

QUABBIN VALLEY OVER THIRTY BASEBALL LEAGUE, INC.

Official Playing Rules

Revised through February 8, 2004

Section 1 - Rules

- 1.1 The Quabbin Valley Over Thirty Baseball League, Inc. adopts as its Official Playing Rules the official Major League Baseball Rules. Additions and exceptions to these rules are listed herein.
- 1.2 Additions, deletions, or amendments to these rules may be made by a majority vote of the Board of Directors. Players will be notified of any changes by their manager or their team's Board member. A current copy of the QVOTBL Official Playing Rules will be distributed to each league member each year at the time of registration.

Section 2 - Conduct

- 2.1 No alcoholic beverages will be permitted in the vicinity of the playing field. Players and managers may not smoke in the vicinity of the playing field during a game. Profanity is strongly discouraged in the vicinity of the playing field.
- 2.2 Unsportsmanlike conduct is strictly prohibited. The Board of Directors will review any such incidents, with the following penalties possible for the players or managers involved: warning, reprimand, suspension, expulsion, or permanent expulsion from the league. Each team is responsible for the conduct of its players and supporters. Notwithstanding Section 4.4, a manager may remove a player from the game for unsportsmanlike conduct. A team is subject to forfeiture of any game in which unsportsmanlike conduct occurs, at the discretion of the umpire.
- 2.3 Mature conduct is expected toward other players, managers, umpires, and spectators. Any player or manager ejected from a game by an umpire shall be subject to the provisions of Section 2.2 in regard to unsportsmanlike conduct and shall be suspended for the next game, whether played or forfeited. Under extenuating circumstances and after a review of the matter, the Board of Directors may waive the additional suspension or may impose more extensive sanctions.
- 2.4 No player or manager shall ever use any words, sounds, or gestures – whether from the bench, the coach's box, or anywhere else in the vicinity of the playing field – that refer to or reflect upon any player, manager, umpire, or spectator in a derogatory manner; nor shall any player or manager ever express in any manner disapproval of an umpire's decision after having been warned by an umpire to refrain from expressing such disapproval. For any violation of this rule, any umpire officiating at the game may, in his or her discretion, eject the offender or offenders from the game or remove them from the vicinity of the playing field or declare the game forfeited to the other team.
- 2.5 Any hostile physical contact with an umpire shall result in expulsion from the league of the offending player. The Board of Directors retains sole discretion, under extenuating circumstances, to specify conditions under which it will consider application from the offending player for reinstatement. This in no way implies an obligation on the Board to take such action.
- 2.6 If a manager encounters a serious problem regarding the behavior of any player, the manager may bring the matter to the attention of the Board of Directors, which by majority vote may (a) impose probationary conditions for the continued participation of the player in the league on either the same team or another team, or (b) may expel the player from the league upon such terms and conditions as the Board shall deem appropriate.

- 2.7 If an infielder decoys a catch for the purpose of making a runner slide unnecessarily, all runners shall be entitled to advance one (1) base. If the same fielder decoys twice in a game, he shall be ejected from the game. The umpire's judgment shall prevail.
- 2.8 All runners must avoid an intentional collision with a fielder. If a collision is deemed by an umpire to have been deliberate, the runner shall be ruled out, and the offending player shall be ejected from the game.
- 2.9 A pitcher who, in the opinion of an umpire, deliberately attempts to hit a batter with a pitch shall be ejected from the game. If a pitcher hits three (3) batters in any one game, the pitcher must be removed from the game as a pitcher; however, he or she may continue to play in the game at another position.

Section 3 - Eligibility, Commitment

- 3.1 No manager or player should make winning more important than playing fair.
- 3.2 During registration, all players must attest to their age. Players over 30 years of age by June 15 are eligible to play in that season. Exceptions to this will be made for "under 30" players who have already appeared on a QVOTBL roster in a previous season. Managers are responsible for making reasonable efforts to determine the ages of their players; failure to do so may result in action by the Board of Directors against the manager.
- 3.3 Managers have the right to question the age of a player on another team and to bring his or her name before the Board of Directors for a ruling. The penalty for misrepresenting one's age is expulsion from the league for four years, measured from the date on which the player would ordinarily have been eligible to play or the date on which the Board of Directors imposes expulsion, whichever is later.
- 3.4 Each year, the names of registrants shall be placed in a draft in order to fill available roster spots for the coming season. The procedures for this draft shall be determined in advance by the Board of Directors. The draft shall be conducted in a manner that promotes parity, fairness, and an opportunity for all teams to field all positions, with priority given to returning players. Once the regular preseason draft has been concluded, any additions to teams will be made by periodic supplemental drafts, as necessary, with procedures for the supplementary drafts to be determined in advance by the Board of Directors.
- 3.5 The date for submission of final rosters shall be determined by the league President. There will be no roster changes permitted after that date without the approval of the league President.
- 3.6 A player may change teams after the draft only with the consent of both managers and the league President.
- 3.7 Teams must field at least eight (8) players for a game to be considered an official game. Forfeited games cannot be rescheduled. If a team cannot field eight (8) players for a scheduled doubleheader, both games shall be forfeited.
- 3.8 Any player who misses two (2) games without notifying the manager in advance shall be subject to suspension for the remainder of the season by a majority vote of the Board of Directors. Any player suspended for this reason shall not be entitled to any refund of fees.
- 3.9 In order to be eligible to play in the playoffs, a player must have played in at least 50 percent of the team's regular season games. This rule may be waived for individual players by appeal in writing to the Board of Directors.

Section 4 - Playing Time, Positions, Availability

- 4.1 A pitcher may pitch no more than a total of twelve (12) innings in two (2) consecutive games. In addition, any pitcher who pitches more than six (6) innings in any one (1) game may not pitch in the following game. Once a pitcher is removed from the mound during a game, he or she cannot be called upon to pitch again in the same game. Delivering one (1) pitch shall constitute pitching in an inning.

- 4.2 The provisions of Rule 8.0 of the official Major League Baseball Rules shall be strictly enforced.
- 4.3 All players who are present at the start of a game shall be placed in the batting order for that game. The manager shall add players who arrive late at the bottom of the batting order, as soon as they are ready to play.
- 4.4 Batters cannot be deleted or skipped over, unless they are physically unable to bat. If a player is forced to leave the game for any reason, that spot in the lineup shall thereafter be skipped and all batters shall move up accordingly, with no penalty to the affected team.
- 4.5 All players who are able and eligible to play must play at least four (4) innings in the field – except for doubleheader games played pursuant to Section 5.1 – unless the Board of Directors, in its discretion, provides otherwise by a special waiver which may be granted to any player who makes written request for such a special waiver.
- 4.6 Players who will need courtesy runners due to injury must have their manager notify the opposing manager before the game. If not so notified, the opposing manager may deny the request during the game. Each team shall be allowed courtesy runners for a maximum of two (2) players per game. In the event a player becomes injured during a game, additional courtesy runners may be used. In all cases, the courtesy runner shall be the player who made the last batted out, unless that player is the pitcher or catcher or unless he or she has already served as a courtesy runner in that inning, in which case the courtesy runner shall be the player who made the next previous batted out. In the first inning, when no batted out has been made, the courtesy runner shall be the last person listed in the batting order.
- 4.7 Pitchers and catchers shall be allowed a courtesy runner when there are two outs in an inning. The runner must be substituted before a pitch is made to the next batter, and the manager must designate a courtesy runner in conformity with the provisions of Section 4.6.

Section 5 - Reserve Players

- 5.1 After each team has been restored to a full 14-player roster through the regular league draft, any team may elect to draft up to two reserve players from the players remaining in the applicant pool. Reserve players will be selected through a reserve draft supervised by the league President. Reserve players are to be called up to replace, either temporarily or permanently, a regular roster player who become unable to play for reasons set forth in Section 5.5.
- 5.2 Players selected in the reserve draft may choose either to join a team's reserve roster or to remain on the league waiting list. If a player chooses to remain on the league waiting list, another reserve player may be designated by the league President, in chronological order by date of application. Applicants who do not wish to be placed on a reserve roster will remain on the league waiting list. As openings develop on team active rosters not already covered by reserve players, the league President shall appoint replacement players from the waiting list in chronological order by date of application.
- 5.3 A reserve player will be charged only for the cost of a uniform and need not pay the league membership fee unless he or she appears in at least half the regular season games, in which case the membership fee will be prorated by the league President.
- 5.4 Reserve players will be contacted for call-up to the active roster for the regular season based upon their order of selection in the reserve draft. If a team has a second reserve roster player, then that reserve player may be called up only after the first reserve player has either already been called up or has declined to join the active roster.

- 5.5 Reserve players may not play in a game unless the team manager notifies the league President by 9:00 p.m. on the Friday before a game; provided that, if on the day of a game a team has less than 11 players, then a reserve player may play in that game. Otherwise, to activate a reserve player, the manager must provide (a) the name of the reserve player being called up, (b) the name of the regular roster player being replaced, (c) the reason for the replacement, and (d) the expected duration of the replacement.
- 5.6 Acceptable reasons for calling up a reserve player to the active roster are (a) disciplinary actions by the manager for reasons set forth in Sections 2.2, 2.3, 2.6, and 3.8, (b) illness or injury, or (c) excused absences such as vacation or prior commitment. Any manager who deactivates a regular roster player for any other reason shall be subject to the provisions of Sections 2.3 and 3.1.
- 5.7 The regular roster player automatically returns to the active roster after his or her reported absence. If both reserve players have been called up, the second player activated will return to the reserve roster when a regular roster player returns to a team, regardless of which regular roster player that reserve roster player replace.
- 5.8 A team retains rights to its reserve players for the regular draft the following season if space is available on its roster. Otherwise, any returning reserve player will be placed at the top of the draft pool list chronologically based upon his or her date of initial application for membership in the league. A reserve roster player retains the right to return to his or her original team if space is available on the team's roster.
- 5.9 Any player on a team's active roster may elect the following year to be placed on the team's reserve roster without having to participate in the reserve draft.

Section 6 - Completed Games, Protests

- 6.1 All games are intended to be nine (9) innings long, except in the case of a doubleheader (when two games between the same teams are played on one day). In the case of a doubleheader, each game is intended to be seven (7) innings long, and the designation of home and visiting teams shall remain the same as for the originally scheduled game. During a doubleheader, no pitcher may pitch more than nine (9) combined innings for both games; otherwise, the provisions of Section 4.1 shall apply. In a doubleheader game, all players who are able and eligible to play must play at least three (3) innings in the field.
- 6.2 In the discretion of the umpire-in-chief, a game may be called due to darkness or inclement weather. A game called due to darkness or inclement weather shall be considered completed if at least five (5) innings have been played and the losing team has been retired in the last inning played. If the score is tied or the last inning has not been completed when the game is called, then the game shall be a suspended game and shall be completed in accordance with Rule 4.12 (c and d) of the official Major League Baseball Rules. In determining pitching eligibility under Section 4.1 of these QVOTBL Official Playing Rules, a pitcher's innings in a suspended game shall be credited to the week in which they were actually pitched and not to the week in which the suspended game is completed.
- 6.3 If one team has a fifteen (15) run lead after the completion of five (5) or more innings and the game has lasted at least two (2) hours, the game shall be considered completed. This rule shall not apply to playoff games.
- 6.4 Teams may not begin a new inning after three (3) hours and thirty (30) minutes from the start of a game. The game shall be considered completed at that point unless the game is tied, in which case the game shall be continued until one team wins or until the game is suspended due to darkness or field unavailability. This rule shall not apply to playoff games.

- 6.5 If a game is called or cancelled because of weather, it will be rescheduled as the second game of a doubleheader—pursuant to Section 6.1—at the next scheduled meeting of the same two teams. If the teams are not scheduled to meet again, the game will be rescheduled as a nine-inning game during the league make-up date or dates at the end of the season. If one of the teams already has another make-up game scheduled on the make-up date, the second make-up game will be cancelled unless authorized by the league President to be played on another date. Make-up games shall be scheduled in the order in which the need for them occurs. The league President shall handle the rescheduling of games.
- 6.6 All protests shall be lodged verbally with the league President within twenty-four (24) hours and must be submitted in writing to the league President within seventy-two (72) hours. All protests shall be decided by the Board of Directors. Any Board member whose team is involved with a protest shall have no vote on that matter. In case of a deadlock, the league President's vote shall be the deciding vote.

Section 7 - Equipment, Uniforms

- 7.1 All players shall wear a uniform which will be supplied by the league prior to the first game. No player without a uniform shall be permitted to play without the opposing manager's consent.
- 7.2 All batters and runners must wear helmets. Helmets with an ear flap facing the pitcher are mandatory for batters. Runners may wear helmets with no ear flaps. Catchers are required to wear a helmet beneath their facemask strapping.
- 7.3 Only league-approved baseballs shall be permitted for league play. Each team must have at least three (3) new baseballs available for each game.
- 7.4 Wooden, metal, and composite bats are allowed. All bats must be in safe condition, with no cracks, splinters, or chips. The length of a non-wood bat (measured in inches) shall not exceed the weight of the bat (measured in ounces) by more than three units. Use of an illegal bat shall result in ejection from the game of the offending player. A second or subsequent offense by the same player shall be considered as "unsportsmanlike conduct" and shall be reviewed by the Board of Directors pursuant to the provisions of Section 2.2. Any play resulting from the use of an illegal bat shall be nullified, the batter shall be called out, and no runners may advance. Standing in the batter's box for at least one pitch shall constitute "use" by a player of a bat. Any infraction of this rule must be protested before the next pitch or the infraction will be considered to have been waived by the opposing team.
- 7.5 Either metal or plastic baseball cleats are permitted, but neither is required.