

# **Shaker Youth Baseball Major and Minor League Rules**

## **OBJECTIVE:**

Shaker Youth Baseball is a coeducational League. Its goal is to provide a supervised recreational and instructional summer baseball program for players currently in the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> grade (Minor League) and 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grade (Major League). Team participation, sportsmanship, enjoyment and the learning of baseball skills are to be stressed at all time.

## **LEAGUE STRUCTURE:**

Each league will be divided into a maximum of 14 teams and two divisions. Each team will have a maximum of 14 players. The practice season will start at beginning of May. The regular season will start the Saturday after Memorial Day, and run through the end of July. The post season for each league will consist of a seeded single or double elimination playoff tournament. All teams will participate in the tournament. Every effort will be made to end the tournament by the end of July, weather permitting.

## **AFFILIATIONS:**

Each minor league team will be the affiliate of at least one Major league team. A major league team can request a player or players to complete a game day roster from their minor league affiliate. The request should be made to the minor league manager at least 24 hours before game time. The minor league player may not play if the requesting team has 10 players from their team roster present for the game. Minor league players may not pitch in a Major league game. With the exception of pitching, the Minor league player is to treated exactly as a Major league player for the duration of the game in which he/she has been called up to play in. **Unless there is a conflict in game times, a minor league manager may not refuse to send up a player(s). In the event of a dispute between managers, the Commissioners reserve the right to make the final determination.** A major league player may not play in a minor league game without prior minor league commissioner approval.

Each major league team will be the affiliate of at least one Senior League team (Grades 7 through 10). If a Senior League team knows that it will be unable to field a team of nine (9) players for a regular season game, a request may be made to bring up a player from its Major League affiliate to play in that game. The player may not pitch. Arrangements should be made between managers. **Unless game times conflict, managers may not refuse to send up a player(s). In the event of a dispute between managers, the Commissioners reserve the right to make the final determination.** Under no condition may a Senior League player play in either the Major or Minor Leagues unless prior approval has been obtained from the appropriate league Commissioners.

## **COMMISSIONERS:**

Each league has two commissioners who are directly responsible for the supervision and administration of their league. It is their responsibility to report to the league Board of Directors concerning the conduct of this league.

The commissioners will:

1. Handle any and all protests, complaints, etc.
2. Make any changes necessary to complete the schedule.

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3. Resolve all disputes and have the authority to suspend a manager or coach for just cause and remove a manager or coach if the league Board of Directors approves such action.
4. Exclusively determine if a player is to be placed on a different team or in a different league.
5. Select the Tournament Team and coaches for their league. The Tournament Team will play in a tournament in Mentor over the July Fourth holiday. The Tournament Team will not conflict with regular season games or practices. There will be an additional fee charged to participants of the Tournament Teams.
6. Determine the selection procedures for the league All-Star game.

### **GAME DAY PROCEDURES:**

1. The Major and Minor Leagues play six (6) inning games. Games start precisely at 6:20 p.m. during the week and at 9:00 a.m., 2:00 p.m. or 4:30 p.m. on Saturdays. There may be an occasional Friday or Sunday game depending on rainouts and scheduling constraints. Umpires will enforce game starting times.
2. There is a 2 hour and 15 minute time limit to complete a game, and no new inning may start after the time limit has expired. Games that end in a tie at the end of six (6) innings may go to extra innings, time, weather and visibility permitting. The maximum number of extra innings allowed is *two (2) for Minors and three (3) for Majors*.
3. *Minor league only: Except for the 6<sup>th</sup> inning, the maximum number of runs a team may score is six per inning, regardless of the number of outs. On extra base hits when the 6<sup>th</sup> run scores before the play ends, the additional runs will not count and the umpire will call time to end the play.*
4. For regular season games where the required number of innings to be an official game has not been played, the game will be rescheduled and replayed from the beginning, time and field availability permitting. **A game is counted as official when the losing team has completed its at bat in the 4<sup>th</sup> inning (minors) or 5<sup>th</sup> inning (majors).**
5. Majors' Mercy Rule: A Major League game will be declared to be over when one team leads another team by 12 or more runs and the losing team has batted in the fifth inning.
6. The home team is designated on the schedule, and is responsible for providing the official scorer. Both teams should keep score, but in the event of a disagreement, the official scorer's records shall be controlling. The home team shall also provide and install the bases and the pitching rubber. **The home team (minors), both teams (majors) PICK ONE is also required to call in the results of the game to SYBL voice mail at 216-556-5708 or e-mail the results to a commissioner immediately after the game ends.** Teams should exchange line-up cards and provide them to the official scorer prior to the start of the game. Players arriving late for the game (after the first pitch) must be inserted at the end of the batting order.
7. The umpire will meet with both managers before the start of each game to discuss the ground rules. Except for special rules specific to the Major and/or Minor leagues, the rule book published by Major League Baseball will govern play. Each team shall supply the umpire

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with one new game ball. Shaker Youth Baseball has a zero tolerance policy regarding any manager, parent or player arguing an umpire's call.

8. A minimum of eight (8) players must be present to field a team to begin a game. The game must immediately begin when the eighth player arrives. If a team fails to have eight (8) players within 10 minutes of the scheduled game time, the game is then forfeited. The forfeiting team's manager must notify a commissioner immediately following the game. There is no minimum number of players required to complete a game once it has started. No automatic outs will be called for teams playing with fewer than 10 players. A team competing with fewer than eight (8) players which is losing by more than 10 runs after completing the fourth (4<sup>th</sup>) inning will be declared to have lost the game.
9. If a pinch runner is requested for an injured player, the pinch runner will be the last batter to record an out. If no outs have been recorded, that runner will be the last hitter in the batting order.
10. All games must be played as scheduled. Only a league commissioner may make a change to the schedule.
11. Players are to wear full game uniforms (hat, tucked in shirt, pants, and socks).
12. Metal cleats are prohibited. Molded cleats and athletic shoes are permitted.
13. Managers are responsible for the supervision of the mandatory use of safety equipment. All batters and base runners must wear protective helmets (Batters must wear helmets with a face mask. Runners' helmets do not require a face mask). **The umpire will call out a batter or base runner for intentionally removing the helmet while on the playing field without time being granted by the umpire.** Catchers must wear protective helmets with face mask and throat guard attached, chest protector, shin guards, and a protective cup (required for boys and girls). Managers are responsible for inspecting equipment before each game. Any unsafe equipment should be returned immediately to a league commissioner for repair or replacement.
14. Bats cannot exceed 33 inches in length with a maximum barrel diameter of 2 ¼ inches. Only baseball bats are allowed; no softball bats.
15. *The Minor League will use RIF #5 baseballs. The Major League will use regulation hardballs.*

### **TERMINATION OF PLAY:**

16. It is the responsibility of all team managers to suspend play when weather, visibility, or field conditions make play unsafe. Managers and the umpire should confer about the start of a new inning if darkness or weather may prevent completing that inning. (MINOR'S ALSO HAVE TIME, BUT ISN'T TIME SELF DETERMING?) If the managers cannot agree, then the umpire shall decide factoring the safety of the players into the final decision.
17. Lightning in the area will cause an immediate 15-minute suspension of the game. Players, coaches and parents should immediately seek cover in vehicles until lightning has safely cleared the area.

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18. Light rain or scattered showers will not necessarily postpone or cancel a game. When in doubt about the field conditions, managers and players should report to the field. If the field has not been declared unplayable by the City, and is playable in the opinion of the umpire, then a forfeit shall be declared if one team does not have sufficient players at game time (following regular forfeit rules). If the umpire and managers determine that the field is not playable, then the game will not be played and the manager(s) must contact the League Commissioner. If the managers cannot agree as to the condition of the field, the umpire will have the deciding vote. If the Shaker Heights Community Life Department decides that the fields are not playable, then the game shall not be played and will be rescheduled, if possible.
19. If the umpire believes that he has lost control of the game, he is empowered to suspend the game. He is to instruct both managers to clear the field and immediately leave the vicinity of the playing field. The field umpire will notify the Head Umpire who will contact the League Commissioners. The League Commissioners will determine the final outcome of the game and what other actions are required.
20. No field maintenance should be conducted by any Manager, Parent, Player or Umpire on either of the Lomond fields. Only drying agents provided by the city of Shaker Heights may be used to make any other fields playable. Cat litter is never to be applied to any field.

### **GENERAL FIELD RULES:**

21. The only individuals permitted on the playing field during the game are players, managers, coaches, umpires and scorers. Managers are responsible for enforcing this rule.
22. For safety reasons, all players on the batting team are to be seated on the bench, except for the batter, batter on-deck and players permitted by the coach to be warming up to enter the game. Managers should designate an on-deck batting circle. No one should be permitted to sit on the bench other than team members or managers, nor should children be permitted in the area of the on-deck batting circle.
23. All defensive players not in the field are to be seated on the bench unless expressly permitted by the manager to be warming up.
24. The use of tobacco, alcohol, or any illegal drugs is prohibited on or around the playing field by any adult directly involved with SYBL teams or games. This includes commissioners, managers, assistants and umpires.
25. Only one coach may be used at first base and one coach at third base. Players in uniform, wearing a running helmet, may also be used as base coaches. A base coach may not touch any player who is running the base paths. If a coach interferes with a player running the base paths in any way, the umpire shall immediately call the runner out.
26. Each manager is permitted to call one brief (one-minute) time out during his offensive or defensive half of an inning to talk to a player. This does not include time-outs due to injury. Only the umpire may grant the request for a time-out. The second trip to the pitcher's mound, **or** the calling of a second time out to talk to a position player, will require a pitching change. The third time-out when batting will result in an automatic strike being called on the player at or coming to bat, but not a third strike.

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27. Sportsmanship **is to be taken seriously** and stressed at all times during the season. Positive cheering is encouraged. Any negative comments, including any razzing of the batters by the catchers, are strictly prohibited. Catchers are to be instructed not to make any negative comments to the batter. Managers are responsible for the conduct of their players, assistants and spectators. Any unsportsmanlike conduct should be reported immediately to the League Commissioner. **Shaker Youth Baseball supports Shaker Heights' Zero Tolerance Policy that was enacted in July of 2001.**
28. An umpire may not remove a manager or player from a game, but can suspend a game as set forth in rule #19.
29. Each team is allowed one warning for throwing a bat. After the first occurrence, the umpire will issue a team warning. Following the warning, subsequent throwing of the bat by any player on the same team will result in the umpire calling that player immediately out.
30. A manager shall not put a player in the lineup if the manager knows that the player cannot participate in all aspects of the game—batting, running, fielding and throwing. If a base runner is injured, that player can be replaced with the player who made the last batted out. If the injury occurs in the first inning before a batted out has been recorded, the replacement will be the last player in the batting order. The injured (replaced) base runner may not bat in the same offensive inning. Additionally, the injured (replaced) base runner must sit out, at a minimum, the next defensive inning. If the injured (replaced) player was pitching prior to the injury, that player may not pitch the remainder of the game. The injured (replaced) player may return to any defensive position except pitcher after sitting out at least one defensive inning. If the same player is replaced on the base paths for a second time during the same game, the injured (replaced) player cannot play for the remainder of the game.

### **IMPORTANT RULES:**

31. Field dimensions:
  - Pitching distance: 46 feet
  - Distance between bases: 60 feet (Minors) 65 feet (Majors)
  - (Bases are not to be tied down.)
32. Managers are expected to rotate their players. Player participation for a six (6) inning game is as follows:
  - a) All players are in the batting order for the entire game. Players arriving after the first pitch are added to the end of the batting order;
  - b) All players present at the beginning of a game are to play a minimum of four (4) innings in the field;
  - c) *Minor league*: Managers are required to position players in a variety of positions, i.e., infield and outfield. Each player present must play at least 1 inning per game in both the infield and outfield. No player may play more than three innings per game at the same position. Pitching and catching are considered infield positions. The minor league plays with 10 defensive players with 4 outfielders (LF, LCF, RCF, and RF) equally spaced across the outfield a minimum of 30 feet behind the baseline. If only 3 outfielders are being played, they are to be stationed in LF, CF, and RF equally spaced across the outfield a minimum of 30 feet beyond the baseline. If fewer than 3 outfielders are being played, the manager may space them as he deems appropriate. Failure to comply with the spirit of this rule will result in first a league warning followed by further league action.
    - Major league*: No player should play at the same position for every inning of every game.

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The major league plays with 10 defensive players with 4 outfielders (LF, LCF, RCF, RF) equally spaced across the outfield a minimum of 30 feet behind the baselines. If fewer than 4 outfielders are being played, the manager may space them as he/she deems appropriate. Failure to comply with the spirit of the rule will result in first a league warning followed by further league actions.

33. Sliding Rule:

**If a fielder is in a position to make a tag and is in possession of the ball, the base runner must slide. An infraction of this rule will require the runner to be called out by the umpire.** The intent of the rules regarding sliding is to prevent collisions and injuries to base runners and fielders.

Runners may NOT take out a fielder by running into him or by sliding into him with unnecessary roughness in order to breakup a double play or to attempt to separate the ball from the fielder. Fielders, including the catcher, may NOT block a runner's path to a base, even if in the act of making a tag. When receiving a throw or making a tag, a fielder may straddle the bag or otherwise maintain his share of the base area but may not block the runner's progress.

Absolutely no head first sliding is allowed. The runner will automatically be called out. Note: Dive backs are allowed with a two-step maximum.

Slides must be on the ground and not in the air, directly into the fielder trying to make a tag.

Base runners may be awarded extra bases by the umpire if in his judgment that base would have been reached had the base blocking not occurred.

Sliding into 1<sup>st</sup> base, feet first, it allowed.

34. Pitching Rule: A player may pitch no more than three (3) innings per game and a total of six (6) innings per week (Monday through Sunday). This includes extra inning games. One pitch in any inning counts as a full inning pitched. Innings pitched in a game that is suspended count towards the six (6) inning weekly maximum. Pitchers must pitch consecutive innings. After completing their pitching, the player may rotate to other positions in the field.
35. With two outs, a courtesy runner will be allowed to pinch run for the player who will be catching the next inning. The courtesy runner must be the last batted out.
36. There are no lead offs permitted from any base. Stealing is allowed, but the runner may not leave the base until after the pitch has passed the plate. A base runner may steal on a foul tip caught by the catcher. If the runner leaves the base early when attempting to steal, the umpire will call *no pitch*, and the base runner will be called out. **The runner must respect the sliding rule when stealing a base.** *Minor League only: A base runner may not advance past 3<sup>rd</sup> base on any stealing play. There is no stealing home. When a base runner reaches 3<sup>rd</sup> base (while stealing or not), he may not advance past 3<sup>rd</sup> base on a live ball, unless the ball is hit, or there is a walk or hit batsman with the bases loaded. On any stealing play, a runner on 3<sup>rd</sup> base owns that base. He may not attempt to steal home. If a run down occurs between 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup>, or 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup>, the runner on 3<sup>rd</sup> must hold his base. If he attempts to draw a*

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*throw by leaving his base, he will be called out. He may be awarded home on a dead ball, if the ball is thrown out of play at another base.*

37. There are no balks.
38. The batter may not advance to first on a dropped third strike.
39. The infield fly rule will be in effect, but it is not automatic and must be called by the umpire.
40. Intentional walks are allowed, although the pitches do not have to be thrown.
41. Bunting is allowed.
42. There are no appeal plays. The umpire will call any infraction that is observed, whether appealed or not. The **only** appeal allowed by either manager will be for a player batting out of order.
43. Rainouts will not automatically be rescheduled, but depending on field availability, may be rescheduled. The League Commissioners will designate rescheduled games.

#### **PLAYOFF RULES:**

44. If the records of two teams are identical at the conclusion of the regular season, the winner of the regular season game(s) will receive the higher seeding for the playoffs. If the regular season game ended in a tie or more than two teams have identical records, the Commissioners reserve the right to determine the final playoff seeds.
45. In the playoffs, the team with the higher seed will be the home team.
46. For pitchers during the playoffs, the three (3) innings per game rule will be enforced, but there will be no weekly maximum on innings pitched.
47. A playoff game that is tied after six innings will continue into extra innings until a winner is declared. The maximum three (3) extra innings rule will *not* apply during the playoffs.
48. If a playoff game is suspended for any reason, and it is not an official game or the score is tied when suspended, the game will be resumed at the exact point where play was suspended at a time and place designated by the Commissioners.

#### **RULES TO KNOW:**

1. Infield fly rule
2. Two base runners on the same base
3. Number of bases allowed on an overthrow
4. Batting out of order
5. Base runner passes another runner
6. Strike zone
7. Interference in the base path
8. Sliding rule
9. Stealing rule

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10. Pitched ball hits the ground before crossing the plate
11. Batted ball hits home plate, or stops on home plate

### **CITY OF SHAKER HEIGHTS ZERO TOLERANCE POLICY**

To ensure a safe, enjoyable and positive experience for all who use the City's recreational facilities, the following policy was adopted in July 2001, and is fully enforceable by the City of Shaker Heights.

This policy addresses inappropriate or disruptive behavior that interferes with the pleasure and peaceful atmosphere at all City recreational facilities by parents, participants, officials, spectators and employees. The policy emphasizes respect for others and responsible, mature behavior when responding to emotional or stressful situations.

Our policy is that appropriate or disruptive behavior will not be allowed or tolerated on the grounds of City recreational facilities or fields.

Inappropriate *or* disruptive behavior shall include, but is not limited to:

- A. Using loud, obscene or vulgar language in a boisterous, combative or confrontational manner.
- B. Taunting of individuals, coaches, officials, employees or spectators by means of baiting, stalking, ridiculing, or threatening physical violence.
- C. Exhibiting behavior detrimental to the physical and/or emotional well being of youth participants.

Our staff has been instructed to contact the Shaker Heights Police Department when *inappropriate or disruptive behavior occurs*. Violators will be escorted from the facility and will not be allowed to return until the Department of Community Life conducts a hearing with all involved parties in attendance.

Penalties will vary dependent upon severity of infraction and could include written warning, temporary suspension or permanent suspension from facilities and programs. Additionally, police reports and criminal charges may be filed.

Please enjoy our facilities and program. Please support and respect players, coaches, officials, staff and all attendees in a positive, productive and mature manner.

Thank you.

The City of Shaker Heights

*Good Luck and Have Fun!*