



# **Sydney Metropolitan Baseball League.**

## **Competition Rules.**

### **WARNING ABOUT INHERENT DANGERS OF BASEBALL**

*The Rules and Procedures issued by Sydney Metropolitan Baseball League are designed to maximise the enjoyment, fairness and safety of our game. Officials and players should be aware that baseball, like all sports, will always have inherent dangers.*

*Some of these dangers arise from batted balls and collisions with other players. Care should be taken by all concerned to minimise such dangers through the use of appropriate equipment (including protective equipment), proper training methods and awareness of risks.*

### **1. General.**

1.1 All games will be played under the "OFFICIAL RULES OF BASEBALL" as adopted by the AUSTRALIAN BASEBALL FEDERATION provided that, if there is a conflict, the competition rules as follow shall prevail.

1.2 The Management Committee reserves the right to vary any of the competition rules at any time, if special circumstances warrant such action. Any substantial variation to these rules will be notified to League and Club representatives.

### **2. Competition Structure.**

2.1 The method of conducting competitions for clubs shall be as approved by the League each season.

2.2 The League will conduct competitions in graded Divisions.

2.3 Position in the competition table shall be decided by dividing the number of games played by games won and calculated to a third decimal point. A drawn or tied game shall be counted as a played game with half a win.

### **3. Registration of Teams.**

3.1 Clubs must submit to the League, the completed Club Registration Form, showing details of club management and number of teams being entered into the League's competition, by the date specified by the Management Committee.

3.2 Clubs must submit the completed Team Roster form with full details of all players and officials by the date specified by the Management Committee.

3.3 The Management Committee reserves the right to refuse the entry of any team and/ or the registration of any person.

3.4 All monies owing by the club arising from accounts issued by the League, must be paid by the date scheduled by the League. Any club in breach of this rule will not be permitted to continue in the competition, unless special approval has been granted by the League.

#### **4. Registration of Players and Officials.**

This League recognises those players registered by the League as per the following rules.

- 4.1 All players must be separately registered with BNSW before taking the field.
- 4.2 The minimum age of players registering is :-
  - \* 15 years of age on 31st August for each summer State League season
  - \* 15 years of age on 31 March for each Sydney Winter League season.

Applications for exemption must be requested in writing to the SMBL Committee.  
Applications for exemptions will not be accepted after the start of the current season

Applications must include players experience and reasons for applying to play in senior grade.  
Where request is approved the team must include a family member and / or a Level 3 coach  
Player must present for an on-field evaluation if required

Determination of the application will specify the grade level appropriate for the player  
Appeal against a ruling should be in writing to the BNSW Technical Committee.

- 4.3 Each club shall register the name and address of each player, coach, manager and scorer on, and fully complete, the form prescribed by the League. All registrations must be in the hands of the League by the date determined by the Management Committee each season.
- 4.4 Except by special permission of the League, no new player registrations will be accepted after the 30<sup>th</sup> September (summer season) or 30 April (winter season).
- 4.5 Only persons whose registrations have been completed, submitted by the determined date and approved by the League, may participate in competition games.
- 4.6 Should a player, coach or manager change their address, their club must notify the League within 14 days.
- 4.7 All players must be fully paid registered players with the Sydney Metropolitan Baseball League. No defaulters will be accepted until they have presented proof that the debt has been paid.

#### **5. Transfers and Clearance.**

- 5.1 A player who transfers from one club to another must secure a clearance from the original club stating that they have been cleared of all financial obligations to that club. The club to which they transfer may register them without receiving a clearance and they may participate in games with that club provided that, if no clearance is eventually granted, each game in which the player has participated shall be debited as a forfeit, after such disclosures and on lodgement of a protest by the offended club.
- 5.2 Any player in debt to a club, may be listed with the League as a defaulter. Defaulters must be notified by the 31<sup>st</sup> October (summer season) or 31<sup>st</sup> May (winter season). After this date, no defaulters will be added to the list for that current season.

#### **6. Eligibility of Players. (Note: playing an ineligible player will result in forfeit of that game.)**

- 6.1 No new players shall be eligible to take part in any match after the determined registration date unless approved by the League and the registration forwarded within 48 hours. Any breach shall result in the forfeiture of any matches that the player has participated in.

- 6.2 Any team not having nine (9) players may play registered players from a lower grade from their own club.
- 6.3 A team cannot take the field unless it has a minimum of six (6) players registered with that team.
- 6.4 No player having participated in four (4) competition matches in a particular grade, shall be eligible to play in a lower grade unless approval has been given by the League.
- 6.5 Where two or more teams are entered by one club in the same grade players must play only for that team for which they were originally registered unless special permission has been granted by the League. Breaches of this rule will result in a forfeit being recorded against the offending team. Special permission may be granted by the League to re-register players.
- 6.6 No player or coach may play or coach with more than one club in the same competition, during the same season without the approval of the League. Any request under this rule will not be granted after 31<sup>st</sup> May (winter season) or 31<sup>st</sup> October (summer season).
- 6.7 Seven (7) players in a given game may constitute a team, as long as substitutes can be found to field. Substitutes must be registered with the League and can be loaned from opposition teams or from within their own club.
- 6.8 No substitutes shall play if there are registered players available who have not yet participated in the game.
- 6.9 Substitutes shall only be eligible to play in the outfield.
- 6.10 Substitutes are entitled to bat except in the case where the team has less than nine (9) players and is borrowing players for fielding. In this case the intended substitutes turn at bat will be declared an out unless both teams agree to the contrary.
- 6.11 A player who has been substituted and voluntarily removed from the game may, due to injury to another player, re-enter the game as an outfielder provided no other fresh substitutes are available.

## **7. Game Rules.**

- 7.1 The starting and scheduled completion times for games shall be those stated in the Competition Schedule issued by the League.
- 7.2 Games shall be 2 hours or 9 innings.
- 7.3 If at the conclusion of the seventh (7) innings of a game or at the conclusion of any completed innings thereafter, a team is ten (10) or more runs ahead, such team shall be declared the winner.
- 7.4 It shall be a regulation competition game if the umpire certifies that play has proceeded for at least half ( $\frac{1}{2}$ ) the regulation time or 4 innings ( $3\frac{1}{2}$  innings if the home team is leading).
- 7.5 In the event of a team being unable to field seven (7) registered players, or failing to appear at the ground within ten (10) minutes of the scheduled starting time or refusing to proceed to play when directed by the umpire to do so, the opposing side shall be awarded the game on appeal to the umpire. The team forfeiting in such circumstances shall be required to pay equivalent to normal umpire's fees where umpires have been appointed to that game.
- 7.6 A team receiving a forfeit shall be regarded as having scored a nine (9) to nil (0) win, and the losers a nil (0) to nine (9) loss, for the purpose of compiling the average of runs for and against. A \$50 fine may be imposed where a game is forfeited on less than 24 hours notice.

7.7 In the event of a game not being declared a regulation game for any reason (other than a forfeit), the game will be declared a “no game” and no game win/loss results will be recorded towards either team’s points percentage.

7.8 The League is committed to the principle that the competition is to be played in the true spirit of the game. Where the actions of teams are deemed by the umpire to be either deliberately getting themselves out or not attempting to achieve outs in order to affect the result of the game, the umpire has the authority to declare the game a no game or award the game as a forfeit against the team which is breaching this rule.

7.9 For all games, the top half of an innings shall not begin less than ten (10) minutes before the scheduled finishing time. In the last scheduled game, or where there is a single game drawn on the ground, if an inning is not completed at the scheduled finish time, play will continue until the bottom half is completed or the side batting in the bottom half has scored the winning run.

7.10 In the first game of scheduled double games on the same field, play will cease with the completion of the time at bat of the player in the batting box at the scheduled finishing time with the following exception. If the umpire considers that a result may be possible before the scheduled start time for the second game, play shall be allowed to continue. Time shall then be called with batter in the box at the scheduled start time of the second game. The second game will commence as soon as practicable after that time with the official start time recorded from the time the umpire calls “Play ball”.

7.11 The final score, when an unequal number of innings has been played, reverts back to the last equal innings except where:-

- a) The team in the bottom of the innings is at bat and is ahead or tied.
- b) The team last at bat was behind the previous innings and still behind when time is called in which case all runs scored count.

examples follow.

Examples: Team A bats first.

A	=	6	then bats, score	0	=	6	
B	=	4	incomplete innings	2	=	6	game tied.
A	=	6	then bats, score	1	=	7	
B	=	4	incomplete innings	2	=	6	A wins 7-6
A	=	5	then bats, score	3	=	8	
B	=	7	incomplete innings	0	=	7	B wins 7-5 as score reverts

7.12 In all grades a team may elect, if extra players are available, to name up to a maximum of twelve (12) players in the team batting line up. If electing to bat more than nine (9) players then all players listed on the line up must bat. Players must continue to bat in named order. They may be substituted by fresh players but any voluntary removal from the batting line up which reduces the number of batters shall be declared an automatic out. The named players may be substituted in the field by other named players on unlimited occasions but only at the end of completed innings. However not withstanding, replacement of players due to injury is allowed at any time and injured players cannot return to the game except when temporary removal is required to comply with the Blood Rule (7.14).

7.13 Coaches shall be able without penalty to make one (1) visit to the pitcher in an innings. On the second (2) visit the pitcher must be replaced but may remain in the game. Any pitcher replaced under this rule cannot pitch again in that game.

7.14 **Blood Rule:** Should injury to a player during a game produce blood then that player must immediately be removed from the game until the wound is dressed and the flow of blood stopped. Players who are injured in the course of a game and who require treatment to stem the flow of any body fluids may leave the game without penalty. If on bases a substitute runner may be used until replaced by the original player. If at bat the player may obtain treatment and if unable to be treated

within a reasonable period the batting order shall continue without penalty with the next batter in the lineup batting.(The player shall in this case not bat again until their turn in the order again arrives and if not fit to take this turn at bat shall be replaced, if this has not already occurred.). If in the field the player may be substituted while treatment is applied.

**7.15 High Temperature Rule:** A five minute break may be called at the first break in play after a team has been in the field for 30 minutes **if** the ambient temperature at the ground is 38 or above (32+ Wet Bulb Temperature).

## **8. Grounds and Umpires.**

8.1 The dimensions of, and on the field, should where possible be :-

Diamond.	Pitching.	Foul Line.	Centre.
90'	60'6"	300' (min)	360' (min)

8.2 The fitness of the ground for competition games shall be decided by the authorities controlling the ground, or by the officially appointed umpire, in that order. If no officially appointed umpire is in attendance, then the coaches must decide. If the coaches disagree the game is declared a 'no game'. This rule will not be subject to protest.

8.3 The umpire, upon being made aware that the layout of the diamond is incorrect, shall ensure that it is corrected immediately.

8.4 In the event of the game not being played because of the unfitness of the ground, the result shall be declared a no game unless the two (2) teams advise the Management Committee within seven (7) days that by mutual agreement they will replay the game. Any replay must be played within one calendar month or before the first semi-final weekend – whichever is earliest.

8.5 Once an appeal has been made against poor light, the fitness of the light for play shall be in the hands of the umpire for decision at any time without further appeal.

8.6 In the event of an official League umpire not being allocated or attending at the time set down for the game to commence or being able to continue, it shall be the home clubs responsibility to appoint an umpire.

8.7 The home team shall dress and set up the ground prior to the game in accordance with the Rules of Baseball. Duty of care requires that the pitcher's mound and home plate area are prepared before the second game of a double-header. Non compliance may result in the home team forfeiting the game.

8.8 The team named first in the competition draw shall be the home team and will have first choice of dugout and field first in the game. If the game is played on a neutral ground the home team will not have a choice but will take the first base dugout.

8.9

## **9. Behaviour.**

9.1 A player, coach or umpire participating in the game, shall not consume/use any unapproved substances including cigarettes, alcohol, chewing tobacco or drugs other than those prescribed by a physician in the vicinity of the playing field. Offenders will be removed from the game.

9.2 Clubs are responsible for the behaviour of their supporters in uniform or not, both on and off the playing field. Any breach of this rule will be subject to disciplinary action by the League.

9.3 Clubs members, players, coaches and supporters are not to bring drinks in glass containers to the ground.

## **10. Major and AA League Players.**

10.1 Players may be registered to play in this league and also in other Leagues.

10.2 Players who have played in Major League, AA League or Sydney Winter may not play lower than C Grade without express permission of the Management Committee.

10.3 No player can play in a grade lower than the one he was registered in during the previous season without the approval of the Management Committee

## **11 Uniforms and Equipment.**

11.1. Each club shall register colours and design of its uniform and only approved uniforms and warm-up jackets shall be worn during a game of baseball. No change of any kind shall be made to the colours of the uniform unless submitted and approved by the League.

11.2. Clubs must only use break-away bases

11.3. Pitchers and relieved pitchers only, shall be allowed to wear warm-up jackets in the batting box and on the field of play.

11.4. Each club shall endeavour to have uniforms carrying a number without duplication, and such number should be of a size no less than 150mm and should be clearly seen from outside the field of play.

11.5. Club uniforms must be worn, baseball caps shall form part of that uniform and must be worn at all times except when the batting helmet or catcher's mask are worn.

11.6. Double eared batting helmets must be worn by bat boys, juniors coaching in the coaches' boxes, batters and baserunners.

11.7. All baseballs used are to be leather, in good order, and of a type approved by the League or supplied by the League if so directed by the Management Committee. Wet weather balls will only be permitted in inclement weather.

11.8. The umpire shall be sole judge of the fitness of balls for play.

11.9. The home team (named first in draw) shall provide two new leather match baseballs and have sufficient reserve balls in match condition to enable the game to continue without undue delay.

11.10. All catchers must wear helmets and masks. Throat guards are essential. Players warming up pitchers must wear a mask.

11.10 Bats shall be of aluminium, graphite or ceramic construction or one solid piece of wood or wood composite.

11.11 Division 1 to Division 3 are restricted to wood bats or aluminium bats with a maximum weight to length differential of -3

11.12 The maximum weight to length differential of bats is -5 for all grades below Division Three. A weight to length differential of -7 is permitted for women in the Women's competition only.

## **12 Notification of Results.**

12.1 **The winning team** must forward to the League's Recorder the completed result sheet for each game, within two (2) days of the game.

12.2 The results must be submitted by sms, phone or email by **the winning team** to the League Recorder, as directed, and by the time advised. Failure to comply with this rule may result in a loss being recorded against the offending team &/or a fine of \$10 for each offence and increase incrementally at the discretion of the Management Committee.

12.3 Any injury to players **MUST** be recorded on the result sheet. If the injury is considered serious a separate report is to be forwarded to the League within five days of the game.

## **13 Fines and Penalties.**

13.1 The Management Committee reserves the right to implement fines, or the penalty of loss of points, to clubs who breach these rules.

## **14 Disputes.**

14.1 In the event of an umpire giving an erroneous decision on a point of law and refusing to alter that decision although attention is drawn to the fact at the time, on the field by the coach of the team who has suffered by such wrong decision, then the team so suffering has the right to protest to the League Appeals Committee provided that the intention to protest is indicated to the umpire at the time of the disputed decision and before the next ball is pitched, and before any intervening play occurs and is so marked in the score book.

14.2 A club wishing the Appeals Committee to adjudicate upon any dispute shall forward to the League in writing within three (3) days of the game out of which the dispute arose, a clear statement of the matter in dispute signed by a club official and enclosing a fee of \$50. If the protest is upheld the fee will be returned.

14.3 A player or coach dismissed from a game of baseball shall be required to attend a Judiciary Committee meeting, where their case is to be heard. The umpire shall be required to submit a report on the incident to the League on the day following the sending off. The umpire shall advise the offending club's coach of the nature of the offence. The Judiciary will determine if the umpire should be present at the hearing.

14.4 If the Judiciary hearing is not held prior to the players next scheduled game, the player may play unless the Judiciary specifically instructs the player and his/her club that they cannot play. If the player does take part in a game after receiving instructions not to play, the game is forfeit.

14.5 A player, manager or coach who is under suspension by this League or any other League or Association is ineligible to participate in any game of baseball under the control of the Sydney Metropolitan Baseball League. Playing ineligible players will mean forfeiture of the game in which they play.

14.6 Any matter brought to the attention of the League with regard to behaviour, breach of rules or any act which could adversely affect the good name of the League or bring the game into disrepute will be investigated and acted on by the League. The League reserves the right to pass any such matter on to a Committee for further investigation and advice.

## **15 Sliding or avoiding contact.**

15.1 Any runners who does not slide directly at the base or attempt to avoid a fielder and collides with a fielder shall be given out.

15.2 Any player, adjudged by the umpire to have acted deliberately, carelessly or recklessly to cause a collision to occur shall be ejected from the game. The same action is to be taken where a fielder deliberately or recklessly collides with a runner.

## **16. Player Condition Notification**

16.1 Players shall notify their coach and club officials of any condition which may affect their performance or participation in the sport of baseball. Such conditions may include for example; epilepsy, pregnancy, etc.

16.2 Players with such a condition shall seek medical advice in relation to their ongoing participation in the sport.

16.3 The League shall not be held responsible for the players or individual's failure to seek and follow appropriate medical advice.

16.4 Information relating to a player's condition shall be held confidentially (unless this is not required) but may be used by the organisation for administrative, insurance, legal or related purposes.

16.5 A player agrees that they shall not contravene medical advice in relation to their continued participation, and when required, shall provide a copy of a medical certificate approving their participation.

## **17 Under age pitchers;**

17.1 Any player aged 16 or 17 years as at 31 December of the next or current summer season (ie eligible for U18's) shall not pitch more than a maximum of 90 pitches in a game nor in any consecutive three day period.

17.2 Any player aged 17 years and under as above shall not pitch in any other game if they have pitched 65 pitchers or more in any game during that three day period.

17.3 Any player aged 17 years and under as above shall not pitch and catch (nor catch and then pitch) in the same game

17.4 Players under the age of 16 who have pitched more than 30 pitches in a game cannot go to the field.

17.5 Any player aged 17 years and under as above once removed as a pitcher shall not return to the mound

17.6 A player aged 15 years as at 31 December of the next or current summer season (ie eligible for U16's) can pitch once he has turned 15. He is then restricted to a maximum of 75 pitches in a game or in a consecutive three day period.

17.7 A player who has pitched in a Junior competition game in the morning shall not pitch in an afternoon game on the same day.

17.8 Breaches of this rule for the first offence will result in the loss of game and for a second offence the loss of all competition points.

In all cases quoted above the pitcher may complete the batter in the box.

## 18 Specific Grade Restrictions

- 18.1 In specific Mixed Team Grades the registered team must comprise at least five female members.
- 18.2 Where squads are used in A1/A2 grade the A1 team is only allowed nine players and an optional DH.
- 18.3 Refer to rule 7.3 **In G & H grade** competitions a maximum of 7 runs may be scored in any one innings. Once the seventh run is scored the umpire is to call "side away". The only exception to this rule is if the final play involves an out-of-the-park home run – in that case all runs would score
- 18.4 **In G & H grade** competitions a maximum of 7 runs may be scored in any one innings. Once the seventh run is scored the umpire is to call "side away". The only exception to this rule is if the final play involves an out-of-the-park home run – in that case all runs would score.

## 19 Eligibility of Players for the Final Series

- 19.1 To be eligible to play in the semi finals, finals or grand finals, a player must be registered on that clubs list held by the League and have participated in six (6) competition games for that club during the current season and be eligible to compete in that grade.
- 19.2 Players who have qualified in a lower grade, may be used in higher grade semi finals, finals or grand finals, if higher grade players are unavailable.
- 19.3 To be eligible to play in semi finals, finals or grand finals in A1/A2 grades a player must play 60% of the available games in that grade. In an 18 week season that is 11 games.

## 20 Final Series

- 20.1 All previous game rules will apply, except for the following variations and other special rules as notified by the Management Committee.
- 20.2 In competitions where semi finals, finals and grand finals are to be played, the team leading the competition table at the conclusion of the last game prior to the semi finals shall be declared the Minor Premiers.
- 20.3 In the event of two or more teams being equal in the competition table on percentages, their respective positions shall be determined in the following order
- number of games won against the teams involved
  - the average of runs scored for and against each other in the competition rounds
  - and if still equal, then runs for and against all teams through the whole season.

The method for determining the average is as follows:

- the runs for and against each team shall be totaled and divided by the total of runs 'against' each team with the higher average being the better.
- If still equal the format to decide the finishing positions will be decided by the Management Committee.

20.4 At the conclusion of the competition rounds, the 4 leading teams shall meet in semi final, final and grand final as follows:-

**Semi Finals** - The team finishing first on the competition table plays against the team finishing second (Game A) and the team finishing third on the table plays the fourth placed team (Game B).

**Final** - Losing team in Game A plays the winner of Game B (Game C).

**Grand Final** - winner of Game A plays the winner of Game C.

20.5 The winner of the grand final shall be declared the PREMIERS.

20.6 In the event of a semi-final or final not being commenced or not being completed as a constituted game the team which led in the competition table shall be declared the winner. In the case of a Grand Final only, a specified alternative date will be declared by the League.

20.7 In the Semi-finals and Final the team finishing the higher of the two in the competition will be the home team and field first. In the Grand Final the team which wins the Major Semi-Final will be the home team.

20.8 The finishing time of the early game will be altered to enable a maximum of 15 minutes to be played where it is needed to achieve a result. If a result is not achieved within the extra time, the game will be called with the batter in the box at the conclusion of the extra 15 minutes. The score will revert to the last completed innings provided that the team batting last has not drawn or won the game in incomplete innings.

20.9 In the Grand Final where the game, even with extra time, results in a draw, the game will be replayed the following week. If the late game is drawn, up to two extra innings will be played after the scheduled finish time in order to achieve a result. If still drawn the game will be replayed the following week or at a date determined by the League.

20.10 In the event that a replay is not possible, the winner of the Major Semi Final will be declared the Premiers.

20.11 Both teams will supply an equal number of new balls for the final series games, a minimum of 2 each, and have a sufficient reserve balls in match condition to enable the game to continue without undue delay. The umpire will be the sole judge of the fitness of the balls for play.

**Rules: September 2003**

**Revised April 2005**

**Revised September 2007**

**Revised September 2010**

**Revised March 2011**

**Revised March 2012**

**Revised February 2014**

**Revised May 2014**

**Revised September 2017 (BNSW Underage restrictions)**

**Revised January 2018 (Hot Weather)**

**Revised March 2018 (H grade battery restrictions)**

**Revised March 2019 (H grade battery restrictions removed)**

**Revised March 2020 (4.2 Underage restrictions)**

**Revised April 2021 (Grand Finals replays)**