

# SCVAA Youth Baseball Rules

## *4th/5th Grade*

The St. Croix Valley Athletic Association (SCVAA) is a nonprofit, volunteer organization that promotes and provides youth athletic programs throughout the #834 School District area. The purpose of SCVAA Baseball is to give youth the opportunity to learn fundamental baseball skills, practice good sportsmanship, and have fun. Coaches and parents should always keep these objectives in mind and remain positive.

All players, coaches, and spectators must demonstrate respect, positivity, and fair play. Negative behavior, bullying, or unsportsmanlike conduct will not be tolerated. Coaches should promote teamwork and equal participation, while players should encourage teammates and opponents. Disagreements should be handled calmly and respectfully. Spectators must cheer positively and avoid negative comments.

Failure to follow these guidelines may result in warnings, suspensions, or removal from the league.

### **FIELD**

#### **BASES**

Base distance will be 60'

#### **PITCHING DISTANCE**

Player Pitch Rubber will be 45' from home plate

### **EQUIPMENT**

#### **BALLS**

Regulation baseballs

#### **BATS** (Player Provided)

No limit on weight, length or drop. Max 2 ¾ inch barrel diameter.

Bats must be USA Baseball, USSSA or BBCOR approved

## CATCHERS

Catchers are required to wear an approved catcher's mask, helmet (covers both ears), chest protector, and shin guards. Protective cups are mandatory for male catchers and recommended for female catchers.

## SHOES

For the safety of all players, the following footwear rules apply to SCVAA Baseball:

- Metal cleats or spikes are **NOT allowed**
- Players must wear molded cleats or athletic/tennis shoes
- No open-toe shoes (sandals, flip-flops)

Players who do not comply will not be allowed to participate until proper footwear is worn.

## UNIFORMS

All players are expected to wear uniforms provided by SCVAA when playing in games.

## PROTECTIVE CUPS

Protective cups are mandatory for male catchers and recommended for females.

# THE GAME

## FREE SUBSTITUTION

Every player on the team who is present at the game will be placed in the batting order and take their turn at bat. Free substitution in the field will be permitted.

## INNINGS

A half inning will end when 3 outs have occurred, or 6 runs have scored

\* The run limit applies to all innings. Assuming time allows, the visiting team should bat in the top half of the final inning regardless of whether they are losing by more than the run limit.

- During the regular season, extra innings shall not be played. During the tournament, extra innings shall be played to determine a winner.

## NUMBER OF PLAYERS

Each team may field 9 players on defense. All players will bat on offense.

## **START TIME**

Games should start at their scheduled times. However, there will be a 5-minute grace period if one team does not have enough players to start the game.

## **TOO FEW PLAYERS**

A team showing up for a game with fewer than 7 players should pool their players and scrimmage. Coaches are encouraged to attempt to re-schedule games in advance if they are aware that a team will not have enough players. Anything less than 7 players is a forfeit.

**Teams may not field players who are not registered for SCVAA baseball.**

## **BASE COACHES**

Each team must have first and third base coaches while at bat. Coaches, parents or other adults are encouraged to fill these positions.

## **COACHES ON THE FIELD**

No coaches (from the fielding team) are allowed on the field during a game.

## **LENGTH OF GAME**

6 innings or 2 hours. No inning may start after an hour and forty five minutes.

## **TRICK PLAYS**

Hidden Ball or other "Trick Plays" are NOT Allowed at any grade level.

## **UMPIRES**

A SVAA umpire will be used. If umpires do not show, coaches should select a neutral Volunteer adult umpire.

If no neutral volunteer umpires can be found, each team shall provide a home plate umpire for 3 innings and a base umpire for 3 innings. The volunteer home-plate umpire must call balls and strikes from behind the pitcher to avoid the chances of injury.

Tournament: Umpires will be used at the end-of-year tournament.

## **INFIELD FLY RULE**

An infield fly is a ball that is hit when all the following are true:

- The ball is in fair play.
- It is not a line drive or attempted bunt.
- There are fewer than 2 outs.
- The hit is made when first and second bases are already occupied (third may also be occupied).
- It can be caught by an infielder with ordinary effort.

The rule does not preclude outfielders from being allowed to make the catch.

When, in the umpire's judgment, it seems apparent that a batted ball will be an infield fly, the umpire immediately announces it for the benefit of the runner. The batter is automatically out and runners may advance at their own risk.

## **WEATHER**

### **LIGHTNING & RAIN**

If lightning is present, the game must be immediately canceled—NO EXCEPTIONS. Coaches are encouraged to reschedule games. See the SCVAA weather policy at [www.scvaa.org](http://www.scvaa.org).

For rain delays or cancellations, coaches and umpires will mutually decide. If a game is canceled due to rain before start time, the home team must notify the Umpire Coordinator at least 2 hours prior and arrange umpires for the rescheduled game. Contact information is available on the SCVAA website under the Baseball Commission tab.

Weather Makeup Games: The home team is responsible for rescheduling the game. Batting order and innings will follow standard league rules in rescheduled games.

### **HEAT INDEX**

Heat index: <http://www.scvaa.org/SCVAAB/weather-information>

# PITCHING

- Pitchers shall be allowed 5 warm-up pitches between innings.
- Coaches may visit the mound 3 times during a game to confer with the pitcher (or other defensive player). Removal of a pitcher does not constitute a conference. The second time a coach visits the pitching mound with the same pitcher, the pitcher must be replaced.
- 1 pitch thrown in an inning constitutes an inning pitched.

Only fastballs and change-ups are allowed. Breaking pitches (curveballs, sliders) are not permitted.

## LIMITS

Pitchers shall be limited to:

- **Regular season:** 3 innings per game and 9 innings per week
- **End of year Tournament:** 3 innings per game and 9 innings for the entire tournament

## RE-ENTRY

Once a pitcher is removed from the pitching position the player may not return as a pitcher for the duration of the game.

## STRIKE ZONE

The strike zone should be expanded slightly. I.E. - From the top of the shoulder to the bottom of the kneecap at the point that the ball crosses the plate. If any part of the ball crosses over the plate (including the black outline), the pitch is considered a STRIKE.

## HIT BATTERS

Purposely throwing at a batter will NOT be tolerated in any SCVAA games. A pitcher who intentionally throws at a batter (even if he does not hit the batter), will be ejected from the game. "Intent" will be at the discretion of the umpire. If a pitcher unintentionally hits two or more batters, and the umpire feels that the pitcher does not have adequate pitch control, he may direct the coach to remove the pitcher.

# BATTING

## HELMETS

All batters must wear protective helmets. If a helmet is intentionally removed, the runner shall receive a warning and the next time shall be declared out.

## THROWING THE BAT

A team shall be warned the first time for throwing the bat (intentionally or not). The second team violation will result in the batter being called out.

## BATTING ROTATION

Teams are to bat the entire roster. Late arrivals must be placed at the end of the lineup.

If a player must be removed from the lineup due to injury, illness or otherwise, their spot in the batting order will be skipped. This will NOT be counted as an out. The only exception to this rule is if the player was ejected, in which case it would be an out each time their spot comes up in the order.

If a batter is injured during an at-bat, the last player putout assumes the injured players count and continues the at-bat.

## THE FIELD OF PLAY

Only the batter and the on-deck player are allowed on the field. On-deck batters should be on the pull side of the Player batting. All other players must be on or behind the bench. All helmets, bats, etc. not being used by the batter or on-deck player must be on or behind the bench. If equipment interferes with a play, the batter shall be automatically out.

## DROPPED THIRD STRIKE

The batter is out. Runners may advance at their own risk.

## BUNTING

Bunting is allowed

## BASE RUNNING

A runner occupying third base at the start of a play (time of pitch) may only advance home on a batted ball, a bases loaded walk/hit-by-pitch, or an attempted play on said runner.

No headfirst sliding into home, runner will be called out.

### OVERTHROW

If the ball goes out of play runners will be awarded one base. If the ball remains in play, runners may advance at their own risk.

NOTE: "Awarded one base" means the base they were running to plus the next base.

### BASE STEALING & LEADING OFF

- Runners may not leave the base until the ball crosses the plate
- Each team is allowed one warning for leaving early; additional violations result in the runner being called out
- Runners may steal one base per pitch. If an overthrow occurs during a steal attempt, the runner may not advance beyond the base they were attempting to steal.
- **Stealing home is not allowed**

#### Dead Ball Rule:

- The ball is dead when the catcher returns the ball to the pitcher in control on the mound
- Runners may not advance once the ball is dead

### NO CONTACT RULE

- A runner cannot "bowl" over a catcher or fielder trying to make a tag.
- A runner is out if they fail to slide or safely get around a fielder who has the ball at the base or who is attempting to field a batted ball or catch a thrown ball.
- A fielder may not be in the baseline except when fielding a ball.

### COURTESY RUNNERS

- A courtesy runner is allowed for a runner who will be the catcher. This rule should be utilized to speed up play.
- A courtesy runner shall be allowed to replace an injured player. If used once during the game, runner substituted for must have a courtesy runner the remainder of the game.
- The courtesy runner MUST be the last player to have made an out.

# PLAYERS, COACHES, & PARENTS

## HUSTLE

All players are expected to hustle on and off the field.

## PLAYER ROTATION

All players should receive equal playing time, except for special disciplinary reasons.

Players may play the same position more than 2 innings; however, coaches are encouraged to rotate players to the positions of their choice whenever possible.

NOTE: A Player Rotation Sheet is provided on the SCVAA website to facilitate a random and equitable player rotation schedule.

## EQUIPMENT CARE

Players are expected to care for and respect all equipment. Players should never kick, hit, or throw batting helmets, bats, gloves, or catcher's equipment.

If there is any faulty equipment, the coach should call the equipment or Grade Level Coordinator to get it replaced. Please do not drag the equipment bags.

The current rules will be posted on the website. Changes or corrections made after publication of this manual will supersede this manual. See the Rules Update tab on the web site. Calendars, commission contacts, registration, and other miscellaneous information will be posted on the SCVAA website.

## SCVAA Unsportsmanlike Conduct Rule

Unsportsmanlike conduct, including but not limited to verbal abuse, physical altercations, or disrespectful behavior towards players, coaches, officials, or spectators, will **not be tolerated**. Any participant (player, coach, or spectator) engaging in unsportsmanlike conduct may be subject to the following actions:

1. **Warning:** The first instance will result in a verbal warning.
2. **Ejection:** Continued unsportsmanlike conduct may result in ejection from the game or facility.
3. **Suspension:** A suspension from future games or practices may be imposed for severe or repeated offenses.
4. **Permanent Removal:** In cases of serious misconduct, the individual may be permanently removed from the league.

The SCVAA is committed to fostering a positive, respectful environment for all participants, and any behavior that undermines these values will be addressed promptly.

Web Site: [www.scvaa.org](http://www.scvaa.org)

