

Important League Information

SPECTATORS

Please do not use any Mendon businesses' bathrooms. Port-A-Johns will be available for your convenience while at the games.

INSURANCE

The HF-M Youth Baseball program does not carry any insurance covering medical expenses to players. We encourage you to review your own medical insurance to assess your child's coverage.

FIELD MAINTENANCE

Every year a **Field Clean-up Day** is held in April at the fields in Mendon. We need your help to get/keep the fields in playing condition. This time of year we have signs to hang and the fields need reconditioning. Please make yourself available to help us. We can't do it all without your help.

UNIFORMS

- Hats, shirts, and pants (T-Ball players receive hats and shirts only) will be given to your child at the beginning of the season. They are included in your registration fee.
- The official uniform for coaches is the matching shirt and hat of their respective teams.
- All participants will receive a trophy at the awards picnic.

INCLEMENT WEATHER

- A. All players are to arrive at the field ready to play as scheduled unless contacted (telephone or email or text) and directed otherwise.
- B. In the case of inclement weather the umpire will, upon discussion with the coaches, determine whether conditions are safe. In the T-Ball and Intermediate leagues, the coaches will make the decision. **THE FINAL DECISION ABOUT WHETHER AN INDIVIDUAL PLAYER CONTINUES TO PLAY IS ALWAYS DEFERRED TO THE PLAYER'S PARENT(S).**
- C. Coaches are to leave no child alone at the field.
- D. All games will be stopped at the first sighting of lightning (by anyone at the field) and all players must leave the field of play. Play may resume 20 minutes after the most recent sighting **at the umpire's discretion.**

Play in general will follow the rules of
LITTLE LEAGUE BASEBALL
with exceptions for the following
LOCAL GROUND RULES

All Leagues

Miscellaneous

- A. Players may not play on more than one regular season team within the HFL - Mendon Youth Baseball League. There is no prohibition of a player playing in HFLMYBL and on a team in another town at the same time. (Please be considerate of the team to which you have committed first.)
- B. Coaches may not use any tobacco products on the field.
- C. Any player who is hospitalized, treated in an emergency facility, or who undergoes outpatient surgery during the season (pre-season practice included) **MUST** provide a physician's release to his coach before being allowed to practice or play in a game. The coach in turn will deliver the release in a timely fashion to a league representative.
- D. Any player (all leagues) who sustains any injury that prevents him or her from immediately resuming/continuing play must be removed from the game for the remainder of the inning and shall return to the game at the discretion of the parents (first) and coach. The ball shall be declared dead at the time of injury (umpire's call) - play ceases. Any runner advancement will then be determined by the umpire (judgment call).
- E. Maximum allowed bat barrel diameter in all leagues (age 12 and under) is 2¼ inches.

Game Conduct

- A. The decision of the umpire is **FINAL**.
- B. Discussion of rules and play of the game are to be between umpire and coaches **ONLY**.
- C. The umpire has the right to ask any player, coach, or parent who (in the umpire's opinion) is causing a disturbance to leave the field/area after one warning. If the cited individual refuses the umpire's direction to leave the area in a timely fashion the game will be forfeited by the offending team.
- D. Spectators will not enter the field of play.

- E. All coaches will set good examples of sportsmanship for the players and conduct themselves ethically with the umpires and other coaches.
- All coaches will be subject to a background check.
 - Any coach ejected from a HFL - Mendon Youth Baseball sponsored baseball team game must appear before the board to explain his/her actions at the next scheduled board meeting. The executive board (president, vice president, secretary and treasurer) shall decide if the coach may resume coaching activities after a mandatory one game suspension. **In addition, if a second offense should occur within the same season, the coach shall be ejected from the league for the remainder of the season.**
- F. All players will conduct themselves with the utmost of good sportsmanship and ethics of the rules of baseball. **Any player ejected from a game for disciplinary purposes shall attend one game in uniform in which he/she is not permitted to play prior to returning to active player status.**

Game Play

- F. The visiting team will take the field for warm-ups 30 minutes prior to the start of the game (e.g. weeknights @ 5:30 pm) and will surrender the field to the home team 15 minutes before game time (e.g. weeknights @ 5:45 pm). Umpires are to see that the game begins promptly @ 6:00 pm (weeknights) regardless of how long the infield practice lasts (to provide every opportunity for a complete game). On rare occasion it might be necessary to alter this; and then only upon agreement between both coaches and the plate umpire.
- G. **The home team is responsible for raking the infield, mound and home plate dirt at the conclusion of each game. Each team is also responsible for picking up trash in the bleacher and bench areas.**
- H. A minimum of 8 players (7 players for T-Ball and Intermediate Leagues) must be present to begin a game. When fewer than this are present 15 minutes past game time, a forfeit shall be declared (no make-up game is required). In the event that an injury results in the interruption of a game (fewer than 8 players), the game will be resumed at exactly the same point (i.e. same line-up, batting order, and count). Other amicable arrangements between coaches are acceptable. The league representative will resolve disputes.
- I. There are no balks **in the TBall, Intermediate, or Minor Leagues. Balks are enforced at the Major League level.**
- J. A continuous batting order will be used in each game for all leagues. The initial batting order will be used the entire game. Players not present at the start of the game will be added to the end of the batting sequence.
- K. All present team members must play in the field at least 3 innings in all 5 and 6 inning games. The only exception will be for disciplinary reasons and this will only be done when the opposing coach has been notified.

- L. The home plate umpire may call a game at anytime for darkness or threatening weather (see previous notes for parental decision and inclement weather). The home plate umpire should notify both coaches, if possible at the beginning of an inning of his intentions to call a game.
- M. In the Minor and Major Leagues, a regulation game consists of six innings unless extended by a tie score or shortened because the home team needs none (or only a portion) of its half of the sixth inning or because the umpire calls the game.
- N. When a game is called, it is a regulation game if four innings have been completed or if the home team is winning after 3½ innings have been completed.
- O. Any game that is called before it has become a regulation game, but after one or more innings have been played, shall resume exactly where it left off. **Note:** All records, including pitching, shall be counted.
- P. Make-up games should be made up within 7 calendar days of the postponement date. This may be waived upon agreement of the league representative.
- Q. With the exception of the Major League, four outfielders are to be used if 10 or more players are present for the game. This rule is in effect even when the opposing team has fewer than 10 players present. The fourth outfielder may not be positioned as a “short center fielder”. The Major League will play with three outfielders.
- R. Only official Little League-sized bats and HFLMYB League-issued baseballs will be used. The home team is on the first base side of the field.
- S. It is the coaches' option to assign players or coaches as base coaches.
- T. Players must wear batting helmets when coaching.
- U. Once a pitcher has been relieved he/she cannot return to that position again during that game.
- V. Each pitcher can only pitch a **maximum of 9 consecutive outs** in one game.
- W. A player cannot pitch two consecutive calendar days in a row. A day of rest is required. **Exception for playoff games only: If a pitcher was not able to pitch 9 consecutive outs due to the suspension of a game, the pitcher may pitch the next day in the continuation of the same game up until the 9th consecutive out is made. A pitcher may not pitch more than 9 outs in total between the suspended and continued portion of the game. A pitcher may not pitch on consecutive days during the playoffs in two different games. This exception only applies to the completion of a suspended playoff game.**

**T-BALL LEAGUE
LOCAL GROUND RULES**

- A. Games consist of 3 innings or a maximum of 1 hour and 15 minutes.
- B. Batters may hit the ball off the tee or have a coach pitch to them. If the coach pitches and the count reaches 3 strikes, the batter must then hit off the tee. There are no strikeouts.
- C. All players must wear a batting helmet with face-shield when hitting and running. All players must wear long pants and sneakers or approved baseball shoes.
- D. All players must play in the field each inning to be eligible to bat each inning. If a coach is pitching, the player in the pitching position must be no closer than the coach/pitcher. A ½ inning consists of each eligible team member getting one at-bat.
- E. Runners may only advance one base per hit unless the ball is hit to the outfield. There will be no advancement on an overthrow.
- F. No bunting is allowed. The infield fly rule is not in effect. Base runners may not leave the base occupied until the ball is hit. Base stealing is not allowed.
- G. Any player who throws the bat shall be given a warning. Subsequent bat throwing will result in the player missing his/her next at bat (no out).
- H. There may be no running with the ball unless within 10 feet of the base.
- I. Practices may be no longer than one hour per day, one practice per week.
- J. The only ball to be used shall be the “RIF” ball distributed by the league.

INTERMEDIATE LEAGUE LOCAL GROUND RULES

- A. Games consist of 4 innings or 2 hours. No new inning may be started after 8:00 PM on school nights.
- B. Pitching machines will be used exclusively for the first half of the season. The coach of the offensive team will run the machine and call balls and strikes. For the first half of the season, players will be called out after 6 swinging strikes. Starting with the next game, players will be called out after 4 strikes (swinging or called). There shall be no walks.
- C. The player in the pitching position must have one foot on the dirt and be even with the pitching rubber when the pitching machine is being used. The player in the pitching position is required to wear a helmet with a masked cage when the pitching machine is in use.
- D. Starting with the 2nd half of the season, and agreement between coaches, a player from each team may pitch a maximum of one inning each per game (either first or last inning as agreed upon by coaches). If a player-pitcher reaches a four-ball count, the offensive team coach will pitch (or use pitching machine at offensive coach's discretion) and the strike count shall continue. There shall be no walks. Coaches may move up to 10 feet closer to home plate when pitching to any player at the discretion of both coaches.
- E. All players must wear a batting helmet with face shield.
- F. Three outs or 10 batters (regardless of the number of team members) batting constitute a ½ inning. There will be a regular infield of players but all players will play on defense. The outfielders must be a minimum of 10' behind the baseline.
- G. There will be no advancement on an overthrow.
- H. No bunting allowed. The infield fly rule is not in effect. Base runners may not leave the base occupied until the ball is hit. Base stealing is not allowed.
- I. On a ball hit to the outfield all runners shall stop at the closest base when the ball is under control in the infield, if between bases the runner can advance to the next base.
- J. Any player who throws the bat shall be given a warning. Subsequent bat throwing will result in the player missing his/her next at bat (no out).
- K. The offensive team's coach shall call balls and strikes. The respective base coaches will judge plays at the bases.
- L. Practices may be no longer than 1½ hours per day, twice per week.
- M. The defensive team may position a coach in the outfield for instructional purposes.
- N. The only ball to be used shall be the "RIF" (#5 ball) distributed by the league.

- O. For the first half of the season there will be no fly ball double plays.
- P. Prior to the start of the season, the intermediate league rep, with assistance from head coaches will determine appropriate settings and location on mound for pitching machines. This will be published, and settings/locations maintained as best as possible throughout the season.

MINOR LEAGUE LOCAL GROUND RULES

- A. Games consist of six innings – extra innings if tied at the end of six innings. No new innings may begin after 8:15pm.
- B. All players must wear a batting helmet with face-shield and a protective vest when hitting or coaching the bases. These requirements may be waived for 9 and 10 year old players if a parent signs and returns the waiver form to the coach. A helmet without a face-shield is the minimum requirement.
- C. The first time playing a team, when the count reaches four balls, the batter's coach (or other member of the coaching staff) will pitch to the batter (overhand only, no closer to the plate). The strike count will continue with balls and strikes being determined by the umpire. **The coach is expected to pitch to the level of the batter's ability.** The batter may strike out by "swinging" or on a called strike. There will be no walks. Any ball that hits the pitching coach will be considered in play. The player in the pitching position must have one foot on the dirt and be even with the pitching rubber. The remaining games and playoffs will have no coach pitching. All ball fours will be considered walks.
- D. Three outs or 5 runs constitute a ½ inning. Exceptions:
 - a. If a home run is hit **over the fence**, all runs crossing the plate, including the batter, will count.
 - b. The 5 run maximum per half inning will be waived in the 6th inning (and any extra innings) **during playoffs only.**
- E. There will be no more than 10 players in the field on defense.
- F. On an overthrow outside the field of play, all players are awarded the base to which they were running, and the next base. The runner gets one base only. On an overthrow inside the field of play all players are allowed, at the runner's risk, to advance to the base to which they were running and the next base. The runners may attempt one base only. There is no advancement on a second overthrow during the same play. An overthrow is a misplayed ball at a base, not a throw to a cut-off person.
- G. No bunting is allowed.
- H. The infield fly rule is NOT in effect.
- I. Base runners must remain on base until the ball is hit, or crosses the plate when pitched.
- J. Stealing will occur during games with no coach pitching. Each team is allowed one steal event per inning. This may be 1st to 2nd, 2nd to 3rd, or both. When to steal is a coach's decision. The runner may only leave after the ball has crossed the plate. A runner leaving early will be warned and returned to their base. In order to encourage catchers to throw on a steal, no advancing on an overthrow is permitted.
- K. If a runner fails to slide at 2nd, 3rd, or home and contact is made when there is a play at that base (umpires discretion), the runner will be called out.
- L. Any pickle (rundown) will continue until the play is stopped and the umpire grants a time out.
- M. If a player throws the bat, the player will be warned. Subsequent bat throwing will result in the play being called dead, the batter called out, and any base runners returning to the bases they originally occupied.

- N. If a team is behind by 10 or more runs, the coach of the losing team **may** elect to end a game after 3 or more innings.
- O. Frequency of practices is at the discretion of the coach.
- P. All playoff games must be completed through 6 innings (5 ½ when the home team is ahead).

MAJOR LEAGUE LOCAL GROUND RULES

- A. Games consist of **seven** innings - extra innings if tied at the end of **seven** innings. **On weeknights, no new inning may be started after 8:15 PM. On Saturdays, no new inning may be started 2 hours and 15 minutes after the actual start time of the game.**
- B. All players must wear a batting helmet when hitting, running or coaching the bases.
- C. If a player throws the bat, the player shall be given a warning. Subsequent bat throwing will result in the play being called dead, the batter called out and any base runners returned to the bases they occupied at the start of the play.
- D. The defensive team may declare an intentional walk by so notifying the home plate umpire at any point during a player's at bat. The ball is dead and the batter is awarded first base with any other runners advancing if "forced". This option may be exercised **only once per player per game.**
- E. On those occasions when the pitcher stops his/her motion toward home plate upon seeing the batter square to bunt, the umpire shall declare the pitch a ball.
- F. All playoff games must be completed through 6 innings (5 ½ when the home team is ahead).
- G. **FAKE BUNTS**
No swing after a fake bunt during the same pitch. Batter may not swing the bat after partially or fully squaring to bunt. Once batter has assumed any stage of a bunt position, the batter must either attempt the bunt or pull the bat back to take the pitch.

PENALTY FOR FAKE BUNT THEN SWING: If the batter swings or check swings the bat after assuming any stage of a bunt position, then the batter shall be called out regardless of the result of the swing and the play shall be called dead and runners return to their base. If the same player commits a second offense during the season of the fake bunt rule during the season the player must be ejected from the game and be required to sit out the next game too.

- H. **HEADFIRST SLIDES**
No headfirst slides are permitted when advancing to the next base. Headfirst slide is permitted when retreating back to the last attained base.

PENALTY FOR HEADFIRST SLIDE WHEN ADVANCING TO NEXT BASE: Runner is called out. If the same player commits a second offense of the headfirst slide rule during

the season (Coaches responsible for monitoring their own players), the player must be ejected from the game and be required to sit out the next game as well.

I. WILD PICK OFF THROW

If the pitcher steps off the rubber in a pickoff attempt and then throws the ball out of play, the runner is only entitled to advance to the next base. There is no "one plus one" advancement when the pitcher steps off the rubber and throws the ball out of play.

J. THIRD STRIKE NOT CAUGHT

A batter is out when (1) a third strike is legally caught by the catcher; or (2) a third strike is not caught by the catcher when first base is occupied before two are out.

The batter becomes a runner when the third strike called by the umpire is not caught, providing (1) first base is unoccupied or (2) first base is occupied with two out (NOTE: A batter forfeits his/her opportunity to advance to first base when he/she enters the dugout or other dead ball area);

K. ILLEGAL PITCH

With no runners on base an illegal pitch is (1) a pitch delivered to the batter when the pitcher does not have the pivot foot in contact with the pitcher's plate; or (2) a quick return pitch.

PENALTY FOR ILLEGAL PITCH: Warning on first offense. Illegal pitch is called on subsequent offenses in same game and pitch is called a ball.

L. BALK RULE

With a runner or runners on base, it is a balk when –

(a) The pitcher, while touching the plate, makes any motion naturally associated with the pitch and fails to make such delivery.

(b) The pitcher, while touching the plate, feints a throw to first base and fails to complete the throw.

(c) The pitcher, while touching the plate, fails to step directly toward a base before throwing to that base.

(d) The pitcher, while touching the plate, throws, or feints a throw to an unoccupied base, except for the purpose of making a play.

(e) The pitcher makes a quick pitch; Umpires will judge a quick pitch as one delivered before the batter is reasonably set in the batter's box. With runners on base, a quick pitch is penalized with a balk; with no runners on base, a quick pitch is penalized as an illegal pitch and is a ball.

(f) The pitcher delivers the ball to the batter while not facing the batter.

(g) The pitcher makes any motion naturally associated with the pitch while not touching the pitcher's plate.

- (h) The pitcher unnecessarily delays the game;
- (i) The pitcher, without having the ball, stands on or astride the pitcher's plate, or while off the pitcher's plate feints a pitch.
- (j) The pitcher, while touching the plate, accidentally or intentionally drops the ball.
- (k) The pitcher, while giving an intentional base on balls, pitches when the catcher is not in the catcher's box.
- (l) The pitcher, after coming to a legal position, removes one hand from the ball other than in an actual pitch, or in throwing to a base.
- (m) The pitcher delivers the pitch from the set position without coming to a stop.
- (n) While not in possession of the ball, the pitcher stands with either foot or both feet on any part of the dirt area (circle) of the mound during a hidden-ball-play attempt.

NOTE: A batter hit by a pitch shall be awarded first base without reference to the illegal pitch.

PENALTY FOR A BALK: One warning per pitcher per game for the first offense. A balk may be called on subsequent offenses if the umpire determines the intent of pitcher is to deceive the runner. When a balk is called, the ball is dead, and each runner shall advance one base without liability to be put out unless the batter reaches first on a hit, an error, a base on balls, a hit batter or otherwise, and all other runners advance at least one base in which case the play proceeds without reference to the balk. When a balk is called and the pitch is delivered it will be considered neither a ball nor strike unless the pitch is ball four (4) awarding the batter first base and forcing all runners on base to advance.

When a balk is called, if the pitch is delivered, a pitch shall be charged against the pitch count regardless of whether the batter put the pitch into play. However, on a balk that is called on a pickoff attempt or in an instance that the pitcher does not deliver the pitch, no pitch shall be charged to the pitch count. After any balk warning or balk call, the coach may go to the mound to instruct the pitcher about the balk without being charged a visit to the mound.

NOTE: Umpires should bear in mind that the purpose of the balk rule is to prevent the pitcher from deliberately deceiving the base runner. If there is doubt in the umpire's mind, the "intent" of the pitcher should govern. However, certain specifics should be borne in mind:

- (1) Straddling the pitcher's plate without the ball is to be interpreted as intent to deceive and ruled a balk.
- (2) With a runner on first base, and the runner attempting to steal second, the pitcher may make a complete turn, without hesitating toward first, and throw to second. This is not to be interpreted as throwing to an unoccupied base.

APPROVED RULING: If the pitcher violates (a) through (n) in this rule and throws wild to a base, the runner or runners may advance at their own risk. (Delayed dead ball.)

APPROVED RULING: A runner who misses the first base to which that runner is advancing and who is called out on appeal shall be considered as having advanced one base for the purpose of this rule.

M. **BORROWING PLAYERS**

Teams with fewer than 9 rostered players at the start of a game may borrow players from other HFLMYB majors' teams in order to start the game with 9 players, but may not use borrowed players at the start of the game to exceed 9 players. Borrowed players must play

the outfield and must be placed at the end of the batting order after all rostered players. If two players are borrowed, for example, they must bat 8th and 9th and play outfield the entire game. If the regular rostered players arrive after the game has started then they must be inserted in the lineup ahead of the borrowed players if the borrowed players have not yet come up to bat. If the borrowed players have already been up to bat, then the late arriving regular players must be inserted at the end of the lineup after the borrowed players.

N. **LEADING OFF THE BASE**

Runners may lead off or steal any base at any time at their own peril. No restrictions on leading or stealing.

O. **INFIELD FLY RULE**

An INFIELD FLY is a fair fly ball (not including a line drive nor an attempted bunt), which can be caught by an infielder with ordinary effort, when first and second, or first, second and third bases are occupied, before two are out. The pitcher, catcher and any outfielder who stations himself in the infield on the play shall be considered infielders for the purpose of this rule.

The ball is alive and runners may advance at the risk of the ball being caught, or retouch and advance after the ball is touched, the same as on any fly ball. If the hit becomes a foul ball, it is treated the same as any foul.

P. **RUN LIMIT**

There is no run limit.

Q. **BAT RULE**

Bats shall not be more than thirty-three (33) inches in length nor more than two and one-quarter ($2\frac{1}{4}$) inches in diameter. Non-wood bats shall be labeled with a BPF (bat performance factor) of 1.15 or less. **Big barrel bats (2 5/8" diameter) are prohibited.**