (age 6): Coach pitch/Tee

1. Participation

- 1.1 T-ball is a participation division and non-competitive from the standpoint that the outcome will not be recorded nor have any impact on awards for post-season play. Score will be kept during the game; however that main purpose of this league is to teach baseball fundamentals, sportsmanship and the development of young players.
 - 1.1.1 When time expires, the current at-bat will be completed and the game will be over. It does not matter whether or not the inning has been completed.
- 1.2 All teams will bat thru the roster, until three outs are made or until 5 runs are scored.
- 1.3 All players will play in the field. Infield will take normal positions. The outfielders must be in the grass in the outfield. The pitcher and catcher positions must wear a helmet with a mask at all times on the field.
- 1.4 The game will be played is six (6) or more players are present from each team. Adjustments can be made to place opposing players on a team to fill out the playing field. If a team has less than 6 players, it can bring a player(s) from the preceding age group to complete the team.
- 1.5 A coach can bring a roster of no more than 11 players.

2. Base Running

- 2.1 Runners may not leave a base they are occupying at the time of the pitch until the ball is hit by the batter.
- 2.2 A maximum of 2 bases may be taken on a hit, at the runners own risk.
- 2.3 One base may be taken on an overthrow at any base. Coaches should know the rule and have their runners stop at the appropriate base. Runners may not run past the allowed base in an attempt to draw a throw from the defense.
- 2.4 Runners will stop once the ball is in the infield or one base has been taken on an overthrow.

3. Pitching

- 3.1 A coach for the offensive team will pitch to his/her batters from the pitching rubber, which will be 35' from the plate.
- 3.2 There will be 3 pitches. If the batter does not hit from the pitch they will be allowed to hit from the Tee. The batter will be given a maximum of 2 swings from the tee, if the ball is not put in play by the 2nd swing the batter is out (the batter will get another swing if the ball goes foul on the 2nd swing).
- 3.3 The coach doing the pitching will leave the playing field to foul territory when a pitched ball is hit into play.

4. Defense

- 4.1 No defensive coaches will be allowed on the infield. A maximum of 2 defensive coaches will be allowed in the outfield.
- 4.2 Outfielders must play 10' behind the bases in the grass. Outfielders must throw the ball into the infield and cannot run to force or tag a player unassisted. If retrieving an overthrow the outfielder may tag or make a defensive play without further assistance.
- 4.3 The pitcher may not make an unassisted out on any player after fielding the ball (i.e. no running to force at home or first, this is for the safety of the players). If retrieving an overthrow the pitcher may tag or make a defensive play without further assistance.

Coach Pitch (7u & 8u leagues):

1. Participation

- 1.1. All teams will bat throughout the roster, until three outs are made or until 5 runs are scored.
- 1.2. The pitcher must wear a helmet with a mask at all times on the field while the ball is in play.
- 1.3. The defense will field 10 players (4 Outfielders). Infielders will take normal infield positions.
- 1.4. There must be two levels of fielders: 'infielders' and 'outfielders'. Outfielders must be positioned both behind the infielders and behind the base paths (the direct line between each base). Note that it may be possible for an outfielder to be positioned on the dirt and meet these two criteria.
- 1.5. The game will be played if eight (8) or more players are present from each team. If a team has less than 8 roster players it can bring a player(s) from the preceding age group to complete the team, see General Rule 2.1. If **no** player(s) can be found to fill vacant spots on a team, then an out will be given in the 9th spot of the batting lineup (only the 9th spot...if a team does not have 10 players, two outs will not be taken in the batting order).
- 1.6. When the official time limit expires, the *inning* will be completed in full if team is leading by less than 5 runs. If the outcome of the game (winner or loser) will not change by finishing the inning (one team is winning by 6 or more runs either at the beginning or at some point during the inning), the batter will finish the bat and the game will be over via mathematical elimination.
- 1.7. No player may sit out a second defensive inning until all players have sat out at least once.
 - 1.7.1. Injured and sick players may remain on the bench. However, once these players miss their turn at bat, they are ineligible to return for the remainder of the current game.

Note: If a player must leave the game due to illness or injury, no out will be recorded for his spot in the batter order unless there are fewer than 9 active players in the batting order.

2. Batting / Base Running:

- 2.1. There will be 5 pitches, or 3 swinging strikes. A foul on the 3rd strike is not an out unless it is caught by the catcher. A foul on the 5th pitch will extend the at bat until the batter misses the pitch or puts the ball into play.
- 2.2. A batted ball must reach the grass cutout (on the red & green fields) to be considered a fair ball. Balls not reaching the grass will be a foul ball. For games on the blue field, the ball must pass the chalk line drawn on the field (which should be roughly 12 ft from home plate). Batted balls that reach the cutout and spin back towards the plate will be considered fair.
- 2.3. Batters may not bunt the pitch. Should a player successfully bunt a pitch, the umpire will call Time, no runners may advance, and the pitch counts as one strike of the batter's 5th pitch, the batter is out.
- 2.4. **Slashing** – Players may not swing away after showing bunt.
Penalty: Batter is out at the time the bat is swung. The ball is dead and all runners will return to the base occupied at the time of the pitch
- 2.5. Runners may not leave a base they are occupying at the time of the pitch until the ball is hit by the batter.
- 2.6. Runners may advance only one base on overthrows at first base only. Unless the ball enters a dead ball area, the ball remains live and the runner advances at his own risk.
 - 2.6.1. Overthrows at any other base have no restrictions on far the runner may advance. Time will be called by the umpire pursuant to rule 2.7.
Note: Coaches and runners are expected to know this rule. Runners may not continue running past the farthest base they are allowed in an attempt to draw a throw from the defense. Should the runners not stop at the appropriate base, the umpires will call time and place the runners accordingly.
- 2.7. Runners will stop when the umpire calls TIME. Play stops when ball crosses base path from throw-ins from the outfield and in control of the defense. Defense must control the lead runner. Trailing runners may not advance when the lead runner has broken full stride. *Ex. – runner rounding 3rd base and stops after touching the bag to see where the ball is, if the fielder has possession, the runner cannot advance.*

If he does he will be sent back to 3^d. If he continues towards home without hesitation, no matter where the ball is, he will be allowed to score.

- 2.8. Runners will be out if they slide head first at home, with or without a play at the plate.
- 2.9. Whenever a tag play is imminent (in the umpire's judgement), runners must slide or seek to avoid contact with the fielder. Malicious contact shall supersede all obstruction penalties.

Note: Hurdling or leaping over a fielder attempting to make a tag is not interpreted as seeking to avoid contact.

Penalty: If in the umpire's judgement the runner does not slide and instigated contact with the fielder on a tag play, the runner will be declared out and may be ejected at the umpire's discretion (if the contact is deemed malicious).

3. Defense / Pitching:

- 3.1. The player pitcher must have one foot in the area considered to be the pitcher's mound when the pitch is made.
- 3.2. A Coach for the offensive team will pitch to his/her batters from the pitching rubber, which will be 40 feet from home plate. The coach must straddle or remain in contact with the rubber while pitching. Pitches must be thrown overhand.
- 3.3. The Coach doing the pitching will leave the playing field to foul territory when a pitched ball is hit into play.
 - 3.3.1. Coaches who do not leave the field when the ball is in play will be reminded by the umpire. Continued failure to abide by the umpire's instruction will result in the replacement of the coach pitcher.
- 3.4. If the coach pitching is hit by a batted ball:
 - 3.4.1. If the umpire determines that it was unintentional, the ball is dead and no pitch is declared.
 - 3.4.2. If the umpire determines that the coach purposely interfered, than the batter is declared out and no runners advance.

4. Coaches Responsibilities:

- 4.1. No more than 4 coaches may be inside the fences during play.

Note: "Inside the fences" is defined as the field of play in addition to the dugout area.
- 4.2. Defensive Coaches may not be in the field of play, but may be in foul territory past first and third bases.
 - 4.2.1. The Defense may position a coach behind the catcher to help shag balls and keep the game moving. This person may encourage players but may not coach or position defenders from this position.
- 4.3. Offensive Coaches are to be in coach's boxes at first and third base NO EXCEPTIONS.
- 4.4. Coaches must remember to not assist base runners on the base paths. Runners may be called out if the umpire sees a coach pushing or pulling back on a runner.

5. General:

- 5.1. A five run rule for each one-half inning will apply.
- 5.2. Standings will be kept during the spring season.
- 5.3. No infield fly rule in effect.
- 5.4. Courtesy runners are allowed only for the catcher of record (projected substitutions are not allowed), or in the case of injury. The runner will always be the last batted out. This is optional.

Baseball (age 9):

Note: For seasons when HVA plays with other associations, please see the Interlock Rules

1. Participation:

- 1.1. All teams will bat throughout the roster.
 - 1.2. Teams must have at least eight (8) players to play a game. If only eight players are available, the 9th position in the batting order will be an automatic out. Should a ninth player arrive after the start of the game, that player goes into the game in the 9th position in the batting order. Fewer than six (6) roster players will result in a forfeit. If a team has 8 or less players, it can bring a player(s) from the preceding age group to complete the team, see *General Rule 2.1*. If **no** player(s) can be found to fill vacant spots on a team, then an out will be given in that spot of the batting lineup.
 - 1.3. Player participation requires non-starters to enter the game in the beginning of the second inning and at a minimum rotate every other inning.
 - 1.4. No player may sit out twice until all players have sat out once.
 - 1.4.1. Injured and sick players may remain on the bench. However, once these players miss their turn at bat, they are ineligible to return for the remainder of the current game.
- Note: If a player must leave the game due to illness or injury, no out will be recorded for his spot in the batter order unless there are fewer than 9 active players in the batting order.

2. Batting / Base Running:

- 2.1. Tight bases are in effect at all bases: runners may not leave a base they are occupying at the time of the pitch until the pitched ball put in play or "reaches the Catcher".
- 2.2. A runner may only make a steal attempt from first base to second base or from second base to third base. A runner may not make an attempt to steal from third base to home. When making a steal attempt, a runner may only advance one base. In other words, if a runner attempts to steal second base and the throw from the catcher goes into the outfield, the runner may not continue to third base. The same applies to a runner attempting to steal from second base to third base. This rule is to encourage the catchers to make a throw to second or third without fear of the runner advancing another base.
- 2.3. A runner may only advance home from third base by (1) a batted ball, (2) an overthrow of a batted ball (and resulting base awards if the ball is out of play), (3) when forced home by a bases loaded walk, or (4) when a play is made on the batter on a "dropped 3rd strike".

Note: The simple act of a third strike getting past the catcher is not the determining factor. For the runner to be allowed to advance home on the dropped third strike, the catcher must actually throw the ball to first base.
- 2.4. Runners will be out if they slide head first at home, with or without a play at the plate.
- 2.5. Once the pitcher, in possession of the ball, has stepped on the pitching rubber and is ready to pitch, runners leaving their base or less than halfway to the next base will be sent back to their original occupied base.

Penalty: if a runner tries to improperly advance, the umpires should call 'Time' and return the runner to the appropriate base. A team warning should be issued. The next player leaving early will be called out.
- 2.6. Whenever a tag play is imminent (in the umpire's judgment), runners must slide or seek to avoid contact with the fielder.

Note: Hurdling or leaping over a fielder attempting to make a tag is not interpreted as seeking to avoid contact.

Penalty: If in the umpire's judgment the runner does not slide and instigated contact with the fielder on a tag play, the runner will be declared out.
- 2.7. If, in the umpire's judgment, contact initiated by either the runner or fielder is deemed malicious, the offending player may be ejected from the game. Malicious contact supersedes all obstruction penalties.
- 2.8. Runners will be out if they slide head first at home, with or without a play at the plate.

- 2.9. **Slashing** - Players may bunt, however, they cannot swing away after showing bunt.
Penalty: Batter is out at the time the bat is swung. The ball is dead and all runners will return to the base occupied at the time of the pitch.
- 2.10. The batter may advance to first on a “dropped 3rd strike”.

3. Defense / Pitching

- 3.1. With closed bases, there are NO BALKS.
- 3.1.1. The umpire should allow the pitcher and batter to reset as so the pitcher does not ‘quick pitch’ the batter should his initial motion to the plate stop.
- 3.1.2. Coaches are encouraged to begin instructing players on proper pitching techniques with runners on base.
- 3.2. Pitches and rest periods are governed by the Pitch Count Sheet located on page 20.
- 3.2.1. Coaches MUST track each pitcher’s pitch count and submit to his commissioner after the game.
- 3.3. A pitcher removed from the game may not return to the game as the pitcher. He may, however, return in another position.
- 3.4. A pitcher must pitch from the stretch when ANY base is occupied. One warning will be given to the pitcher and then a BALL will be called by the umpire on any pitch not from the stretch.
- 3.5. The infield fly rule is in effect.

4. Coaches Responsibilities:

- 4.1. No more than 4 coaches may be inside the fences during play.
Note: “Inside the fences” is defined as the field of play in addition to the dugout area.
- 4.2. Coaches on the field (there are NO EXCEPTIONS to these rules)
- 4.2.1. Defensive Coaches may not be in the field of play. Coaches (and their buckets) must remain at the opening of the dugout. It is not appropriate for coaches to sit on buckets down towards the end of the dugout or to roam the sidelines during play.
- 4.2.2. Offensive Coaches are to be in coach’s boxes at first and third base only. Coaches may assist in retrieving bats between at bats, but should be in the dugout when the ball is in play.
- 4.3. A ‘charged conference’ will occur if a coach receives timeout to speak with any defensive player (including, but not only the pitcher). On any second charged conference in one inning, the pitcher must be changed.

5. General:

- 5.1. A five run rule for each one-half inning will apply.
- 5.2. Teams are allowed one offensive timeout per inning.
- 5.3. Courtesy runners are allowed for the pitcher and catcher of record (projected substitutions are not allowed). The runner will always be the last batted out. This is optional and the substitution may occur at any point in the inning. If there are not yet any batted outs in the first inning, the courtesy runner will be the last batter in the lineup.

Baseball (age 10):

Note: For seasons when HVA plays with other associations, please see the Interlock Rules

1. Participation:

- 1.1 All teams will bat throughout the roster.
- 1.2 Teams must have at least eight (8) players to play a game. If only eight players are available, the 9th position in the batting order will be an automatic out. Should a ninth player arrive after the start of the game, that player goes into the game in the 9th position in the batting order. Fewer than six (6) roster players will result in a forfeit. If a team has 8 or less players, it can bring a player(s) from the preceding age group to complete the team, see *General Rule 2.1*. If **no** player(s) can be found to fill vacant spots on a team, then an out will be given in that spot of the batting lineup.
- 1.3 Player participation requires non-starters to enter the game in the beginning of the second inning and at a minimum rotate every other inning.
- 1.4 No player may sit out twice until all players have sat out once.
 - 1.4.1 Injured and sick players may remain on the bench. However, once these players miss their turn at bat, they are ineligible to return for the remainder of the current game.

Note: If a player must leave the game due to illness or injury, no out will be recorded for his spot in the batter order unless there are fewer than 9 active players in the batting order.

2. Batting / Base Running:

- 2.1. Open bases: runners may lead off from all bases.
- 2.2. Whenever a tag play is imminent (in the umpire's judgment), runners must slide or seek to avoid contact with the fielder.

Note: Hurdling or leaping over a fielder attempting to make a tag is not interpreted as seeking to avoid contact.

Penalty: If in the umpire's judgment the runner does not slide and instigated contact with the fielder on a tag play, the runner will be declared out.
- 2.3. If, in the umpire's judgment, contact initiated by either the runner or fielder is deemed malicious, the offending player may be ejected from the game. Malicious contact supersedes all obstruction penalties.
- 2.4. Runners will be out if they slide head first at home, with or without a play at the plate.
- 2.5. **Slashing** - Players may bunt, however, they cannot swing away after showing bunt.

Penalty: Batter is out at the time the bat is swung. The ball is dead and all runners will return to the base occupied at the time of the pitch.
- 2.6. The batter may advance to first on a "dropped 3rd strike".

3. Defense / Pitching

- 3.1. Each pitcher will be granted two balk warnings per game. On these warnings, the umpire will stop play, return the runners to their bases at the time of the pitch/balk and the ball is dead. On any succeeding balk, runners will advance as designated in the Official Baseball Rules.
- 3.2. Pitches and rest periods are governed by the Pitch Count Sheet located on page 20.
 - 3.2.1 Coaches **MUST** track each pitcher's pitch count and submit to his commissioner after the game.
- 3.3. A pitcher removed from the game may not return to the game as the pitcher. He may, however, return in another position.
- 3.4. The infield fly rule is in effect.

4. Coaches Responsibilities:

- 4.1. No more than 4 coaches may be inside the fences during play.
Note: "Inside the fences" is defined as the field of play in addition to the dugout area.
- 4.2. Coaches on the field (there are NO EXCEPTIONS to these rules)
 - 4.2.1. Defensive Coaches may not be in the field of play. Coaches (and their buckets) must remain at the opening of the dugout. It is not appropriate for coaches to sit on buckets down towards the end of the dugout or to roam the sidelines during play.
 - 4.2.2. Offensive Coaches are to be in coach's boxes at first and third base only. Coaches may assist in retrieving bats between at bats, but should be in the dugout when the ball is in play.
- 4.3. A 'charged conference' will occur if a coach receives timeout to speak with any defensive player (including, but not only the pitcher). On any second charged conference in one inning, the pitcher must be changed.

5. General:

- 5.1. A five run rule for each one-half inning will apply.
- 5.2. Teams are allowed one offensive timeout per inning.
- 5.3. Courtesy runners are allowed for the pitcher and catcher of record (projected substitutions are not allowed). The runner will always be the last batted out. This is optional and the substitution may occur at any point in the inning. If there are not yet any batted outs in the first inning, the courtesy runner will be the last batter in the lineup.

Baseball (age 11 - 12):

Note: For seasons when HVA plays with other associations, please see the Interlock Rules

1. Participation

- 1.1. All teams will bat throughout the roster.
- 1.2. Teams must have at least eight players to play a game. If only eight players are available, the 9th position in the batting order will be an automatic out. Should a ninth player arrive after the start of the game, that player goes into the game in the 9th position in the batting order. Fewer than six (6) roster players will result in a forfeit. If a team has 8 or less players, it can bring a player(s) from the preceding age group to complete the team, see General Rule 2.1. If **no** player(s) can be found to fill vacant spots on a team, then an out will be given in that spot of the batting lineup.
- 1.3. No player may sit out twice until all players have sat out once.

1.3.1 Injured and sick players may remain on the bench. However, once these players miss their turn at bat, they are ineligible to return for the remainder of the current game.

Note: If a player must leave the game due to illness or injury, no out will be recorded for his spot in the batter order unless there are fewer than 9 active players in the batting order.

2. Base Running

- 2.1. Whenever a tag play is imminent (in the umpire's judgement), runners must slide or seek to avoid contact with the fielder.

Note: Hurdling or leaping over a fielder attempting to make a tag is not interpreted as seeking to avoid contact.

Penalty: If in the umpire's judgement the runner does not slide and instigated contact with the fielder on a tag play, the runner will be declared out.

- 2.2. If, in the umpire's judgment, contact initiated by either the runner or fielder is deemed malicious, the offending player may be ejected from the game. Malicious contact supersedes all obstruction penalties.
- 2.3. Runners will be out if they slide head first at home, with or without a play at the plate.
- 2.4. **Slashing** - Players can bunt, however, they cannot swing away after showing bunt.

Penalty: Batter is out at the time the bat is swung. The ball is dead and all runners will return to the base occupied at the time of the pitch.

3. Pitching

- 3.1. Pitches and rest periods are governed by the Pitch Count Sheet located on page 20.
 - 3.1.1. Coaches **MUST** track each pitcher's pitch count and submit to his commissioner after the game.
- 3.2. A pitcher withdrawn from the mound may stay in the game at another position, but may not return to pitch in the same game.
- 3.3. Balks
 - 3.3.1. Fall Season: One balk warning will be given to each pitcher before awarding bases to the base runners.
 - 3.3.2. Spring Season: No warnings will be given.

4. Coaches Responsibilities:

- 4.1. No more than 4 coaches may be inside the fences during play.

Note: "Inside the fences" is defined as the field of play in addition to the dugout area.
- 4.2. Coaches on the field (there are NO EXCEPTIONS to these rules)
 - 4.2.1. Defensive Coaches may not be in the field of play. Coaches (and their buckets) must remain at the opening of the dugout. It is not appropriate for coaches to sit on buckets down towards the end of the dugout or to roam the sidelines during play.
 - 4.2.2. Offensive Coaches are to be in coach's boxes at first and third base only. Coaches may assist in retrieving bats between at bats, but should be in the dugout when the ball is in play.

- 4.3. A 'charged conference' will occur if a coach receives timeout to speak with any defensive player (including, but not only the pitcher). On any second charged conference in one inning, the pitcher must be changed.

5. General:

- 5.1. A seven (7) run rule for each one-half inning will apply for both the spring and fall seasons.
- 5.2. **Slashing** - Players can bunt, however, they cannot swing away after showing bunt.
Penalty: Batter is out at the time the bat is swung. The ball is dead and all runners will return to the base occupied at the time of the pitch.
- 5.3. Teams are allowed one offensive timeout per inning.
- 5.4. Courtesy runners are allowed for the pitcher and catcher of record (projected substitutions are not allowed). The runner will always be the last batted out. This is optional and the substitution may occur at any point in the inning. If there are not yet any batted outs in the first inning, the courtesy runner will be the last batter in the lineup.

Baseball (age 13 - 14):

Note: For seasons when HVA plays with other associations, please see the Interlock Rules

1. Participation

- 1.1. All teams will bat throughout the roster.
- 1.2. Teams must have at least eight players present to play a game. If only eight players are available, the 9th position in the batting order will be an automatic out. Should a ninth player arrive after the start of the game, that player goes into the game in the 9th position in the batting order. Fewer than seven (7) available players will result in a forfeit. If a team has 8 or less players, it can bring a player(s) from the preceding age group to complete the team, see General Rule 2.1. If **no** player(s) can be found to fill vacant spots on a team, then an out will be given in that spot of the batting lineup.
- 1.3. No player may sit out twice until all players have sat out once.
 - 1.3.1 Injured and sick players may remain on the bench. However, once these players miss their turn at bat, they are ineligible to return for the remainder of the current game.

Note: If a player must leave the game due to illness or injury, no out will be recorded for his spot in the batter order unless there are fewer than 9 active players in the batting order.

2. Base Running

- 2.1. Whenever a tag play is imminent (in the umpire's judgement), runners must slide or seek to avoid contact with the fielder.

Note: Hurdling or leaping over a fielder attempting to make a tag is not interpreted as seeking to avoid contact.

Penalty: If in the umpire's judgement the runner does not slide and instigated contact with the fielder on a tag play, the runner will be declared out.
- 2.2. If, in the umpire's judgment, contact initiated by either the runner or fielder is deemed malicious, the offending player may be ejected from the game. Malicious contact supersedes all obstruction penalties.
- 2.3. Runners will be out if they slide head first at home, with or without a play at the plate.

3. Pitching

- 3.1. Pitches and rest periods are governed by the Pitch Count Sheet located on page 20.
 - 3.1.1. Coaches MUST track each pitcher's pitch count and submit to his commissioner after the game.
- 3.2. A pitcher withdrawn from the mound may stay in the game at another position, but may not return to pitch in the same game.
- 3.3. No balk warnings will be given.

4. Coaches Responsibilities:

- 4.1. No more than 4 coaches may be inside the fences during play.

Note: "Inside the fences" is defined as the field of play in addition to the dugout area.
- 4.2. Coaches on the field (there are NO EXCEPTIONS to these rules)
 - 4.2.1. Defensive Coaches may not be in the field of play. Coaches (and their buckets) must remain at the opening of the dugout. It is not appropriate for coaches to sit on buckets down towards the end of the dugout or to roam the sidelines during play.
 - 4.2.2. Offensive Coaches are to be in coach's boxes at first and third base only. Coaches may assist in retrieving bats between at bats, but should be in the dugout when the ball is in play.
- 4.3. A 'charged conference' will occur if a coach receives timeout to speak with any defensive player (including, but not only the pitcher). On any second charged conference in one inning, the pitcher must be changed.

5. General

- 5.1. A seven (7) run rule for each one-half inning will apply for both the spring and fall seasons.
- 5.2. Teams are allowed one offensive timeout per inning.
- 5.3. Courtesy runners are allowed for the pitcher and catcher of record (projected substitutions are not allowed). The runner will always be the last batted out. This is optional and the substitution may occur at any point in the inning. If there are not yet any batted outs in the first inning, the courtesy runner will be the last batter in the lineup

Appendix: Coach and Parent Behavior

Every season, we have several incidents at the ballpark that included improper language, verbal threats, bullying umpires and even unacceptable physical contact. We realize that most managers, coaches and parents in the league are not in violation of these incidents, but we must include the entire association in this process and field management changes to ensure the safety of our players, managers, coaches and parents.

By submitting a signed Coaches Application and Parents/Coaches Code of Conduct and being accepted into membership into the Highland Village Baseball & Softball Association, hereinafter referred to as HVABSA, you agreed to follow all bylaws, rules, and codes of conduct required by all of our managers, coaches and parents.

The Managers / Coaches Code of Conduct document provided to you states the following (among others):

- Coaches will be positive role models and will do their best to provide a positive experience for the players and for the parents.
- Coaches will not ridicule or demean players, umpires or league officials.
- Coaches will be responsible for the conduct of their players and the parents during games.

Almost every manager or coach has made a negative comment toward an umpire in the heat of a game. If you catch yourself doing so, stop, calm down and make sure no one on your sideline joins in. Point out that much of umpiring is judgment and that the umpire is neutral. Support the umpire. It is your responsibility to set the tone for the conduct of your parents and fans.

If a manager, coach, parent, or fan becomes abusive in any way and you cannot quiet them, ask them to leave before the umpire or league official has to do so. Your fans are your responsibility from the time you come on to the field until the time you leave.

Parents agree to follow these principles:

- I will remember that children participate to have fun and that the game is for youth, not adults.
- I will learn the rules of the game and the policies of the league and will respect the officials and their authority during games and will never question, discuss, or confront coaches at the game field, and will take time to speak with coaches at an agreed upon time and place.
- I (and my guests) will be a positive role model for my child and encourage sportsmanship by showing respect and courtesy, and by demonstrating positive support for all players, coaches, officials and spectators at every game, practice or other sporting event.
- I (and my guests) will not engage in any kind of unsportsmanlike conduct with any official, coach, player, or parent such as booing and taunting; refusing to shake hands; or using profane language or gestures.
- I will teach my child to play by the rules and to resolve conflicts without resorting to hostility or violence.
- Parents remember that part of the entire HVABSA experience is to include youth umpires as a learning experience for them in a very difficult and stressful environment.

All activities that are in violation of the rules and by laws of HVABSA must stop. HVABSA is a community recreational league designed to provide a safe clean environment for all children in our area to learn the sports of softball and baseball without the stress of high level competition or the threat of verbal or physical abuse.

Umpires are being instructed to be more vigilant for abuses and if the need arises to not be afraid to eject managers, coaches and parents from games. This includes time after games when managers/coaches feel the need to bully/harass youth umpires.

