

Hiawatha Kids League - General Rules

Objective:

It must be understood that the goals of the Hiawatha Kids League are to teach the fundamentals of baseball and softball while, at the same time making it fun so that the boys and girls gain the confidence and spirit needed to participate.

General Information:

The following rules stand for the CURRENT season. The board will take suggestions for changes or alterations for future seasons at any time. Please see a board member with your recommendations and/or e-mail them to the rules committee.

THIS IS A VOLUNTEER PROGRAM. ALL COACHES AND BOARD MEMBERS ARE DONATING THEIR TIME. IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO HELP, PLEASE LET US KNOW BY CONTACTING ANY COACH OR BOARD MEMBER.

No alcoholic beverages or tobacco products are permitted at Kid's League activities.

All players and coaches will be required to pick up papers, trash, etc. at the end of each game. This includes the bleacher area.

Pre-game warm-up will not be more than 1 hour before the game.

All diamonds are reserved one hour before game time for those teams scheduled to play. All other teams must vacate the diamond for those teams playing.

No practice other than the game warm-up may be held after 12:00 p.m. (noon) for teams playing that day.

ELIGIBILITY

Players must be in Kindergarten through 8th Grade. Players may lose their eligibility as a result of false information given on their application form, for repeated offenses of sportsmanship, conduct or attendance, or for any single flagrant violation of sportsmanship, conduct or other rules of the game.

SPORTSMANSHIP - Zero Tolerance (The term Zero Tolerance encompasses a wide range of actions or verbiage directed from one person to another, or a group of people, including but not limited to: Unsolicited physical contact which would constitute assault under state law)

Disorderly conduct from players, coaches or spectators will not be tolerated. Umpires may eject disorderly spectators, coaches, or players from the game. If this discipline is ignored, the offending team will forfeit the game. Use of profanity is considered disorderly conduct. The umpire will give one warning before ejection. The umpire(s) will report all offenses to the Board of Directors. The Board of Directors will then review the incident and determine a course of action. This action can include suspensions up to and including indefinite suspension from the league. All decisions of the Board will be final.

Penalty for a player ejection consists in sitting on the bench for the following attended game. Forfeits are excluded.

Unsportsmanlike conduct or inappropriate behavior by coaches, players or spectators will not be allowed.

An umpire, League Director or board member may call a game for unsportsmanlike conduct.

Coaches displaying unsportsmanlike conduct or using abusive language will not receive a warning from the League Director or board member per our Zero Tolerance policy. The HKL Board of Directors will review all incidents.

Members of a coaching staff may not, by their actions, influence, distract or intimidate an opposing player or the umpire.

Coaches/Adults may not go behind the backstop to watch the umpire.

A coach may not protest a judgment call made by an umpire, Coaches may appeal a disputed call, but the umpire's decision is still final.

Players are not allowed to use personal name calling of opposing players or profanity.

Catcher and infield player may not distract the batter.

Base runner may not distract the pitcher.

The umpire may eject a player from the game for throwing a bat or helmet.

The HKL board must approve all coaches. **No unapproved persons allowed in the dugout/bench area during any game.**

See also Coaches Conduct and Parent Conduct detailed at www.hiawathakidsleague.com.

SCOREKEEPER

The home team shall furnish an adequate scorekeeper prior to the beginning of each game. If the home team is unable to find a scorekeeper the opposing team may provide the scorekeeper. The scorekeeper will not be a coach participating in the game being played. The team listed first on the schedule is the home team. The scorekeeper is responsible to notify the umpire of the number of runs scored per inning. The scorekeeper can also notify the umpire when a batter is out of order. **The scorekeeper will not be in the dugout or on a player bench.**

Prior to the game, the commissioner or a designee shall determine if the game is to be called because of unsafe field conditions. It is the plate umpire's discretion after the game begins. If no umpire is present, it will revert to the coaches' decision.

UMPIRES

The Hiawatha Kid's League will, to the best of their ability, provide umpires for all games. If umpires are not provided, head coaches are then asked to provide volunteers to umpire their game, one from each team.

Score sheets must be properly completed and signed by both coaches and umpires at the end of the game. This will include any additional comments from coaches or umpires. The official scorekeeper is responsible to notify the umpire of the run limits for each team.

It is the umpire's responsibility to keep the game moving as quickly as possible. Coaches will not be allowed to use excessive time-outs. Only two (2) mound visits per inning will be allowed with a maximum of four (4) per game. Note: A pitching change is not considered a mound visit.

EQUIPMENT

ONLY EQUIPMENT FURNISHED by the Kid's League will be used in the games and practices, with the exception of bats, catcher's gear, gloves, helmets and knee savers. If there are any problems with any of your equipment contact your league director.

BAT SPECIFICATIONS

Baseball – No wood bats. Length must be less than 36". Diameter of bat is 2 ¼ ". Little League USA, Babe Ruth, Pony League & USSSA only.

Softball –



All bats must bear **either the wording** Official Softball, USSSA or the ASA approved 2000 certification mark as shown above, and must not be listed on an ASA non approved list. If the bat is not distinguishable/or there are no markings, the bat will NOT be approved for player use. HKL reserves the right to reject any equipment brought into the league. Bats not meeting the requirements (illegal) will be removed immediately from play and returned only to a parent or guardian at the end of the evening. Player determined to be using an illegal bat will be suspended for the balance of the current game plus the next game on the playing schedule. All decisions of the officiating umpire, Division Director, or board member are FINAL. Umpires will be given bat templates for the outlying diamonds.

HELMETS



Must be stamped onto the helmet. Black and navy blue only.

Loose equipment - Helmets, bats, gloves, etc., must be kept in the dugout or behind the player's bench for safety.

ANY PLAYER/COACH WHO ABUSES EQUIPMENT at any time shall be IMMEDIATELY DISCIPLINED by being ejected from the game. The umpire will report any ejection to the Board for further action.

Ankle length pants (NO SKIN MAY BE EXPOSED ON THE LEG) and gym shoes, rubber cleats, or plastic cleats (no steel cleats) must be worn during games and practices. Uniform shirts must be worn at all Hiawatha Kid's League games. Shirts are not to be altered in any way. Only Hiawatha Kid's League hats/visors are to be worn if a hat/visor is worn. Watches and bracelets are not to be worn. Only stud-type earrings will be allowed. No wristbands or mirrored sunglasses are to be worn while pitching.

ALL CATCHERS must wear protective gear (face mask, chest and throat protector, and shin guards) as approved by the HKL in practice as well as in the games, and must wear skullcaps during games. Any player warming up the pitcher shall wear the facemask with throat protector. Boys should wear a protective cup.

Safety Base - A safety base (double first base) will be used. The batter-runner may use the orange portion on only the first attempt at first base. Once the runner passes first base the runner must use only the white from that point. The defensive player may use only the white in making any play at first.

One exception for a Defensive Players use of the orange safety base:

A defensive player may use the orange part of the safety base if trying to avoid contact with the batter-runner. Note: If the defensive player uses the orange base (rather than the white base) in attempt to put out the batter-runner and they are not trying to avoid contact, then the batter-runner will be declared "safe".

PLAYERS, SUBSTITUTES, AND COACHES

FREE SUBSTITUTION is allowed on defense only. On offense, player substitution is allowed in case of injury, illness, or excused absence, with no out being called. The player may re-enter the game but must play defense before being allowed to bat. The player substituted, will be the one who made the last out.

All players present and wearing a uniform, and who have attended more than 50% of all called practices, shall not sit out more than one (1) consecutive inning. The only exception is a player who may be disciplined for bad conduct. The plate umpire and scorekeeper MUST be notified of such action BEFORE the game begins.

No player may play or practice with any injury, which requires a cast or any type of splinting or immobilizer. The Board of Directors **WILL MAKE FINAL DETERMINATION ON ALL INJURIES.**

Any injury occurring during a game must be reported to the HKL Board.

Players are not allowed to dispute the umpire's decision. Coaches may appeal a disputed call, but the umpire's decision is still final.

Coaches, players and/or spectators are not permitted to smoke, drink alcoholic beverages, or chew tobacco on the playing field, in the dugouts, in the bench areas, or in the vicinity of the ball diamond (i.e. warm-up field, bleachers, back-stop and behind dug-outs). Failure to comply will be grounds for ejection by the umpire from the current or upcoming game. Anyone failing to comply with the warning or who has repeated violations will be ejected from the league by the HKL board. Ejections and violations are to be reported to the HKL board by the umpires.

Each child must have a registration form signed by the child's parent or guardian, and the registration fee must be paid before the child is eligible to play or practice. The Hiawatha Kid's League Board will provide medical release and emergency contact forms to all coaches and these forms must be filled out completely prior to the 1st practice and retained by the coaches.

Frequent absences by coaches and/or players from practices and/or games will be brought to the attention of the Hiawatha Kid's League Board, and the board will take appropriate corrective action.

In the event that the coach and assistant coach are not present at game time, a board member or the umpire will ask for an adult volunteer to substitute coach. If no coach is found, the game will be forfeited.

Members of the coaching staff may not, by their actions, influence or distract an opposing player. Coaches must stay in the dugout or defensive coach's area when their team is in the field and in the coaches' boxes when their team is batting. Defensive coaches' area is defined as a six (6) foot diameter circle by the dugout or player's bench. Exception: T-ball through Machine Pitch Leagues.

No player shall distract the batter.

No more than two (2) coaches will be identified as official coaches per team. All coaches must be at least 18 years old and have completed a background check. These two coaches will be allowed to have their children and/or relatives on their team. A maximum of four (4) players will be allowed.

After team selections, a third coach may be selected but only two (2) will be allowed on the field while the team is on offense with the exception of T-Ball through Machine Pitch Leagues.

A sponsor may have up to two (2) children per team. The children's parents must be either the sponsor, relative, or active employee's of the sponsor.

Coaches, players, or spectator shall not:

Use words or actions to incite or try to incite spectators, use profanity or remarks which are directed at opposing players, umpires or spectators; or enter the area behind the catcher while the game is in progress. EFFECT: the offender may be ejected from the field.

Players, coaches, or spectators shall not climb on or rattle dugout fences or stand on the benches.

THE GAME

Forfeit time for any scheduled or make-up game is ten (10) minutes past the scheduled starting time.

Games are played Monday through Thursday with an occasional Friday weather permitting. After 2 games have been rained out, all other rainouts will be rescheduled by the HKL Board.

It is the plate umpire's decision to call the game because of darkness/weather conditions prior to any inning, if no umpire is present; it will be the coaches' decision.

Games will not be started with less than seven (7) players. At forfeit time if less than seven players are present, the team short players will automatically forfeit the game. If a team plays with seven players, they shall not be penalized with automatic outs for missing players. The game may be played for practice if a team has less than seven present.

The score of a forfeited game shall be 7-0 in favor of the team not at fault.

The first team listed is the home team (i.e., 4-5, Team #4 is the home team).

The visiting team will sit in the first base dugouts and the home team will sit in the third base dugouts.

Tie Breaker Rule – If a game is tied at the end of the last scheduled inning and time permits, the remainder of the game will be played as follows:

1. The team at bat will place runners on 2nd and 3rd bases with one (1) out. The runners will be the last two batters of the previous inning in the same order as batting.
2. The game will continue as usual. The limited runs per inning used prior to the last inning will be in effect.
3. The above applies to the home team when batting.
4. The above applies to all extra innings if time permits.
5. There will be no "Sudden Death" unless the **HOME** team scores the winning run(s); in which the game will be over.

BATTING

All coaches must list players, by first initial, last name, and shirt number on the score sheet. If a player arrives late it will be the coach's decision to let that player participate. If the coach allows the player to participate, the late arriver will be put at the bottom of the batting order and the coach is responsible for putting that player's name in the official scorebook and notifying the umpire.

A continuous batting order will be used for all players throughout the game in all leagues. Prior to the game, a batting line-up will be prepared for all players present. Players will continue to bat in turn, even if they are not playing in the field.

Batting out of order is when the incorrect batter is in the batter's box and is ready for the pitch. When batting out of order is called, the team at bat will be charged with one out, and the correct batter will be up to bat and will begin with a 0/0 count. If an out of order batter becomes a base runner and the error is discovered before the next pitch (legal or illegal), the out of order base runner will be declared out and removed from the base. The official scorekeeper should call batting out of order.

Helmet rule - It is mandatory for each on-deck batter, runner, and players in the coaches' boxes to wear a batting helmet. The on-deck batter, batter, runner and any players in the coach's boxes shall wear a batting helmet. The batting helmet worn by each batter, on deck batter, runner, shall have extended earflaps which cover both ears and temples.

When an umpire witnesses a runner (including the batter-runner) deliberately remove a batting helmet during playing action, the violator shall be declared out immediately. If the helmet must be removed, the player must wait for "Time" to be declared by the umpire. Failure by a player to wear proper equipment after being informed by the umpire shall result in ejection. If the pitcher wears a head protector, its entire outer cover shall have a non-glare surface.

BASERUNNING

If a base runner is hit by a batted ball before it passes an infielder other than the pitcher, said runner is out, if the ball hits a runner after it has passed an infielder other than the pitcher, said runner is safe.

THE RUNNER MUST SLIDE if a play is being made on the base he or she is advancing to. If the contact is intentional the runner shall be called out and ejected for unsportsmanlike conduct. If the contact is not intentional, the runner shall be called out on delayed dead ball. Hurdling is prohibited. Hurdling is an attempt by an offensive player to go over the top of a defensive player who has the ball and is in position to make a tag. If a slide is not practical, the base runner must attempt to avoid contact with the defensive player.

Courtesy runners will be used for the catcher for the next half inning (when the offensive team plays defense). This rule is invoked in an effort to speed up play. A courtesy runner may only be used when there are two outs. The courtesy runner must be the player in the offensive team's batting order that made the last (i.e. second) out.

BALL DEAD/BALL IN PLAY

Ground Rule Double is any batted fair ball that rolls through an outfield gate hole in the fence, or under a fence or that goes over the outfield fence after first striking the ground in fair territory or first striking the ground in fair territory and then being deflected off a player's glove. The ball is dead and all runners and the batter/runner advance two bases.

Out of Play – A ball is considered out of play when it is thrown or deflected out of the playing area or into either dugout or bench area. If a ball is thrown or deflected out of play by a defensive player, the base runners or batter becoming a runner will be awarded two (2) bases from the time of the throw.

DEFINITIONS

Appeal Play – An appeal play is a play upon which an umpire cannot make a decision until requested by a player. The appeal must be made before the next pitch, legal or illegal, is delivered to the batter and the ball must be live. The appeal must be made through the pitcher.

Base Path – A base path is an imaginary line three feet to either side of the direct line between the bases.

Dead Ball – Ball is not in play and is not considered in play again until the pitcher holds it in pitching position, the catcher is in the catcher's box, the batter is in the batter's box, and the umpire has called "Play."

Delayed Dead Ball – A delayed dead ball is the time sequence between a rule violation and completion of associated play. Umpires then determine enforcement of penalty or ignoring of infraction based on rule codification.

Fair Ball – A fair ball is a batted ball that settles in fair territory between home and 1st base or home and 3rd base; or that is on or over fair territory including any part of 1st or 3rd base when bounding to the outfield; or that touches 1st, 2nd, or 3rd bases; or that, while on or over fair territory touches the person of any umpire or player, or that while over fair territory passes out of the playing field beyond the outfield fence.

Force-out – A force-out is the putout of a base runner who is required to run; the putout is accomplished by holding the ball while touching the base to which the runner must advance before the runner reaches that base.

Foul Tip – A foul tip is a batted ball, which goes directly from the bat to the catcher's hands and is legally caught.

Infield Fly – Is a fly (not including a line drive or an attempted bunt) which can be caught by an infielder with ordinary effort; and provided this is made before 2 are out and at a time when 1st and 2nd, or 1st, 2nd and 3rd bases are occupied.

Interference – Interference is the act of an offensive player or team member, which impedes or confuses a defensive player while attempting to execute a play.

Legal Touch – A legal touch occurs when the ball touches a runner or batter-base runner who is not touching a base and while it is securely held in a fielder's hand. The ball is not considered as having been securely held if it is juggled or dropped by the fielder having touched the runner unless the runner deliberately knocks the ball from the hand of the fielder. It is sufficient for the runner to be touched with the hand or glove in which the ball is held.

Obstruction – Obstruction is the act of:

- a. A defensive player or team member which hinders or prevents a batter from striking or hitting a pitched ball, or
- b. A fielder, while not in possession of the ball, in the act of fielding a batted ball, or receiving a thrown ball, which impedes the progress of a base runner who is legally running bases. Faking a tag without the ball is obstruction.

Over slide – An over slide is an act of an offensive player when as a base runner, the runner over slides a base the runner is attempting to reach. It is usually caused when momentum causes the runner to lose contact with the base, which then causes the runner to be in jeopardy. The batter-base runner may over slide first base without being in jeopardy if the batter-base runner immediately returns to that base without making a move toward 2nd base.

Pivot Foot – The pivot foot is that foot which the pitcher must keep in constant contact with the pitcher's plate, until pushing off as part of stride during delivery.

Quick Pitch – The quick pitch is one made by the pitcher with the obvious attempt to catch the batter off-balance. This would be before the batter takes a desired position in the batter's box or while the batter is still off-balance as a result of the previous pitch.

Strike Zone – The strike zone is that space over home plate, which is between the batter's armpits and the top of the knees when the batter assumes a natural batting stance.

Hiawatha Kids League baseball/softball rules not outlined above will revert to the divisional or **National Federation of High School Associations Rules.**

Last Updated By S.M.F. 02-27-2010