

# **Interlock Rules 2021 for AAA, Coast, and Majors Baseball**

## **Kirkland National Little League & Redmond West Little League**

\*NOTE: for 2021 season we are NOT interlocking at the Majors level but are keeping the rules here for posterity.

### **Special Rules: Majors, Coast, and AAA Baseball Divisions**

#### **1. Time Limits:**

- a. The game starting time is at the first pitch, noted by the plate umpire and recorded by the official scorekeeper. Time limits are managed by the official scorekeeper.
- b. When time limits apply, once the No New Inning Time Limit is reached, no new inning may begin. Note: a new inning begins the instant the 3rd out is made on the home team.
- c. When time limits apply, once the No New at-Bat Time Limit is reached, no new at bat may begin and the game is called at the conclusion of the in-progress at bat.
- d. If time expires in the home half of the inning, and the home team is leading, then that score will be the final score. Otherwise, the score of last completed inning will be the final score.

#### **2. Lineups:**

Prior to the game, each manager shall provide a lineup to the official scorekeeper, the opposing manager and the home plate umpire. This lineup shall include eligible pitchers, illegible pitchers, and their Little League ages, players' jersey numbers, expected position by inning for each player (can be modified as needed during the game), and bench innings. Players that are not in the lineup due to scheduled absence or injury should be listed. The data may be used by the Player Agent and Board to ensure compliance with minimum play policies.

**3. Scorekeepers:** Scorekeepers should alert the umpire to possible protests (such as ineligible pitchers or catchers) but must not call attention to possible appeals (such as missed bases or batting out of order).

**4. Batting Order:** All games shall be played using the continuous batting order of rule 4.04. An injured batter is replaced with the next player in the lineup, who assumes the count. An injured runner is replaced with the last eligible player who made an out. Rule 7.14 does not apply.

**5. Bat Safety:** Players may not handle or swing a bat during a game except during their turn at the plate. Upon violation, the umpire shall disqualify a base coach to provide more adult supervision in the dugout.

**6. Mound:** When an artificial mound is available, it shall be used unless both managers agree otherwise prior to the game. The plate umpire may declare a mound unsafe and require its

removal during the game. Adjustments to the mound may be made by the umpires between innings to ensure safety.

**7. Minimum Play:** No player shall sit two innings in a game before every other player on the team has sat out one inning (exceptions to this rule will be made for the starting pitcher, or a replacement of an injured starting pitcher, who is continuing to pitch).

**8. Eight Players:** Games may be started with eight (8) or more players (Rules 1.01, 4.04, 4.16, 4.17, and 6.05). A game may not be started with fewer than eight (8) players on each team. A game may not be continued with fewer than eight (8) players on each team. When playing with eight (8) players, a team may skip over the ninth (9th) position in the batting line-up without penalty.

**9. Pool Players:**

- a. Pool players may be used to fill one-time vacancies when a player will miss a single game.
- b. Pool players must hit at the end of the batting order.
- c. If anyone sits out, pool players must sit out before any non-pool players sit out.
- d. Pool players may not pitch.
- e. Pool players may catch. Reference regulation V, Selection of Players

**10. Courtesy Runners:** We permit a courtesy runner for the catcher and/or pitcher of record when there are two (2) outs (2.00, 3.04, and 7.14). Because we use the continuous batter order, the courtesy runner may be in the team's batting order and must be the player in the batting order who made the last out.

**11. Mercy Rule:** Rule 4.10(e) applies in Majors, Coast, and AAA Division play.

**12. Managers/Coaches:** A maximum of 1 manager and 2 coaches shall be in the dugout or on the field during games (rules 1.01 and 3.17)

**13. One Foot in the Box:** Rule 6.02(c) applies. After entering the batter's box, the batter must remain in the box with at least one foot throughout the at bat. See Rule 6.02(c) for the complete list of exceptions and penalties.

**14. Stealing Signs:** These interlock rules do adopt the optional provision of Rule 9.01(d). Umpires shall warn participants after the first offense and eject them upon subsequent offenses.

**Special rules: Majors**

**15. Game Length:** Majors games are played without time limits unless the field is in use following the game. If the field is in use following the game, time limits apply. The No New Inning Time Limit is 2 hours. The No New at-Bat Time Limit is 2 hours 15 minutes.

**16. 3<sup>rd</sup> Strike Not Caught:** Majors will implement Rule 6.05(b), 3rd strike not caught, during the regular season.

**17. Minimum Play:** Every player must fulfill the minimum of one inning played at an infield position within the first five innings of the game. Exceptions to this rule will be made if a starting pitcher continues to pitch into the fourth inning, in which case the manager shall make sure every player fulfills this rule in the soonest possible inning.

**18. Announced Intentional Walk:** Majors will implement Rule 6.08(a)(2), the announced intentional walk.

### Special rules: Coast

**19. Game Length:** The No New Inning Time Limit is 2 hours. The No New at-Bat Time Limit is 2 hours 15 minutes. If the field is not in use following the game, then the No New at-Bat rule will not be enforced.

**20. Run Limit:** The 5-run per-inning run limit is suspended in the sixth and later innings as specified in rule 5.07.

**21. Minimum Play:** Every player must fulfill the minimum of two innings played at an infield position within the first five innings of the game. Exceptions to this rule will be made if a starting pitcher continues to pitch into the fourth inning, in which case the manager shall make sure every player fulfills this rule in the soonest possible inning.

**22. Pitching Minimum:** All players shall pitch to a minimum of 10 batters during preseason and/or regular season games. Exceptions to this rule are made only if the parents notify the Manager, Player Agent, and VP in email.

**23. Announced Intentional Walk:** Coast will implement Rule 6.08(a)(2), the announced intentional walk.

### Special Rules: AAA

**24. Game Length:** All AAA games will have the time limit enforced. The No New Inning Time Limit is 2 hours. The No New at-Bat Time Limit is 2 hours 15 minutes. If the field is not in use following the game, then the No New at-Bat rule will not be enforced.

**25. Run Limit:** The 5-run per-inning run limit is suspended in the sixth and later innings as specified in rule 5.07.

**26. Minimum Play:** Every player must fulfill the minimum of two innings played at an infield position within the first five innings of the game.

**27. Pitching Minimum:** All players shall pitch to a minimum of 10 batters during preseason and/or regular season games. Exceptions to this rule are made only if the parents notify the Manager, Player Agent, and VP in email.

**28. Announced Intentional Walk:** AAA will implement Rule 6.08(a)(2), the announced intentional walk.

**29. Stealing bases:** Stealing of home plate is never permitted. A runner can only advance to home on a ball in play, base on balls, hit-by-pitch, or interference.

**30. Walk Limit:**

- a) If the defensive team issues three total bases on balls in an inning, that defensive team is subject to the Walk Limit rule for the remainder of that inning.
- b) When the Walk Limit rule is in effect, no batter may be awarded a base on balls. If the player-pitcher issues a base on balls, the batter does not advance to first base but instead stays as the batter, the coach-pitcher takes over, and the at bat continues.
- c) Any strikes against the batter carry over when the coach-pitcher steps in.
- d) The player-pitcher starts every new at bat.
- e) No runner may advance on a pitch thrown by the coach-pitcher unless forced or the ball is batted. A coach-pitched ball that is not batted becomes a dead ball once it passes the batter and the plate.
- f) If the coach-pitcher hits a batter with a pitch, the ball will be declared dead. The pitch is "no pitch" and base runners may not advance. The batter does not advance to first base but stays as the batter and the at bat continues.
- g) Once a coach-pitched ball is batted, Rule 7.13 applies normally: When a pitcher is in contact with the pitcher's plate and in possession of the ball and the catcher is in the catcher's box ready to receive delivery of the ball, base runners shall not leave their bases until the ball has been delivered and has reached the batter.
- h) Bunts are not permitted when the coach-pitcher is pitching. If the batter bunts, the ball will be declared dead. The pitch is "no pitch" and base runners may not advance.
- i) For ease of scorekeeping, only strikes (not foul balls) and balls in play thrown by the coach-pitcher will be counted towards player-pitcher's pitch count. An at bat that is completed by the coach-pitcher counts as an at bat toward the player-pitcher's season minimum play pitching time.

**31. Batting Practice:** Teams with games scheduled may practice batting in the outfield using whiffle balls or tennis balls. The use of hard balls for batting prior to game time is prohibited outside the cages. The home team and the visiting team are to split the outfield in half for such use. At the time of infield warm-ups all teams must leave the outfield.

**32. Infield Warm-ups:** Immediately before a game, the entire field is reserved for each team's use in turn:

- 25 minutes to 15 minutes before game time: visiting team warm-ups.
- 15 minutes to 5 minutes before game time: home team warm-ups.
- 5 minutes before game time: managers and umpires meet at home plate

Before taking the field for warm-ups, the team shall leave all bats, batting helmets, and catcher's helmet outside the dugout for the umpires to inspect. When the field is in use by a prior game, infield warm-up times shall be reduced proportionately or eliminated so that the game starts on time. Teams should warm up elsewhere while the earlier game finishes and the field is prepared.

### **33. COVID Protocols**

All players and coaches (and umpires) will be required to wear masks when on and off the field; spectators expected to follow the governor's directions.

Plate umpire cannot be positioned behind the plate (i.e., stand behind the mound instead)

Social distance of 6 ft when not actively in the field of play

Priority seating goes to players (i.e. bleacher seating used for overflow)

Recommending players bring camping chairs to extend dug-out down fence line or in area behind dug-out, as needed.

No sunflower seeds, peanuts, or spitting allowed.

### **34. Ground Rules**

Hartman Field Ground Rules

- Hartman 3:
  - A ball may be able to get under the backstop. Bases will be awarded based on whether it's a thrown or pitched ball, per Rule 7.05.
  - if a fair batted ball goes under the fenced gate in the right field corner, the ball will be considered out of play (e.g., offense will be awarded a ground rule double).
- Hartman 5 & 6 (turf):
  - Portable mounds should be placed at the correct distance by the home team as part of field prep, ideally 30 minutes before the start of play. If the mound is warped, it may need to be adjusted and straightened between innings.

- During field prep the home team will replace the softball first base (double base) with a standard baseball base, unless both team managers agree to use the double base. If opting for the double base, the orange side of the double base is in foul territory.
- The fields aren't enclosed. At the plate meeting, umpires and managers will discuss ground rules for fair batted balls that go beyond the outfield fence line – ball out of play – and awarded as a ground rule double. A fair-batted or thrown ball that goes onto the cement along the H6 right-field line, but not in the dugout, will remain a live ball.
- A batted or thrown ball that goes behind either dugout fence line will be considered out of play.
- Removable fences must be installed for AAA, Coast, and Majors during field prep.