

2024 RULES & REGULATIONS QUAD COUNTY OPTIMIST BASEBALL LEAGUE

Changes from previous season are in yellow.

All games will be played under Official Major League Baseball Rules with exceptions as herein noted.

1) The Quad County Optimist Baseball League is an amateur baseball league. No players can be paid or compensated in any way. In the event that a team is paying or compensating a player(s), the team manager, general manager, and player(s) will be banned from participating in the Quad County Optimist Baseball League at any level for life. The said team will forfeit all games with said player(s) and cannot qualify for post-season play.

2) Rule changes and amendments regarding "on-field" rules may only be made at a league board meeting (unless otherwise accepted by the President and Commissioner). Suggested changes must be submitted in writing to the Commissioner or President at least two weeks prior to the scheduled meeting date. The commissioner will then notify all team representatives of the suggested rule change(s), in writing, prior to the meeting. The change or amendment will then be put on the agenda and must be passed by a simple majority vote. The commissioner, at his discretion, may alter or make rule changes as necessary to maintain or better the integrity and quality of the league. These changes will be presented at the meeting and are not voted on. Any protest to these changes, unless otherwise accepted by the commissioner will be taken into consideration.

a) During the league season, the commissioner is charged with the application and administration of the league rules contained herein, including any/all penalties, fines, suspensions etc. These duties and decisions shall be performed to maintain or better the integrity and quality of the league as a whole. If a team wishes to protest a decision made by the commissioner during the season, a protest must be submitted in writing to the league president or commissioner within five (5) business days of the commissioner's original decision by the protesting team manager/coach.

b) If no commissioner is selected prior to the season, the President or Co-Presidents will take the responsibilities of the Commissioner.

c) Any protest will then be forwarded to a three (3) member committee (hereafter known as the Protest Committee) for review. The protest committee shall be comprised of the commissioner and/or Co-Presidents, and at least one other member in the current league. These members (total of 3) must not have an active role in the current protest that is being voted on. After review by the committee, a ruling will be made to either uphold the original decision, modify it, or dismiss the decision. This is determined by a majority vote of the protest committee. If the protest is rejected, the commissioner's original decision will stand as final. If the protest is upheld or modified, a revised penalty, fine, suspension etc. will be determined and communicated to both the protesting team and the league as well.

c) A protest to this committee may not be withdrawn after it had been submitted. The first protest will be \$0.00. There will be a fifty dollar (\$50.00) protest fee after the first protest, which must be paid to the league at the time of submission of the protest. This fee will be refunded in full only if the protest is upheld and all penalties, fines, suspensions etc. are dismissed. A modified or revised decision will result in the above fee remaining with the league.

3) The fee for forfeiting a game is FIFTY dollars (\$50.00). This fine must be paid to the league president before the team's next scheduled game. Failure to pay the fine on time will result in the team forfeiting its next scheduled game. The forfeiting team must also pay for both umpires, regardless of whether the game is home or away, and any field rental fee if applicable (i.e. visiting team causes forfeit, home team pays \$10/game to use field). Forfeit time for a game is exactly 15 MINUTES after the scheduled starting time of said game. A team must begin and play the entire game with at least 9 rostered players; otherwise the game must be forfeited.

b) First Offense for Forfeiting a Game without notifying the League 48-hours prior to gametime: Forfeit of Game plus fee mentioned above.

c) Second Offense for Forfeiting a Game without notifying the League 48-hours prior to gametime: Forfeit of Game plus fee, plus loss of playoff eligibility.

d) Third Offense for Forfeiting a Game without notifying the League 48-hours prior to gametime: Forfeit of Game plus fee, plus loss of playoff eligibility, plus team status review amongst league directors plus (1) coach from a team not involved with the forfeiting team.

4) No alcoholic beverages or drugs will be allowed on the premises of any game site. This includes fields, parking lots, etc.

5) Profanity is strictly forbidden. Any player and/or team manager using profanity may be ejected from the game and/or premises at the umpire's discretion.

6) Any player or coach arguing with an umpire may be ejected from the game at the umpire's discretion. If ejected, the player or coach WILL be suspended for one (1) game automatically. The player or coach should sit out the next scheduled league game unless otherwise notified by the league. The Umpire can recommend a longer suspension by contacting the league commissioner. Any player ejected from three (3) games in the same season will be suspended for a minimum five (5) additional consecutive games, including playoffs and championship series games if applicable. These suspensions can also carry over to the next seasons play if applicable. Suspended players may not dress in uniform and may not be present on the bench/dugout during their suspension. Flagrant abuse and/or argument with an umpire will result in a review by the Commissioner and could result in harsher penalties if circumstances warrant.

7) No player or coach may harass, slander, defame or argue with any league official while in the course of their duty or actions. This includes telephone calls, letters, e-mails, texts or related any contacts either in personal or professional situations. Such actions will result in an immediate 5 game suspension which is subject to increase based on review of the violation by the Commissioner.

8) Any players or coaches fighting during a game will be automatically ejected from the game and an automatic three (3) game suspension will be given. The suspension will be reviewed by the commissioner and the officiating umpires and may be increased at their discretion.

9) The designated hitter (DH) rule may be used only for the pitcher and cannot be used for any other position player. If used, the DH must make at least ONE PLATE APPEARANCE before another player can be substituted for him (as the DH) or a double change can be made to remove the DH from the game entirely.

10) An extra-hitter (EH) may be in the lineup at any time. You can have as many EH's as you wish. When substituting for the EH, they can only change defensively and must remain in that spot in the order. If someone subs in for that spot entirely, the original EH may re-enter but only in that spot. They cannot be subbed in for another position within the lineup.

11) Batting helmets must be worn by all batters and base runners. Helmets with the single ear flap are permitted. Base coaches are not required to wear helmets when on the field of play.

12) We are a "Slide rule" at all bases including home plate. Basically, the runner must slide or avoid intentional physical contact with any fielder, including the catcher when attempting to score at home plate.

13) Wooden and composite "wooden" bats ONLY may be used. Aluminum and graphite bats are prohibited. Wooden bats may not be corked or altered in any way that does not conform to Major League rules. "Corking", tampering or other related violations regarding altering the bat are strictly forbidden and any players caught in violation will be suspended a minimum of three (3) league games. A second offense will result in suspension for the entire season. A manager who suspects any tampering or illegal wooden bats can file a protest with the umpire and have the bat confiscated from the game. The bat must be forwarded to the league Commissioner or President within 3 days of the game in question. The bat will be destroyed in order to determine whether it is legal. If the protest is valid, the game will be replayed. If the bat is found to be legal, the protesting team will be required to compensate the player or team for the cost of replacing the bat. All rulings and suspensions related to this rule are subject to the Commissioner's final judgment.

14) All teams must submit a roster to the league at the beginning of the season. Maximum roster is twenty-six (26) players per team, plus two spots for "HS-Aged" players. "HS-Aged" players are any players that played for a High School baseball program in the same year as the league's season. Any player who is of age, but did not play for a High School team would be ineligible for qualifying for the "HS-Aged" player. Total = 28. There is no age limit. Any teams fielding players that are not on the roster are subject to forfeiting all games played with unregistered players. Expansion and changes to rosters is allowed until July 4th of each season. Players must sign a contract with their respective teams or once they record an out for the team, they are attached to that team for the season. Any in-season tournaments do not count towards the player attachment towards a team. Players may change teams if their current manager signs a release form. If a player meets all conditions of the contract, the manager must release said player if requested. This applies to both playing season and off-season changes. No players may change teams after the July 4th closing of rosters. To add or delete players from a roster after the first game of the season, the team manager must turn in a signed contract or release form to the league. The player added will be eligible to play as soon as the league and/or

president receive players completed contract and \$50.00 player fee. The league will notify each team of the addition/deletion.

b) The fee to be collected by the teams and forwarded to the league will be known as "league dues". Payments will be made to the league as follows:

i) A communicated deposit schedule to all teams prior to the start of the season in a league meeting or written format. A delay or missed payment could result in forfeit of games and/or removal from the league. Any issue of getting the payment to the league must be communicated IMMEDIATELY. Result in no communication will be assumed to be considered a "missed payment". See "Coaches Contract" detailed penalties of missing payments and/or not communicating payment intentions.

ii) For all players added to the roster after that point, the \$50.00 fee and the contract must be emailed to the league. New Contracts received without the fee will not be valid (player is not eligible) until fee has been received.

iii) The new league sign up option via the Quad County website takes care of all of this for new players.

iiii) Once a new player records an out for their respective team, they have accepted the terms of the league contract for players.

c) Any player released from his team on or after May 15th of each year will be ineligible to play with any other team in the league for the first five (5) league games of the new team after his release.

d) The league will maintain and distribute list of players who will be "released" from their previous team's roster for the upcoming season, but they are ineligible to play due to owing their previous team money, fees, uniforms, equipment etc. Teams must provide the league with those names by May 15th. These players are ineligible to play in the league for any other team until their former team receives payment/return of above said money, fees, uniform, equipment etc.

e) Team rosters must include the names of non-playing coaches. Non-playing scorekeepers and bat boys must also be listed on the roster for insurance purposes if they wish to sit on the bench or in the dugouts. These spots do not count against the 28 player roster limit.

15) All players must appear in a minimum of five (5) league games to qualify to participate in the playoffs. Exceptions to this rule are as follows:

a) HS-Aged "add-on" players who join the roster after July 4th.

b) Players designated as "Pitchers Only". These players are claimed by their teams to not play any other position other than to pitch. These players must have a minimum of four (4) appearances, or twelve (12) innings pitched to be eligible for the playoffs. THERE ARE NO EXCEPTIONS TO THESE APPEARANCE RULES.

16) A ten (10) run rule is in effect for all games. The game is considered complete after the 5th inning if either team is leading by 10 or more runs. A regulation game is seven (7) innings.

17) Any game called because of darkness or rain after the 5th inning is an official game. Any game called because of darkness or rain before the completion of the 5th inning will be replayed in its entirety. However, all statistics for the innings played will stand and must be sent to the league statistician. If the Home Team is winning after the completion of the top of the 4th, the game will be considered completed and the Home Team will be declared the winner.

a) Any game called due to darkness or rain which is tied shall remain a tie for both teams in the standings.

b) Positions in the standings will be determined as follows: two (2) points for a win; one (1) point for a tie; and zero (0) points for a loss.

c) Playoff games called due to darkness or rain prior to the completion of the 5th inning will be suspended and resume from that point of play.

18) Any game can be protested. The protest must be officially announced to the home plate umpire before any further pitches are thrown after the protested call is made in order to be valid. (NOTE: Judgment calls by an umpire cannot be protested). A protest can only be submitted by the team manager or a coach. All protests must be submitted in writing to the league commissioner within five (5) business days by the protesting team manager/coach. If the protest involves a playoff or championship game, the protest must be submitted within one (1) hour of the games conclusion. The league commissioner will decide whether or not to uphold the protest. If the protest is upheld, the entire game will be replayed. If the protest is rejected, the game is official as played. Any protest may be withdrawn at any time during the course of the remainder of the game or until the time of the commissioner's decision. There will be a fifty dollar (\$50.00) protest fee which must be paid at the time of league notification. This fee will be refunded in full if the protest is upheld.

19) Starting players who have been removed from the game may re- enter a game one time at the same position of the batting order as when they started the game.

a) The only exception is the pitcher, who cannot re-enter as a pitcher once he is removed from the game. The pitcher may re-enter as another position player but cannot pitch again in that game. If the DH is being used for the pitcher, another pitcher can enter into that spot from off the bench in a single change (pitcher for pitcher – DH intact). If a replacement pitcher is brought in from a position in the field, and the starting pitcher remains in the game at another position, the DH must be removed from the game (double switch).

b) If the pitcher has a DH for him, and he exits the game, he cannot re-enter the game unless the DH is removed and the pitcher re-enters in the same spot in the batting order. (Remember, the DH and pitcher originally start out as the same spot or “player” in the batting order – same as all other position players).

c) Courtesy Runner: A “courtesy runner” may be only used for the pitcher and the catcher. The runner must either be a bench player or the last “batted out”. The same runner cannot run for both the pitcher and the catcher. A different runner must be used for those two players. The courtesy runner cannot also run for the DH for the pitcher.

20) The home team must supply at least three (3) new game balls per game. Game balls will be supplied to each team by the league. The league will supply all game balls for post season games. The official ball of the league is the Rawlings Professional balls and/or Wilson 1010 Blems which are provided by the league and are the ONLY BALLS WHICH MAY BE USED during an official league game. Any change in official league balls will be communicated to the league coaches by the league directors.

21) The home team will keep the official score book for each game. Score sheets must be turned into the league statistician within seven (7) days after the game is completed. If the score sheet is not turned into the league statistician within seven (7) days, the home team will be fined twenty dollars (\$20.00) from their Penalty Fund*. If the Penalty Fund has insufficient monies to cover the fine, the team will begin forfeiting ALL games scheduled (see Rule #3 for additional fines) until the score sheet has been turned in or the fund is replenished. After ten (10) days, the league statistician may call the visiting team for a score sheet for the game. If they provide the score sheet, they will receive credit of the \$20 fine taken from the violating home

team. The home team must also provide a copy of the score sheet to the visiting team (if the visiting team requests a copy) within seven (7) days after the game has been completed.

22) All team members must wear complete uniforms (hat, jersey, pants) of similar design and color(s), including non-playing coaches. Any person not in proper uniform may not enter the playing field, including the coaching boxes. Violation of this uniform code could result in a protested game leading to a forfeit/penalties etc. New uniforms may not contain current league members "nicknames, logos, etc."

23) Each team is responsible for paying one of the two umpires (one team pays the home plate umpire, the other team pays the field umpire). If a forfeit is involved, the forfeiting team is responsible for paying the umpires (see Rule #3). For teams choosing to play a double-header, each team will pay one of the umpires for both games (split costs 50-50). The league will pay all umpire fees during the playoffs.

a) If a team fails to pay their respective umpire for said game, it MUST remit payment for said game at its next scheduled game (whether home or away) to the umpires officiating the next scheduled game. If the delinquent umpire fees are not paid at the said next scheduled game, the delinquent team will forfeit said game and all future games until the delinquent fees have been paid.

24) The home team is responsible for having the field prepared for play (this includes raking foul lines to at least first and third base). If the visiting team feels a field is not suitable for play, they should call the condition to the attention of the umpires prior to the start of the game. If, in the opinion of the umpires, the field is not suitable for play, the home team will forfeit the game. The league in conjunction with the "host" team (if applicable) will be responsible for preparing the field for playing during the playoffs.

25) The home team manager is responsible for notifying the visiting team manager and umpires if a game must be postponed due to inclement weather. The home team is also responsible for checking the condition of the field. Every effort possible must be made to make the field suitable for play.

a) GAMES MAY ONLY BE POSTPONED DUE TO INCLEMENT WEATHER. Once the league season begins, any games rescheduled for reasons other than weather without the approval of the Commissioner will be considered a forfeit by the home team. Appropriate forfeit penalties as designated by other league rules will also apply.

b) In cases where a game has been postponed or suspended due to darkness or rain, the home team manager must contact the visiting team manager within three (3) days of said game and they must schedule a make-up date within 10 days of the original scheduled game date. If the two teams cannot come to an agreement on a date within that time period, the commissioner must be notified after three (3) days and will then schedule the game for both teams.

i) If the home manager does not contact the visiting manager within the allotted three (3) day period, the game will be considered a forfeit, with the visiting team getting a win and the home team will have \$50 forfeit fee taken from the Penalty Fund.

c) ALL games postponed during the season must be rescheduled and played prior to the beginning of the playoffs. NO EXCEPTIONS.

d) If a home team is unable to use their field for any reason other than weather, the visiting team's field must be used if available. If the visiting field is unavailable, the game may be postponed/rescheduled only with the commissioner's approval. NO EXCEPTIONS.

e) NO games may be rescheduled for reasons other than weather without approval by the commissioner. NO EXCEPTIONS.

f) The league has sole control over playoff games and will make all decisions concerning scheduling, game times, postponements (weather etc.), and all other applicable decisions/changes as necessary etc.

g) Field locations for all playoff rounds will be at the preference of the league. This is to ease the process of field rentals for all parties involved. Any playoff team having an issue scheduling their field for playoff games should contact the league immediately.

h) If the league decides on a centralized location, playoffs will be played there.

i) The League Championship Series will be played at a field(s) determined by the league.

26) League Post-season and Playoffs will be the following format:

a) In a two (2) division format this season, the top team of each division will advance to the playoffs. After that, it will be the overall top 3 teams of the league that advance. There will be a one-game

"Play-in" round as follows: #5 seed vs. #4 seed. These games will be played prior to the official start of the playoffs. The winner of this game advances into the official 4-team playoff schedule.

b) The division winner will be seeded #1 and will play the #4/5 seed in the Quarterfinal round. The team that finishes #2 will play the #3 seed.

d) The Semifinal round playoff series will be a best of three (3) game series. The Championship series will be best of five (5).

f) The higher seeded team is always the "home" team for each series they play during the playoffs. In a best of three series, games 1 and 3 are home for the higher seeded team. Game 2 is home for the lower seed.

In a best of five series, games 1, 2 and 5 are home for the higher seeded team, with games 3 and 4 home games for the lower seed.

27) Tie-breakers within the standings:

a) Ties for the division championship will be determined by the following;

i) Head-to-Head record.

ii) Overall record against divisional opponents.

iii) One game playoff (if forgo, coin flip will decide outcome).

b) Ties for all other playoff seeding (regardless of number of teams involved) will be determined first by comparing the head to head records of those teams during the regular season. They shall be placed in the standings based on those records if applicable.

c) For any tiebreakers for the teams seeding #3-5, the following will determine the outcome;

i) Head-to-Head Records.

ii) Combined record against the winner of each division.

iii) Highest run differential for the season (according to GameChanger).

iiii) If a tie still exists, one game playoff (if forgo, coin flip).

28) The home team, as designated by the playoff schedule created by the league, will have preference over which dugout/side of the field it will use during the game. Other pre-game fielding/batting practice can either be agreed upon by both team managers or will follow general practice and courtesy used during regular season league games.