MIDWEST OHIO BASEBALL LEAGUE PLAYING RULES

1. All league play shall be governed by **Ohio High School Baseball Rules**. ONLY those exceptions specifically listed herein shall be applicable.
2. INDIVIDUAL PLAYER & TEAM ELIGIBILITY A. Age Based with Grade Exceptions Divisions:
    1. 8U Division Players who turn 9 prior to May 1 of the current season are not eligible unless they are in the 2nd grade. Also, any player turning 10 prior to August 1 will not be eligible. Players who are 8u are eligible for this division regardless of their grade.
    2. 9U Division Players who turn 10 prior to May 1 of the current season are not eligible unless they are in the 3rd grade. Also, any player turning 11 prior to August 1 will not be eligible. Players who are 9u are eligible for this division regardless of their grade.
    3. 10U Division Players who turn 11 prior to May 1 of the current season are not eligible unless they are in the 4th grade. Also, any player turning 12 prior to August 1 will not be eligible. Players who are 10u are eligible for this division regardless of their grade.
    4. 11U Division Players who turn 12 prior to May 1 of the current season are not eligible unless they are in the 5th grade. Also, any player turning 13 prior to August 1 will not be eligible. Players who are 11u are eligible for this division regardless of their grade.
    5. 12U Division Players who turn 13 prior to May 1 of the current season are not eligible unless they are in the 6th grade. Also, any player turning 14 prior to August 1 will not be eligible. Players who are 12u are eligible for this division regardless of their grade.
    6. 13U Division Players who turn 14 prior to May 1 of the current season are not eligible unless they the 7th grade. Also, any player turning 15 prior to August 1 will not be eligible. Players who are 13u are eligible for this division regardless of their grade.
    7. 14U Division Players who turn 15 prior to May 1 of the current season are not eligible unless they are in the 8th grade. Also, any player turning 16 prior to August 1 will not be eligible. Players who are 14u eligible are eligible for this division regardless of grade.
    8. 15U/HS Division Players who are in high school and have not graduated will be eligible for this Division.

    9. All grade-based players must have a copy of their birth certificate, current report card, or official school ID with grade, or any official government document stating the grade. A player that is found to be illegal due to an age or grade violation during or after a league or tournament game, shall result in the offending team losing the game(s) team and player being suspended from the league, team being placed last in the standings and forfeiting all awards. The illegal player shall be removed from the offending team's Official Online Roster and additional penalties may be applied to the illegal player and / or team manager / coaches.

    10. No player is eligible to play unless his properly electronically signed MWOBL contract and birth certificate have been uploaded to the league prior to said player playing in his first game.

11. Players may be rostered on more than one team provided they are not in the same age group. Players remain subject to days of rest due to pitch limits across both teams. Furthermore, it is the coaches' responsibility to verify any affiliation rules pertaining to players being on more than one roster.

12. No player may be added to the roster after June 15 each year. Contact the league with emergency issues.

13. Each team is limited to a maximum of 25 players.

3. Field Dimensions: Pitching and base path distances shall be:

Age	Pitching Rubber	Base path
8U	40'	60'
9U	44' (43-46')	60' (60-65')
10U	46' (43-46')	65' (60-65)
11U	50' (48-52')	70' (70-75')
12U	50' (50-54')	70' (70-75')
13U	54'	80' (80-85')
14U-18U	60'6"	90'

4. Equipment

- Baseballs must be leather covered and not vinyl or rubber and must be rated for use within your teams' age range or older. If you have a question that the ball you are using is of sufficient quality, buy a better ball. The league will make available for purchase at reasonable rates age-appropriate baseballs. NFHS rules requiring NOCSAE stamping of baseballs WILL NOT BE ENFORCED BY MWOBL. Use good baseballs.

- All USSSA and USA 1.15 BPF marked bats, which have not been decertified by manufacturers or national affiliations will be accepted for MWOB play. Here are the acceptable drops by age group:15U and up use -3 BBCOR or wood as in high school.
- 14u will use -5, BBCOR or wood.
- 13u will use -8, BBCOR or wood.

- 12u and below will be able to use -12, -10, -8, -5, BBCOR or wood.
- CHECK BAT MANUFACTURERS SITES FOR DECERTIFIED BATS.

- N.O.C.S.A.E. approved batting helmets shall be worn by all batters, base runners, and on deck batters. Catchers must wear, at minimum, standard protective gear including an N.O.C.S.A.E approved hockey-style mask-helmet combo, chest protector, shin guards and protective cup. Player/Bullpen catchers must at least wear protective mask (Full equipment is preferred and strongly encouraged by the league.)

- Only rubber or plastic spikes are allowed from age 9-12. Metal spikes may be used at 13U and above.

5. Game play
    - A minimum of 8 players is required to begin a game.

    - Games shall be six (6) innings in duration for age levels 8U-11U, while 12U-18U shall be seven (7) innings, however innings necessary to break a tie are permitted.

    - Run Rules shall apply when the visiting team is behind 15 runs after 3 innings; 12 runs after 4 innings and 10 runs after the 5th inning . However, in 8u A half inning shall consist of three (3) outs or eight (8) runs, whichever comes first. Except, in the final inning (6th) when it shall be 3 outs only. 8u level teams will adhere to a **12 run after 5 inning rule (Thus playing a minimum of 4 ½ or 5 innings prior to any run rule).**

    - In ages 8-14 only, there will be a 2-hour time limit. This means that no new inning shall start after the 2-hour time limit; innings started within the 2-hour time limit shall be completed.

    - A continuous batting order will be used for all Division II and Division III games and shall be optional in Division I games (see Division I Substitution Addendum). All players in uniform will be in the batting order. An injured player or a player being disciplined may be withheld from the batting order as long as the coach reports this to the opposing coach prior to the game's start. In the event a player is injured his spot is skipped without penalty. In the event of an ejection, that spot is an automatic out for the rest of the game. In a continuous batting order, the spot occupied by an ejected player is an automatic out for the rest of the game. Free substitution shall be used defensively, except for the pitcher. Once a pitcher is removed from the pitching position, he shall not return to the pitching position in that game.

    - A courtesy runner may be used for the pitcher and catcher at any time after reaching base. The courtesy runner may be anyone not having started or appeared in the game (when using other than continuous batting) or in the event that all players have been placed in the lineup, after that point, the courtesy runner may be anyone not in the game. A courtesy runner shall be the player who made the last out in a continuous batting situation. Note that this is option and not a mandatory "speed-up" rule. Being a courtesy runner does not affect that player's ability to enter the game at a later point.

- A trip to the mound will be charged once the coach crosses the foul line to talk to the pitcher or any other fielder. Two trips per inning (per pitcher) mean the pitcher must be removed from the game.

- Base runners must **avoid violent or malicious contact** during league play. (For interpretation, this means high spiking, or the use of body parts for the purpose of dislodging the ball or causing bodily harm.)

6. Failure to start game on time:

    - There shall be a 15 minute **grace period** for a late start.
    - The team that was on time shall notify the league of the infraction.
    - This grace period shall only be afforded twice during a season, after which the on time team may elect a forfeit.

    - If a team shows after the 15 minute grace period or it is their third or more infraction, the on time team may elect a forfeit win. However, if they choose to play the game, it shall be official and the grace period violation is waived in that instance only.

    - If the **umpire fails to show** by at least 15 minutes after the scheduled game time, managers may elect any of the following:

        i. Mutually agree to cancel the game

            1. Where the game is cancelled due to umpire no-show, there shall be no penalty to either team providing the host team did schedule an umpire.

            2. If it can be proven the host team failed to schedule an umpire and the game is cancelled, they shall forfeit that game.

        ii. Mutually agree upon an extended length of time to delay the game before cancellation or the following alternatives are instituted.

        iii. Appoint a mutually agreed upon individual to call the game or portion thereof

        (i.e.: until the assigned umpire shows)

            1. Where a replacement umpire is agreed upon prior to the start of the game, that game shall be official.

7. A **pre-game umpires/coaches meeting** shall be conducted prior to the start of every game in order to inform the visitors of all ground rules and to properly educate the umpire of all league specific playing rules. **No host team playing another MWOBL team may vary from league application of rules simply because the game is being played at their site.** Any variance from league rules must be agreed upon

by team managers. Teams may agree to alter the rules under which they are playing a specific game, but only by mutual agreement and only for that game. At this meeting, coaches are to trade information about who is eligible to pitch that game.

8. Umpires:

- Age levels 8U-12U require at least one MWOBL approved umpire (approved list is available on the website), while 13U-18U Prefer at least two MWOBL approved umpires. Due to the umpire shortage it is possible that some games will need to be played with one umpire. That is legal effective immediately. The use of additional umpire(s) f o r yo u n g e r t e a m s are at the expense of the team electing to use additional umpires. b.

Payment of Umpires

i. Umpire fees are payable in a form acceptable to the umpire, at the pre-game meeting or as arranged with the umpire. ii. Teams shall split umpire expenses for any and all league games and there shall be no argument by the visiting team over the fee charged by umpires.

iii. Umpires fees are: $60 age 8U; $90 ages 9U-12; Games for 13-15/HS will include 2 umpires ($160 total). In the event that an umpire does a game solo for 13 and above, the rate will be $120

c. If you cancel a game, call the umpire FIRST. Do not rely on email on the day of a game. Many umpires do not have access to email during the day and/or may leave work early to get to your game on time. Call them. IF you have to leave a message, ask them to call or text you so that you know that they got the message. Here is the rest of the protocol in the event that you do not reach them in time:

i. If an umpire shows up at the site and there is bad weather prior to the start of the game and it is canceled the umpire is paid a $25.00 show up fee. ii. If the games start (just one pitch thrown) the umpire is paid a full game fee because he fulfilled his contract obligation.

iii. When you reschedule to resume or play a makeup game, that umpire gets full game fee. iv. If there is a rain delay prior to the start of a game or during the middle of a game we require that the umpire wait no more than 45 minutes to get the game restarted after fixing the field to make it ready to play.

9. Inclement weather or darkness

- Either the general or field manager of the home team may be designated by the team's league member as the **responsible party for determining the start of a game due to inclement weather or darkness.** Until the game is started, the umpire shall have no authority in this matter. Only the home team can call a game due to weather prior to the first pitch. Umpires fees may be due according to the host team's umpire agreement (such as a show -up fee) may be fully or in part payable by the host team only, if the game is cancelled prior to its start.

- No game shall be started or commenced where lightning is present or there is a tornado warning (As distinguished from a watch). Once the game is started, the umpire in chief alone shall be responsible for such determinations.

- If a game is called due to **inclement weather or darkness**, it shall be a completed game if official (4 completed innings for 6 inning games and 5 complete for 7

innings). If it is not yet official, it shall be picked up at a point of suspension prior to the start of the next scheduled game between the two teams or at a time agreed upon by the managers and played to completion or the run rule. Teams shall share all expense incurred for this make-up portion of the game including, likely, full umpire expense. If the completing of this game would not impact league standing, it need not be completed. In addition, the losing manager may elect a loss and the game need not be completed. However, if a game would impact league standings and thus post season tournament opportunities, the game must be completed or the manager refusing completion shall be suspended for a portion of the next season at the discretion of the Board.

- In order to help everyone understand and apply the difference between a Completed Game and a Suspended Game. These examples will be after the 5th inning for 7 inning games and after the 4th inning for 6 inning games. This will immediately be added to Rule 9 and should clarify many situations.

First, no game is ever "called" and "started over". When a game is interrupted or suspended for any reason, and cannot be resumed that date, the game will be SUSPENDED if the team behind in the score has not completed its turn at bat in the 5th inning (4th for 6 inning games).

Second, If a game is called prior to the completion of full inning after the 5th inning (4th if 6 inning game), the game becomes a suspended game only in the following situation:
The visiting team has, in this inning, scored one or more runs to tie the score or to take the lead, and the home team has not retaken the lead and the game is called while an inning is in process but before the inning is completed. Otherwise it is a Completed Game. Examples of Completed/Suspended Games:

In a game where the home team is ahead after 5 innings (4 if a 6 inning game) 2-0.

- The game is called prior to the start of the 6th inning due to darkness: Ruling: COMPLETED GAME
- The first batter in the top of the 6th inning is at bat with any count on the batter and the game cannot be completed: Ruling: COMPLETED GAME • The first batter in the top of the 6th inning reaches base and the game is called: Ruling: COMPLETED GAME
- The visiting team scores one run in the top of the 6th inning and the game is called anytime during the 6th inning: Ruling: COMPLETED GAME
- The visiting team scores 2 runs in the top of the 6th inning and the sixth inning is NOT completed NOR does the home team retake the lead in the bottom of the 6th inning: Ruling: SUSPENDED GAME
- The visiting team scores 2 or 3 runs in the top of the 6th inning and the 6th inning is NOT completed NOR does the home team retake the lead in the bottom of the 6th inning: Ruling: SUSPENDED GAME

The visiting team scores 2 or 3 runs in the top of the 6th inning and the home team retakes the lead in the bottom of the 6th inning. The game is called later in the bottom half of the 6th inning or after 6 complete innings: Ruling: COMPLETE GAME

10. Rescheduling Procedures

- Once scheduled, if a game is cancelled, the procedures are as follows:

i. Coaches can jointly agree on a date within 48 hours of cancellation or
ii. If coaches cannot agree on a date within 48 hours of the cancellation, the opposing coach shall, within 72 hours of cancellation, provide the cancelling coach with three (3) optional dates to reschedule.

1. These dates must be shown as available on the opponent's schedule. Therefore, it is important to make sure you include all tournaments and non-league games on your website schedule and update any changes.

2. No Mondays are allowed following tournament play.

3. The canceling team must notify the opposing coach of their acceptance of one of the proposed dates or forfeit within 24 hours of optional dates being provided.

4. If any of these timelines/procedures are not followed, coaches must notify the league immediately for resolution.

- League Policy on Scheduling Disputes

1. The Midwest Ohio Baseball League does not utilize forfeits as a regular-season scheduling tool and does not assess point penalties for scheduling disputes.

2. Teams, coaches, and organizations may not award, accept, claim, or declare a forfeit on their own.

3. Every effort should be made by both teams to reschedule and play all league games.

4. Any scheduling dispute, failure to follow league procedures, or unresolved makeup game issue must be submitted to the league for review and resolution.

5. The league reserves the sole authority to determine the appropriate resolution of any scheduling matter.

- Avoiding Scheduling Issues:

1. Send a copy of your schedule with the specific game highlighted and ask the other team to compare your schedule to theirs.

2. Call each opposing coach a short time prior to your game to confirm that you both have the same date, time, and place for the game.

3. Review the master schedule on the website to confirm that you both have the same information.

11. Reporting scores and pitch counts and Defining a Day of Rest

- It shall be the responsibility of the winning manager or his/her appointee to **submit the score and pitching record into the website within 48 hours of game time.** This is a direct report via the website.

- Teams shall receive one point for a win, ½ point for a ties and 0 points for a loss or unreported win. Forfeits will be a (-2) points.

- Losing teams are responsible to review those entries and report errors to their league.

- There is an entire standalone outline of the pitch count rules but for clarification purposes **a "Day of Rest" is defined this way: A day of rest is a full calendar day and not a 24 hour window. Therefore, if a player pitches a noon game on a Saturday and is subject to two days' rest, then his required days of rest are Sunday and Monday and he is eligible to pitch again on Tuesday.** Many times we are asked if he can rest 48 hours and pitch again on Monday evening (effectively 52-56 hours of rest). This DOES NOT satisfy his rest.

12. Standings

Everything that we do is designed to maximize the certainty that final standings will be determined by games played on the field. However, while we do all we can to get 100% of games played, sometimes rain, or teams disbanding, or just other circumstances prevent this from happening. Thus, we need to protect teams that are doing all they can to get games in from these circumstances or teams' unwillingness or inability to get games completed. Thus, at times, it is necessary to award a forfeit. Below is the explanation of why forfeits are awarded and the process used to determine the final standings.

The forfeit only serves to prevent a team who has attempted to get games in from being penalized by other teams not being able or willing to play. Thus, in determining standings the forfeit does only two things: 1. it establishes a game towards the 90% and 2. establishes a win for the sole purpose of "total" wins. ..... Then, we protect the remaining teams by not allowing the forfeit to be used against them either. So, in the event that there are two teams vying for a final standings position and one of them has been awarded a forfeit, we remove the forfeited game(s) as well as the games against the same team(s) from the other teams schedule in order to equalize the schedules.

- Final standings will be based on winning percentage of league games, provided each team involved played at least 90% of their games. When teams have not played 90% of their games, the League reserves the right to make administrative decisions in the best interests of the League including but not limited to using points, "equalizing schedules" or any other means to determine champions that the League views as acceptable.

- Standings tie breaking procedure shall be determined in the following sequence:

i. Head to head competition within your division or ii. Record against

the next higher team in league standings iii. Record

against the next lower team in league standings iv. . A one game playoff at a neutral site sharing expenses

13. Ejections, Issue Resolution and Sanctions

- **Any player ejected will be ejected from that game plus the next league game. Any Coach ejected from a game will be ejected for that game plus the next 2 league games. Plus, each Coach ejected will be fined $100 to be paid to the Miracle League Fields of Troy.**

Also both teams must report the incident to the league by completing the "Ejection Form" from the website. The league reserves the right to enforce further penalties as needed.

Additional ejections in a single season, will likely result in more severe sanctions, including, but not limited to additional games suspended, or suspension for the balance of the season.

- Formal complaints must be filed with the league via the Issue Resolution Form on the website. Put all concerns, complaints and issues into the Issue Resolution Form and email them to the League as that allows us to forward the issue to the proper person to receive the timeliest resolution.

14. Discussion of line-ups in the event of make-up rescheduled or resumed games. Suspended games should be resumed at the point of suspension with the same line-up and batting order as the original game (if possible). That is the ideal world and rarely applies to us perfectly. But it is our benchmark if it can be met.

- If a kid who was at the original game is not available when the game is resumed, the team should not be charged an out. Simply skip his turn at bat with no penalty. Likewise, if you need to place a runner on a base and he is not there, simply use the last out.

b. As a rule, any kid not available at the original game cannot play in the suspended game. This is one exception to the bat your roster rule. However, there is no problem if the two coaches involved in a suspended game decide together that they are willing to allow kids not available for the original game to play for both sides. that is okay (it is always okay to get more kids in the game if both sides agree). But don't play the game and then complain about the results.

c. Pitching. These come up several times each year.

1. If a player was ineligible to pitch during initial game, but has satisfactory rest for the make-up game, is he eligible? Yes. He would be able to pitch as long as he did not pitch the first game.
2. If a player begins pitching in a game, but does not finish b/c of rain, etc.

when the game resumes, assuming he has satisfactory rest, do we pick up original pitch count, or start back at zero? The pitch count is limited to his remaining per day pitch limits including the rain delayed pitches.

d. Please use common sense and try to resolve any issues among yourselves about issues involved with suspended games. Remember that we are all here for kids to play baseball.

Division I Substitution Addendum

In all Division I games, each team has the option of:

1. Roster Batting with Free Substitution
2. Using a Designated Hitter (DH)
3. Using an Extra Hitter (EH)
4. Using both a Designated Hitter (DH) and an Extra Hitter (EH)
5. Bat 9 play 9.

Both teams are not required to select the same option; however each team must play entire game with their respective choice.

Roster Batting with Free Substitution

A continuous batting order will be used. All players in uniform will be in the batting order. An injured player or a player being disciplined may be withheld from the batting order as long as the coach reports this to the opposing coach prior to the game's start. In a continuous batting order, the spot occupied by an ejected player is an automatic out for the rest of the game. Free substitution shall be used defensively, except for the pitcher. Once a pitcher is removed from the pitching position, he shall not return to the pitching position in that game.

Courtesy Runners:

A courtesy runner may be used for the pitcher and catcher at any time after reaching base. The courtesy runner may be anyone not having started or appeared in the game (when using other than continuous batting) or in the event that all players have been placed in the line-up, after that point, the courtesy runner may be anyone not in the game. A courtesy runner shall be the player who made the last out in a continuous batting situation. Note that this is an option and not a mandatory "speed-up" rule. Being a courtesy runner does not affect that player's ability to enter the game at a later point.

Notes on both Designated Hitter (DH) and/or Extra Hitter (EH)

If a team has used all eligible and healthy players in a game and a player is injured or ejected, the opposing coach shall choose from among the healthy players having played but not currently in the game to finish the game. If no healthy players are available, the game shall be forfeited at that point. The high school re-entry rule shall be in effect (Starters may re-enter once in their same spot in the batting order. Non-starters may not re-enter.

Designated Hitter (DH) rules are the High School D.H Rules

Extra Hitter (EH) rules

a.). The extra hitter can play defense.

b.) If the extra hitter is used, he must be used for the entire game.
c.) The extra hitter must remain in the same position in the batting order for the entire game.
d.) If an extra hitter is used, all ten (10) players must bat and any nine (9) players can play defense. Defensive positions can be changed, but the batting order must remain the same.
e.) The extra hitter may be substituted for at any time, either by a pinch hitter or a pinch runner, who then becomes the extra player. The substitute may be a player who has not yet been in the game.

8U Rules Addendum

The following modification to the league rules shall apply to the 8U Division:

1. Ten fielders will be used. Normal positions with four outfielders. Outfielders must be approximately an equal distance from home plate; this means no "short fielders". Outfielders must have both feet in the grass.

2. One coach is allowed in the outfield when his/her team is on defense. The defensive coach should be positioned behind the outfielders.

3. The fielding pitchers must ve within 5" of the pitching rubber until the ball is pitched. The fielding pitcher may stand to the right, left, or behind the mound, but not in front of the designated pitcher.

4. The designated pitcher will pitch overhand from the pitching rubber. The designated pitcher MUST make every effort to leave the playing field immediately after the ball is hit. The designated pitcher will use caution NOT TO INTERFERE with the ball, fielders, and runner, and will remain off the field until play is stopped. If the designated pitcher interferes with the play, all runners will return to the last base they were at. The designated pitcher shall refrain from coaching the runners; this is the responsibility of the base coaches.

5. There will be no more than seven pitches to the batter. If the ball is not put into play on one of those pitches, the batter will be called out, with the following EXCEPTIONS:

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1. A foul ball (unless caught) on the third strike, if it is also the 7 pitch, will not be counted as part of

the seven pitches.

2. If a batted ball hits the designated pitcher, it shall be ruled a DEAD BALL; no pitch, no strike.

6. No walks

7. No infield fly rule is in effect

8. Batter cannot run on dropped third strike

9. No bunting. If the umpire judges that the batter bunted or attempted to bunt, the pitch is counted as a strike.

10. A base runner will be called out if they leave the base before the ball crosses the plate. This will not affect any other play that is being made on the batted ball.
11. No stealing.

12. Play is stopped when the ball is in control of an infielder and the lead runner has been stopped. Coaches, please don't send runners if the infielder is in control of the ball. We are trying to teach them how to play the game correctly. Infielders can request time, but ONLY the umpire can call time.

13. A half inning shall consist of three (3) outs or eight (8) runs, whichever comes first. Except, in the final inning (6th) when it shall be 3 outs only. 8u level teams will adhere to a **12 run after 5 inning rule. (Thus, playing a minimum of 4 ½ or 5 innings prior to any run rule).**

9u Addendum Including Clarifications and Scenarios as of April 28, 2025.

Coaches, to help clarify these rules, their intent and application, we have discussed with some coaches and received some information related to scenarios that they thought would help everyone. Thank you to those coaches who helped us craft these responses and scenarios.

The intent of this 9U addendum is to provide a competitive transition year from coach pitch to 'real baseball.' The modified rules will allow pitchers and catchers to develop without the additional pressures of more nuanced baseball scenarios within their battery duties, such as dropped 3rd strike, holding runners on base, and pickoffs. Furthermore, overall defensive development is added by the removal of bunt defenses and infield fly. This year is about player development and building pitcher confidence.

Addendum 9u Specific Rules: Permanent Effective 3/21/25 Note that the last two years' rules regarding not being able to score from third except on a hit, were too complicated to understand and enforce properly. Therefore, we have eliminated those rules and instead implemented a simple definition of "No Lead-Offs before the ball crosses the plate. See the highlighted section below. All other aspects of the 9u Addendum rules are the same; no changes.

The Midwest Ohio Baseball League has been studying ways to improve player development during the critical early years of players involvement in organized, competitive games. From inception until 2004, the Midwest Ohio Baseball League allowed coaches at ages 9-10 to determine that year's rules regarding leadoffs, stealing and dropped third strikes. Each year during this time, the coaches elected to restrict 9u (and in most years 10u) to: No lead offs; Stealing after the ball crosses the plate; and No advancement on dropped third strikes.

As more National Associations began to compete with Little League Baseball, and baseball began to move toward "Tournaments" with solely profit-based concerns, those Associations were looking for methods to differentiate themselves from Little League Baseball that would be clearly baseball related issues. Lead-offs,

stealing and dropped third strikes were the only true game related places to differentiate from Little League except the pitching mound distance which were also adjusted.

Midwest Ohio Baseball grew dramatically between 2004-2006 making standardized rules critical. As most teams began to play “real baseball” tournaments, it made sense to apply those rules to all age groups 9 and above.

However, over the last few years, we have become increasingly concerned about the impact those rules are having on the development of our young players throughout the Miami Valley. Thus, we have been in informal discussions with USA Baseball, local High School and College Coaches, and former Professional players about the relationship of these rules to player development. As a result of this investigation, the Midwest Ohio Baseball League is instituting the following rules for 9U: ·

- Nine (9) defensive players shall play in the field. ·
- Balk rules shall not apply. ·
- A batter shall be automatically out on a dropped / missed third (3rd) strike by the catcher. ·
- No delayed stealing.
    - After the ball is pitched and the ball crosses home plate, a runner must immediately make an attempt to steal the next base.
    - If the catcher controls the ball, the runner must return to the previously occupied base and cannot remain on basepath anticipating and continuing forward on the return throw to the pitcher.
- Does not apply to wild pitches or past balls. Runners may advance at their own risk. A team will receive one warning per game for the violation of leaving base too early, and the runner must return back to the base. Thereafter, runners will be called out. ·
- No lead offs. A player cannot lead off prior to the ball crossing the plate. A team will receive one warning per game for the violation of leaving base too early, and the runner must return back to previous base. Thereafter, runners will be called out. ·
- No Infield Fly Rule. ·
- An inning will be 3 outs or 6 runs maximum, even if the last hit causes more than 6 runs to score (only 6 runs will count). ·
- Unlimited Runs will be allowed as follows: ○ 1. In the 6th inning. ○ 2. In any inning the umpire declares as the last due to time limit. ○ 3. In extra innings, if necessary. ·
- No bunting. If the umpire judges that the batter bunted or attempted to bunt, the pitch is counted as a strike. ·
- Play is stopped when the ball is in control of an infielder and the lead runner has been stopped. ○ The intent of this rule is to limit coaches from ‘rolling’ runners through bases trying to anticipate poor defensive throws or catches.
    - Think: If I wouldn’t send a Junior High player to the next base, don’t send the runner.
    - If an umpire deems the runner should have been held, base runners will be returned to the last occupied base. Play will resume upon the next pitch.
        - If a runner was put out by the defense in their advance, the out will stand.
- The return throw to the pitcher from any position, including the catcher, is not protected. If the pitcher is overthrown, the ball is live, and the baserunner is free to advance at their own risk.
- 9u teams will adhere to a 10-run after 5th inning rule. (Thus, playing a minimum of 4 ½ or 5 innings prior to any run rule).

If not specified here, all other Midwest Ohio Baseball League Rules apply.

Scenario 1:

- Base runners are on the corners (1 & 3)
- Runner on 1 has been given the green light to seal 2nd.
- Pitcher delivers the ball, and the catcher controls the pitch (caught, blocked, trapped, etc.):

Q1: If the catcher throws to 2nd, can the runner at 3rd advance?
A1: Yes, the ball is live and the runner may advance at their own risk.
Scenario 2:

- Base runners are on the corners (1 & 3. Runner on 1 has been given the green light to seal 2nd
- Pitcher delivers the ball, and the catcher controls the pitch (caught, blocked, trapped, etc.).
- The catcher decides to hold the ball (not throw to 2nd) and holds the ball until runners both runners are in scoring position (2 & 3) before returning the ball to the pitcher.
- Pitcher is overthrown and the ball rolls through infield.

Q: Can runners advance to next base?
A: The return throw is not protected, and the ball is live. Runners may advance at their own risk.
Scenario 3:

- Runner on 2nd
- As ball crosses the plate, the runner pops off the bag in anticipation of a hit
- Pitcher delivers the ball, and the catcher controls the pitch (caught, blocked, trapped, etc.).

Q: Can runner wait on basepath for return throw to pitcher?
A: No, runner is not actively trying to steal next base and must return to previously occupied base Q: Can runner wait for return throw from catcher to steal?
A: No, delayed steals are not allowed per 9U addendum.
Q: If pitcher fails to catch return ball from catcher, can runner advance?
A: Assuming runner as returned to original base (2nd), yes, the ball is live, and runner can advance at their own risk. If runner had not yet returned to original base, runner cannot advance.

- No Infield Fly Rule.
- An inning will be 3 outs or 6 runs maximum, even if the last hit causes more than 6 runs to score (only 6 runs will count).
- Unlimited Runs will be allowed as follows: 1. In the 6th inning. 2. In any inning the umpire declares as the last due to time limit. 3. In extra innings, if necessary.
- No bunting. If the umpire judges that the batter bunted or attempted to bunt, the pitch is counted as a strike.
- Play is stopped when the ball is in control of an infielder and the lead runner has been stopped.
- 9u teams will adhere to a 10-run after 5th inning rule. (Thus, playing a minimum of 4 ½ or 5 innings prior to any run rule).

If not specified here, all other Midwest Ohio Baseball League Rules apply.