

The South Central Illinois District 2010 Rules Review Committee has made the following recommended changes to the Baseball and Softball rules, and the George Khoury Association of Baseball Leagues Board of Governors has approved all such changes as of January 25, 2011.

1. For Baseball Rule 1, Section 1, the requirements for the Atom I, Atom II, Bantam I, Bantam II, Midget I, Midget II, and Juvenile Age Division individually to provide additional clarity regarding the age requirements of these divisions.
2. For Baseball Rule 1, Section 1, the Junior and Senior Age Divisions were realigned such that players who are not yet 18 are in the Junior division and those who are 18 or older are Seniors.

*Committee Comment: The creation of a Junior Age Division provides a program specifically aimed at high school aged kids. This can be promoted as such and with the goal of improving the popularity of this program at the target age levels. Combined with the possibility of later registration dates and game schedule, the logistics of playing baseball at school are now easier to accommodate. The realignment and expanded ages provides better opportunity to create teams combined with the later starting dates and marketing.*

3. For Softball Rule 1, Section 1, the age requirements for the Pixie I Pixie II Age Divisions individually.

*Committee Comment: There is a vast skill level difference at this age level. However Petites will be combined as Chics currently are to make it easier to make full teams. The goal of this change is to eliminate the problem of allowing players to play down based on the majority of players. See proposed Rule 1, Section 4 for additional clarification.*

4. For Softball Rule 1, Section 1, the Debutante Age Division and all references to it throughout the rules were removed.

*Committee Comment: Same concept as eliminating Juvenile Age Division. The proposed changes to the Sophomore Age Division below will include high school ages.*

5. For Softball Rule 1, Section 1, the Sophomore and Senior Age Divisions were realigned such that players who are not yet 18 are in sophomores and those who are 18 or older are seniors.

*Committee Comment: The creation of a Sophomore Age Division provides a program specifically aimed at high school aged kids. This can be promoted as such and with the goal of improving the popularity of this program at the target age levels. Combined with the possibility of later registration dates and game schedule, the logistics of playing baseball at school are now easier to accommodate. The realignment and expanded ages provides better opportunity to create teams combined with the later starting dates and marketing.*

6. For Baseball and Softball Rule 1, Section 2, now clearly defines that a Player can play up only as if he or she is no more than one year older.

*Committee Comment: This clarifies the rule and prevents playing up two years, which could be a safety and liability issue. For example, a Player who is in the Atom I age group can play up into Atom II but not into Bantam I. Also, for Age Divisions that include multiple age groups, such as Petite, a Player may play up into the next Age Division only when they are in*

*the last age group of the Age Division. For example, a Player that is in the first year of Petite may not play up into Chic, but a Player in the second year of Petite can.*

7. For Baseball and Softball Rule 1, Section 3 was added to clearly establish the minimum age limit for entering the Baseball and Softball programs.

*Committee Comment: This eliminates the possibility for individual Leagues to consider any request from players who are too young to enter the Baseball Program or Softball Program. It is the opinion of this committee that for safety and liability reasons, this rule must remain in place and must be strictly enforced.*

8. For Baseball and Softball Rule 1, Section 4 was added to clarify that the age of the oldest player on any given roster shall determine the age division in which a team participates in the Baseball or Softball programs.

*Committee Comment: This rule was stated in Rule 2 but appeared to apply only to teams who were coming from outside of the Khoury Leagues. The intent is that this rule applies to all teams and serves to clarify the requirements for the team to participate in the proper Age Division. It is the opinion of this committee that we must no longer allow a team to play in any age division based upon the age of the majority of players.*

9. For Baseball and Softball Rule 5, Section 2 was revised to clarify that it is only the “pre-season” rosters are to be filed with the District or the Association prior to the start of the season.

*Committee Comment: This clarifies that the pre-season roster is not necessarily the final roster used in the National Playoff Tournament, but is instead a representation of each team at the onset of the season. The purpose of this pre-season roster is to baseline each team to help eliminate the combining of teams or movement of players prior to the National Playoff Tournament.*

10. For Baseball and Softball Rule 5, Section 3 was added to establish that the failure of a League to file a pre-season roster prior to the established deadline shall result in the team being ineligible for the National Playoff Tournament.

*Committee Comment: Clarifying the consequences of not filing a pre-season roster as required will serve to establish the importance of these requirements. It is the goal of the committee to make this and related changes in order to help improve the integrity of the National Playoff Tournament in general.*

11. For Baseball and Softball Rule 5, Section 6 restructured with sub-sections to simplify and clarify the responsibilities of the Roster Approval Committee. Specifically, the committee shall now be required to review the submitted rosters with the pre-season rosters to verify that any and all changes to the teams’ rosters are legal.

*Committee Comment: These changes should help to clarify the responsibilities of this committee and to help it enforce the provisions of these rules, thereby reducing or eliminating the questionability of teams that participate in the National Playoff Tournament.*

12. For Baseball and Softball Rule 5, Section 9, limitations imposed on the Junior and Senior Age Divisions were relaxed due to the fact that most will likely be involved in both High School and Legion programs.

*Committee Comment: The committee felt it was important to remove any barrier to these players that could prevent them from participating in our programs. Additionally, we were concerned that excluding specific organizations and not others may become problematic as others may continue to gain popularity.*

13. For Baseball and Softball Rule 9, Rule 11, Section 2 was relocated to Rule 9, Section 3 to clarify the definition of the umpire “crew chief”.

*Committee Comment: The committee felt that this provision was in the wrong place in the rules, which may have led to widespread confusion regarding the definition of the “crew chief” of the team of umpires on any given Association game. Many assume the plate umpire is the crew chief, however this is not accurate. In many cases, it is the more experienced umpire, however the committee discussed exceptions to that though and decided to modify this provision slightly to allow the individual Leagues to determine who the crew chief shall be.*

14. For Baseball and Softball Rule 10, the provisions of both Sections 16 and 17 were clarified to include language that specifically states that Rule 10, Section 18 shall supersede the time limits set forth in these sections.

*Committee Comment: Strangely, there continues to be lingering confusion about time limits. Some managers continue to argue passionately that their games must last the full time provided by Sections 16 and 17 and do not seem to realize that for logistical reasons, this is sometimes not practical. The committee hopes that this clarification can help to reduce or eliminate such confusion.*

15. For Baseball Rule 10, Section 28 and Softball Rule 10, Section 34, remedies were missing for violations of the face guard requirements and we have therefore added remedies such that the first team offense results in a team warning and the second team offense the batter or runner is called out.

*Committee Comment: Without specific remedies, Leagues and Tournament Hosts were unable to enforce this rule effectively. By establishing specific remedies, enforcement of this rule should be clear, quick and easy.*

16. For Baseball Rule 10, Section 35 and Softball Rule 10, Section 33, language was added to require all participants under the age of 18 playing any offensive position, including batters, runners, base coaches, etc. to wear a helmet at all times while on the field of play. Also added are remedies to support enforcement of this rule.

*Committee Comments: Numerous concerns have been expressed about the need for the expansion of this rule. Especially in the older Age Divisions where players are often coaching bases, this will help to improve the level of safety of all players.*

17. The committee recommends that no change should be made to Baseball Rule 10, Section 47 and Softball Rule 10, Section 45.

*Committee Comment: While challenged on more than one occasion during the 2010 season, the committee recommends that this rule stand and that 9 players continue to be required for a game to be considered legal. It is the opinion of this committee that a minimum number of players be required to maintain the integrity of the game and that the minimum is a reasonable number of players. There was no compelling reason to lower the number of players from 9, and if done, what would that minimum be and what would be the justification used?*

18. For Baseball Rule 10, Sections 53 through 59 were added to define the adoption of pitch counts as the primary safety strategy to protect pitchers' arms. We recommend a pitch limit of 50 pitches for the Atom age division. We recommend a pitch limit of 70 pitches for the Bantam Age Division. We recommend a pitch limit of 90 pitches for the Midget and Juvenile Age Divisions.

*Committee Comment: A substantial amount of time was spent by this committee discussing the pros and cons of various approaches, more than one of which was considered. The concept of counting pitches has been proposed several times over the years but has never been adopted. After careful consideration of the benefits of this approach, the committee determined this option made the most sense and is therefore our recommendation.*

19. For Baseball Rule 10, Sections 58 and 60 were added to clarify that the Umpire(s) shall maintain responsibility for tracking pitching outs.

*Committee Comment: When an umpire is working by himself or herself, that umpire is encouraged to get a reliable parent to track pitches. When two umpires are on a game, it is thought that a second counter can be used by the umpires to track pitches. Optionally however, reliable parents can be used to help. Regardless of the method chosen by the umpire crew chief, he or she is responsible for tracking and assigning pitch counts to the best of his or her ability. If there are discrepancies, the umpire crew chief shall state the count of pitches charged and move on.*

20. For Baseball Rule 10, sections previously numbered as 56, 57 and 58 were deleted, thereby eliminating pitching limits for the Junior and Senior Age Divisions.

*The committee could not justify the use of pitch counts at these levels, nor could it justify leaving the pitching outs concept in place given the adoption of pitch counting at the younger levels. There are no formal pitching limits at the High School level and beyond and there seems to be little reason to implement them for our programs.*

21. For Baseball and Softball Rule 11, Section 1 was added to require the submission of Team and Field information to the District Scheduler by the deadline established by the respective District Council. Also included are remedies to address failures to meet these requirements.

*Committee Comment: The inability of a League to get Team and Field information to the District Scheduler on a reasonable timeline is very disruptive to the startup of the season. It is the intention of this committee to substantially reduce and even eliminate these problems to help achieve a more smoothly running season for all Leagues.*

22. For Baseball and Softball Rule 11, Section 2 was added to require League Presidents or their designees to inform all Leagues within a reasonable amount of time when teams are dropped from the schedule.

*Committee Comment: There has been confusion caused by the dropping of teams after the season has begun. To help reduce or eliminate these problems, the committee recommends that responsibilities be clarified.*

23. For Baseball and Softball Rule 11, Section 4 was added to require National Playoff Tournament dates on all schedules.

*Committee Comment: The number one reason stated for not participating in the National Playoff Tournament is not knowing when the tournament will be held. This will directly address that issue and may help to improve participation.*

24. For Baseball and Softball Rule 11, Section 6 was added to clarify how late-arriving players must enter the game, and when they cannot.

*Committee Comment: Most of this provision has been an “unwritten rule” and has mostly been followed. The committee recommends that it be formally added to the rules at this time simply to eliminate any possible related confusion.*

25. For Baseball and Softball Rule 11, Section 7, a provision was added to clarify the score in the event that a team must forfeit due to their inability to field a team within a reasonable amount of time.

*Committee Comment: This is a simple clarification.*

26. For Baseball and Softball Rule 11, Section 8 now includes the addition of language to clarify the definition of the Official Start Time of an Association game.

*Committee Comment: This is a simple clarification.*

27. For Baseball and Softball Rule 12, Section 7 was added to require that all National Playoff Tournament Schedules be submitted to the Association not less than 72 hours prior to the start of the tournament.

*Committee Comment: There have been many instances where National Playoff Tournament schedules have not been available until the last moments prior to the start of the tournament. This provision will help to reduce or eliminate that problem. Additionally, by submitting the schedule to the Association, it can be posted on the Association’s website for all to see.*

28. For Baseball and Softball Rule 12, Section 8 was added to require that National Playoff Tournament Schedules be communicated to participating teams not less than 72 hours prior to the start of the tournament.

*Committee Comment: This is another provision to try to help get schedule information to teams on a more timely basis.*

29. For Baseball and Softball Rule 12, Section 9 was added to require that changes to the National Playoff Tournament schedules be communicated to participating teams within a reasonable amount of time.

*Committee Comment: This is another provision to try to help get schedule information to teams on a more timely basis.*

30. For Baseball and Softball Rule 12, Section 15, a minor revision was made to allow Tournament Directors to determine the outcome of ties rather than requiring a coin toss.

*Committee Comment: This simply seems more reasonable.*

31. For Baseball and Softball Rule 12, Section 20, additional language was added to prohibit games less than 2 hours.

*Committee Comment: No game in any of the National Playoff Tournaments should be scheduled to last less than 2 hours.*

32. For Baseball and Softball Rule 12, Section 36 was added to require that results and standings be publically posted within 1 hour.

*Committee Comment: While not thought to be a significant problem for most, the committee recommends that this requirement be formalized.*

33. For Baseball and Softball Rule 12, Section 37 was added to require that final results and be communicated to the Association within 72 hours following the completion of the tournament.

*Committee Comment: The committee recommends that this is needed to help improve the integrity of the playoff tournament and for public relations purposes. Additionally, this will enable to Association to communicate the results of its playoff tournaments to the public and press as it sees fit.*

34. For Baseball and Softball Rule 13, Sections 3 and 4 were combined and tobacco use was added to the list of prohibited substances.

*Committee Comment: The committee received feedback that tobacco should be included, and that seems to be in line with popular opinion. In doing so, it became apparent that the existing sections could be combined as well rather than add a third such provision.*

35. For Baseball and Softball Rule 13, Section 7, language was added to provide specific support for the enforcement of concessions rules.

*Committee Comment: Concessions rules enforcement continues to be a recurring problem and these additions should help Leagues to more consistently enforce these rules.*

36. For Baseball and Softball Rule 13, Section 8 was added to provide clear remedies for Leagues in such cases where conduct and concessions or other rules are not followed.

*Committee Comment: This additional language is recommended to help Leagues to more aggressively enforce their concessions rules.*

37. For Baseball and Softball Rule 13, Sections 9 and 10 were added to require that all forfeitures and ejections be filed with both the District Director and the Association.

*Committee Comment: The committee recommends that a more complete approach be taken to identify and control potentially problematic situations to prevent recurrence. By sharing information about ejections and forfeitures, Leagues can be aware of the potential for such problems and can take measures to help prevent future problems, such as the scheduling of senior umpires, having League officials on hand, to take an opportunity to clarify any rules, etc.*

It should be noted that this list of changes includes only the more significant changes proposed. Numerous minor revisions were also made to correct grammar, spelling, and various other errors or omissions. This committee recommends a thorough review of the document of proposed changes to ensure that the final result is what is needed and expected.

Respectfully,

The 2010 Rules Review Committee

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