

**2011 RULES & REGULATIONS  
QUAD COUNTY OPTIMIST BASEBALL LEAGUE**

**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 the November league board meeting (unless otherwise accepted by the President and Commissioner). Suggested changes must be submitted in writing to the commissioner at least two weeks prior to the scheduled November meeting date. The commissioner will then notify all team representatives of the suggested rule change(s), in writing, at least one week 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 November 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) The 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 at least two other members who are not affiliated with any of the teams competing in the current league. These members must be voted on and approved by a majority vote of the league managers. 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. There will be a fifty dollar (\$50.00) protest fee, which must be paid to the league at the time of submission of the original 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). Any team that forfeits three games in one season WILL be banned from post-season play and may be prohibited from playing its remaining league games. 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.
- 4) No alcoholic beverages or drugs will be allowed on the premises of any game site. This includes fields, parking lots, etc.
- 5) 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.
- 6) 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.
- 7) 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.
- 8) No player 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 or related 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.
- 9) 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.
- 10) 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.
- 11) We are adopting the PIAA "Slide rule" at home plate. Basically, the runner must slide or avoid intentional contact with the catcher when attempting to score at home plate.

- 12) 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.
- 13) All teams must submit a roster to the league statistician at the beginning of the season. Maximum roster is twenty-five (25) players per team, plus three spots for "Legion" players. 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 June 30th of each season. Players must sign a contract with their respective teams. 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 June 30th 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 statistician. The player added will be eligible to play as soon as the league statistician and/or president receive players completed contract and \$40.00 player fee. The statistician will notify each team of the addition/deletion.
- b) There will be a \$40.00 player fee assessed to all players who play in the league. This fee is to be collected by the teams and forwarded to the league. Payment will be made to the league as follows:
- i) All players who will appear on the opening day roster must be paid for by the May league meeting (i.e. 15 players on roster X \$40=\$600.00 due in May);
- ii) For all players added to the roster after that point, the \$40.00 fee must be mailed along with the contract to the statistician. New Contracts received without the fee will not be valid (player is not eligible) until fee has been received.
- (1) The June 30th closing date and the \$40.00 player fee do not apply to American Legion players. American Legion player is defined as a player who is eligible to play American Legion Baseball and does not participate in more than 3 Quad County Optimist League games prior to June 30<sup>th</sup>. If you intend to use Legion players throughout your regular league season, they occupy one of your roster spots, they must pay their \$40.00 player fee, and they must make the minimum number of appearances to be eligible for the playoffs. Legion additions must be made before the start of the playoffs. Legion players are eligible to play immediately following the receipt of a signed contract by the league statistician. They may not play until the contract is received by the statistician because of insurance purposes.

- c) Any player released from his team on or after April 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 April 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.
- 14) All players must appear in a minimum of eight (8) league games to qualify to participate in the playoffs. Exceptions to this rule are as follows:
- a) American Legion "add-on" players who join the roster after June 30<sup>th</sup>.
  - 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 appear in at least six (6) games (as a pitcher) or have a minimum of thirty (30) innings pitched to be eligible for the playoffs. THERE ARE NO EXCEPTIONS TO THESE APPEARANCE RULES.
  - c) The three (3) additional roster spots may only be used for Legion players. Legion players may be "double rostered" and play on both Legion and Optimist League teams. Legion players are obligated to play in their Legion game in the event that an Optimist league game and Legion game fall on the same day or at the same time. Legion games have priority over Optimist games in this event and Legion players are restricted from playing in Optimist games in this situation. Any violation of this agreement will be addressed by the President and Commissioner.
- 15) 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.
- 16) 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.
- 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.

- 17) 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.
- 18) 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).
- 19) 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 Diamond D1-PRO Professional balls which are provided by the league and is the ONLY BALL WHICH MAY BE USED during an official league game.
- 20) 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.

- a) Penalty Fund of \$200.00 will be paid by each franchise prior to the start of the season. Any fines including late score sheets, forfeiting game fees, or missed meetings will be taken from the fund by the league and either distributed to the appropriate team or fines will otherwise go into the general fund. After the season has ended, teams may request the balance of their Penalty Fund back, or it may be credited towards the following year's league fees or Penalty Fund.
- 21) 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."
- 22) The home team is responsible for paying both umpires. If a forfeit is involved, the forfeiting team is responsible for paying the umpires (see Rule #3). The league will pay for umpires during the playoffs.
  - a) If the home team fails to pay the umpires 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.
- 23) 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.
- 24) 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, field locations and all other applicable changes as necessary etc.

25) Playoffs will be the following format:

- a) In a one (1) division format, the top eight teams will advance to the playoffs. The division winner will be seeded #1 and play the #8 seed in the first round. The team that finishes #2 will play the #7 seed in the first round. The team that finishes #3 will play the #6 seed in the first round. And the team that finishes #4 will play the #5 seed in the first round. The higher seeded team is designated the home team for each series.
- b) First round winners will then play in the divisional semifinal series.
- c) The first round playoff series will be a best of three (3) game series. The semifinals series will be best of five (5).
- d) Winners of the divisional semifinal series will advance to the best of five (5) championship series.

26) Tie-breakers within the standings:

- a) Ties for the division championship will be determined by a one (1) game playoff. The home team will be determined by a coin toss.
  - i) In the event that three (3) or more teams are tied, head to head competition will be used. The teams will be placed according to head to head records and a single elimination tie breaker series will be used.
- b) Ties for playoff seeding (regardless of number of teams involved) will be determined by head to head regular season competition.
  - i) If the season series is tied, the team with the better record verses other teams who have qualified for the playoffs shall be placed higher in the standings.
  - ii) If both teams record verses other teams qualifying for the playoffs is tied, there will be a one game playoff to determine who shall be placed higher in the standings.
- c) Ties for the final playoff berth (#8 seed) will be determined by a one game playoff. The home team will be determined by which team won the regular season series.
  - i) If the season series is tied, the team with the better record verses other teams who have qualified for the playoffs shall be placed as the home team for that game.

- ii) In the event that three (3) or more teams are tied, head to head competition will be used as the first tie-breaker. The teams will be placed according to head to head records first and eliminated if possible. If the season series is tied amongst three (3) or more teams, the teams with the better record verses other teams who have qualified for the playoffs shall be placed higher in the standings.
  - iii) Once the final two teams are determined by the above tie-breakers, a one game playoff will be held to determine the final playoff spot.
- 27) 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.