



Umpire Guidelines

Main umpire responsibilities:

- Call safe/out at the bases, including home.
 - Field 1 Ump has all 1B calls.
 - Field 2 Ump has calls at 2B and 3B. Plays at the plate need to be covered by Field 2 ump with assistance from Field 1. Plays at the plate may be difficult to see so both field umpires should get together to confirm a call if there is a close play at the plate.
- Determining fair or foul. Field Ump 1 has the 1B line, Field Ump 2 has the 3B line.
 - Outside of the grass cutout is the foul line at West, the dirt is completely in fair territory. Chalk line used at Crocker or Minors.
 - With runners on, Field 2 Ump has to do their best to determine foul balls down the 3rd base line since you will be positioned off the 3rd base line.
- Determining that a play has stopped when the ball has been returned to the vicinity of the pitchers mound *rule 4*.
 - Teams must throw the ball to a fielder standing in the mound area. If there is no player standing close to the mound and the ball is thrown in that direction, it does NOT stop play. A player must be there to attempt to catch the ball.
 - The player does NOT have to catch the ball. All throws with reasonable intent to return the ball to the mound will count in stopping a play. High throws or rolling/bouncing balls to the mound will stop the play. Use your best judgement in determining if the play was stopped. There may be a circle drawn on the field to help you identify the mound area.
 - Any fielder, including outfielders, can throw the ball to the pitcher to stop a play.
 - Once play is stopped, it is the responsibility of the umpires to determine if the runners are more than halfway to the next base. There should be a halfway line painted on the field to help you. If the play is stopped and the runners have not reached the halfway marker, they must return to the previous base. Please discuss with the other umpire if you need help with determining if any runner reached the halfway point before the play was stopped.
- Calling balls out of play *rule 5*.
 - If a ball goes past the imaginary fence line, put your hands up in the air and call a dead ball out of play. All runners will be awarded next base.



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- Umpires are NOT responsible to keep score. The coaches/teams are responsible for tracking all runs. Max 6 runs per inning mercy rule.
 - Only the team managers are allowed to speak to the umpires. Please hold a pregame plate meeting to introduce yourself. If any of the other coaches talks to you, politely tell them that you are only allowed to talk with the managers.
 - If an illegal non USA bat is identified, please have it removed from the game and warn both managers about the illegal bat. If the illegal bat is used in the game, it will be an automatic out for that hitter.
 - If a hitter throws a bat, issue the offending team a warning. If anyone on the team throws a bat after the warning has been issued, the hitter will be called out.
 - Umpires do not track the amount of pitches per rule #1. The coaches will determine if the batter has reached the 5 pitch maximum.
 - If there is a close play and you need help or did not get a good view of the play, please get together with the other umpire to come to a mutual decision. The managers should not be directing you to get together and you are not required to do so if they request it. All calls are final and not subject to review. Only a rule clarification may be discussed with the managers.
 - If there is only 1 umpire assigned to the game, please take the Field 1 position. The pitching coach operator will act as Field 2 umpire and help make calls at 2B, 3B, home and fair or foul on the 3B line.
 - For many of the playoff games, a 3rd umpire game monitor will be assigned. The game monitor will be there to assist you on rules and engage with the managers. While there to support you, they will have final say and ability to override any call on the field as they deem fit. The umpire monitor will be an experienced umpire usually in high school or an adult.



AA Division Playoff Rules

Pitch Count & Batting

1. Strict 5-pitch maximum, regardless of good/bad pitches, unless it is a foul on the 5th pitch. No out for sit downs. It could be 8+ pitches if they foul off 4+ in a row. The 5 pitches are to allow for occasional bad pitches by the machine, and to eliminate discretion on good/bad pitches.
2. No bunts.

Base Running & Overthrows

3. Base runners may not leave a base until the ball is hit. If a runner leaves before contact is made and an attempted play is made on that runner (force out or tag out), the umpires can call the player out at their discretion if they believe the outcome may have been impacted. If no attempted play is made but the runner left early, the umpire should send runners back to the most likely bases that they would have reached without leaving early.
4. Once the ball is in the vicinity of the pitching mound/machine and is either caught by the pitcher or passes the point where it should have been caught, the play stops. A runner who is not more than half way to a base at the time the ball either arrives at or passes the pitcher shall return to the previous base. In the event that the pitcher picks up a ball on the ground that has not been thrown, then he/she must hold the ball to stop the play (i.e. if they field the ball and intend to make a play, the play does not stop). If the ball is in play in the field, you can continue to run until it goes to / near the pitching mound/machine.
5. If an overthrow is made at first or third and the ball goes past the dugout fence line, it is a dead ball and the baserunners are awarded the next base. If the ball remains in play on an initial overthrow to first base or third base, the runners (at their own risk) may only advance a maximum of 1 additional base as long as the defense immediately attempts to return the ball to the pitcher's mound per rule #4. If the ball remains in play on an initial overthrow and the defensive attempts to make a play on any advancing runner instead of returning the ball to the mound, the subsequent throw is subject to additional overthrow penalties. If an overthrow is made at second base or home, it is considered a live ball and play does not stop until it is in the vicinity of the pitcher, per rule # 4.
6. FYI, runners rounding 1st base – unless the runner attempts to go to 2nd base, the runner can round the base into fair territory without being tagged out. See Little League Rule 7.08(c).



7. If the ball hits the machine, ball bag/bucket, or the coach operating the machine, dead ball single. All base runners advance one base but the play is dead.

Fielding

8. The outfielders should not be positioned as back-up infielders before the ball has been hit. They should be at least 5 yards behind the base paths, though we won't be measuring, marking or enforcing this. A simple way to explain this – an outfielder should generally throw the ball to an infielder at the base to make an out. We do not want to see the Center Fielder repeatedly playing back-up 2nd, fielding a groundball and recording a force out by running to the bag, or playing 'rover,' positioned directly behind the bag. We can live with letting the kid run and touch the base as long as he/she is positioned correctly at the beginning of the play. We recognize it will be tough to enforce, but the idea is that as long as he's/she's not standing in the vicinity of the base before the ball is hit, then let the play happen naturally. OF positions are: LF, LC, RC, RF and that absolutely NO rovers (i.e., kid standing 5 ft behind 2B) are allowed.

Line-ups and Innings Played

9. Due to teams having uneven numbers on defensive, at most 10 players can play on defense each inning. Four outfielders plus six infielders. If you only have 9, you may play with 3 outfielders. This means many players may only play 3 innings if you have 11 to 13 players at your game. **All players must play at least 3 innings (i.e., player can only sit out max 1 inning) of the first 4 innings.**
10. We will play 4 inning games. If there is a tie after 4 – then play a 5th or more as needed.
11. **Every player must play at least 1 inning in the infield** before the end of the third inning. **No player may play all four innings in the infield.** No player can sit out more than 1 inning / all players must play at least 3 innings (out of the 4 innings).
12. **We'd like coaches to share roster cards with the opposing team to ensure they abide by this, as we know it has been a contentious issue in previous years' playoffs.** Last minute changes due to a missing player are fine so long as managers follow the rule and let the other team know. Prepare a 5-inning line-up in advance to use in case of a tie.

Run Limit

13. Inning ends when the **6th run is scored** - no further runs will be recorded even on the same play. **The effect of this rule is that if either team is leading by 6+ runs going into the 4th inning, then the**



winner of the game is decided already because the gap cannot be closed due to the 6-run limit. It is then up to the trailing team's manager/coaches to decide whether to go ahead and play the 4th inning for fun, or whether they would rather end the game at the bottom of the 3rd inning.

14. Unbalanced teams (e.g. 11 players vs. 9 players) won't be an issue for batting because we are using a 6-run limit instead of batting once through the order. **The stopping point of an inning will be only the 6th run or 3 outs, not the number of batters who have batted in the inning.** If neither of those has happened and you have cycled all the way through your order, then start again at the beginning of your order and keep playing the inning until 3 outs are made or the 6th run is scored.

Other

15. **At most, two coaches from the defensive team may stand in the outfield to help coach their team.**
16. The umpires will be kids and they may make unexpected calls. They are learning too. You can ask them if they saw the play and had a clear view. If they say yes, then it is their call and can't be overturned. If they say no, you can ask them to confer with the other umpire, but **only the Manager can talk to the umpires**. Don't let any of your base coaches try to influence calls with safe or out signs, or groaning, etc. Please communicate this to your co-coaches. There are some passionate Dads out there that lose track of the fact that these are 7-8 year old kids.
17. If no umpires are available or assigned to the game, the coach running the pitching machine will be the umpire. All calls by the pitching coach are final and not subject to argument or objection.
18. After the game – the Winning team should email Division Director aa-div@hllbaseball.org and timothyctan@gmail.com so scores can be posted onto the HLL web site.