

METROWEST

ADULT BASEBALL

LEAGUE RULES

Last Update Date: 1/24/10

The MetroWest Adult Baseball League (ABL) plays by all Major League baseball rules with the following adaptations.

Player Eligibility

The MetroWest ABL is an over 30 baseball league.

A player must turn 30 in the calendar year to be eligible for that season

For example, if you were born on or before December 31, 1980 you are eligible to play in the 2010 season. However, if you are born on January 1, 1981 you are not eligible for 2010, you must wait until the 2011 season to play.

Professional Baseball Players must wait 3 years to play in the league

An ex-professional baseball player must wait 3 complete MetroWest ABL seasons before being eligible to play in the league.

Managers are responsible for checking their players age

We will require IDs for all new players. We will check the IDs of all players that attend our draft.

For players that are added to teams without going to the draft, it will be the managers responsibility to get a copy of the players ID to prove age.

If a manager has a concern about a players age, the issue must be raised the day of the game between the teams (same rule holds for playoff games). The manager can not wait for 5 weeks to challenge an ID. The challenge can occur later that game day (does not have to be during or before the game) but must occur on that same day. The challenge would be made to the manager with the player in question and the league president needs to be notified. The manager has a week to provide verification of the players age. If the player is proved to be ineligible, all games that player has played in that season will have to be forfeited. The player is not allowed to play again that season until a valid age check can be made.

This rule has no consequence other than the player must produce the documentation before they can continue to play.

Every Player at a Game Bats

All players at a game will bat during regular season and post-season games. There is no possibility for pinch hitters due to this rule.

Ejected Players

If a player is ejected from a game an out is recorded every time his spot comes up in the batting order. The player also loses playoff eligibility for the game even if two official at bats have been achieved. More on this in the playoff eligibility section of the rules.

Players Leaving Games Early

If a player leaves the game for any reason except an injury, an out is recorded every time his spot comes up in the batting order. If a Manager informs the opposing Manager before the game starts that one of his players has to leave the game early the preceding sentence will not apply and no out will be recorded when the departing player's spot comes up in the batting order. This rule is subject to change at any time should any Managers decide to abuse this benefit.

Players Arriving Late

Any player arriving after the first pitch is thrown, or after the starting lineups have been exchanged whichever is first, is added to the end of the batting order as soon as the player reports to the bench. A player may not enter a game once it has started unless the manager informs the opposing manager that the player will be coming late to the game.

Explanation: A player cannot come, sit on the bench until the last inning then jump in and play. In the past this has happened and it happened so that the player would not have to bat. All players have to bat.

Fielding

No hidden ball trick.

Substitutions

Since all players bat, there is free defensive substitutions for all positions but pitcher.

A pitcher may re-enter the game once.

If a pitcher is removed and stays in the field, the relieving pitcher must finish facing 1 batter before the original pitcher can return to the mound to pitch.

If a pitcher is removed and goes to the bench, the original pitcher can't return to the mound to pitch until the next inning.

Pitching and Visitation Rules

- Pitchers may not throw pitchouts. If the umpire deems a pitcher has thrown a pitchout, a balk will be called.
- Pitchers are not allowed to intentionally walk a batter.
- Catcher's can't stand outside the catcher's box and call for pitchouts or intentional walks.
- A pitcher who hits 3 batters in one inning or 4 batters during a game will be removed from the game at that time and can't pitch the remainder of that game.

As with Major League Baseball, a manager is allowed two visits to the mound. On the second visit, the pitcher must be removed. If the manager is playing a defensive position, the manager is allowed one trip to the mound to confer with his pitcher. Any subsequent trips will be counted as "official trips". If the manager is a catcher, there is no limit to the number of trips.

Courtesy and Pinch Runners

There are 2 categories of runners that managers may use during a game, courtesy and pinch.

Courtesy Runners

The courtesy runner is the last batted out except for pitchers and catchers. If the last batted out is a pitcher or catcher, the manager can decide to allow the pitcher or catcher to run or go to the previous batted out. If this occurs in the first inning and there are no batted outs, the last player in the batting order becomes the courtesy runner.

- Each team is allowed to declare 2 courtesy runners
- Courtesy runners must be declared before the game starts, during the starting lineup exchange
- Courtesy runners can not be changed during a game even in the case of injury
- Players who are awarded courtesy runners still must bat and run out the play. Once the batter reaches base the last batted out becomes the runner. When the play has stopped, timeout is called and the last batted out can take the base.

- If a player has been granted a courtesy runner before the game but reaches base and decides to run, the courtesy runner privilege is removed for the rest of the game. The courtesy runner can NOT be switched to another player at that time, the privilege is lost.

It is the responsibility of the Manager to ensure that the CORRECT player is acting as the Courtesy Runner. The opposing team's Manager may officially "Appeal" the Courtesy Runner, but only PRIOR to the resumption of play. Once play has been resumed, there can be no appeal of the Courtesy Runner. If the appeal is upheld (after review of the scorebooks by the Managers and Umps), then the correct Courtesy runner is put into the game and the Manager responsible is issued a warning. Any subsequent, upheld appeal will result in the runner being called out. No replacement runner will be allowed to enter the game. If this out is the 3rd out of the inning, then the inning is over.

Pinch Runners

As with Major League Baseball, a manager may decide to replace a base runner with a player on the bench.

- Each team is allowed to use 3 pinch runners
- A player can only be used to pinch run once
- Pinch runners do not need to be declared before a game starts
- Pinch runner can be used after calling timeout and notifying the umpire and opposing manager of the use of a pinch runner
- If the player who is pinch running is on base when their turn at bat comes up, the manager must use another pinch runner so the player can bat. If the manager has already used 3 pinch runners, then an out is recorded, the runner stays on base and the next batter comes up (if the third out is recorded then the inning would end).

Players Hurt While Running Bases and Must be Removed From Game

If a player is hurt during a base running play and can not continue playing the game, a team may use a "temporary" courtesy runner. This temporary courtesy runner would finish the turn at base until the inning ends or the runner gets out or scores.

The manager has the option to replace the hurt base runner with this "temporary" courtesy runner (last batted out rules apply) or use 1 of 3 allowed pinch runners.

Players Hurt During a Game

Players who are injured during the game are not afforded courtesy runners. If an injured player has courtesy runner and the player sustains further injury causing him to leave the game the assignment of courtesy runner cannot be switched to another player so the team loses the courtesy runner.

Players that are injured and miss their turn at bat cannot re-enter the game. If a player is injured during a game, and is unable to complete 2 plate appearances during the game, then the game is not considered an official "appearance" for the player, and does not count toward playoff eligibility. (See - Game Playoff Eligibility)

Code of Conduct

General Conduct

It is important to use good sportsmanship in this league. While the league is competitive and everyone is out to win, we also need to remember this league is for everyone's enjoyment from players to umpires to fans.

Our actions on the field reflect not only on our own reputations but those of our team and league.

Base Running

While it is the intent of this league to promote fair competition, it is also the intent of this league to promote safety. It is the intent of this rule to ensure that both base runner and fielder are allowed to "make a play", but not to a point where it endangers the other player. Intentionally making contact with another player, during the course of play, is not allowed. Base runners must make a reasonable effort to avoid contact with the fielder (slide, run around the fielder, or give themselves up). Fielders, in the act of making a play, have the right to make the play without danger of intentional contact by the base runner. Fielders, not in the act of making a play, must yield to the base runner. This rule applies to all players, all base runners and plays at all bases. Any act perceived as intentional contact by a fielder or base runner will be considered in violation of this rule, and the guilty player will be subject to possible ejection. Enforcement of this rule will be left to the discretion of the umpires.

Base runners in violation of this rule are automatically out. If this occurs in a double play situation, the second base runner may also be called out (if the umpires decide that the violation interfered with a possible double play). The base runner found in violation may be ejected from the game.

If a fielder is found in violation of this rule, then the base runner is automatically safe. The fielder may be ejected from the game.

(See "Umpire Ejections" for rules governing ejections)

Any player found in violation of this rule for a second time (at any time during the season) will be subject to the "Physical Contact" rule. (See "Physical Contact" for details).

Physical Contact

Any physical contact with another player, manager, or umpire that is of an aggressive and/or threatening nature will result in immediate ejection, and suspension for the league. The term of the suspension shall be determined by the league president and rules committee but shall be for a least one year from the date of the incident.

Players must slide or avoid contact on the base paths.

Verbal Abuse

Any verbal threats made to another player, manager, or umpire shall result in immediate ejection and suspension of at least one game and the player making the threat must go before the president and rules committee before the can play again.

Umpire Ejections

Any player or manager who is ejected from a game for any reason is fined \$25.00 payable to the league. The player is suspended for one game.

A second ejection results in a \$50.00 fine payable to the league and a two game suspension.

A third ejection result is a \$100.00 fine and the player is suspended for the remainder of the season.

A player cannot return to play until the fine is received by the league.

A player who is ejected loses the game he is ejected from, from his play-off eligibility tally.

Umpires can eject players for using foul language. Any swearing directed at an opponent or umpire is grounds for immediate ejection.

Umpires have been told that excessive swearing or rudeness should not be tolerated.

Administrative

Teams rights

A team has a player's rights in the league so long as the player is in the league unless:

The player sits out one calendar year in which case they become a free agent

The player declares his free agency prior to the first game of the year and then plays out the year with the team thus becoming a free agent at the end of the year.

The player's rights are traded by the manager to another team.

Managers are not allowed to recruit from another team.

Managers are responsible to give other manager a heads up should a player from one of the teams contact him about playing or switching teams.

Players cannot switch teams if they owe a former team dues or have a balance with another team until it is paid of or the former manager release the player from the debt. This is why it is important for all managers to communicate trades and free agencies.

Dress Code

All players shall be in complete uniforms.

Equipment Codes

Teams must use league specified baseballs.

The home team is responsible for supplying baseballs for the game.

The MetroWest ABL is a wooden bat league. All types of wood are allowed including maple, ash and bamboo.

The only type of composite bat that is allowed is the Brett bat. No other types of composite bats are allowed.

Helmets must be worn by all batters and runners.

Catchers must wear all appropriate equipment including chest protectors and helmets.

League Offices

Only managers vote on league rules-one team one vote

One President - Three year term

3 members rules committee including the president –three year term

All managers are responsible to field a team with 16 players, pay all league fees, umpires fees, and fees related to their teams use of fields.

Registration and Draft Policies

New Player Website Registration

The following process will be followed for players registering on the website:

From the tryout/draft until July 31, players registering on the website will be posted to every team for 3 days. At the end of three days, the team with the highest draft order that requested to have the player will be granted rights to the player. That team will then drop to the bottom of the team draft list.

From August 1 until the tryout/draft date the following season, all players registering on the website will not be available to teams for selection until the tryout/draft. Players registering during this period of time are off limits to all teams.

League Draft

At the tryout, teams draft players in reverse order of regular season finish in the previous season.

Miscellaneous

Mercy rule

In a 9 inning game, a team wins by mercy rule if they lead by 15 or more runs at any point after the end of the 7th inning.

In a 7 inning game, a team wins by mercy rule if they lead by 15 or more runs at any point after the end of the 5th inning.

Forfeits

If a team either fails to have at least 8 players to start a game (first or second game of a DH included) or finish a game (team starts with 8 players but has an injury or ejection at any point in the game), then that team will forfeit the game and the other team will record a victory. The winning team players in attendance get playoff eligibility but the forfeiting team does not get any playoff eligibility for any players.

Rainout Policy

Home team manager must contact umpires and opposing manager at least 1.5 hours before game time to cancel a game due to weather. If the home team manager does not cancel the game but the game is called off by the umpires before the game starts, then the home team is responsible for paying the umps. If the game starts and is then called by the umpires, then both managers must pay the umps.

Rainout Makeups

The league decides how to use the rainout makeup weekend, it always is a week earlier in the season where all games were rained out. We push those games to the rainout makeup weekend. The president sends a note out and updates the schedule.

The rule change is for games that are rained out and are not going to be played on the rainout makeup weekend. The home team has 4 weeks to propose at least 2 makeup dates/locations. The makeup game dates must be on

or before the last regular season game. If the home team fails to propose makeup dates within the 4 week period, the visiting team is awarded a win for the game and the home team is awarded a loss for the game. If the visiting team refuses to play on any of the dates provided by the home team, then the visiting team is awarded a loss for the game and the home team is awarded a win for the game.

If the home team is unable to find a field to play the makeup game after three weeks, the home team should ask the league to help find a field and date to play the game. If the league can't come up with a field to play the game on in the one remaining week, then the game is not played and is effectively removed from the schedule. Once the league sets a date and a field, the game must be played. Any team that can't field a team for the league generated field and date is awarded a loss for the game, be that one team or both teams.

This rule does not apply to rainouts in the last 2 weeks of the regular season.

Corked Bats

Not that this should EVER happen in our league, but a player caught with a corked bat will be ejected from the current game and be suspended for 1 game.

Warm-ups

All teams shall make the field available to the opposing team for 15 minutes prior to the game for fielding practice if the opposing team request it.

Play-Offs

Player Eligibility

Playoff rosters must be submitted to the League President before the playoff games start. The League President or the league playoff eligibility tracker is responsible for verifying the players on the playoff rosters meet the playoff eligibility guidelines.

50% Eligibility

A player must have credit for playing in 50% of a team's games to be eligible to play in the playoffs. If your team plays 16 games, a player must play in at least 8 games to be eligible to play in the playoffs. If your team plays 15 games, a player must still play in 8 games to be eligible to play in the playoffs (50% rounded up is the requirement).

2 Waiver Players

The only exception to the rule above is that each team may use 2 waiver players. These players must have at least 4 games of eligibility but don't have to have played in 50% of the games.

These waiver players can NOT pitch in the playoffs.

Game Playoff Eligibility

If a player starts and finishes a game, then the player is credited with a game played toward playoff eligibility.

If a player arrives late or leaves early (not due to an ejection), then the player must have two plate appearances in order to be credited with a game played for playoff eligibility. These are plate appearances and not official at bats, so if you walk or are HBP, this still counts towards the required 2 appearances.

Please see the section on game forfeits which talks about potential penalties including losing playoff eligibility for the games that are forfeited.

Reporting Game Rosters

The home team manager of each game is responsible for E-mailing the roster for their team AND the opposing team to the league playoff eligibility tracker and the visiting manager.

The visiting manager must respond to the home team manager and league playoff eligibility tracker to accept the submitted rosters or make corrections. Corrections would then need to be approved by the home team manager.

The league playoff eligibility tracker will NOT give players playoff eligibility credit for a game played until both managers have approved of the submitted rosters. Playoff eligibility is displayed on the league website so managers can keep track of their players eligibility.

All game rosters must include each player's full name and unique uniform number.

Tie Breaking Procedures

Our procedure for breaking ties between teams are:

- 1 - Head to Head record
- 2 - Best record in division
- 3 - Run differential within division

4 - Coin flip

Top 4 teams in each division make the play-offs

Play-Off Format

1st and 2nd rounds

Best of three

All games will be 9-innings.

The Finals

Best of three, all games are 9 innings.