

DANNY SMITH MEMORIAL PARK CORPORATION
INCREDIBALL LEAGUE BASEBALL RULES

1. Participation and Sportsmanship Requirements

- a. Trash-talking, abusive language, vulgarity, and unsportsmanlike conduct are unacceptable at Danny Smith Park. Players, coaches, parents, or fans engaging in this conduct may be removed from the Park or subject to other sanctions at the discretion of the Board.
- b. One umpire shall be used for each game. At its discretion, the Board may employ two umpires, in which event the home plate umpire shall be the head umpire. Umpires will make all calls. An umpire's judgment calls are final and not subject to challenge. Challenges or protests concerning the application or interpretation of the rules shall be made to the Board.

2. Field Preparation & Equipment

- a. Bases shall be set 50' apart.
- b. The home team is responsible for preparing the field for play before each game. This includes lining the field and placing bases. If it is the last game of the day, the home team shall be responsible for storing field equipment, turning off lights, and locking equipment buildings.
- c. Lining the field shall include a 12 (twelve) foot diameter circle around the pitcher's mound and halfway marks between 1st and 2nd bases, 2nd and 3rd bases, and 3rd and home plate.
- d. The visiting team is responsible for connecting and running the scoreboard and, if it is the last game of the day, returning scoreboard equipment to the shed. A parent makes an ideal candidate for this task.
- e. Each team is responsible for removing their equipment, trash etc. from the field and dugouts. Teams should attempt to vacate the field and dugouts promptly to allow teams in subsequent games to take the field and warm up.
- f. Soft baseballs, supplied to the coaches prior to the season, will be used for league play. Each offensive coach may use his or her own soft baseballs in the game. If necessary, the league may supply additional balls.
- g. Metal cleats or spikes are not permitted.
- h. Players must wear batting helmets when on-deck, at bat, and running the bases.
- i. Defensive players should wear hats on the field.

3. Pitching Rules

- a. Pitching shall be done by a coach (or other person designated by the coach), overhand at a distance of approximately thirty (30) feet from the plate, or as far forward as the front of the circle as the pitching coach chooses (approximately 24 feet).
- b. The pitching coach must quickly leave the field so as to avoid interfering with a hit ball or the play and remain off the field until the play is ruled dead.
- c. The play is dead if the pitching coach is inadvertently hit with a ball. The pitch does not count, no runners advance and the batter returns to the plate.
- d. If the pitching coach intentionally interferes with a hit ball or play, unless reasonably necessary for player safety, the batter shall be called out and all runners shall return to the bases they began the play on.
- e. Each batter shall receive up to five (5) pitches. If the fifth pitch is hit foul or a foul tip, the coach shall continue to pitch to that player until the batter either swings and misses or hits the ball into fair territory. There are no walks or strikeouts.

f. If the batter does not hit one of his or her allotted pitches into fair territory, the ball shall be placed on the tee and the batter shall hit from the tee. The batter shall continue to bat from the tee until he or she hits the ball into fair territory. If a player batting from the tee hits the tee but not the ball, the play shall be called dead and the ball replaced on the tee. The offensive coach assisting the player in batting shall determine when the player hit the tee and not the ball.

4. Other Playing Rules

- a. Free substitution is permitted at all positions, subject to participation requirements and limitations on innings played at pitcher.
- a. Each team must field a minimum of six (6) players within fifteen (15) minutes of the scheduled start time of each game. Failure to do so results in a forfeit. If a team plays with fewer than 8 players, the coach may choose which positions to leave vacant. In the event of a forfeit, teams are permitted to play a “scrimmage” game.
- b. c. Each team is permitted to play five (5) infielders. Catchers are not used in this league. The remaining players on the team shall be positioned in the outfield. Outfielders must remain on the grass until the ball is hit.
- c. The player-pitcher shall play even with or behind the coach pitcher. The player-pitcher may stand on either side of the coach pitcher and must remain within six (6) feet of the coach pitcher.
- d. A player shall play no more than two innings per game at the pitcher position. f. Each team shall bat its entire roster, in the batting order before returning to the top of its batting order, irrespective of whether a player played in the field that inning. Exceptions may be made for injury, illness, or timid players. Outs will not be assessed for batters who miss their at-bat in the order due to injury, illness, or reluctance. Sick, injured, or timid players shall be permitted to rejoin play.
- e. Each player shall play one inning in the infield before any other player may play two innings in the infield. Exceptions may be made for sick, injured, or timid players.
- f. Base stealing and lead-offs are not permitted. Runners may not leave the base until the pitch has been hit.
- g. Play will be called dead when play has stopped or stalled (e.g. the lead runner is not attempting to advance and no play is being made on runners) **OR** when an infielder has possession of the ball and at least one foot in the pitcher’s circle.
- h. When an infielder enters the circle with possession of the ball to stop play (i.e. not attempting to make a play on a runner), runners who have passed the halfway mark on the base paths shall advance to that next base UNLESS a runner ahead of them is required to return to that base because they did not pass the halfway point to the next base. Runners who have not passed the halfway mark shall return to their previous base unless forced to advance by the batter at first base. This “force” rule does not apply to a batter attempting to reach second or subsequent bases. The batter will be awarded first base regardless of where he or she is on the first base path when the infielder enters the circle.
- i. There is a limit of one base on an overthrow to a base. An overthrow is defined as an attempt to throw a ball to a base and the ball gets past the intended target. We do not want to over-penalize players for attempting to make an out.
- j. All hits are single base advancement. A ball hit to the outfield is a two-base max advancement.
- k. All slides must be feet first. A player who slides head first will not be called out, but the coach should immediately instruct the player that headfirst slides are not permitted. m. Players who are called out will return to the dugout. We want to reward defensive plays as well as teach offense. Coaches should take time to explain to the players that being out is just part of the game.
- l. There is no infield fly rule.

- m. Up to three (3) defensive coaches are permitted to be on the field in fair territory during play. These coaches must remain in the outfield during pitching and play but may enter the infield during dead-ball periods to instruct players. If a defensive coach is hit by a batted ball in fair territory, the batter is awarded a ground-rule double, and all runners are on base at the time of the hit score.

5. Umpiring, Time, and Scoring Rules

- a. Coaches for the defensive team shall umpire that half-inning.
- b. The head coach of the home team will declare the actual start time of the game prior to the first pitch being thrown.
- c. Teams are not guaranteed infield warm-up prior to games. When time permits, infield warm-up time should be shared evenly between the teams.
- d. Games shall be a maximum of (3) innings in length, subject to the time limits set forth herein. (In previous seasons, most games have only been 2 innings in length). A regular Incrediball season game may end in a tie. We encourage coaches to be responsible in monitoring game time and to decide if there is time for a third inning to be played, even if under the time limit. (At this age, sometimes players just aren't up for a third inning...).
- e. Time Limits in Regular Season Games: No new inning shall be started more than forty-five (45) minutes after the **actual start time** of the game. All innings that are started shall be played to completion.
- f. Tournament games are not subject to time limits. If a tournament game remains tied after three innings, then the team that recorded the most defensive outs shall be deemed the winner.
- g. Games will be declared complete if, after two (2) complete innings (1-½ if the home team is ahead) the game is stopped due to weather conditions. If fewer than 2 (or 1-½)innings have been completed, the game will be rescheduled (calendar permitting) and resumed at the point it was stopped, as opposed to being restarted.
- h. There shall be a cap of five (5) runs per team per inning.
- i. There is no "mercy" or "runs ahead" rule (e.g. 10-run rule).

6. General roster expectations

- a. Each player shall be given the opportunity to play at least one inning in the infield each game. No player will be made to play in the infield if that is their choice.
- b. Teams shall roster bat, meaning every player in attendance shall bat in the batting order. Exceptions shall be made for injury or illness or timid players. Outs will not be assessed for batters who miss their at-bat in the order due to injury, illness, or reluctance. Sick, injured, or timid players shall be permitted to rejoin play.

7. Double Base at First Rules and Procedures

- a. Double bases were installed to prevent collisions between the batter-runner and the first basemen. Many players at this age are still learning where to stand when covering a specific base in the infield.
- b. A batted ball that hits the white section of the double base shall be declared fair. A batted ball that hits the orange section without first touching or bouncing over the white section shall be declared foul.
- c. Whenever a play is being made on the batter-runner, the defense must use the white section of the double first base.
 - i. NOTE 1: A play is being made on the batter-runner when he/she is attempting

to reach first base while the defense is attempting to retire him/her at that base.

- ii. NOTE: 2: If there is a play on the batter-runner, and the batter-runner touches only the white portion and the defense appeals prior to the batter-runner returning to first base, it is treated the same as missing the base. Therefore, the batter-runner is declared out.
- d. If the batter-runner collides with the fielder who is only on the white portion of the bag attempting to catch the ball, it is **interference. The runner is ruled out.**
- e. If the fielder is only standing on the orange portion of the bag and there is a collision prior to the fielder catching the ball, it is **obstruction. The runner is ruled safe.**
- f. If both players are doing what they are supposed to do and there is a collision, it may be incidental contact, and no penalty is assessed.

8. The Board may interpret, change, modify, or suspend these rules as deemed necessary.

9. Coaches should not be so rigid with the rules that they forget the purpose of the league.