

# GREATER VICTORIA BASEBALL ASSOCIATION

## Universal House Rules Governing League Play: Spring Season

### 15U “A” DIVISION BASEBALL

Updated: March 4, 2023

Revised April 13, 2023

**Note:** With the exceptions outlined below, The Official Rules of Baseball (Canadian Edition) and the rules of the BC Minor Baseball Association (BCMBA) apply to all 15U A Division baseball played in the Greater Victoria Area. In addition, the following Universal House Rules also apply during all Exhibition, League, Inter-League, Mid-Season Tournament and Playoff games during the Spring season.

**For a park fielding more than one team in a division must follow the universal drafting procedures: To be found on the [www.victoriabaseball.com/rules/](http://www.victoriabaseball.com/rules/) “Spring Season Draft Rules”**

## 1. OFFICIAL GAMES

As per BCMBA Rule 22.01, Regulation Games shall be seven (7) innings in length. When the score is tied at the end of a regulation game, subject to the time limit, extra innings will be played until a decision is reached or the game is stopped by the umpire.

If bad weather, darkness or any other reason prevents completion of a game, the following procedures apply:

- a) If 5 innings have been completed or if the home team is ahead after 4.5 innings, the game is Official and the outcome is recorded.
- b) If a **League or Inter-League game** is called for any reason before it is an Official Game, the entire game will be re-played. If a re-schedule is not possible, the game will be recorded as a tie.
- c) If a **Playoff game** is called for any reason before it is an Official Game, the re-scheduled game will resume where it was halted and will not be replayed as a new game. Managers must attempt to put players back in their same positions.
- d) Decisions on whether to cancel/postpone a game are made at the playing field at the start time for each game. Teams are expected to show up on time for all scheduled games.
- e) The game's start time shall be declared by the umpire to the scorekeeper immediately before the 1<sup>st</sup> pitch is thrown. The scorekeeper is to record that time on the official score sheet, and indicate what watch or clock is being used to determine the game's time limit.

## 2. FIELDING NINE PLAYERS

Generally, games are not to be postponed or forfeited by Managers or Coaches because of a shortage of players. **If a team does not have at least 10 players** from its regular roster in attendance at the start of a game, pick-up or call-up players may be used to bring the temporary roster for that game up to 10 players, using the following procedures:

- a) Pick-up and call-up players must be registered on other teams in the GVBA. They may only be from the same division (15U) or from the next lower division (13U), as long as their participation does not interfere with games/practices of his/her regular team. **Pick-up players are not allowed to come from Little League.**

- b) **Pick-up players from other 15U Division teams:**
- may play any position, but may not pitch **for another 15UA team**;
  - may bat anywhere in the lineup; and
  - MAY NOT play in any playoff game.
  - **NOTE:** 15UAA or 15UAAA players may not be used as pick-ups on 15U A teams.
  - **NOTE 2:** 15UA players playing in 15UAA are restricted to **8** games at the AA level. Exceeding the **8**-game limit would deem the player ineligible for further play in GVBA 15UA division play.
- c) **Call-up players from 13U Division teams:**
- may play any position, but may not pitch;
  - may bat anywhere in the lineup;
  - may play in playoff games; and
  - are restricted to a total of **4** games in the 15U Division plus one invitational tournament (as per BCMBA Rule **5.06**).
- d) Regular team members always have precedence over pick-up/call-up players and should not sit out more innings than pick-up/call-up players. Regular team members arriving late are to be inserted into the game between half innings.
- e) Line-ups (with copies going to the Plate Umpire, Scorekeeper and opposing Manager) must list absent or injured players and identify the pick-up/call-up players. Pick-up/call-up players must wear all required safety equipment and the uniform of their regular team. **NOTE:** A player listed as injured on the line-up roster shall not play at any time during the game.
- f) As a last resort, a team may play with only 8 players without penalty. **If a team cannot field at least 8 players (including pick-ups/call-ups), it will forfeit the game.** **NOTE:** Pick-up/call-up players may NOT be used to cover a player shortage resulting from an EJECTION. If a team cannot field 8 players after an ejection, the game will be immediately stopped and the opposing team will be declared the winner by forfeit.
- g) In the event that neither team can field 8 players, both teams will forfeit the game and a loss will be recorded for both. The game will not be re-scheduled.

**NOTE 1: Any 15U player who is used as a 18U call-up** may NOT play more than 8 games at the 18U level, or penalties will be imposed as per BCMBA **Rule 5.06**.

**NOTE 2: Movement within the Division** (i.e., from 15U A to 15UAA) will not be interpreted as “playing up” for the purposes of the “Playing Up Game Limits” set in BCMBA Rule **5.06(B)**.

**NOTE 3: Summer Play.** Once a player’s team has been eliminated in the Spring playoffs, he may then play according to Summer rules. If a player’s Spring team is still playing, he must get approval from his Spring coach to play for a Summer team. He cannot pitch for a Summer team during the GVBA’s Spring playoffs as long as his Spring team is still playing.

### 3. SCHEDULED START TIMES

Teams will be given 15 minutes from the scheduled start time of a game to field at least eight (8) players. After the 15 minute delay, the game will either start or be declared forfeited, regardless of the reasons given for the inability to field a team.

#### 4. PRE-GAME RESPONSIBILITIES AND WARM-UPS

- a) 25 minutes before game time, the Visiting team has the infield and outfield for the next 10 minutes.
- b) 15 minutes before game time, the Home team has the infield and outfield for the next 10 minutes.
- c) 5 minutes before game time, the Umpires will call the Managers for the pre-game meeting and exchange of line-ups.
- d) In interlocking games, the home team will provide the Umpires with 4 balls at the start of each game.

#### 5. PLAYING RULES

- a) **A CONTINUOUS BATTING ORDER** is to be used by ALL teams, as follows:
  - i. All players in attendance and playing defensively are to be listed on the batting line-up in the order that they will bat, and that order will remain constant for the entire game.
  - ii. Should a player arrive late to a game, his/her name is added to the bottom of the batting order.
  - iii. In the event of an injury, the following procedures will be followed:
    - **Injury to a runner:** the player last out will replace the injured player
    - **Injury to a batter:** the player last out will complete the turn at bat, assuming the existing count
    - **Injury to a fielder:** any player on the bench may replace the injured player
    - **Once an injured player misses part of his turn at bat, he/she may not return to the game.**
  - iv. If a player must leave the park, is injured, or is ejected by an umpire, he is simply skipped in the batting order. **He is not an automatic out.**
  - v. A player listed as injured on the line-up roster shall not play at any time during the game.
- b) **UNLIMITED SUBSTITUTIONS:** Defensive changes may be made at any time (subject to the Pitching Rules, below).
- c) **FAIR PLAY RULE:** All players in attendance at a game **must not sit out more than 2 consecutive defensive innings**, except for injury or disciplinary reasons (which must be communicated to the Plate Umpire and the Scorekeeper). Failure to comply with this rule will result in forfeiture of the game.
- d) **PLAYING TIME:** Over the course of the season, the team manager and coaches will attempt to **ensure that all players play an equitable number of complete defensive innings** (within reason). Ejections, suspensions or injuries may influence total innings played.
- e) Use of a **COURTESY RUNNER** for the catcher on base is **mandatory when two are out**. The substitute runner is the player who was the last out.

- f) **6 RUN LIMIT (15U A ONLY):** There shall be a limit of 6 runs scored by each team per inning. **The last inning** (usually the 7<sup>th</sup>, but see (g) below) **shall be a Modified “Open” Inning.”** In a **Modified Open Inning**, the visiting team (if already leading) may score only 6 more runs, or (if trailing) may score as many runs as it takes to reach a 6 run lead. In a **Modified Open Inning**, the home team may score as many runs as it takes to win the game.

g) **TIME LIMITS**

i. **15U A** Even if it is not yet the 7<sup>th</sup> inning, a new inning started AFTER 2:00 from the game’s start time will be declared a **Modified Open Inning**. If that inning ends after the 2:15 mark then the game is over. If that inning ends BEFORE the 2:15 mark (and it was not yet the 7<sup>th</sup> inning), then ONE more **Modified Open Inning** will be played. Games called because of the time limit will be considered Regulation Games regardless of the number of innings played.

**FOR EXAMPLE:** if the 5<sup>th</sup> inning begins at the 2:01 mark, it is declared a **Modified Open Inning**. If it is a quick inning and ends at 2:14, then a 6<sup>th</sup> inning is played, which is also a **Modified Open Inning**. If the 5<sup>th</sup> inning in this example ends after the 2:15 mark, then the game would be over.

**NOTE 1: If a 15U A game is tied after 7 complete innings,** an extra **Modified Open Inning** will only be played to determine a winner if it can be started before the 2:15 mark.

**NOTE 2: 15U A Playoff games are not subject to time limits.** In playoff games, the 7<sup>th</sup> inning is a **Modified Open Inning** as are any extra innings required to break a tie.

**GENERAL TIME LIMIT NOTE:** A new inning officially begins the moment the last out is made in the previous inning.

- h) **MERCY (10- RUN) RULE:** If the visiting team is ahead by 10 runs after at least 5 complete innings, or if the home team is ahead by 10 runs after at least 4.5 complete innings, or if the home team goes ahead by 10 runs or more before completing its at bat in the bottom of the 5<sup>th</sup> inning, the game is terminated and the team ahead is declared the winner.
- i) **SLIDE OR AVOID RULE:** As per BCMBA **Rule 26.01**:  
If a play is being made, or is about to be made, it is **MANDATORY for runners to slide or make an effort to avoid a collision** at all bases and home plate. Failure to do either will result in an automatic 'out'. The ball is dead and no runner may advance beyond the base that was last legally acquired. An umpire will have the option of ejection if the incident warrants such a measure.
- j) **FORCE-PLAY SLIDE RULE:** Refer to BCMBA Rule **26.02**.  
In summary, on any force play, a sliding runner must slide directly into the base (**or on the side of the base opposite to that of the fielder**) to avoid making contact or altering the play

of the fielder). Interference will be called when (a) any contact occurs between the runner and fielder outside of the straight line between bases, or (b) the fielder is forced to avoid contact (by jumping or other means) outside of the straight line between bases. Contact is only permitted on a direct slide into a base.

**PENALTY:**

- With less than two outs, the batter-runner, as well as the interfering runner, shall be declared out and all runners must return to the base they occupied prior to the pitch. (Note: there are NO EXCEPTIONS to this)
- With two outs, the interfering runner shall be declared out and no other runner may advance.
- If the runner's slide is flagrant, and injures or has a high likelihood of injuring the fielder, the runner shall be ejected from the game.

k) **BLOOD RULE.** BCMBA Rule 26.04 is as follows:

- i. Any player who is bleeding or who has an open wound during a game shall be removed from the field of play by the umpires. The player may return to the game only after the bleeding has stopped and the affected or open wound has been completely and securely covered to the satisfaction of the umpires.
- ii. Should the same player start bleeding again or the affected area shows signs of bleeding, the umpires may remove the player for the duration of the game.
- iii. Should any blood be on the player's uniform, it must be washed out completely to the satisfaction of the umpire prior to the player returning to the game.
- iv. The substitute player is only a courtesy player until the original player returns.
- v. If a pitcher, while pitching, suffers an injury referred to in paragraph (i) above, the umpire will call a courtesy time for no longer than fifteen (15) minutes. If the pitcher can not return in this time a pitching change must be made.
- vi. Should a team only have eight (8) players available at the time of an injury referred to in paragraph (i) above, a courtesy time will be called for no longer than fifteen (15) minutes. If the affected player is unable to return after this time then the game will be forfeited.

l) **COACH'S DRESS.** Coaches must wear long pants (no shorts). These do not have to be uniform baseball pants, but should be athletic in nature. In addition, as a minimum, coaches must wear a team cap and may not wear open-toed shoes or sandals. Coaches that fail to comply with these rules are not allowed in the dugout or on the playing field during games.

## 6. PITCHING RULES

a) **NUMBER OF PITCHES AND REQUIRED REST**

- 1-35 pitches per day = no rest
- 36-65 pitches per day = 2 nights rest
- 66-85 pitches per day = 3 nights rest
- Maximum pitches allowed = 85 per day

**NOTE 1:** There are no maximum total pitch counts for a week or tournament.

**NOTE 2:** Pitches thrown in warm-up, in the bullpen, or ruled No Pitch by the umpire because time was called prior to the pitch, or thrown when ruled No Pitch due to a balk do not count towards pitch count.

**NOTE 3:** Pitch count is recorded after each game. A pitcher who requires rest after the first game of the day cannot pitch in the second game. For example: A 15U pitcher who throws 36 pitches in Game One is NOT eligible to pitch in Game Two that day.

**NOTE 4:** If a pitcher has two appearances in the same day his total pitch count for the day is combined for the purpose of calculating required rest. For example: A 15U pitcher who throws 30 pitches in Game One and 40 pitches in Game Two has thrown 70 pitches for the day and requires 3 nights rest.

**NOTE 5:** The following is an illustration of the rest required. If a pitcher requires three nights rest after throwing a 1PM game on a Sunday, he/she must rest Sunday night, Monday night, Tuesday night and can pitch when he/she wakes up on Wednesday morning.

- b) **EXCEEDING LIMITS TO FINISH BATTER.** See BCMBA Rule 24.02. A pitcher is permitted to exceed the daily maximum pitch limit (85 pitches) to complete pitching to a batter. For example: A pitcher starts pitching to a new batter at 80 pitches. At the end of facing that batter, the pitcher has thrown 87 pitches. The pitcher must then be removed from the mound and he/she requires 3 nights rest.
- c) **PITCHING ON CONSECUTIVE DAYS.** See BCMBA Rule 24.03. Pitchers may not pitch on three consecutive days EXCEPT during Spring tournaments AND his/her pitch count on the previous 2 days does not exceed 35 pitches IN TOTAL.
- d) **PITCHING AND CATCHING ON THE SAME DAY.** This is now permitted.
- e) **PITCHER REMOVED.** Refer to BCMBA Rule 24.06. Once withdrawn from the mound, pitchers are not permitted to pitch again in the same game.
- f) **PENALTY FOR VIOLATIONS.** Refer to BCMBA Rule 24.08.
  - i. **Maximum Pitch Count Violation**  
If a pitcher is about to exceed his/her maximum pitch count for the day, the opposing manager and/or official scorekeeper and/or tournament director must inform the pitcher's manager before the violation occurs. If a violation is discovered after it occurs the pitcher is simply removed from the mound and no further penalty will be invoked.
  - ii. **Rest Rule Violation:** If a pitcher pitches without proper rest, as defined above, the game will be forfeited to the opposing team. Such a violation may be protested by the opposing team up to 48 hours after the game upon the discovery of the violation.
- g) **ENFORCEMENT AND TRACKING.** Refer to BCMBA Rule 24.09.
  - i. Managers will be responsible for tracking the pitch count of their pitchers and may assign this duty to their scorekeeper, assistant coach, etc., however it is ultimately the manager's responsibility to ensure pitch count restrictions are followed.
  - ii. Each team is responsible for **maintaining a log of pitches thrown** by their pitchers on the form provided by BC Minor. A team may request to view their opposition's pitch count log prior to a game. A manager failing to maintain an accurate log may be reported to BC Minor and may face supplemental discipline including the forfeiture of games.
  - iii. Under no circumstances will umpires be expected to track or enforce pitch count restrictions.

- h) **BALKS:** Up to and including May 15, each pitcher will be given one balk warning per game.
- i) **STEPPING OFF THE RUBBER.** After a pitcher steps onto the rubber with the ball, the only way he/she can legally step off is to **step backward with his/her pivot foot**. The BC Baseball Umpires Association (BCBUA) has confirmed that stepping off improperly is a balk.

## 7. CODES OF CONDUCT

All players, managers, coaches, and parents in the GVBA must follow the Code of Conduct as defined in the BC Minor Rule Book (BCMBA Rule 13):

### BC MINOR CODE OF CONDUCT

BC Minor is committed to providing an environment in which all individuals are treated with respect. Furthermore, BC Minor Baseball supports equal opportunity and prohibits discriminatory practices. Members are expected to conduct themselves at all times in a manner consistent with the values of BC Minor Baseball. Members may be subject to sanctions according to BC Minor Baseball Discipline Policy for engaging in any of the following behavior:

- a) Not complying with the rules, regulations or policies of BC Minor Baseball, as adopted and amended from time to time;
- b) Deliberately disregarding the Rules of Baseball as amended from time to time;
- c) Verbally or physically abusing an opponent, officials, umpires, spectators, or sponsors;
- d) Showing disrespect to officials, including the use of foul language and obscene or offensive gestures;
- e) Abusing playing equipment or playing area;
- f) Failing to comply with the conditions of entry of an event including any rules with regard to eligibility or advertising;
- g) Using tobacco products on-field at any BC Minor baseball sanctioned competition;
- h) Any other unreasonable conduct which brings the game into disrepute, including but not limited to, abusive use of alcohol, non-medical use of drugs, use of alcohol by minors.

### PARENT CODE OF CONDUCT (BCMBA Rule 13.08)

Parents and spectators attending BCMBA sanctioned events are expected to role model appropriate behaviour for the youth players competing on the field. When conflict situations occur, parents and spectators are expected to resolve the conflict appropriately. Players, coaches, and umpires have the right to participate in the game without being subjected to abuse or distractions from outside the playing field.

Examples of unacceptable behaviour include but are not limited to: showing disrespect to umpires, opposing players, coaches, parents, and league administrators, including taunting, insulting language, angry outbursts, gestures, and physical aggression. The consumption of alcohol is not permitted at BCMBA sanctioned games.

Coaches are expected to make their best efforts to ensure these expectations are met by their parents and supporters.

Any parent or spectator who fails to meet these expectations may be asked to leave the area surrounding the field by the umpires. The umpire may speak directly to the individual being asked to leave or may choose to have the appropriate coach communicate this decision to the parent. If a parent or spectator refuses to leave the area surrounding the field the umpire may suspend the game without making any judgment as to the final score, which will be determined by the BCMBA Baseball Association.

Any BCMBA director may request that a parent or spectator leave the area surrounding the field of play

GVBA 15U Universal House Rules



as per the provisions of BCMBA Rule **13.08**.

The BCMBA may review any reports submitted in writing regarding unacceptable parent behaviour and issue discipline as is deemed to be warranted.

## 8. EJECTIONS & AUTOMATIC SUSPENSIONS

In the event of an ejection of a player, coach, or manager, the following will occur:

1. The ejected player, coach, or manager will leave the field of play immediately. A player may remain on the bench however a coach or manager must remove him/her self from the vicinity of the ball park.
2. The ejected player, coach, or manager **will AUTOMATICALLY serve a ONE game suspension following the first game he/she is ejected from. If a player, coach or manager is ejected more than once in the spring season, he/she will AUTOMATICALLY serve a THREE game suspension following the second (etc.) game he/she is ejected from.** No appeal will be allowed for these automatic suspensions. In the case of an automatic suspension, if there are less than the prescribed number of games remaining in the spring season (including playoff games), then the suspension will be carried into the next year.
3. Within 24 hours, the umpire who performed the ejection will submit a BC Baseball Umpires Association **Ejection Report** by filling out an electronic form at the BCBUA website ([www.bcbua.ca](http://www.bcbua.ca)).
4. A copy of this form will be forwarded to the GVBA Umpire in Chief and the GVBA President by the BCBUA. If the ejection is deemed by the umpire or GVBA UIC to be considered “offensive” or “very offensive,” as defined by the BC Baseball Umpires Association, copies of the ejection report must be forwarded on to a GVBA Discipline Committee for review within 24 hours of receiving it. The Discipline Committee will review the ejection report and will decide if further disciplinary action beyond the one or three game suspension is warranted. After the automatic one or three game suspension is satisfied, the player coach or manager may resume play pending the decision of the Discipline Committee. If further suspension is required, the player coach or manager must begin the suspension immediately after the decision is given.
5. A penalty greater than the automatic one or three game suspension may be appealed in writing to the GVBA Discipline Committee Chair, within 48 hours of the Discipline Committee submitting its decision. The player, coach, or manager is still under suspension until the appeal is heard by a GVBA Special Board Meeting, which will occur within 72 hours of the appeal submission.
6. The GVBA President will notify all Association Presidents and Association UICs of the final outcome of all ejections.

## 9. INCIDENT REPORTS

Incident reports can be submitted by anyone involved in a baseball game (on or off the field) that involves a GVBA team. An Incident Report is used to report **behavior** from any player, coach, manager, or umpire involved in a game that is felt not to be in accordance with the BC Minor Code of Conduct. Incident Reports should not include complaints of an umpire’s judgment calls or rule interpretations. Incident Reports can be submitted to any GVBA Board Member and may be reviewed by a GVBA Discipline Committee. It is at the discretion of the Discipline Committee Chair to decide on the appropriate course of action to deal with the situation.

Incident Report forms may be downloaded from the GVBA website ([www.victoriabaseball.com](http://www.victoriabaseball.com)).