

Highland Minor-Coach Pitch Rules

Playing Field, Equipment & Safety

- **Bats:** Any bats certified by USA or USSSA with any barrel diameter (2", 2 1/4", 2 1/2", 2 5/8", and 2 3/4").
- **Base Paths:** 60 ft.
- **Fair Ball Arc:** There will be a 10 ft. arc drawn from the first baseline to third baseline in front of home plate.
- **Safety Arc:** There shall be a 30 ft. arc drawn from the first baseline to the third baseline in front of home plate. Infielders must stay behind this line until the ball is hit.
- **Pitching Circle:** There will be a 10 ft diameter circle with front edge at 42 ft from the rear point of home plate.
- **Coach Pitch Line:** There will be a line located 30 ft from the back of point of home plate.
- **Halfway Line:** There will be a line located halfway between bases (first and second, second and third, third and home) to aid in determining if the trail runner has reached halfway when time is called.
- **Catching Equipment:** The catcher shall wear all appropriate protective gear including a catcher's helmet that fully covers both ears with face mask and either a built-in extended throat guard or a separately attached throat guard, chest protector, shin and/or leg guards, and protective cup.
- **Batting Helmets:** Are required, including during practice, in the cage, or warming up swings in the outfield. Jaw guards or face masks are recommended.
- **Other Protective Equipment:** Heart guards and cups (if applicable) for all players are also required.

Game Preliminaries

- The Home team will get the third base dugout.
- Teams will bat the roster. A copy of the lineup including player name and number should be provided to the opposing team manager.
- Late arriving players will be inserted at the bottom of batting order and cannot enter defensively until start of next inning.
- Teams playing short **MUST** field a full infield, including a catcher and pitcher.

Umpires **If no official umpire is available**

- **Behind the Plate Umpire:** A defensive coach positioned behind the batter will be the Behind the Plate Umpire and will help with collecting pitched baseballs and will make safe/out calls on plays at home plate.
- **Field Umpire:** The offensive coach pitching will be the Field Umpire making safe/out calls on the bases.
- **Rookie Tournament Umpires:** For end of season tournament, the Rookie Commissioner will assign these two umpire positions, which are normally other Rookie coaches whose team is not playing in that game.
- **Fair/Foul Calls:** First and third base coaches are responsible for fair/foul calls down their respective lines.

Starting and Ending a Game

- Each team must have 8 players to begin and end the game.
 - Substitute players are allowed but are limited to the outfield and bottom of the lineup.
- Games will be 6 innings in length or 1 hour and 15 minutes. A new inning may not start after time has expired.
- Regular season games may continue into extra innings if the time limit has not expired. If time has expired, the game will end in a tie.
- Championship game will have NO time limit.
- Each half inning will consist of 3 outs or 5 runs, whichever occurs first. There is no continuation of play; once the 5th run scores, the Field Umpire will call "time" and the play is dead.
- Only in the 6th inning (and any necessary extra innings) will be unlimited runs.
 - This rule **ONLY** applies to the 6th inning (and any necessary extra innings) not the "last" inning.
- 12-run rule after 3 innings. 10-run rule after 4 innings. 8-run rule after 5 innings.
- If a game is called due to rain, weather, or other reason it is a complete game if 4 innings have been played or if the home team has scored more runs after three 3 1/2 innings. All games called that cannot be considered a complete game shall be deemed a suspended game; when resumed, the game shall continue from the exact point of suspension.

Coach Pitch Specific Rules

- The pitching coach can pitch anywhere behind the 30 ft **Coach Pitch Line** and in front of the **Pitching Circle**.
- The pitching coach shall be an adult at least eighteen years of age.
- The pitching coach shall limit verbally and physically coaching from the pitching position.
- The batter will receive 5 pitches or 3 swinging strikes. Batter will continue batting if the last strike is fouled off.
- The **Behind the Plate Umpire** can call a "no pitch" on the last pitch if it is unhittable. This is a judgement call and cannot be appealed.
- When a batted ball hits the Pitching Coach:
 - If in the Umpires judgement, the coach did make a legitimate attempt to avoid contact; the ball becomes dead and a single is awarded to the batter and all runners shall advance one base.
 - If in the Umpires judgement, the coach did not make a legitimate attempt to avoid contact; the batter is declared out and no runners shall advance.

The Batter, Batter Runner & Runner

- All batters will wear a batting helmet while at bat, on deck and on base.
- No intentional walks.
- Butting shall not be allowed.

- A batted ball must go past the **Fair Ball Arc** line to be a fair ball.
- Player removed for disciplinary reasons will be called out each time he/she is at bat.
- Player that is ill or injured will not be called out each time.
- A player that has been removed from the game will not be allowed to return to line up.
- A thrown bat will result in a warning. After the warning, if a batter throws a bat he/she will be called out.
- Runners shall not lead-off or steal bases. If a runner leaves a base early (before the ball is hit), the **Behind the Plate Umpire** will direct the runner back to the base. If that base is now occupied due to hit on pitch, runner will be called out.
- At any time, the offensive team may use a courtesy runner for the catcher of record from the previous inning. The courtesy runner shall be the player making the last batted out. This rule should be used to get the catcher dressed for the next inning to speed up the game.
- Whenever a tag play is evident, a runner must slide or seek to avoid contact with the fielder and/or catcher.
 - **Penalty:** The runner shall be called out and may be ejected from the game at the discretion of the umpires if contact is malicious.
- A runner who jumps over a player will be called out whether or not contact is made with the defensive player.
- Base runners may advance multiple bases as in "real" baseball.
 - Once a play has been declared "dead" the base runner may proceed to the next base if they have passed the half-way line. A runner must return to the last reached base if the play is deemed dead and they have not passed the half-way line.
- Play will be declared dead once the pitcher has possession of the baseball with both feet inside the pitching circle or a defender with possession of the ball has stopped offensive advancement of the play. Stopping offensive advancement or "Facing Off" is defined by the defender having possession of the ball and placing their self between the lead base runner and the next available base preventing the runner from advancing. The Umpire will declare "Time" and the play will be declared dead at that point.
 - When a runner stands off a base and "jukes" or "feints" back and forth, this is to be interpreted as "not attempting to advance" and "Time" shall be called.
- Runners may advance one (1) base on an overthrown ball to any base (or to the pitcher), at their own risk. Once they have reached that next base safely, they may not advance further during the same play, even if another overthrown ball occurs.
- Overthrows from the Catcher to the Pitcher between pitches is considered a dead ball and no runners may advance.
- Play will continue if no attempt to stop the play has been made or the defense elects to make another play. A "reasonable" defensive play must always be attempted initially.
- Teams should not "excessively run the bases" in order to "win the game".

Rookie League is competitive but winning the game is not the main objective for this division.

Defense

- Defensive team consists of 10 players (4 outfielders).
- The defensive player listed as pitcher must have both feet in the Pitching Circle and cannot leave the circle until the ball is hit.
 - **Penalty:** The play continues. After the play has ended, the offensive team has the option of taking the result of the play or a no-pitch. If a player violates this rule, on the first offense the player will be warned, on the second offense the player will be removed from the pitching position for the remainder of the game. The Behind the Plate Umpire shall make this call.
- Defense will coach from inside the dugout, with 2 coaches being allowed in the outfield grass. They can only verbally coach.
- The Infield Fly Rule shall not be in effect at any time.
- Free substitution at any position.
- All players must play 6 defensive outs or two complete innings.
- Plays at the plate must be made by the Catcher (not including rundowns). The spirit of this rule is to prevent other fielders from setting up as Catcher AND to discourage infielders from running home for a tag, risking a potential collision at the plate. If a runner goes home, a throw should be made to the Catcher, then a traditional rundown can ensue.

Pre/Post Game Checklist for Coaches

Pregame	Postgame
First game coaches responsibilities	Last game coaches responsibilities
Open / Unlock Concession Building	Drag Field (Remove Bases and Insert Plugs in Anchors)
Drag Field (Remove Bases and Insert Plugs in Anchors)	Reinsert Bases, Rake Around Bases, and Home Plate
Reinsert Bases, Rake Around Bases, and Home Plate	Put Away All Equipment
Water Infield or Apply Field Dry*** if needed	Put Away Scoreboard Controller
Chalk the Lines and Batters Boxes	Turn off Scoreboard / Light Switches
Turn on Scoreboard / Light Switches	Put Away Concession Money in Freezer
Bring out Catcher's Gear/Pitcher's Mask	Close / Lock Concession Building
Bring out Scoreboard Controller's	Lock Gate

*****Use of Field Dry must be authorized by Commissioner**