

# Spring 2024 Multi-County Baseball Rules

## Pony / Senior

**Date Last Revised: 1/24/2024**

**Revised by: MCB Board**

**Date Approved by Interleague members: 02/15/2024**

For purposes of this rulebook, the term “league” and “interleague” will refer to the following associations

- Archer
- Buford
- Collins Hill
- Dacula
- Duluth
- Grayson
- Hebron
- Lanier
- Lawrenceville
- Mill Creek
- Mountain Park
- Mountain View
- Norcross
- North Gwinnett
- Peachtree Ridge

The Interleague will play according to **the National Federation of High Schools Baseball rulebook**. For additional information you are encouraged to go to the NFHS website.

**Board Members are as follows:**

Ted Thomas - Commissioner

Scott Henry - Scheduler / Secretary

Ray Maurer - Treasurer

David Applebee - Director Liaison

Don Einolf - Umpire Director

**Tournament Host:**

Senior Gold: TBD

Senior Silver: TBD

Pony Gold: TBD

Pony Silver: TBD

Definition: Season - Each season begins in the fall and carries into the spring. Example: Fall of 2023 to Spring of 2024 is considered a season under this definition.

Season Age limits: Players age may **NOT** exceed 19 as of May 1st of the spring of the following year.

Example Seniors: Players who will be older than 19 as of May 1, 2024, are **NOT** eligible to play in the Fall 2023 - Spring 2024 season.

Example Pony: Players who will be older than 14 as of May 1, 2024, are **NOT** eligible to play in the Fall 2023 - Spring 2024 season.

Birthdates must be entered into Quickscores when rosters are entered.

**Age Violation Penalty:** Should it be discovered that a player's age exceeds league rules, that team will forfeit all games where that player participated and that team will be disqualified from participating in the tournament

Each participating park agrees to solely use these approved Rules and agrees to instruct their Umpires Association to use only these approved Rules. Each Park may have its unique ground rules in addition to these rules. It is strongly encouraged that any rule questions or clarifications be addressed at the Plate Meeting, such as length of the game, runs per inning and pitch counts.

# GENERAL LEAGUE RULES

1. Games delayed by rain, or other acts of nature (including lights going out shall be regulation games if 4 innings have been played, or the home team is ahead after 3 1/2 innings. Games shortened by reason of curfew, rain, or unforeseen conditions before they become regulation games shall be resumed from the point of termination.
2. In the event of weather or other unforeseen conditions prior to the start of a game, members of the local baseball committee, in consultation with the umpires and league director, will determine whether playing conditions are safe. If a game has been started, the home plate umpire is in control and will have the responsibility and authority to suspend or continue play. If a lightning detector is utilized. The detector will be the determining factor as to whether a game or practices at the park are halted due to lightning. Once the detector registers lightning, ALL GAMES will be halted. Everyone must clear the fields and dugout. All game participants and visitors are to proceed to their vehicles until an all clear signal is sounded which will be three (3) short blasts of the air horn. THERE ARE NO EXCEPTIONS! A team will be given one warning and if they do not adhere to that, they will forfeit the game. A waiting period of thirty minutes will be allowed to start or resume a game due to field conditions after the Detector sounds the ALL CLEAR. The league director in accordance with the scheduling and umpire coordinator will reschedule games for the next available time on the field in question not occupied by a previously scheduled game (this will be determined by the home team director and ONLY the home team director. If a team can't make the rain makeup date, they will be forced to forfeit)
3. Interleague Temperature rule - If at the start of the game or practice the temperature is 40 degrees or below on the at park thermometer the game will be rescheduled. In the event there is not an at park thermometer, the posted temperature at <http://www.weather.com> for the park zip code will be used. The ON-DUTY Director will consider the wind chill factor. ***This is a Gwinnett County Ordinance therefore a condition of league use for the park.***
4. For the purposes of determining whether another inning can start, the next inning will be considered started when the third out of the previous inning is made. If time and innings remain, based on the game time limits for each age group, then play will be allowed to continue.
5. The home team shall occupy the batting cages first followed by the visiting team. The home team will have use of the cages an hour before the game for twenty-five (25) minutes. The visiting team will have use of the cages thirty-five (35) minutes before game time for twenty-five (25) minutes. Each team needs to be at the field ten (10) minutes prior to game time.
6. The home park shall be responsible for getting and returning the electronic score board equipment and game box to the storage. Both teams are responsible for the cleanup of their dugout and stands after each game.
7. The home team will keep the scorebook (digital or paper) and the scoreboard / pitch log. Two adults will use the pitch counters. (These need to be competent people who can handle the responsibility for each team, no one under the age 18.)

8. The team will be given one warning for "slinging the bat." The second and subsequent occurrences in the same game will result in the player being called out. The umpire must notify the official scorekeeper and manager of each warning.
9. All players who are eligible to participate shall be placed in the batting order and bat consecutively in that order.
10. Sliding is highly suggested under all conditions permitted, but not required. Any action, which, in the judgment of the umpire, is made to collide with a defensive player will result in the offensive player being called out. All batter-runners and runners are required to AVOID contact with a defensive player. It is the sole judgment of the umpires and therefore not a protestable call. On all slides it is the responsibility of the runner to attempt to avoid contact. When in doubt, slide.
11. Free defensive substitutions are permitted provided that minimum play requirements are met and no player shall sit two consecutive innings. These requirements are at least every other inning.
  - A manager may choose to sit out a player for disciplinary reasons. The manager must inform the home plate umpire and the opposing manager and/or scorekeeper of this situation at the time rosters are exchanged. The manager during the game for disciplinary reasons may also remove players. This may be as a substitution if other players are available. The league director must be notified in writing if this situation occurs.
  - If a player is injured and must sit two consecutive innings, the head coach must communicate this to the plate umpire and the other coach.
  - Consequence for not following this rule will result in the offending team taking an out the following inning.
12. Any person warming up a pitcher must wear a catcher's helmet or catcher's mask with a throat guard. A batting helmet cannot be used to warm up a pitcher. It is strongly recommended that only players warm up a pitcher at any time. No other person shall warm up a pitcher without a protective face mask due to the risk of substantial facial or head injury from deflected balls.
13. Catchers must wear a hockey style mask with ear protection
14. No player will be considered ready to play if he/she is wearing any type of hard surface cast or brace. An ace bandage or similar type of soft support does not constitute a cast for the purpose of this rule. The Home Plate Umpire has the final say in the safety of any soft cast.
15. Only the Head Coach may represent or speak for the team unless otherwise requested by the Head Coach or duty officer. Managers must request and receive a time out from an umpire to discuss a call or rule. Anyone who charges the umpire or who does not request and receive a time out or who displays, at the discretion of the umpire, unsportsmanlike conduct, may be ejected from the game and must leave the immediate playing field and grandstand area within **two minutes of ejection**. Failure to leave these areas or any further disruptions may result in forfeiture of the game. Anyone ejected from a game is automatically suspended from the next game. Further disciplinary action may be taken by the specific Association within which the individual in question, or their family member/player or team, is a member.
16. Game changer is highly encouraged in order to track the game.

# SPORTSMANSHIP

Prior to the start of each game, the umpire will hold a meeting at home plate consisting of at least one coach and coaches are encouraged to bring one team captain (player) to the plate meeting. In addition to the confirmation of the rules, the umpire will remind the team captains that unsportsmanlike behavior will not be tolerated. In the event of an infraction of the sportsmanship code of conduct as defined herein the league rules, the team will receive one warning. Any subsequent infraction will result in the ejection of any player guilty of the infraction.

## Sportsmanship Code of Conduct

1. Observe and support the rules of the game, promoting both the spirit and letter of the rules
2. Show civility towards competitors, coaches, officials, parents and fellow teammates.
3. Hold oneself and teammates accountable in maintaining a respectful environment.
4. Refrain from abusive language or profanity on the field or in the dugout.
5. Refrain from physical or verbal threats to players, coaches, officials and parents.
6. Refrain from throwing, pounding, hats, gloves, helmets or other equipment out of disgust or the results of a play.
7. Refrain from "heckling" directed at the opposing teams players, with the intent to disrupt players ability to perform or enjoy the game.

# ROSTERS

1. Each team is required to submit their official roster to (or post to a web site as directed) the league scheduler before the first game of the season. A player can only appear on one team roster per league/age group (i.e. a player can only be on one team in Pony or Senior, but could potentially be simultaneously on both a Pony and Senior team.). One exception would be that a senior player cannot play down on a pony team
  - All rosters must be entered before the first game of the season. If rosters are not entered, the team will have to forfeit each game the roster is not completed until the complete roster is in QuickScores..
  - Any changes (added players, dropped players, etc) must be locked down by the second week of the season.
  - The Board can override this deadline by a majority vote
  - **Name (first and last), jersey number and birthdate are all required in order to have a complete roster.**
2. Any player playing on a team that is not on the official roster (other than a pickup player or pull up player in order to meet the low player rule below), will result in that team forfeiting the game in question and if in the tournament, they will forfeit the

tournament. If the team repeats the violation, a board vote will proceed to expel the team from the league and they will be forced to forfeit the rest of their games.

3. A player may only play for one organization/park in the Multicounty Baseball League during any given season.
4. If a team starts play with eight players, an out will be taken for the ninth position in the batting order the first time through the order. Both coaches may agree at the plate meeting to not enforce this rule.
5. No penalty of an out if loss during game due to injury/sickness.
6. If an ejection results in a batting order of less than 9, the team will be penalized by an out each time through the order.
7. A sickness/injury loss can return to the game.
8. Players arriving after the game has started may be put into the game, but must bat as the last batter of the starting order.
9. A team failing to field at least eight eligible uniformed players within ten minutes after the scheduled start time shall forfeit the game.
10. A team shall not be allowed to complete any game with less than eight players
11. If a team is unable to field nine players in a game they may fill up to three (3) positions for a **nine- player roster** from the lower age groups or within the same recreation league. They may not pull more than is necessary to fill a nine-player roster. The non-roster players can play anywhere in the field, except pitcher and catcher and placed at the end of the batting order. The Manager of the opposing team must be notified of the non-roster player prior to the start of the game. Senior may pull from other Senior Teams or below from any park.
  - a. Pony can pick up players during the tournament to equal 9 players
  - b. Seniors can NOT pick up players during the tournament unless they get the board approval.
  - c. If a team can not field 8 players, the team must forfeit the game
12. Substitute runners are allowed only if the original player is injured. The player that made the last batted out shall be used as the substitute runner.
13. Courtesy runners are allowed for pitchers and catchers in all innings except the last inning (7<sup>th</sup> inning) to speed up the game. The courtesy runner shall be the LAST COMPLETED AT BATT. The pitcher/catcher then must pitch/catch the next inning.

## PROTESTING

1. Protests that involve an umpire's judgment shall not be accepted.
2. Only the team manager or the acting team manager shall be entitled to file a protest.
3. The only legal protest shall be one that involves a violation of playing rules, the use of an ineligible player or eligibility of a pitcher
4. The protesting manager must request time, notify the umpire he is protesting, notify the official scorekeeper to record the point in the game, and continue the game.
5. The protest shall be considered only if it is placed in writing in accordance with the interleague rules by the manager in person along with \$200.00 cash at which the game takes place and to that park within 24 hours of the completion of the game. If protest is

refused, the protest fee will be forfeited to that association. The award for winning a rule protest will be that the game will be replayed from the point of the protest at a time and date to be determined by the league.

6. **AFTER THE COMPLETION OF A GAME, THERE SHALL BE NO PROTEST REGARDLESS OF THE CIRCUMSTANCES INVOLVED WITH THE EXCEPTION OF A PROTEST ON ELIGIBILITY OR FAILURE TO COMPLY WITH THE PARTICIPATION REQUIREMENT OR A PITCHING VIOLATION.**
7. A game shall not be considered as complete until opposing managers have an opportunity to make a protest on a game-ending play or failure to comply with the participation requirement. Fifteen minutes shall be considered sufficient time for the fulfillment of this rule.
8. Protests will be voted on by the board in a majority vote.

# BAT RULES

## 1. PONY

- a. The bat rule for the 2023-24 season once again addresses the use of composite barrel bats.
- b. A bat can have a 2 1/2 inch barrel or a 2 5/8 inch barrel diameter but must be a drop 5 or drop 3. Violation will result in the batter being called out. Second violation will result in a coach ejection and the batter out.
- c. Only composite barrel bats certified and marked BBCOR .50 will be allowed.
  - Point of Emphasis: All bats having a composite barrel must be BBCOR .50 certified.

## 2. SENIOR

- a. The bat rule for the 2023-2024 season remains the same.
  - **Rule 1:10 DM**—BBCOR is the approved bat standard for 15U Division, Pre-Majors & Dixie Majors Baseball. Note: The length to weight “difference” (i.e. -3) will be maintained through BBCOR standards. Wood bats are legal.
- b. 2023-2024 (Point of Emphasis)
  - Any player found to have used a bat that has been altered (shaved, rolled, etc.) will be immediately disqualified from further play and is subject to permanent dismissal from the program.



# LENGTH OF PLAY AND RUNS ALLOWED BY LEAGUE

## 1. Pony

- a. Games are 7 innings.
- b. A new inning will not start after 1 hour and 50 minutes of play.
- c. If after 4 innings a team is leading by fifteen (15) or more runs, or after 3 ½ innings if the home team is leading, the game will be declared over. If after 5 innings a team is leading by ten (10) or more runs, or after 4 ½ innings if the home team is leading, the game will be declared over.
- d. Teams are limited to 8 Runs Per Inning except the 7<sup>th</sup> Inning which allows unlimited runs.

## 2. Senior

- a. Games are 7 innings
- b. A new inning will not start after 1 hour and 50 minutes of play.
- c. If after 4 innings a team is leading by fifteen (15) or more runs, or after 3 1/2 innings if the home team is leading, the game will be declared over. If after 5 innings a team is leading by ten (10) or more runs, or after 4 1/2 innings if the home team is leading, the game will be declared over
- d. Teams are limited to 10 Runs Per Inning except the 7<sup>th</sup> Inning which allows unlimited runs.

# PITCH COUNTS

1. The official scorebook keeper/ scoreboard operator should keep pitch counts for both teams' pitchers as well as a participant from the visiting team.
2. Pitches thrown in a make up game count for the day the game is played, not the day originally scheduled.
3. Game summary/Pitch count log sheet must be completed at the end of each game and signed by both Managers/Coaches. Furthermore the final score and pitch counts shall be entered into the online schedule system (Quickscores). The final score should be entered by the home team and the pitch counts shall be entered by either team individually for their team only.
  - a. At the end of each game, coaches will meet to compare pitch counts. If pitch counts do not match, the counts will be averaged to become the official count for that pitcher.
  - b. If pitch counts differ by more than 10, or if the average of the counts exceed league pitching rules, then the directors of both parks shall be notified within 24 hours for review of the books.
    - i. First Violation: If a violation of pitch count or rest period is discovered, and the violating team won as a result, that team shall forfeit that game and receive a team warning. If the violating team lost as a result, the loss will be converted to a forfeit and receive a team warning.
    - ii. Second Violation: A second violation of pitch count or rest period will result in disqualification of that team from participating in the tournament. If the violation occurs during a tournament game, the violating team will be disqualified immediately.
4. Within 24 hours of game completion, the home team shall record their score and official pitch counts for both teams online in Quickscores. Exception: During the tournament, the winner shall enter the score and pitch count before midnight the day of the game.. If the winning team fails to enter the score and pitch count before midnight of the day of the game, anyone who pitched that game will be ineligible to pitch the next game. Exceptions will be made by the directors.
  - i. First Violation: Failure to update Quickscores as described above will result in a warning.
  - ii. Second Violation: Second violation will result in disqualification from participating in the tournament.
5. The manager must remove the pitcher from the mound when the pitcher reaches the limit for their age group as noted below.
6. Once the pitcher has been removed from the pitcher position, they can not re-enter as a pitcher during that game.

7. Pitchers of Pony and Senior must adhere to the following rest requirements
  - a. **TOTAL PITCHES THROWN IN A GAME**
    - i. **SENIOR**
      1. **110 Total Pitches Per Game**
        - a. NOTE: A pitcher shall not throw more than 110 pitches in a single day or cumulative over a two-day period. All rest periods apply per game.
        - b. A pitcher shall not pitch more than two consecutive days regardless of the pitch count, at which time a minimum 1-day rest period is required.
        - c. Double headers are considered two separate games and single game pitch count limitations are in effect.
        - d. All other rest periods are based on the total pitches thrown
        - e. Days of rest start at midnight the day of the game.
      2. **REQUIRED REST PERIOD SENIOR**
        - 86-110 Pitches 3 Days
        - 61-85 Pitches 2 Days
        - 36-60 Pitches 1 Day
        - 1-35 Pitches 0 Days
    - ii. **PONY**
      1. **95 Total Pitches Per Game**
        - a. NOTE: A pitcher shall not throw more than 95 pitches in a single day or cumulative over a two-day period. All rest periods apply per game.
        - b. A pitcher shall not pitch more than two consecutive days regardless of the pitch count, at which time a minimum 1-day rest period is required.
        - c. Double headers are considered two separate games and single game pitch count limitations are in effect.
        - d. All other rest periods are based on the total pitches thrown
        - e. Days of rest start at midnight the day of the game.
      2. **REQUIRED REST PERIOD PONY**
        - 65-95 Pitches 3 Days
        - 45-64 Pitches 2 Days
        - 31-44 Pitches 1 Day
        - 1-30 Pitches 0 Days
7. **FINISH THE BATTER** – A pitcher at either level (Pony or Senior) shall be allowed to finish the batter when the pitch count limit is reached during an at bat, but shall be replaced immediately when the at bat ends.
8. **DAYS OF REST** – A day of rest is defined as a “calendar day”. Example: A Senior level pitcher who has reached the 110 pitch limit on Tuesday shall not be allowed to pitch again until Saturday.
9. **PITCH COUNT DISPUTES:** If there is a dispute in the pitch count both teams will present their pitch count, it will be divided by 2 and that will become the new pitch count.

10. **HIT BY PITCHES:** A pitcher must be removed from the pitcher position IF they hit a batter THREE times in one inning or any FOUR batters in a line up in a game.
11. **VIOLATION:** If a team **violates** the above rules, that team will record a **forfeit** for the offending game.

# PONY SPECIFIC RULES

All Pony rules will be according NFHS except for the following:

1. Metal cleats are allowed (however, each park can not allow them). Please check the opening email for a list of parks that allow and don't allow.
2. Facemasks or C-Flaps on batters helmets are optional.
3. Head-first sliding will be allowed, except when the runner's helmet has a facemask or any face protection. If they have a facemask or any face protection and do a head first slide, the runner is out. Exception is diving back into a base. The ball will be a delayed dead ball.
4. The on deck circle for each team shall be on the side in which the team is representing. Players are not to go to the opposite on deck circle depending on which side the batter bats on.
5. Balks will be called.
6. The Infield Fly Rule will be called.
7. Bunting is allowed. Faking a Bunt and pulling back and swinging is not allowed.
  - a. Penalty for fake bunting is an immediate dead ball and an automatic out and an ejection of the player
8. There will be 3 defensive timeouts per game. The 4th and each consecutive visit will result in removing the pitcher.
  - a. Mound visit ends when the coach crosses the foul line leaving the field of play.
  - b. Pitchers can not return as a pitcher.
9. Runners may advance on a dropped Third Strike.

# SENIOR SPECIFIC RULES

All Senior rules will be played according to the NFHS, unless otherwise stated in this rulebook.

1. The on deck circle for each team shall be on the side in which the team is representing. Players are not to go to the opposite on deck circle depending on which side the batter bats on.
2. Facemasks or C-Flaps on batters helmets are optional.
3. Head-first sliding will be allowed, except when the runner's helmet has a facemask or any face protection. If they have a facemask or any face protection and do a head first slide, the runner is out. Exception is diving back into a base.
4. Balks will be called.
5. The Infield Fly Rule will be called.
6. Bunting is allowed. Faking a Bunt and pulling back and swinging is not allowed.
  - a. Penalty for fake bunting is an immediate dead ball and an automatic out and an ejection of the player
7. There will be 3 defensive timeouts per game. The 4th and each consecutive visit will result in removing the pitcher.
  - a. Mound visit ends when the coach crosses the foul line leaving the field of play.
  - b. Pitchers can not return as a pitcher.
8. Runners may advance on a dropped Third Strike.

# TOURNAMENT FORMAT

The tournament will be formatted in the following manner:

- Senior East/West Gold (Hosted by \_\_\_\_\_)
- Senior East/West Silver (Hosted by \_\_\_\_\_)
  
- Pony East/West Gold (Hosted by \_\_\_\_\_)
- Pony East/West Silver (Hosted by \_\_\_\_\_)

The records will be split into gold and silver brackets determined by win/loss percentage, head to head, coin flip by the league scheduler

Each park will be required to pay to enter their teams in the tournament **BEFORE THE SEASON STARTS**. Fee will be determined before the season starts and all costs for the tournament. Umpires and trophies will be paid by the league using the funds provided at the beginning of the season.

# **MULTI-COUNTY BASEBALL CODE OF CONDUCT AGREEMENT**

It is the purpose and intent of **MULTI-COUNTY BASEBALL** to create and offer quality learning and baseball playing opportunities. The following **CODE OF CONDUCT AGREEMENT** is constructed as an instrument to emphasize those values, principles, and beliefs which are central to the foundation, structure, and operation of **MULTI-COUNTY BASEBALL**.

At all times, we agree to and support:

- Positive and exemplary sportsmanship, and appropriate demeanor by everyone (**NO FOUL LANGUAGE ON OR AROUND FIELD OR CHILDREN**)
- Safety and well-being of players, coaches, umpires, and spectators.
- First-class representation of players, parents/families, coaches, umpires, and spectators.
- Full respect and pride for the presentation of **MULTI-COUNTY BASEBALL**.
- Always playing within the established rules of the game (e.g., age limits, etc.).
- The understanding that participation with **MULTI-COUNTY BASEBALL** is a privilege and a player/family decision, completely voluntary, without any pressure or coercion.
- Team dress code, appearance, and player uniform standards...on and off the fields while at the park or representing **MULTI-COUNTY Baseball**.
- Realization that all our activities (instructional and competitive) are designed to enhance growth and development of all our players, families, and coaches.
- Equal respect and value of every teammate regardless of size, experience, talent, or performance...no criticism or "looking down on" anyone in any manner at any time for any reason whatsoever.
- Mutual respect, tolerance, understanding, and caring in all team matters.
- Respect coach's decisions (whether we understand, like, or disagree with them) and, no "coaching" from the stands.
- Emphasis on team spirit, team unity, team effort, and team success.
- Encouragement of everyone involved... players, coaches, parents, family members, et al.
- The reality that some players may have more plate appearances, playing time, positions/roles, and starting assignments, than other players.
- Tactful, quiet, one-on-one discussions of any concerns, questions, or ideas with coaches.
- Acknowledgement that each of us is responsible for our own thoughts, feelings, attitudes, decisions, and behaviors.
- Importance of leaving each other, each dugout, each ballpark, each tournament site, and each situation in better shape than we found them.

**MULTI-COUNTY BASEBALL  
CODE OF CONDUCT AGREEMENT (continued)**

Violations:

Any violations of the conduct, depending on how egregious, will result in a verbal warning and up to removal from the league.

1<sup>st</sup> Offense: Handled by Head Coach and advisement to League Director

2<sup>nd</sup> Offense: Handled by League Director and advisement to Baseball Director

3<sup>rd</sup> Offense: Handled by Baseball Director alongside the MULTI COUNTY  
Baseball Board

***NO REFUND OF PLAYER FEES FOR ANY REASON***

We have read, have discussed, and understand this CODE OF CONDUCT AGREEMENT, and fully, unequivocally support it, its intent, and its essence.

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Player signature/date  
(Pony/Senior Players Only)

Parent/guardian signature/date