

# 2011 MINUTEMAN BASEBALL LEAGUE RULES

Rev. 4/12/2011

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The Minuteman Baseball League is comprised of the Minuteman League, Patriot League, Continental League, Summer League and Fall League with player eligibility as defined in these rules. The rules set forth below will apply to all leagues unless specifically noted.

Any changes to the rules after printing will be available on [www.mmbrl.com](http://www.mmbrl.com).

## 1.0 Sportsmanship

Good sportsmanship shall be expected of coaches, players, and parents at all times. Unacceptable behavior includes, but is not limited to: the taunting of opposing players, the use of profanity, demonstrative actions or statements in response to an umpire's call, and the throwing or slamming of equipment.

1.1 Any communications with an umpire regarding calls or rule interpretations shall be initiated only by a team's manager or acting manager and such interactions shall occur in a civilized, sportsmanlike manner. Coaches, players, and spectators shall refrain from initiating such discussions.

1.2 A player, coach or spectator ejected from a game by an umpire will not be allowed to participate or appear at the next game for that team. The Coach of the opposing team of the player, coach or spectator ejected is required to notify their Town Director immediately after the game when such an ejection occurs. It is the Town Director's responsibility to promptly notify the other Town Director to ensure compliance with this rule.

## 2.0 Eligible Players

Boys and girls living in the participating towns and born between May 1, 1992 and April 30, 1998 are eligible to play in the Minuteman League during the spring 2011 season. Players who are 15 years old on April 30<sup>th</sup> of the current year are considered 15 year-olds for purposes of the league and its rules. Players who are 14 years old on April 30<sup>th</sup> of the current year are considered 14 year-olds for purposes of the league and its rules. Players who are 13 years old on April 30<sup>th</sup> of the current year are considered 13 year-olds for purposes of the league and its rules and only 13 year old players are eligible to participate in the Patriot League. Players who are 16, 17 or 18 years old on April 30<sup>th</sup> of the current year are eligible to participate in the Continental League. Under no circumstances will any player born prior to May 1, 1992 be allowed to participate. A player born after April 30, 1998 will be allowed to participate if he is not playing for his town's small diamond (Little League equivalent) program and if he is eligible to participate in his town's Babe Ruth League-level big diamond program by virtue of his school grade level or town league policy. Any such player will be listed on his team's roster as a 12 year-old.

### 3.0 Playing Rules

The basic playing rules are those outlined in the Babe Ruth League baseball rulebook of the national Babe Ruth organization, except for the following modifications:

- 3.1 Teams will consist of no fewer than 12 rostered players, WITH EVERY EFFORT MADE TO EQUALIZE TALENT AMONG THE TEAMS CREATED WITHIN EACH TOWN'S ORGANIZATION. Our objective is to maximize playing opportunities while not keeping rosters so small that forfeits are likely. Roster changes will be allowed throughout the season, but no one added after May 8, 2011, may participate in the post-season playoffs. Each Town Director is responsible for updating the website with roster changes for his town's teams prior to the next affected games, and he is responsible generally for making certain that website roster information is current and accurate.
- 3.2 All players present at a game will bat in a continuous rotation (for example, a 13-man batting order is used if 13 players are present). Anyone arriving late will be slotted into the final spot in the order. Every player must play at least 3 innings in the field. No player shall sit out more than 2 innings in a row defensively. The batting and minimum fielding requirements shall apply to all players available to participate for each team at the time the home team takes the field to start a game. If a player's injury prevents him from being able to bat, throw or field effectively, that player shall be removed from the lineup. If a player is able to play in the field but not able to hit due to injury, that player shall be removed from the lineup. If a player is able to hit but not able to throw due to injury, that player shall be removed from the lineup. If a player listed in the original lineup is removed from the batting order due to injury, ejection, or early departure, that player shall not re-enter the game as either a batter or a fielder, and his spot in the lineup shall be skipped with no penalty involved.
- 3.3 A minimum of 8 players is required to begin and continue a game. A team playing with 8 players will not be penalized in any way (for example, no automatic out for the "empty" lineup slot) regardless of the circumstances creating the situation.
- 3.4 No new inning shall begin more than 2 hours and 15 minutes after the actual (as opposed to scheduled) starting time of the game. Any game stopped due to this rule shall be considered a complete regulation game, regardless of the number of innings completed. Extra-inning games may exceed this time limitation, but only if there is no succeeding game scheduled to be played on the same field.
- 3.5 Mercy Rules
  - 3.5.1 In the Minuteman League, during first round games, a mercy rule of 6 runs per half-inning shall be in force, except in the last agreed upon inning. For all games subsequent to the first round, there will be no per-inning or per-game mercy rule
  - 3.5.2 In the Patriot League, a mercy rule of 5 runs per half-inning shall be in force (except in the last agreed upon inning) for the full season, excluding the playoffs.
  - 3.5.3 In the Patriot and Minuteman League, in the last agreed upon inning there will be no run limits. So if a team is trailing by more than 5 or 6 runs respectfully, they have a chance in coming back in a game. If a visiting team comes up and goes ahead, but darkness becomes an issue. The game does go back the previous inning score and is counted as a complete game.
- 3.6 Alternate Player Rule
  - 3.6.1 Minuteman League: If a team does not have enough players for any regular season game (rule does not apply to the post season), the team may add up to 4 alternate players who are rostered on another Minuteman or Patriot League team from their town. Any alternate player must bat last or no greater than 10<sup>th</sup> in the batting order. If there are more than one alternate players, they must bat in age order (youngest to oldest) at the end of the lineup. If 11 or more non-alternate players show up for a game, no alternate players can play. If a non-alternate player shows up late to a game, then any alternate player that is batting in the 10th position must be removed from the game and the non-alternate player is inserted into the lineup prior to any alternate players. Any alternate player can only play outfield positions or catcher. If a manager or coach is using an alternate player for a game, he/she must inform the other manager/coach prior to the game of the name and age of the alternate player(s) and on which team(s) the alternate player(s) are rostered.
  - 3.6.2 Patriot League: Same rules as Rule 3.8.1, except the alternate player(s) must be 13 years old, and be rostered on a Patriot League or Minuteman League team. (rule does not apply to the post season).
  - 3.6.3 Continental League. Same rules as Rule 8.3.1, except the alternate player(s) must be 16, 17 or 18 years old and be rostered on a Continental League team. (rule does not apply to the post season).
- 3.7 If a game is suspended by umpire's decision before becoming an official game, it shall be resumed from its point of discontinuance and played to a regulation conclusion. A regulation game ending in a tie shall be considered an

official game and not resumed at a later date, except for any post-season playoff game, which shall be continued to a conclusion from its point of discontinuance. In situations not specifically covered by this Rule 3.8, the Babe Ruth Baseball rulebook shall govern.

3.8 The “force-play slide rule” as adopted by the MIAA shall be in effect. This is the NCAA Force-Play-Slide Rule (Rule 8, Section 4). Below is a copy of that rule. Force-Play-Slide Rule (NCAA Baseball Rule 8 Section 4 - adopted by MIAA)

SECTION 4. The intent of the force-play-slide rule is to ensure the safety of all players. This is a safety as well as an interference rule. Whether the defense could have completed the double play has no bearing on the applicability of this rule. This rule pertains to a force-play situation at any base, regardless of the number of outs.

a. On any force play, the runner must slide on the ground before the base and in a direct line between the two bases. It is permissible for the slider’s momentum to carry him through the base in the baseline extended (see diagram).

**Exception**—A runner need not slide directly into a base as long as the runner slides or runs in a direction away from the fielder to avoid making contact or altering the play of the fielder. Interference shall not be called.

(1) “On the ground” means either a head-first slide or a slide with one leg and buttock on the ground before the base.

(2) “Directly into a base” means the runner’s entire body (feet, legs, trunk and arms) must stay in a straight line between the bases.

b. Contact with a fielder is legal and interference shall not be called if the runner makes a legal slide directly to the base and in the baseline extended (see diagram).

**A.R.**—If contact occurs on top of the base as a result of a “pop-up” slide, this contact is legal.

c. Actions by a runner are illegal and interference shall be called if:

(1) The runner slides or runs out of the base line in the direction of the fielder and alters the play of a fielder (with or without contact);

(2) The runner uses a rolling or cross-body slide and either makes contact with or alters the play of a fielder;

(3) The runner’s raised leg makes contact higher than the fielder’s knee when in a standing position;

(4) The runner slashes or kicks the fielder with either leg; or

(5) The runner illegally slides toward or contacts the fielder even if the fielder makes no attempt to throw to complete a play.

**PENALTY for 1-5**—(1) **With less than two outs, the batter-runner, as well as the interfering runner, shall be declared out and no other runner(s) shall advance.**

(2) **With two outs, the interfering runner shall be declared out and no other runner(s) shall advance.**

(3) **If the runner’s slide or collision is flagrant, the runner shall be ejected from the contest.**

**A.R.**—If the bases are loaded with no outs, a double-play attempt is made, and interference is called, all other runners must return to their original bases.

3.9 Either adults or players may be used as base coaches, but all players acting as coaches must wear a batting helmet.

## 4.0 Pitching Rules

The basic pitching rules are those outlined in the Babe Ruth Baseball rules, except for the following modifications:

4.1 Patriot League and Continental League player’s pitching week is Monday - Sunday. Minuteman League only players pitching week is Friday – Thursday except for the playoffs.

4.2 No player may pitch more than 6 innings in regular season games played during their pitching week. Additionally, a player is not allowed to pitch on back-to-back days if they have pitched 3 or more innings on the first day. Thus, for example, a player pitches 3 innings in a Saturday game cannot pitch on Sunday. Also, in the Minuteman League, if a team plays a Friday night due to an odd number of teams in the league, and that team’s next game is on Sunday. These games (Friday and Sunday) will be considered back to back for pitching purposes.

4.3 A player may pitch a maximum of 9 innings per their pitching week including the Minuteman League, in-town leagues, and school programs.

4.4 The total number of combined innings pitched by all of a team’s 15 year-olds in one game shall not exceed three (3), as measured by Rule 4.6. Additionally, the total of all innings pitched by a 15-year old cannot exceed 4 innings in any single pitching week.

4.5 A Continental League player may pitch a maximum of 5 innings in any one game, regular season and playoffs.

4.6 Throwing one pitch during an inning (not including warm-ups) constitutes one inning pitched. Thus, more than one pitcher may be charged with an inning pitched for the same inning.

4.7 A player must be removed as a pitcher for the remainder of a game after hitting three batters in the same game.

- 4.8 The standard balk rules shall be enforced at all times against 14 and 15 year-old pitchers. Each 13 year-old pitcher (in either the Minuteman or Patriot League) will be allowed one balk warning per game before the standard balk rules are enforced. Balk rules will be enforced against pitchers of all ages during the post-season playoffs.
- 4.9 After a player has been removed as a pitcher, he cannot return to pitch again in the same game.

## **5.0 Equipment**

- 5.1 Each team will provide its own batting and catching equipment.
- 5.2 The home team will make sure bases are in place and will provide three game balls (official Babe Ruth League balls or comparable), regardless of game location.
- 5.3 The MIAA rules on the use of non-wood bats shall apply to all Minuteman Baseball League players 14 yrs old and older. For details of the current MIAA bat rules, please visit the following web site <http://www.massbca.com/#/2011-bat-rules/4547774802>. Any player may use a wooden bat of any specifications. Each manager will be responsible for enforcement of this rule among his/her players. The penalty for illegal bat use will be as follows:
- 5.3.1 If the illegal bat is identified and replaced before an at-bat has concluded, there is no penalty.
  - 5.3.2 If the illegal bat is identified after an at-bat has concluded but before a pitch has been thrown to the following batter, the batter using the illegal bat shall be declared out, and all baserunners shall be returned to the bases they occupied prior to the final pitch.
  - 5.3.3 If the illegal bat is identified after the at-bat has concluded and after a pitch has been thrown to the following batter, the result of the at-bat stands.

## **6.0 Umpires**

- 6.1 Each Town Director is responsible for booking umpires for all regular season and playoff games scheduled to be played in their town, regardless of which teams are competing, unless special alternative arrangements have been made.
- 6.2 Each Town Director is responsible for prompt payment to umpires he has booked for the regular season games played in his town and for any regular season home games of his town's teams that might need to be scheduled elsewhere. Each team participating in a playoff game shall be prepared to pay one-half the total umpire expenses of that game directly to the umpire(s) at the pre-game meeting, regardless of where the game is played.
- 6.3 One umpire stationed behind home plate is a minimum standard. The Minuteman Baseball League recommends two umpires for the Minuteman Division, Continental Division, Summer Minuteman Division, Fall Minuteman Division and Fall High School Division regular season games and ALL playoff games at ALL levels. Every effort should be made to utilize certified umpires in appropriate umpiring attire. The use of coaches and parents should be avoided unless a scheduled umpire fails to appear, in which case the opposing coaches should agree on the use of the best available umpire-substitutes so that the players will have the opportunity to play baseball, rather than endure a forfeit.

## **7.0 Insurance**

- 7.1 Each town program is responsible for providing liability and excess medical insurance.

## **8.0 Weather & Field Condition Notification/ Make-Up Games**

- 8.1 It shall be the responsibility of the Town Director in each town to monitor weather and field conditions as they affect games scheduled to be played in his town. He shall notify coaches of all affected teams no later than two hours before scheduled game time if there are any doubts about playability. Similarly, he is responsible for notifying the Umpire Coordinator and the umpires scheduled to handle those games. This communication will avoid unnecessary trips and will allow for field switching in the event that a scheduled field is unplayable but an unscheduled field is useable.
- 8.2 With many fields available to us throughout the towns involved, our goal should be to avoid the need for make-up games by utilizing alternative fields (even in other league towns) at the scheduled game time or the scheduled field at an earlier or later game time on the scheduled day. Umpires should be informed of any field or time changes with as much advance notice as possible.

- 8.3 If a game needs to be postponed for reasons other than weather or field conditions (e.g. advance knowledge of a team's inability to field 8 or more players), the manager of a team unable to play a game at its scheduled time and place must notify the opposing team's manager, the Umpire Coordinator, and his own Town Director at least 48 hours prior to the scheduled game time. If he does not, his team will be charged with a forfeit, the game will not be rescheduled for playing, and he will be responsible for paying any umpire expenses.
- 8.4 Any game appropriately postponed (under Rule 8.3 or because of weather or field conditions) shall be played at an agreed to time by both teams, such as:
- 8.4.1 Moving the game to a different, playable field at the originally scheduled time (see 8.2 above).
  - 8.4.2 Playing a double header on a different, playable field.
  - 8.4.3 Using a weeknight with the fewest conflicts. This arrangement may be more feasible after school sports conclude (around June 1) or for games between teams from the same town.
  - 8.4.4 The Town Directors of the involved towns must be kept informed of all rescheduling plans and must give final approval. If no rescheduling arrangements can be made for a game postponed under Rule 8.3, the game shall be considered a forfeit in favor of the team originally willing and able to play at the scheduled time.

## **9.0 Reporting of Game Results**

- 9.1 After each game, the winning team's manager is responsible for reporting the final score and pitcher utilization for *each* team according to procedures discussed at the managers' meeting. Information for tie games should be reported by the home team's manager. Results should be reported by 11:00 p.m. the same evening as the game. The appropriate method of reporting is the league website. If the website is inoperative for some reason, game information may be e-mailed to the website administrator and league president.
- 9.2 A manager reporting through the website shall follow the instructions given there for appropriate submission. The information required in a game report submission, whether via the website or e-mail, is as follows:
- 9.2.1 Final score showing both team names.
  - 9.2.2 Date the game was played.
  - 9.2.3 Pitchers for the winning team, listed with names, ages, and number of innings pitched by each. (Remember that one pitch thrown in an inning constitutes an inning pitched for that pitcher.)
  - 9.2.4 Pitchers for the losing team, listed with names, ages, and number of innings pitched by each. (Winning manager should remember to confirm this data with the losing manager before leaving the field.)
  - 9.2.5 Name of the person entering the report and the best way to make follow-up contact, if needed (e-mail address or phone # is automatically added in the web site entry).
- 9.3 Standings and other game-related information is available on the web site as soon as the game results are entered.

## **10.0 Spring Season Rounds of Play and Post-season Playoff Schedules**

- 10.1 The Minuteman League will play three rounds of games with a post season playoff. After each round (4 games, 4 games, and 6 games) the teams will be regrouped in an attempt to schedule games against teams of comparable ability. Minuteman League games are primarily scheduled for Saturday and Sunday. The Patriot League will play their games during the week with a separate single elimination playoff among all teams at the end of the season.
- 10.2 All teams (Minuteman, Patriot and Continental Leagues) are eligible to participate in the post-season playoffs. Any team choosing not to participate should inform its Town Director no later than the Monday prior to the scheduled start of playoffs. As much as possible, seeding shall be made based on Minuteman League third-round divisional placement and on regular season records for the Continental and Patriot League. Additional details regarding playoff format will be determined by the Directors and disseminated to all teams in a timely fashion.
- 10.3 All pitching rules under Rule 4.0 shall be in force during the playoffs, except:
- 10.3.1 The balk rules shall be enforced against all pitchers without benefit of a warning.
  - 10.3.2 During the Minuteman League playoff competition, a pitcher's total weekly innings limitation for his team shall be 8, rather than 6. The pitching week will be defined as beginning on the date of the first playoff game and ending on the date of the championship game, even if it is postponed into a subsequent calendar week for any reason.

- 10.3.3 During the Patriot League playoff competition, a pitcher's total weekly innings limitation for his team shall be 8, rather than 6. The pitching week in the Patriot League Playoffs shall be defined as Monday through Sunday.
- 10.3.4 15 year-old pitching limitation for the playoffs. There will be a 4 inning maximum rule for the first 2 games and then a second 4 inning maximum rule for the second 2 games. This rule applies to the total number of innings that can be pitched by a 15-year old. All other pitching rules remain unchanged.

*AR 1. Player A, a 15 yr old, pitched 3 innings in the first round (game 1 of the playoffs). No other 15 yr old can pitch in round 1 (game 1 of the playoffs) as the max total for all 15 yr olds in a game is 3 innings. Player A is available to pitch 1 inning in Round 2 (game 2 of the playoffs) on Friday if their Round 1 game (game 1 of the playoffs) was played on Monday, Tuesday or Wednesday respectively. If the round 1 game (game 1 of the playoffs) was pushed out for some reason to Thursday, and Round 2 (game 2 of the playoffs) was played on Friday, then, Player A under the same circumstances would be ineligible to pitch on Friday, given that these are back to back days and having pitched 3 innings Thursday, disqualifies him for pitching Friday.*

*AR 2. Player A, a 15 yr old, didn't pitch in rounds 1 or 2 (games 1 or 2 of the playoffs), but, pitched 3 innings in round 3 (game 3 of the playoffs) on Saturday. Although he may be entitled to pitch one more inning in round 4 (game 4 of the playoffs), he would be ineligible to pitch in Round 4 (game 4 of the playoffs) if the Round 4 game was played on Sunday, as he can't pitch on back to back days if on the first day he pitched 3 innings. However, if Sunday's game (for weather reasons) was pushed out to Monday, he would be eligible to pitch one more inning.*

**AR 3. Player A, a 15 yr old, didn't pitch in round 1 (game 1 of the playoffs) . He pitches 3 innings in round 2 (game 2 of the playoffs) on Friday night. While this player has a fresh set of 4 15-year old innings available for rounds 3 and 4 (games 3 and 4 of the playoffs), this pitcher would be ineligible to pitch in Round 3 (game 3 of the playoffs), given this is a back to back game with Round 2 (game 2 of the playoffs) and given he pitched 3 innings in Round 2 (game 1 of the playoffs) , disqualifies him.**

- 10.4 Seeding for playoff positions shall be by points earned during the season or in the case of the Minuteman League the points earned in Round 3. In case of two way ties, the tie breaker sequence is (1) head to head, (2) least runs allowed per game (head to head), (3) least runs allowed per game overall. In case of three way or more ties, the tie breaker sequence is (1) least runs allowed per game overall, (2) most runs scored per game overall.
- 10.5 The Directors may publish additional rules to govern the playoffs, as they deem necessary.

## **11.0 Summer League Special Rules**

- 11.1 All Minuteman League rules shall apply to the Summer League, with the following modifications:
- 11.2 The summer league will initially be limited to 20 team slots, and those slots will be filled first by teams from the "core" towns participating in the spring league. If all 20 slots are not filled, teams from outside towns will be considered for acceptance as long as fields are available and travel issues are resolved. If the demand for teams from the core towns exceeds 20 slots, we will expand the summer league for the core towns only, as long as fields are available to fill scheduling requirements.
- 11.3 Each summer team's roster must be posted to the website prior to the first day of scheduled summer league play. Each team is encouraged to roster 20 players. No player may be rostered on more than one summer team in the Minuteman League, but to avoid forfeits, roster flexibility among a town's teams will be allowed, with coaches strongly encouraged to share this information with each other prior to game-time. A team's playoff roster is limited, however, to the players listed on the posted website roster.
- 11.4 To be eligible for the Summer Minuteman League a player must not only meet the Minuteman Spring requirements but must have played on the big diamond in the spring. The Summer Minuteman League is not a step up league for 12 yr old players. Each summer team's roster may include as many as three players age 16 years old as defined in Rule 2.0. These players are not allowed to pitch. The intention of this rule is to provide an opportunity for players of this age who are not chosen to play in a town's summer all-star travel program.
- 11.5 The pitching week in summer league play shall be defined as Monday through Sunday.
- 11.6 The summer schedule shall be a round robin schedule.
- 11.7 The summer playoff format shall be single elimination.

- 11.8 An automatic mercy rule will be in effect. The umpire will stop the game once it becomes official (4 1/2 innings if the home team is ahead or 5 innings if the home team is behind) if one (1) team is ahead by twelve (12) runs (or more) and has had equal time at bat (by innings) or if the home team is leading.

## **12.0 Fall League Special Rules**

- 12.1 The Minuteman Fall Baseball League is comprised of 3 divisions:
- 12.1.1 High School Division - For players that played on their HS team this past spring or who have played Legion, Sr Babe Ruth, Lou Tompkins or AAU baseball. 9 inning games will be scheduled on Sundays.
    - 12.1.1.1 No Pitcher may pitch more than 5 innings, this will allow at least 2 pitchers per game. Everyone Bats - Free substitutions. Other than that it is normal MIAA Rules.
  - 12.1.2 Minuteman Division - For players that previously played a season on the 90 foot diamond (Patriot or Minuteman). Ages for this division are 13 - 16. Double headers will be played on Saturdays.
    - 12.1.2.1 Rules are the same as the Minuteman Summer League with one change. Pitching - maximum four (4) innings in a day for a pitcher.
  - 12.1.3 Step Up Division - This division is designed to facilitate the player transition from the 60 foot diamond to the 90 foot diamond. Players must be at least 12 years old, be in the 7th or 8th grade for the current school year and must be new to the 90 foot diamond. Single game will be played on Saturdays.
    - 12.1.3.1 Rules are the same as the Minuteman Summer League with one change. Pitching - maximum three (3) innings per player, at least 3 players get to pitch per game.
  - 12.1.4 There are Open Rosters and no score reporting or standings maintained for this league.

## **13.0 Continental League Special Rules**

- 13.1 The Continental League shall be comprised of players, age 16 – 18 years old as defined in Rule 2.0.
- 13.2 The Continental League shall play one 9 inning per week on Sunday afternoons. The times of the games shall be set by the Board of Directors, but should not start later than 3:30 PM unless lights are available.
- 13.3 Each team may roster 20 players.
- 13.4 Pitching limitations are defined in Rule 4.5.
- 13.5 Each team will pay one umpire fee of \$75.00/game for the two umpires that are provided by the home team.
- 13.6 The Continental League will play a 7 game regular season and a single elimination playoff.