

2012 Level III Baseball Rule Addendum

The Level III Program uses **2012 National Federation of State High School Association's** baseball rules. The following are the **League modifications** to those rules for all age groups & divisions with references to NFHS rules where appropriate.

Rule 1 - Players, Field and Equipment

1.2.1 The following playing **field distances** shall be used for all Level III League games:

- 9/u Division: The diamond shall be sixty (60') feet between bases. The distance from the front edge of the pitcher's plate to the point of home plate shall be forty (40') feet.
- 10/u Division: The diamond shall be sixty-five (65) feet between bases. The distance from the front edge of the pitcher's plate to the point of home plate shall be forty-six (46') feet.
- 11/u Division: The diamond shall be seventy (70) feet between bases. The distance from the front edge of the pitcher's plate to the point of home plate shall be forty-six (46') feet.
- 12/u Division: The diamond shall be seventy (70) feet between bases. The distance from the front edge of the pitcher's plate to the point of home plate shall be fifty (50') feet.

Note: In the event of blended-age leagues, the rules for the older age-group will be used.

1.3.4 Bat Restrictions:

9 and 10 year-old divisions: There shall be no weight or length restrictions on bats.

11 and 12 year-old divisions: Teams are restricted from using bats with a bat-drop (length to weight ratio) greater than -8.

Per National Federation and USSSA Guidelines, FCBC Level III and Recreational Teams permits only the following bats to be used:

All bats, including big barrel bats, must have the manufacturer's BPF 1.15 certification on the taper or be a wood bat. (Note that NEW bats manufactured for the 2012 season will ALL have the letters "USSSA" on the BPF 1.15 mark.)

1.4.1 Metal Cleats are not allowed.

1.5.1 Batting helmets and catcher's equipment must be League approved.

1.5.4 All catchers' helmets must have full ear protection (dual ear flaps). The mask must have an attached throat protector.

1.5.11 Non-traditional playing equipment must be reviewed by the League commissioner(s) before it will be permitted.

1.5.12 Jewelry shall not be worn (See 3.3.1d) except for religious or medical medals ... taped and worn under the uniform ...

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Rule 2 - Playing Terms and Definitions

- 2.17.1 **Innings** (see also 4.2.2a, 4.2.2b) - **All Divisions:** Games will consist of six (6) innings.
- 2.19 **The Infield Fly Rule** is in effect.

Rule 3 - Substituting, Coaching, Bench and Field Conduct, Charged Conferences

3.1.1 **Substituting**

Late Players: In the situation where a player is late arriving for a game, whether this is pre-announced to the coach or not, the player shall still be allowed to play. Offensively, the late player is placed at the last spot in the line-up (Because we bat the entire roster, a late player may not used merely as a substitute for another player). Defensively, the player may be freely substituted.

Player Removal: If a coach elects to remove a player from the game due to injury or misconduct, an automatic out will not be charged in the batting order (see also Rule 3.1.5). If a player is ejected from the game by the Umpire, an automatic out will be charged in the batting order for each of the ejected player's subsequent at bats.

If a player is injured on offense and the injury results in his removal from the game, the player who made the last out shall be inserted as a courtesy runner.

- 3.1.2 **Pitcher Re-entry:** Only the starting pitcher will be allowed re-entry as a pitcher - and this only once per game. A pitcher who re-enters is still bound by the League Pitching Restrictions as outlined below (Rule 6.1.6).
- 3.1.4 On offense the batting order shall contain the entire roster of players present.
- 3.1.5 With any **injury** that requires the removal of a player from a game, the player must have written permission from a parent (or legal guardian) and a doctor to resume play.
- 3.2.1 Coaches are not required to be in team uniform. However, coaches must wear athletic attire that corresponds to his team's uniform colors. A player base-coach is required to wear a batting helmet. Players and coaches will show respect for the game by wearing hats bill-forward except while playing catcher.

We insert the following rules (3.3.1g, and j) not as modifications, but as plain reminders to coaches.

3.3.1g **Bench and Field Conduct**

'A Coach, player, substitute, attendant or other bench personnel shall not:
commit any unsportsmanlike act to include, but not limited to,

6. any member of the coaching staff who was not the head coach (or designee) in 3.2.4 leaves the vicinity of the dugout or coaching box to dispute a judgment call by an umpire.

The rules further state: For the head coach, the duties of controlling the dugout and team behavior includes being both accountable and responsible for the actions of assistant coaches and all other team personnel ... the head coach is the only coach responsible for communications with umpires, and it

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is not the role of the assistant coach to dispute or appeal play situations and rulings. (p.65, Points of Emphasis, paragraph 2)

PENALTY: The umpire shall eject the offender from the game, unless the offense is judged to be of a minor nature. The umpire may warn the offender and then eject him if he repeats the offense.

FCBC Reserves the right to suspend any assistant coach who violates this rule.

3.3.1j 'A Coach, player, substitute, attendant or other bench personnel shall not:

be outside the designated dugout (bench) or bullpen area if not a batter, runner, on-deck batter, in the coach's box or one of the nine players on defense.'

When your team is on Offense you are allowed two base-coaches (3.3.1). When your team is on Defense the entire coaching staff should be in the dugout.

3.3.1p Use of tobacco or tobacco-like products within 250 feet of the dugout is prohibited for all players, coaches, and team personnel (scorekeepers, attendants, etc.). Offenders shall be ejected immediately upon discovery, and the league may impose additional sanctions.

Rule 4 - Starting and Ending Game

4.1.1 The umpire-in-chief shall decide if the grounds and conditions are suitable for play at game-time. Every effort will be made by umpires to start the game even if it necessitates a delay of up to thirty (:30) minutes.

4.1.3 **A team may start and end the game with 8 players** and an automatic out will not be charged for the missing ninth player. Free substitution shall be allowed on defense. All players shall play a minimum of three complete defensive innings. The batting order shall contain the entire roster of players present.

Pre-Game Warm-ups: Both teams should get an equal amount of on-field warm-up time. Coaches should work together to be certain that both teams' warm-ups are completed five (5) minutes prior to the game's scheduled start time. Umpires will not consider unequal warm-up time, and will start the game on schedule.

Exception: during infield warm-ups the opposing team's starting pitcher may warm-up in live ball territory. The starting pitcher shall warm-up at a location in which his warm-up activities will not obstruct or interrupt the opposing team's infield warm-up. The safety of the pitcher and catcher should be considered when selecting a warm-up location. The catcher may be any player or coach on the starting pitcher's team. If the starting pitcher elects to warm-up in live ball territory it is recommended that a protector (another player or coach with a glove) be used to help insure the safety of the pitcher and catcher.

4.2.1 **Nominal Time-limits:** All games shall start on time. A new inning may only start prior to completing **one-hour and forty-five minutes (1:45) of play**, unless the game is tied, in which case Rule 4.2.2a (Extra Innings) is applied to end the game. The one-hour and forty-five minute (1:45) game clock starts immediately at the conclusion of the umpire/coach pre-game conference. A new inning begins the instant the third out is made in the bottom half of the previous inning.

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Complete Game: For all Divisions, a game shall be considered complete, and will be counted in league standings if the Mercy Rule is applied, or after three (3) complete innings and the one-hour and forty-five minute (1:45) time-limit has expired.

4.2.2 Extra Innings: California Tie-Breaker

- “Extra innings” definition: Innings that are played in order to break a tie. These may include innings played beyond the prescribed number of game innings (as specified under 2.17.1a) or innings started after the one-hour and forty-five minute (1:45) game-time limit in order to break a tie. Once the first extra inning begins, the one-hour and forty-five minutes (1:45) time-limit no longer applies.
- During the first extra inning the last scheduled batter for that inning will be placed on second base. There will be zero (0) outs to start the inning.
- During the second extra inning the last scheduled batter for that inning will be placed on second base and the next-to-last batter will be placed on third base. There will be zero (0) outs to start the inning.
- The maximum number of extra innings allowed is two (2). If a game’s outcome has not been decided at the end of two extra innings, the game will be scored as a tie, and treated as a complete game.

Mercy Rules: The following rule will be in effect for all Divisions and all League games: The game will end if after two (2) complete innings either team is ahead by 20 runs, or if after three (3) complete innings either team goes ahead by 15 runs (or two and one half if the home team is ahead). Games will be played to even innings.

4.2.3 Called Game: 'If weather or darkness interferes with play so that the game is called (ended) by the umpire, it is a regulation game if **three (3) full innings** have been played ... If the game is called when the teams have not had an equal number of complete turns at bat, the score shall be the same as it was at the end of the last completed inning; except that if the home team in its half of the incomplete inning, scores a run (or runs) which equals or exceeds the opponent’s score the final score shall be as recorded when the game is called.'

Additional conditions under which an umpire may “call” (end) a game:

- When a subsequent game on the same field is officially scheduled to begin.
- When any other valid condition exists which prohibits the game from continuing, e.g. park rule stating no play is allowed after a certain time. Any such ground rules must be discussed in the pre-game conference, if known in advance.

4.2.4 Suspended Game: A game that is called by the umpire for any reason (darkness, rain, another scheduled game, etc.) before it is officially completed (three full innings) shall be considered a suspended game; the game will be restarted at a later date at the same point that it was suspended.

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- 4.4.1 Forfeited Games:** A game shall be forfeited to the offended team by the umpire [or the League] when a team:
- Is unable to provide at least eight (8) players to start a game.
 - Is unable or unwilling to participate in the resumption of any suspended game or in any game that has been rescheduled by the League Administration.
 - If both sanctioned coaches are ejected.
 - If neither team shows up for a game. Teams must play all games on the published League Schedule. If both teams fail to show up for a scheduled game, each team will be credited a loss and no score will be entered.
- 4.4.2** Forfeited games will be scored as a 7-0 win for the offended team, and will count in the league standings.
- 4.5** **Protested Game:** Protests will be allowed for game ending procedures questions ONLY. Protests must be made in writing to Fort Collins Baseball Club no more than 24 hours after the completion of the game in question. A \$100.00 protest fee must accompany all protests. The protest fee will be returned if the protest is upheld.

Rule 6 - Pitching

6.1.1-3 Balks: Balks will be called at both 10u and 12u age-levels.

6.1.6 Pitching Restrictions by age-division:

- 9/u Division: **A maximum daily total of 2 innings per pitcher per day is allowed; and 4 innings per week.**
- 10/u Division: **A maximum daily total of 3 innings per pitcher per day is allowed; and 5 innings per week.**
- 11/u Division: **A maximum daily total of 3 innings per pitcher per day is allowed; and 5 innings per week.**
- 12/u Division: **A maximum daily total of 5 innings per pitcher per day is allowed; and 6 innings per week.**

Note: In the event of blended-age leagues, the rules for the older age-group will be used.

One pitch equals one inning.

All totals apply to league play only. *While totals apply to league play only, it is recommended that coaches attempt to follow league restrictions for all games (league and non-league) to insure the health of all pitchers.*

Rule 8 - Baserunning

8.1.1b **The Dropped 3rd Strike IS in effect.**

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8.4.2b1 Any runner is out when he ... does not legally slide and causes illegal contact ...

As point 2 of the rule clearly states, 'Runners are never required to slide, but if a runner elects to slide, the slide must be legal.' The rule does not say that - in order to be a legal play - the player must slide. There is no 'must slide' rule. The rule is concerned about the quality (legality) of the slide, not a necessity of it. The rule is in place for players trying to intentionally take-out the defenseman at 2B.

FCBC Additional Rules and Protocol

Non-Game Team Functions: Any use of alcohol by team personnel before or after games or at any team parties, tournaments, or other functions where the players are present is prohibited.

Entering of Game-scores on the FCBC Website: The coach of the winning team is responsible for entering the game-score and pitchers' innings on the FCBC website, using the Coach Login. If a game is not entered within 24 hours following the start of the game it will be scored as a 0-0 tie. That tie will become part of both teams' record for determining end-of-season playoff seeding.

Suspension and Ejection Policy: The following league ejection and suspension policies will be in effect for all Level III League games, including the End-of-Season Playoff in 2011:

Definition of terms:

- Ejection: A penalty for un-sportsmanlike conduct or other violation penalized by ejection as outlined by NFHS baseball rules. An ejection is served during the game in which the ejection occurred.
- Suspension: A penalty for un-sportsmanlike or other inappropriate conduct. The League Recreational Committee governs suspensions. A suspension is additional punishment to an ejection. A player, coach, or other person associated with a team may be suspended even if they haven't been previously ejected.

Ejections:

- Coach Ejections: All coach ejections are governed by the NFHS baseball rules.
- Player Ejections: All player ejections are governed by the NFHS baseball rules.

Suspensions:

- Coach Suspensions: **A coach, or other person associated with the team, who is ejected from any league game will be suspended for a minimum of one (1) additional game, and is not allowed on site at the game or warm-up. A coach, or other person associated with the team, may be suspended for more than one game.** A coach, or other person associated with the team, may be suspended without having been previously ejected. If both sanctioned coaches are ejected from the same game then the head coach is suspended from the next league game and the manager is suspended from the subsequent league game.
- Player Suspensions: All player ejections will be reviewed by the Competitive Committee to determine if a suspension is necessary.