

**WEST AKRON
BASEBALL LEAGUE**

**2007 PLAYING RULES
FOR BASEBALL**

Revised March 2007

WEST AKRON BASEBALL LEAGUE

LEAGUE OBJECTIVES

West Akron Baseball League (WABL) has been organized to provide all West Akron boys ages six (6) through eighteen (18) the opportunity to play organized baseball. Our objectives are to teach youths the fundamentals of the game, to encourage them to always strive to improve their abilities, to show them the values of fair play, and to help them to work and play together as a team. In so doing we will help youths become better adults.

ELIGIBILITY RULES

The following classes are strictly based on age and are used for the boys in the West Akron Baseball League: **The WABL Board on the recommendation of the President of the Boys program, with conversations with the players Parents and Coach, the eligibility rules can be amended for the player in question.**

AGE GROUP	BOYS	EXPLANATION
15-17	E	Boys play in Greater Akron Baseball Federation or the Suburban League
13-14	F	Players age as of July 31st, 2007
11-12	G	Players age as of July 31st, 2007
9-10	H	Players age as of July 31st, 2007
6-8	I	Players age as of July 31st, 2007

1. Insofar as practically possible, eligibility shall be limited to boys living within the Buchtel and Firestone High School districts at the time of registration, with the exception that any boy, or his brother, originally qualifying for WABL eligibility and having played one or more years in WABL may continue to play in WABL for the balance of their career eligibility.
2. A team roster in triplicate which shall include the names addresses, and birth dates of all players must be completed and filed with the Vice President of Personnel before the start of the season's play.
3. A player in the West Akron Baseball League cannot play on any other baseball team until after the Day of Champions, either in or outside of the league. (Exceptions: Scholastic programs when eligible and tournament teams selected to represent WABL in various tournaments and non-league games are permitted.
4. No player is eligible who has not been assigned to a team by the Vice President of Personnel. Names of non-assigned but otherwise eligible players who wish to play must be returned over to the Vice President of Personnel for assignment to a team.
5. The son of a manager in the boy's league may be pre-assigned to that manager's team prior to assignment of the remaining players in the players' pool. No other players may be pre-assigned to a boy's team except by the Vice President of Personnel.
6. A player assigned to a team by the Vice President of Personnel through the regular player pool may not be transferred from that team to another team without the consent of both managers and each such player's parents and subject to the final approval by the Vice President of Personnel. (See the "Trading Rule.")
7. Assigned players may be traded from one team to another with consent of both managers and each such player's parents and subject to final approval by the Vice President of Personnel. This approval shall not, however, be unreasonably withheld. All trading of returning players must be completed prior to the draft. No returning player shall be traded for a draft choice.
8. A player proven to have been ineligible will be expelled for the season and may, at the discretion of the Vice President of Personnel, be declared ineligible from future participation in WABL. All games in which an ineligible player has participated may be declared forfeited by the Protest Committee after a proper hearing.
9. All managers and coaches are urged to verify the dates of birth.

10. All matters relating to player personnel, birth date verification, player rating, conduct of the tryouts, player draft, and placement of players signing up after tryouts or after completion of the draft, and not specifically covered in this section, shall be within the sole discretion and authority of the Personnel Committee.

GENERAL RULES

1. The Official Baseball Rules (published by the National Baseball Congress) shall govern baseball unless noted otherwise in these WABL rules.
2. Two adults may be allowed to coach from the coaching boxes. The second coach may be a uniformed player from the roster. Only the manager, registered players, coaches, and the scorekeeper shall be allowed in the immediate area of the bench. Players not in the field should remain in the bench area.
3. Molded rubber cleated shoes may be worn in all classes or leagues. Metal cleated shoes shall be prohibited, except in boys E League.
4. Catchers must wear a catcher's mask (with throat guard), helmet, chest protector, and shin guards. Catchers must wear a protective cup. A protective cup is strongly recommended for all male players, and infielders should consider wearing a mouthpiece.
5. Any non-adult catching a pitcher at any time must wear a catcher's facemask with throat guard.
6. A game in any class or league in which five (5) full innings have been completed (4 ½ if the home team leads) and which is ended due to rain, darkness, or other unforeseen developments shall be considered a complete game.
7. A regular-season game rained out or not completed due to rain or other unforeseen developments (including darkness) shall be a suspended game and play shall be resumed from the point where play was suspended. Insofar as is possible, the same players who were in the lineup at the time play was suspended shall resume play. In the event such players are unavailable due to illness, absence, or pitching rules,

substitutions shall be permitted, with substitutes to assume the position of the player they replace in the batting order. All games are to be rescheduled by the League Commissioner of each league in their respective programs. It is the League Commissioner's responsibility to work with the Umpire in Chief. Managers should not call the Umpire in Chief to reschedule games. Any make-up games are to be rescheduled on the "first available date for both teams following a rain-out or cancellation, based on field and umpire availability and in order of postponement. If make-up games cannot be rescheduled on the "first" available day because of field or umpire availability, they must be rescheduled within two (2) weeks or they will not be made up.

8. A playoff game not completed shall be a suspended game and play shall be resumed from the point where play was suspended. Insofar as is possible, the same players who were in the lineup at the time play was suspended shall resume play. In the event such players are unavailable due to illness, absence, or pitching rules, substitutions shall be permitted, with substitutes to assume the position of the player they replace in the batting order.

9. All leagues shall have a 15-minute grace starting period, and no game shall be started after 7:00 p.m. without the consent of both managers.

10. A week is defined as 12:01 a.m. Monday morning and ending at midnight the following Sunday.

11. For purposes of eligibility, an inning is defined as any appearance on the mound. If a pitcher makes one or more appearances on the mound in any one inning, it shall constitute one inning of eligibility.

12. For purposes of pitching eligibility, innings or part innings pitched in incomplete or suspended games SHALL count against a pitcher's allotted number of innings during a week, 72-hour period, or 12-hour period that they are pitched. Innings per game apply since a suspended game is one game played in two parts.

13. Any non-starter present at the start of the game (except for Boys E league) is required to start the next league game for which he is present at the start of the game. This rule does not supersede any disciplinary rules.

14. Each manager, when exchanging the lineups prior to the start of the game, will include the number of innings pitched for that week by each player and the names of any players on the bench at the start of the previous game. Violation of any pitching or substitution rules will result in forfeiture of the game.

15. A courtesy runner may be used in two-out situations for a catcher-base runner. The courtesy runner must be a player not currently in the game, or the last out, if no one is on the bench.
16. No appeal is necessary for the umpire to call out a batter-runner who either fails to touch a base (advancing or returning) or fails to tag up properly after a fly ball.
17. Disciplinary action by a manager – Any player arriving after the start of play of a regularly scheduled WABL game for the second time in a season may be withheld from playing in that game at the discretion of his manager, provided notice and reason is given to the opposing manager.
18. If a player misses two or more regularly scheduled practices or one or more regular season games without excuse or prior notification to the manager or coaches, the manager may suspend the player from the next regular-season game, provided prior notice and explanation is given to the player's parent or guardian. Such suspension must be communicated to the Vice President of Personnel and the Class or League Chairman at least 24 hours prior to the next scheduled game and to the opposing manager prior to the start of such game. After such suspension, in the event that such unexcused absence continues, the manager must apply to the Vice President of Personnel for consent to permanently suspend the player and such consent shall not be unreasonably withheld.
19. Each team must field seven (7) players at the start of a game or a forfeit shall be declared. However, a game may be completed with a lesser number of players. In case of illness during the game, injury, or ejection of a player, a player from the team roster to be chosen by his own manager must be reinserted into the game if available. If a player must leave a game and no substitute is available, his/her team will not be penalized for a vacant batting slot upon proper notice to the opposing team manager. If this player, for whom no substitute is available, is unable to continue while a batter, the next player in the batting order becomes the batter and starts with a new ball and strike count. If a baserunner, for whom no substitute is available, is injured or unable to continue as a base runner, the last available batter must be used as a courtesy runner.
20. The home team shall supply two **new** baseballs for each game. The baseballs that must be supplied for each class are:

Class H: Rawlings CROLB or AO54

Class G: New Rawlings AO68 or AO54

Class F: New Rawlings AO88 or R100

Class E: New Rawlings RO1 or R100

Any backup ball shall be the same quality or better. The umpire approves the game balls and all backup balls.

21. In an attempt to dislodge the ball, a runner shall not deliberately crash into a defensive player who has clear possession of the ball and is waiting to make a tag. Penalty: The runner shall be called out and also ejected from the game for unsportsmanlike conduct.

22. A defensive player shall not fake a tag on a runner when that player does not have the ball in his possession or when a play is not imminent. Penalty: Obstruction will be called and followed by subsequent awarding of bases.

23. A base runner shall not clap, yell or do anything to distract the pitcher or infield defense. Penalty will be an out charged to the base runners team.

24. A manager may talk to a pitcher four times per inning per pitcher per game in the Boys H League. In G and F league two times per inning per pitcher.

25. Any pitcher taking the mound for the second time is entitled to no more than 8 warm-up pitches.

26. Managers are required to play each and every player at least three (3) complete consecutive innings the first time the player enters the game, except in H League; see H League rules 2 and 3. A non-starting player, available at the start of the game, must be inserted into the game after the completion of the third inning and before the start of the fourth inning. If a player arrives after the start of the game with a valid excuse for his or her late arrival, then he or she may be inserted after the third inning. Violation of this rule will result in a two game suspension for the Manager. If violation happens during the playoffs and a two game suspension cannot be served, the game will revert back to substitution, and the coach will be asked to leave the game, and will not be able to participate in any award ceremony.

27. All players may enter the game twice. However, once a player is taken out of a game, that player must stay out two complete innings (12 outs). Any starting player who has been removed by substitution and who has sat out for two or more consecutive full innings may reenter the game any time after the completion of five full innings in place of any player who has played three or more full innings and has batted at least once. The reinserted player shall bat in the position in the batting order

occupied by the player he replaces. Violation of this rule will result in forfeiture of the game. This rule does not apply to H league; see H league rules 2 and 3.

28. A player must bat before leaving the game the first time the player enters the game, unless injured or unable to continue playing in the game.

29. The managers and coaches are responsible for the uniforms and equipment issued by WABL and should give it the best care possible and are subject to whatever rules and regulations promulgated by the board.

30. All batters, on-deck batters and base runners must be wearing protective headgear as approved by WABL when the ball is in play. The batter will be declared out if not wearing such headgear when both feet enter the batters box, and runners may be called out for deliberately discarding of the headgear while running. A batter or base runner leaving the field shall not remove the headgear until he reaches the bench. Umpires are to enforce this rule. **Batters and base runners must wear face guards and chin straps.**

31. There shall be no headfirst sliding unless returning to a base. The penalty is that the runner shall be declared out by the umpire. This “no head first sliding” rule shall not apply to the boys in Class E teams.

CONDUCT RULES

1. The managers and coaches have full responsibility for their team’s action on the field. Managers will do their utmost to control spectators and shall be responsible for the conduct of spectators from their own team. Failure to control may allow the umpire to suspend or forfeit the game. To handle misconduct situations, the umpire’s procedure shall be as follows:

- a. The umpire shall instruct the appropriate manager to control the unruly person(s).
- b. If the disruption continues, the umpire halts the game and directly advises the offender to stop all disruptions.
- c. The umpire has the option to forfeit the game in favor of the other team if the disruptions of the advised person(s) continue.

- d. The WABL board will review the game situation and determine if a game suspension for the offending Manager or Spectator.
2. If a manager or coach is ejected from a game by the umpire, that manager or coach is suspended for his or her team's next two games. If a manager or coach is ejected for the second time that season, he is suspended for the remainder of the season. A manager or coach ejected from the game by the umpire must return to his or her automobile in the parking lot normally used for the particular field for the duration of the game.
3. Habitual arguing or fighting with umpires, team personnel, or spectators will be prohibited and may lead to a forfeit.
4. Any unruly display of temper or foul language or conduct detrimental to WABL's objectives by a manager, coach, or player may result in disciplinary action by the Protest sub-committee.
5. No player, spectator, or coach shall be permitted (less than 15 ft.) behind the backstop during the progress of a game.
6. Players, managers and coaches are prohibited from calling out by name to players on opposing teams. There shall be no negative cheering or disruptive behavior from the bench, stands, or the field. After the first warning, by the umpire, the offending may forfeit the game. However, the use of "Hey, batter" is considered acceptable.
7. Throwing of equipment may result in ejection of the offender from the game by the umpire. A batter who throws the bat may be called out.
8. The home team shall occupy the first base bench.
9. No coaches or umpires should be permitted to use tobacco products while a game is being played. There shall be one warning per team and any other coach seen using tobacco products shall be ejected from the playing area. Umpires using tobacco products while a game is being played will not be paid for that game.

SCORING RULES

1. The visiting team scorekeeper shall verify the score and pitching eligibility at the end of each half inning with the home team scorekeeper. In the event that the visiting team fails to do so, the home team score

book shall be deemed to be official. If, however, a disagreement in the score or pitching eligibility exists, play shall be halted before the start of the next inning; and every reasonable effort shall be made by the scorekeepers and managers to resolve the discrepancy. IN the event they are unable to resolve the problem, the umpire shall then make the final determination by a play-by-play recap of the half inning; and his decision shall be final and shall not be the subject of a protest.

2. The home team shall note in its scorebook the number of innings pitched by each pitcher for both teams, inning by inning, at the bottom of the scorebook. The umpire shall sign the home team's scorebook at the end of the game.

PROTESTS

1. MAKEUP FO THE PROTEST SUBCOMMITTEE

- a. The protest subcommittee shall consist of: (1) the league President, (2) the Vice President of Administration, (3) all members of the rules committee, and (4) the class or league chairman except the one in which the protest is filed.
- b. Any member of the Protest Committee, including the chairman, having a child or relative playing, managing, coaching, or who is otherwise associated with the team(s) and the class or league involved in the protest shall not be present during the discussion and voting of the protest.

2. PROTESTS INVOLVING PLAYING RULES AND PLAYING ELIGIBILITY

- a. Protests shall be considered only when based on the violation of a playing rule or the use of an ineligible player. No protest shall be considered on a decision involving an umpire's judgment.
- b. When the protest involves the violation or application of a rule of the game of baseball, the protest must be made at the time of the infraction and before the start of the next play by notification of the umpire and opposing manager and by notation in the appropriate place in the home team's score book, initialed by the umpire and protesting manager. If not so made, the protest will be regarded as having been waived.

When the basis of the protest is the use of an ineligible player or the violation of a pitching or participation rule, the protest must be made under the two-day time limit set forth above.

- c. Detailed information supporting the protest must be filed in writing by the manager or acting manager with a member of the Protest Committee accompanied by a protest fee of \$20.00 not later than two days following (but not including) the day on which the game was played. All protest fees shall be retained unless the protest is upheld.
- d. The Protest Committee will meet after the filing of a protest, and both managers and the umpire, if involved, must be given notification of the time and place of the protest hearing at least 48 hours in advance and must be given an opportunity to state their positions, either in person or in writing.

3. DISCIPLINARY ACTION

- a. Upon receiving written notice of any player, coach, or manager's conduct being such as to be brought to the attention of the Protest Committee, the President of the league and/or the Vice President of Administration shall call the meeting and shall not vote except to break a tie. He shall be responsible for bringing evidence to the committee. The committee upon hearing both sides shall render a decision. A majority vote shall prevail. The committee may suspend any player, coach, or manager for one to three games and such decision is final. The committee may suspend any player, coach or manager until the next regularly scheduled board meeting and the Vice President of Administration or his designate may move at such a meeting that such suspension be made permanent. The manager shall represent himself or his coach or player at the protest meeting.
- b. No disciplinary action shall be taken against a manager, coach, or player without prior notice given to him of such action intended to be taken against him. Disciplinary meetings shall be heard separately from protest meetings.

PLAYOFF RULES

1. All teams finishing the season shall be eligible for the playoffs in the Boys H, G, and F classes. NOTE: The mercy rule for the playoffs is the same as the regular season mercy rule.
2. For all games leading up to the championship game, the assigned field will be the home field of the higher seeded team of the two teams playing based on:
 - a. Better regular season league record.
 - b. Better record in head to head competition if the two teams have identical regular season league records.
3. All regular season rules shall apply to playoff games except that no two-hour time limit will apply.
4. The championship game will always be at the field designated by the WABL Board of Directors.

BOYS CLASS H RULES

1. These games shall ordinarily consist of six innings unless a tie score exists at the end of six innings, in which case the game shall be continued until completed. The game shall be called, however, at the end of two hours with full innings to be completed or shall be called when a ten run differential exists at the end of five full innings (4 1/2 if the home team leads), whichever occurs first.
2. A continuous batting order, consisting of all players present, will be used in all games. A player that arrives after the start of the game with a valid excuse shall be put at the end of the batting order.
3. Players will sit out (from fielding) only one inning at a time. No player will sit out a second time until all other players have sat out once. **All players will play one inning playing an infield position.** Violation of this rule will result in a two game suspension **for the Manager.**
4. No pitcher may pitch more than three innings per game. No pitcher may pitch more than nine innings per week. A pitcher may reenter as a pitcher only once per game. This rule will be in effect during the regular season, during the playoffs, and on the Day of Champs.

5. The batter is out on a dropped third strike.
6. The runner may not leave a base until the ball crosses the plane of the plate. The penalty for this violation is that the runner is out and there is no pitch.
7. The ball is dead and play is stopped when the pitcher is holding the ball while in contact with the rubber and his only intent is to become a pitcher and not a fielder. A runner advancing to the next base at that point in time shall be permitted to advance at his own risk. The umpire's decision as to when the play has stopped shall not be the subject of a protest.
8. Eight-year old boys may be eligible only at the discretion of the Vice President of Personnel.
9. A tenth player shall be played if ten or more players are available at the start of the game. Four players must be at least ten feet beyond the base line if ten players are available.
10. The baseball diamond dimensions in Class H are
 - a. Pitching Distance 46 feet
 - b. Base Paths 60 feet
 - c. Home to Second 85 feet
11. Only approved Little League bats 2 1/4 inches in diameter or less shall be permitted in H League. Attempts to use an illegal bat will result in the batter being called out.

BOYS CLASS G RULES

1. These games shall ordinarily consist of seven innings unless a tie score exists at the end of seven innings, in which case the game shall continue into extra innings until completed. The game shall be called when a ten run differential exists at the end of five or six full innings (4 1/2 or 5 1/2 if the home team leads).
2. During his first appearance, each player must play three or more consecutive innings and must bat, with the exception of injury, illness, or umpire's ejection during the game.
3. No pitcher may pitch more than four innings per game. No pitcher may pitch more than eight innings in the first two games of a week or

more than twelve innings per week. A pitcher may reenter as a pitcher only once per game. This rule will be in effect during the regular season, during the playoffs, and on the Day of Champs.

4. No pitcher may pitch more than twelve innings within a 72-hour time period; and no pitcher may pitch more than nine innings in any 12-hour time period.

5. **Balk Rule/Leading Off** – There shall be one balk warning per pitcher before an official balk may be called. **Base runners will not be allowed off the base until the pitcher makes his first move.**

6. A player filling the role of additional hitter must play the entire game as the additional hitter, except in the case of injury or ejection. In the event of an injury or ejection, the additional hitter may be substituted for. The additional hitter may be used defensively, continuing to bat in the same position in the batting order, provided he is being rotated in defensively for players who have played at least three innings in the field. Although the additional hitter may play in the field at some time during the game, he will still be considered to be occupying the role of the additional hitter. A player may not be used as the additional hitter in successive games. It is mandatory that the additional hitter be used when you have ten or more players.

7. The baseball diamond dimensions in Class G are:

- a. Pitching Distance 50 feet
- b. Base Paths 70 feet
- c. Home to Second 99 feet

8. Only approved bats that are, 2 3/4 of an inch maximum in diameter or less shall be permitted in G League, with the difference between weight in ounces and length in inches cannot be greater than (-7)-8.5. (e.g. 31” bat must weigh at least 22.5 ounces) Attempted use of an illegal bat will result in the batter being called out.

BOYS CLASS F RULES

1. These games shall ordinarily consist of seven innings unless a tie score exists at the end of seven innings, in which case the game shall

continue into extra innings until completed. The game shall be called when a ten-run differential exists at the end of five or six full innings (4 1/2 or 5 1/2 of the home team leads).

2. During his first appearance, each player must play three or more consecutive innings and must bat, with the exception of injury, illness, or umpire's ejection during the game.

3. No pitcher may pitch more than seven innings in the first two games of a week. No pitcher may pitch more than twelve innings per week. The limit of innings shall not apply to extra inning games provided the pitcher is pitching at the conclusion of the seventh inning. A Pitcher may re-enter as a pitcher only once per game. This rule will be in effect during the regular season, playoffs, and Day of Champs.

4. No pitcher may pitch more than twelve innings within a 72-hour time period, and no pitcher may pitch more than nine innings in any 12-hour time period.

5. Balk Rule – There shall be one balk warning per pitcher before an official balk may be called.

6. The baseball diamond dimensions in Class F are:

- a. Pitching Distance 55 feet
- b. Base Paths 80 feet
- c. Home to Second 113 feet

7. Only approved bats that are, $(2 \frac{5}{8}) 2 \frac{3}{4}$ of an inch maximum in diameter or less shall be permitted in F league, with the difference between weight in ounces and length in inches cannot be greater than (-3)-7 (e.g. 31" bat must weight at least 24 ounces) Attempted use of an illegal bat will result in the batter being called out.

INCLEMENT WEATHER POLICY

All players are to report to the playing field for each game unless specifically notified by their manager **or notice on www.WABL.org website (4:30PM on weekdays)** that the game has been canceled. In case of adverse field conditions, the **Chief of Umpires, President of the Boys League, or President of Fields** shall check the field and determine whether the game can start. If the field can be made playable within a reasonable amount of time, even if the start of the game is delayed, an attempt to start and complete the game should be made. In such a case, both teams should make an effort to make the field playable. This same procedure should apply to all Saturday games. Remember, just because a Saturday morning game may have been canceled, that does not mean following games cannot be played. Once a game has started, the only individual who can stop the game is the umpire assigned to the game. **During inclement weather after a game has started a 30-minute wait will be used, the Umpire will use their best judgment during rain and lightning in calling a game before the 30-minute time frame.**

GUIDELINES FOR TEAMS OUTSIDE THE W.A.B.L. AREA TO PLAY IN W.A.B.L.

1. The WABL playing rules apply, unless a commitment from WABL is to play under other leagues rules.
2. The outside team should have a field available for a reasonable number of games throughout the season.
3. For games played at the outside team's field, the outside team should line the field.
4. Before they play their first regular season game, the outside team must supply a roster to the League Chairman or Vice President of Personnel. This roster should include each player's name, address, telephone number, school and grade, and birth date. This roster will be available to the officers of WABL and other leagues participating in WABL.
5. The manager of each team or his or her representative shall attend the managers meeting and is responsible for all information discussed at the meeting.
6. For games played at the outside team's field, the outside team may supply its own umpires or use WABL umpire system. The outside team/league must determine its umpiring position prior to the start of the regular season.

Rules changes for next year please mail to.

Nick Vitale

2283 Oak Glen Ct.

Akron, Ohio 44333

League_____

Name_____

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3.

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