

# Virginia Baseball Congress

## League Playing Rules – 2007

All playing rule governing major league baseball shall apply unless they conflict with the following league rules.

### I. Teams

#### 1. TEAM NAMES

All league teams shall be named after major league franchises.

#### 2. AGE REQUIREMENTS

Eligible players must turn twenty-eight (28) years old in the calendar year. An opposing manager, at any time, has the right to question a player's age; whereupon, the questioned player must present evidence of his age within one week. Players who do not meet age requirements shall be considered illegal players. See section 4 ROSTER FORMS for age verification requirements.

#### 3. ILLEGAL PLAYERS – PENALTIES

All games played with an illegal player will result in a forfeit of all games during which said player participated.

##### 3A. ADDITIONAL PENALTIES

In addition, the manager may be suspended for up to four (4) games.

#### 4. ROSTER FORMS

All players must submit a completed roster form with age verification to the league office. A copy of a driver's license or birth certificate will be sufficient to establish eligibility. Players will have to submit age verification only once. The league may request to view the original age verification document if the submitted photocopy is not legible or appears altered. Players who do not have a roster form on file shall be considered illegal players.

##### 4A. DEADLINE - INDIVIDUAL ROSTERS

The deadline for submission of individual rosters shall be prior to the 1<sup>st</sup> game. No player is eligible for play unless a signed roster is in the league office by Friday of that week's game. In addition, provide one copy of the roster to the opposing manager and another to the league office.

#### 5. TEAM ROSTERS

Team rosters must be completed and approved by the manager, and submitted to the league office by the date of the 1<sup>st</sup> game. The Board will set this date during the pre-season of each year.

#### 6. ROSTER CHANGES

Once rosters are set, players can be added to the team roster at any time during the season. See Rule 36 for Playoff Eligibility.

#### 7. PLAYER MOVEMENT

##### 7A. OFF-SEASON

Any player can move to another team during the off-season without their current Manager's approval provided that the player moves to a team either ranked below his existing team or ranked one team above his existing team. Team rankings will be based on prior years winning percentage including playoffs.

A player who wants to move to a team two levels or more above his current team must have his Manager's approval. The Commissioner has the right to override the Manager's objections.

## 7B. IN-SEASON

A player can change teams during the season with both Managers and Commissioners approval.

## 7C. DISBANDING OF TEAMS

If a team disbands at any time, then players on this team must follow off-season player movement rules with the Commissioner having final approval.

## 8. FEES

All teams must pay the team fee in order to participate in the current season. Because the team fees may change from season to season, depending on the anticipated expenses and number of teams, the team fee will be established in March of each year. Discounts may apply if the deadline is met. A \$500.00 deposit is due by February 15 to guarantee a team's spot in the league. An additional \$1000.00 is due by March 15. The remaining balance is due by May 1. If the February 15 deadline is not met, than \$1,500.00 is due by March 1 in order to participate in the New Player's draft.

## II. EQUIPMENT

### 9. BASEBALLS

Only those baseballs provided by the league are permitted. The Home Team shall provide all game balls.

### 10. BATS

Only bats with a wood, wood-laminate or wood-shell are allowed for league play. Ash, Maple, and Bamboo are allowed. Composite and metal bats without a wood hitting surface are not allowed for league play.

#### 10A. ADDITIONAL PENALTIES

Using an illegal bat in a game will result in an automatic out and the player will be ejected from the game. The player's position in the batting order must be filled with another player not already in the batting order; if no player is available then the rules of playing with 8 will apply. Umpires do not have the responsibility to police the use of illegal bats. If a player uses an illegal bat, the opposing team must bring it to the attention of the umpire before the next pitch is made to the next batter.

### 11. UNIFORMS

All teams must have full baseball uniforms. Players and coaches without uniforms will not be allowed to play without the opposing manager's consent.

A uniform shall consist of a major league style (facsimile) hat, shirt, pants, and athletic shoes. Each uniform shall be numbered on the back, and the name or logo of the team shall be displayed on the front of the jersey. The jersey shall be tucked in and *there shall be no bare legs*.

## III. GAMES

### 12. FIELDS

All players, coaches and fans must respect the sanctity of the playing fields and refrain from litter, alcohol, drugs, profanity or other undignified behavior. The home team is responsible for enforcement, while players from each team are expected to help line/rake the fields and assist in clean up after each game.

### 13. DUGOUTS

The home team gets its choice of dugouts. *For insurance reasons, visitors are discouraged from the dugout. While in the dugout, children must wear a helmet.*

#### 14. ALCOHOL/INTOXICANTS

There will be no alcoholic beverages or intoxicants permitted during any VBC event.

##### 14A. ALCOHOL/INTOXICANTS VIOLATION

Players will be ejected from the game and made to leave the grounds. Fans shall be asked to discard the alcohol or intoxicants and may stay if they comply promptly. Failure to discard the alcohol or intoxicants will result in the fan being made to leave the grounds.

##### 14B. ADDITIONAL PENALTIES

Players and fans may be forever barred from any future VBC games or events, or may be barred or suspended for such lesser periods as may be appropriate.

#### 15. RAIN OUTS

See Official League Schedule for rain out dates. **If a game is rained out before becoming an official, completed game (see Rule 19), the game will be replayed in its entirety.**

#### 16. NUMBER OF PLAYERS FOR GAMES

Teams must have at least nine defensive players at all times for an official game. If a team has only eight players, that team may borrow a player from the opposing team for defensive purposes only. Offensively, the team with eight players will record an automatic out in the ninth position of the batting order. If during the course of a game, players are injured or leave and this results in that team having eight players, then that team may borrow a defensive player as per above. If a player is ejected from the game thereby causing that team to have eight players, then that team may not borrow a defensive player, causing the game to end in a forfeit. No team can borrow players in play-off games.

#### 17. STARTING TIMES OF GAMES

Weekday games begin at 7:00 p.m. Sunday games begin at 1:00 p.m. but could vary per the Master Schedule. One fifteen (15) minute grace period will be allowed. If a doubleheader, the second game (after forfeiting in the first game) will begin no later than 1-1/2 hours from the scheduled time of the first game. There will be a 20-minute break between double-header games.

#### 18. FORFEITS

Forfeits on three (3) consecutive dates by any team can lead to expulsion from the league play-offs.

#### 19. OFFICIAL GAME

A single game is nine (9) innings and a doubleheader shall consist of two 7-inning games. A game is considered *complete* after 5 innings (or 4 1/2 if home team leads) if, in the umpire's discretion (with the consent of at least one manager), the game should be stopped because of darkness, rain, or playing conditions. Games may start with the consent of both managers. Once the game begins, the umpire, with the consent of at least one manager, may elect to suspend play for rain, poor field conditions, or darkness.

**Exception: see Rule 20**

#### 20. RUN DIFFERENTIAL RULE

In a 7-inning game, if there is a 10 run discrepancy and **either** (1) 5 full innings have been played (4 1/2 if home team leads), 7-innings (6 1/2 if home team leads) in a 9-inning game **or** (2) the game has gone 2 hours (2 1/2 for 9-innings) **then** the game will be ruled complete.

#### 21. PITCHERS

If a pitcher is removed, he may not pitch again in that game unless he stays in the game defensively. A pitcher may return to the mound from a defensive position only **once** during any game.

## 22. BATTERS

Before the game begins, each manager will have the option of batting as many players as he desires in the lineup, subject to a minimum of twelve (12) batters. If a manager has less than twelve (12) players available, he must bat all available players. Additionally, if one team is batting less than twelve (12) players, the opposing manager may reduce his batting order to an equal number. Once the game begins, the manager can add batters to the bottom of his lineup at any time. The opposing team does not have to match the additional batters once the game starts. If a batter is pinch-hit for, he may **not** re-enter the lineup as a hitter, but may stay in the game defensively.

## 23. OFFENSIVE SUBSTITUTIONS

### 23A. PINCH HITTERS

If a player is pinch hit for, he may not re-enter the game unless he becomes the ninth (9<sup>th</sup>) player to avoid a forfeiture. Then and only then may the original player re-enter the game. Hitters, however, can be added during the game to the end of the order.

### 23B. PINCH RUNNERS

Pinch runners are considered substitutions and thus the original player is removed from the game, permanently, unless he becomes the ninth (9<sup>th</sup>) player to avoid forfeiture. Only then may the original runner re-enter the game.

### 23C. COURTESY RUNNERS

A courtesy runner for an injured player can be used if the injured player is not playing a defensive position. The courtesy runner must be someone not in the offensive lineup. However, if all players are in the lineup, then the last batted out will become the courtesy runner. Managers should notify the opposing Manager before the game on players requiring courtesy runners. **These runners can not steal or hit and run with.**

### 23D. DH RULE

A player may DH for anyone in the field including the pitcher. Extra hitters (EH) can be placed into any spot in the order; i.e. you may hit as many players as necessary. Otherwise, the major league DH rule applies.

## 24. DEFENSIVE SUBSTITUTIONS

All players may be substituted for defensively at any time during the game **except for the pitcher** (refer to Rule 21 on pitchers). The original player must remain in the batting order or it is considered an offensive substitution. The defensive substitute need not be added to the offensive lineup.

## 25. PLAYERS LEAVING THE GAME

If a player is forced to leave the game due to injury or commitment, or ejection from a game, then a reserve player, not previously entered into the game as a hitter, must hit in the batter's place. If no reserve is present, that spot is skipped and all batters move up accordingly. See Rule 10 if team has less than nine (9) players. **The opposing manager and umpire shall be informed prior to the game about any player having a commitment requiring him to leave the game.**

### 25A. SPEED-UP RULE - RUNNING

Any catcher or pitcher may elect to have a runner at anytime to speed up the game. The runner must be someone not in the game. If everyone is in the game, then the runner will be the last batted out.

### 25B. SPEED-UP RULE - BATTING

Refer to Rule 7 of the NCAA Handbook concerning the Batter's Box Rule between pitches.

## 26. INTENTIONAL WALKS

Each team is allowed one intentional walk per game and the batter can be waved to first base without throwing a pitch.

## 27. DECOYS

If a fielder decoys a throw, all runners will be entitled to advance one base. If the same fielder decoys twice in a game, he will be ejected.

### 27A. DECOYS DEFINED

A throw is decoyed when any fielder pretends to be receiving a throw and the runner slides unnecessarily as a result of the decoy.

### 27B. HIGH SCHOOL SLIDE RULE

Refer to Rule 2-32, High School Rule Book - Force Play Slide Rule.

## 28. INTENTIONAL COLLISION

All players must avoid an intentional collision; runners and fielders must strive to avoid any intentional contact. In the event of an intentional collision caused by the runner, that runner will be automatically out. That runner may be ejected if, in the umpire's judgment, the action was flagrant. In the event of an intentional collision caused by the fielder, the runner will automatically be awarded a base. That fielder may be ejected if, in the umpire's judgment, the action was flagrant.

## 29. UNSPORTSMANLIKE CONDUCT

The umpires shall have broad authority to eject from the game and the premises any player, manager or fan who engages in unsportsmanlike conduct, disrupting the game or acting in a manner that is threatening to the health or safety of others.

### 29A. UNSPORTSMANLIKE CONDUCT DEFINED

Conduct which may result in ejection from the game and the premises shall include, but is not limited to, the following:

- a. Harmful or offensive physical contact with an umpire;
- b. Threats made to an umpire, player or fan;
- c. Throwing at a batter or runner;
- d. Throwing objects or equipment;
- e. Foul, profane or abusive language;
- f. Flagrant violations of the rules.

### 29B. FIGHTS

All participants of any fights occurring at any VBC event will be ejected from the game and the premises. Further sanctions could take place dependent upon a decision by the League Commissioner.

### 29C. ADDITIONAL PENALTIES

Any ejected player, manager or fan may be forever barred from any future VBC events or may be barred or suspended for such lesser periods as may be appropriate.

## 30. REPEATED EJECTIONS

Three ejections during a season will result in a 3-game suspension of that player.

### 31. GAME PROTESTS

A game protest must be lodged with the Umpire prior to the next pitch after the incident.

All game protests must be submitted by the manager to the League Office, in writing, within 48 hours of the game and accompanied by a \$50.00 filing fee. The League Commissioner shall decide all protests. If the protest is upheld, the \$50.00 filing fee will be refunded.

### 32. APPEALS PROCEDURE

The appellant must file a written appeal accompanied by a \$50.00 filing fee to the League Office within 48 hours of any game protest. All appeals to be decided by the League Commissioner. If the appeal is upheld, the \$50.00 filing fee will be refunded.

#### 32A. SCOPE OF REVIEW

Appellant's written appeal shall list the rule(s) in question, all facts related to the situation and the requested disposition.

## IV. LEAGUE STRUCTURE AND FORMAT

### 33. STATISTICS

The league shall compile the official win/loss records and league standings each week. Each team is responsible for maintaining the accuracy of hitting/pitching statistics and to record them on a diskette (provided by the league) in an Excel spreadsheet. The league will determine the statistical categories. Any team not providing statistics will not be eligible for playoffs or individual awards.

### 34. SCORES

The winning manager shall be responsible for providing scores to the Commissioner as soon as possible so they can be reported on the web site.

### 35. TIEBREAKERS

If two or more teams are tied, the following tiebreakers will be used to determine the final positions for the Position Round games and the Final Standings:

- a. Best winning percentage "head to head" in games concerning teams tied;
- b. Run differential in head to head games (runs scored minus runs allowed);
- c. Fewest runs allowed of teams remaining tied (all games and all teams);
- d. Coin Flip.

**Note:** *Tiebreaker rules are sequential and cumulative; i.e. once a team has been eliminated by a tiebreaker rule, it cannot be considered in the next tiebreaker sequence.*

### 36. PLAYOFF ELIGIBILITY (Players)

To qualify for the playoffs, a player must meet 1 of the following criteria:

- Appear in 8 games
- 16 innings pitched
- 20 plate appearances

### 37. PLAYOFF ELIGIBILITY (Teams)

To qualify for the playoffs, teams must meet all of the following criteria:

- Pay entire Team fee
- Submit roster
- Submit statistics

38. PLAYOFFS/CHAMPIONSHIPS

See League Schedule.

39. VBC WORLD SERIES

See League Schedule

40. POST SEASON AWARDS

Post season awards will be given **in each league** to those players in the following categories:

- Most Valuable Player & Runner-Up
- Batting Champion
- Earned Run Average Leader
- Rookie of the Year & Runner-Up
- Stolen Base Champion
- Cy Young Award & Runner-Up
- Homerun Champion
- RBI Champion
- Strikeout Leader
- Manager of the Year

2/25/07 ww