

## **Thumb Area Baseball League: 12U/ Major Boys Rules**

**Good Sportsmanship is required from all coaches, players, parents, and fans. The emphasis of the Thumb Area Baseball League is to ensure all players have a good experience and learn the game of baseball.**

### **Eligibility**

The Major division is for boys who are 11 or 12 years of age by May 1<sup>st</sup> of the current year.

### **General Rules**

1. MHSAA rules will be followed with the exceptions of these listed.
2. Good Sportsmanship will be used at all times. The Umpire has the discretion to remove any player, parent, or coach if behavior is unsportsmanlike. At the conclusion of every game teams must line up and shake hands. This is mandatory, no exceptions.
3. Teams must have a minimum of 8 players to start a game.
4. Bases will be set at 70' and 50' pitcher's mound (Marlette and Kingston will be set: Bases 60'- Pitcher's mound 46')
5. When on Defense, coaches must stay in their dugouts unless to have a defensive conference or to address the umpire, in which "time" must be called to do so.
6. First team listed on the schedule is the HOME team. The home team will occupy the 1st base dugout and will keep the official book.

### **Uniforms and Equipment**

1. Metal cleats are prohibited. Players may not wear jewelry. Long pants must be worn.
2. All players inside of the playing field fence need to wear a helmet. If the helmet is removed before leaving the playing field, a warning will be issued. Failure to comply a second time and an out will be called against that team. Repeated warnings may result in the player being removed from the game.
3. Bats are to be 2 1/4 up to 2 5/8 diameters. No softball bats or 2 3/4 big barrel bats.

### **Game Length Rules**

1. Games will consist of 6 innings. At least 3 innings must be played to complete a game in case of rain or darkness. If less than 3 innings, the game needs to be rescheduled for a later date. All makeup games need to be scheduled through the league.
2. There will be a maximum of 5 runs scored per inning or 3 outs required to end an inning (except last inning is unlimited runs) Mercy rule comes into effect if a team is leading by 10 runs after 4 completed innings. Mercy rule does not apply in last inning.
3. Umpires will establish the official start time of each game with coaches and scorekeepers from both teams. The umpire will set a game timer that will be set for 75 minutes. Once the 75 minutes is reached, the inning currently in will be finished. The umpire will call last inning and each team will have the opportunity to bat one more time. When the last inning is called it is unlimited runs and 3 outs are needed to end play.
4. If the game reaches the sixth inning prior to the 75 minutes, 6<sup>th</sup> inning becomes last inning and 3 outs are required to end inning. (unlimited runs)
5. When the game ends in a tie, the International Tie Breaker Rule will be in effect. The extra inning will begin with a base runner on second base. That base runner will be the player who made the last out in the previous inning. Both teams will use this tie breaker until the game ends with a team winning.

## **Pitching**

1. Pitchers will be limited to pitching 3 innings per game maximum. A pitcher may be removed and re-entered as a pitcher one time during the game. One pitch constitutes an inning pitched. During double headers pitchers may only pitch 4 innings total for that day, not per game.
2. Only 2 defensive conferences will be allowed per inning. If a coach makes a 2<sup>nd</sup> visit to the mound in the same inning, for the same pitcher, that pitcher must be replaced at that time.
3. If a pitcher hits 4 batters during a game, that pitcher is not to pitch for the remainder of the game.
4. Balks will be called, however each pitcher will receive one warning before being penalized. If there are no runners on base, when a balk is called, a "Ball" will be called for that pitch.
5. Warm up pitches: New Pitcher to an inning: 6 pitches, Pitcher returning in consecutive innings: 4 warm up pitches. Mask and Helmet must be worn by any player warming a pitcher up anywhere in the park.

## **Batting**

1. Teams must bat their entire roster. Late arriving players will be added to the bottom of the batting order.
2. Home Plate is fair territory. A batted ball that hits or settles on home plate is a fair ball.
3. The infield fly rule is in effect. An Infield fly is a fair fly ball (not including a line drive or bunt attempt) that can be caught with ordinary effort when there are runners on 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup>, or bases are loaded with one out or less. The batter is called out and the runners stay at their base.

4. **Drop Third Strike Rule**

On an uncaught third strike with no runner on first base or with two outs, the batter immediately becomes a runner. The batter may then attempt to reach first base and must be tagged or thrown out. If at the time of the strike three pitch, first base is occupied with fewer than two outs, the batter is automatically out and cannot become a runner. If two outs, the dropped third strike is always live even if first base is occupied, runners should be moving.

With two outs and the bases loaded, the catcher who fails to catch the third strike may, upon picking up the ball, step on home plate for a force-out or make a throw to any other fielder. Any deliberate moves toward the dugout following the 3<sup>rd</sup> strike will result in being called out by the umpire.

6. Throwing bats is prohibited. Teams are given one warning per game .Any offense after that will result in an out.

## **Base Running**

1. Runners may lead off. Lead off of 8ft is allowed. Leadoff lines will be marked for the umpires benefit. The runner's right foot may not cross the designated line. Runners leaving before the ball is released by the pitcher will be called out. (At Marlette and Kingston, no lead off will be allowed- runner can leave when ball crosses the plate.)
2. Stealing of any base is allowed, including home.
3. Close plays at any base (except 1<sup>st</sup>) require that the runner slide. The umpire may call the runner out if they feel a slide was warranted.
4. A courtesy runner will be allowed for the catcher when he is on base with two outs. The courtesy runner used must have been the last player out. If a player is injured, the player who made the last out will be the substitution runner, as well.

## **Fielding**

1. Teams will use 9 players when on defense, with free substitutions at the beginning of every half inning. No player will sit out more than 2 innings per game.