



Inter County Baseball Association

22U PLAYING RULES & POLICIES – 2025 AGREEMENT

The contents of this document were discussed at a meeting of the 22U parties held on Thursday, February 20, 2025 using Google Meet.

SEASON STRUCTURE

1. Games:

- a. The 2025 season will consist of 18 regular season games. Each team will play each other twice (one home and one away game).
- b. The season will begin May 12, 2025 and conclude July 20, 2025.
- c. No regular season games will be scheduled the week leading up to Eliminations (July 14-17). Should teams mutually wish to arrange a game during this period it will be permitted.

2. Regular Season:

- a. Records of wins and losses will be kept for the purposes of declaring a regular season league champion. The team with the most points upon completion of the regular season schedule will be declared the “Regular Season League Champion”.
- b. Final standings will be determined by total points accumulated by the season end date. Teams that are tied will have the tie broken by the following:
 - i. head-to-head among tied teams
 - ii. most wins
 - iii. team with the smallest runs against ratio (runs allowed/number of defensive innings played) in games among tied teams
 - iv. team with the smallest runs against ratio (runs allowed/number of defensive innings played) in all games
 - v. team with the highest runs for ratio (runs scored/number of offensive innings played) in games among tied teams
 - vi. team with the highest runs for ratio (runs scored/number of offensive innings played) in all games
 - vii. coin toss

3. Playoffs:

- a. Teams must complete a minimum of 16 of their regular-season games in order to be eligible for the playoffs. An exception to this may be granted by the convenor, in consultation with the senior commissioner, for extenuating circumstances.
- b. Playoffs will commence the week of Monday, July 21.
- c. The final standings will be used to determine playoff seeding.
- d. The playoff format agreed to for the 2025 season is as follows amongst the top 8 teams:
 - i. **Round 1 (July 21-23): Single Elimination Game**
 - Game 1: 1st vs. 8th
 - Game 2: 2nd vs. 7th
 - Game 3: 3rd vs. 6th
 - Game 4: 4th vs. 5th
 - ii. **Round 2 (July 24-26): Single Elimination Game**
 - Game 5: Highest Remaining Seed vs. Lowest Remaining Seed
 - Game 6: Remaining Two Winners from Round 1

iii. **Round 3 (July 27 On): Best 2 of 3 Series**

Game 7/8/9: Winner of Game 5 vs. Winner of Game 6

*Dates subject to change upon consultation with the convenor and senior commissioner based on extenuating circumstances.

- e. The first two rounds are single elimination with the winner advancing to the next round. The final round will be a best 2 of 3 series.
- f. The highest seeded team in each match-up will have home field advantage.
- g. All expenses for playoff games will be assumed by the home team.
- h. If teams qualify for the National tournament, they have the option to be exempt from playoffs. In such cases, that team(s) would be eliminated from consideration and remaining teams would be re-seeded.

SPECIAL PLAYING RULES

- 4. The most current revision of Baseball Ontario (OBA) Rules, and the Official Rules of Baseball, shall govern all games within the Inter County Baseball Association (ICBA). Deviations and clarifications are noted below.
 - a. **Pre-game warm ups:** The home team will provide the visiting team with a minimum of 30 minutes for batting practice starting one (1) hour prior to game start time. This allows each team to have approximately ten (10) minutes for their ins and outs and ground rules. Any deviations from this must be communicated to the opposing coach.
 - b. **Game length:** All regular-season and playoff games will be nine (9) innings in length. If two-regular season games are scheduled as a double-header, games will each be seven (7) innings in length. A seven (7) inning game will be considered a complete game after four (4) innings of play or three and one-half (3 ½) if the home team is ahead. A nine (9) inning game will be considered a complete game after five (5) innings or four and one-half (4 ½) if the home team is ahead. A game must have reached a point in this section to become an official game due to rain, anything prior to the above criteria the game is to be restarted from the beginning.
 - c. **Time Limits:** All nine (9) inning games shall be subject to a three (3) hour time limit. Seven (7) inning games shall be subject to a two-hour and fifteen-minute (2:15) time limit. No new inning may commence once the time limit has been reached.
 - d. **Ties:** In the event of a tied game, play will continue if time remains until either the tie is broken and a winner is declared or when the time limit is reached upon which the tie will stand. Any extra innings will be played in accordance with OBA Rule RP 2.8
 - e. **Mercy Rule:** In all 22U ICBA games a fifteen (15) run mercy rule will apply after six (6) innings. A ten (10) run mercy rule will also apply after 7 innings or any subsequent inning thereafter. If the home team leads after the top half of any such inning, the game shall be considered a mercy and the home team will not bat. If the home team takes the lead by the above-mentioned runs, the game will end at that point.

- f. **Pitching Rules:** All 22U ICBA games will abide by OBA Rule RP2.11 l) for league play – “Once a player assumes the pitching position, they are no longer eligible to catch for the remainder of the day. Once a player assumes the catching position, they are no longer eligible to pitch for the remainder of the day.”

Reminder: It is the responsibility of the 22U coach to enter any pitches thrown by one of their players in an IBL game into the Pitch Count App. These pitches will count towards eligibility and players will need to abide by the appropriate days rest. Failure to do so will result in further sanctions as set out in OBA Rule RP2.11 n).

- g. **Re-entry Rule:** Any starting player may be substituted for and returned to the game one time only. They must return to their original place in the batting order. Any further substitutions do not jeopardize the right of re-entry for the original/starting player. Any starting player returned to the game may pitch as long as they have not previously assumed the pitching position. A pinch runner or pinch hitter may be inserted for a pitcher, who was listed in the starting batting order, and the pitcher may return to pitch under this re-entry rule **only if** the player is re-entered immediately as a pitcher when his/her team takes the field defensively
- h. **Extra Player (EP):** Should teams wish to use an extra player in their line-up, ICBA will allow the 22U division to adopt OBA rule RP2.8 (d).
- i. **Handshakes:** No pre-game or post-game handshakes will occur at the 22U division.
- j. **Baseballs:** All 22U teams will use ROML baseballs for all ICBA league play.

ICBA POLICIES & PROCEDURES

5. The following policies/procedures are expected to be adhered to:

- a. **Contacts:** Each club shall provide to the Convenor, a minimum of one contact who shall be the primary contact for the purposes of rescheduling and league-to-team communication.
- b. **Reporting Game Results:**
 - i. It shall be the responsibility of the home team to confirm the game score with the Convenor, via their preferred method of communication, within 24 hours of the game being played. In addition, any ejections and suspensions served (i.e., Smith #10, served game 1 of 2) must be reported. Failure to comply may result in fines and/or forfeits.
 - ii. ICBA will follow OBA Rule A12.01 q) for all 22U league play – “The Manager (or designate) of the home team shall record the number of pitches thrown for all of both teams' players **within 24 hours** (or before the start of the next game, whichever is earlier) of the game's start time using the OBA Pitch Count Tracker.”

- c. **Postponing/Cancelling Games:** The home team must notify the visiting team a minimum of three (3) hours before game time by phone in case of a rainout game. Rainouts must be rescheduled according to the procedure outlined below:

- i. If a team wishes to re-schedule a game for any other reason than weather or unplayable grounds, it must first obtain the consent of the Convenor and give the other team at least seven (7) days' notice. The teams must then comply with the rescheduling procedures outlined below.
- ii. If a team wishes to re-schedule and cannot make the seven (7) days' notice requirement, it is at the Convenor's discretion to declare a win by forfeit for the non-offending team, or to re-schedule the game at the soonest possible date.

d. **Rescheduling/Make-up Games**

- i. Rescheduling should be restricted to situations such as weather, light failure, and unforeseen circumstances. It is expected that teams will utilize call-ups rather than reschedule a game due to missing players.
- ii. When a game is postponed, the home team must advise the Convenor within 24 hours from the original game time, the reason for postponement.
- iii. Within seven (7) days, the home team must propose a suitable date for the game to be played. Once a re-scheduled date is agreed on, the Division Convenor must be notified. During the last two weeks of the schedule, the date **MUST** be set within 24 hours of the postponed game. If the two teams do not agree on a date. The date will be picked by the convenor after consideration of the playing schedule of both teams.
- iv. If within one (1) week from the scheduled date of the postponed game, the teams have not set a re-scheduled date, then the division Convenor will at their sole discretion determine the time and place for the game to be played. This timing may be compressed at the end of the season and during playoffs. The home team will be responsible for all expenses regardless of location selected. Violation of this section or failure to comply with the Convenor will result in forfeiture by the offending team or teams.
- v. If a team forfeits games three (3) times, by failing to field a team at the beginning of a scheduled game, it shall be suspended from the remainder of the season and fined \$200. The club has 7 days to pay the fine. The ICBA Board must review teams suspended for the season, before they will be accepted to play in the next year's playing schedule.

e. **Signing of Players, Managers and Coaches**

- i. Any player, manager, or coach must be on an affiliate-approved roster prior to participating in any ICBA or OBA game.
- ii. All non-ICBA teams must submit a copy of their affiliate-approved roster to the convenor by April 28.
- iii. ICBA will adhere to OBA's June 30 deadline for roster changes and coaching credentials.

f. Umpires:

- i. Any verbal abuse of an umpire by any player or other team personnel (i.e., trainer, coach, etc.) at any time during a game shall result in immediate ejection of that person from the game. If such a confrontation occurs, it shall be the field manager and coaches' responsibility to immediately remove any team member upon request by the umpire. Failure to do so will result in the ejection of the field manager and/or coach, as well as the team member.
- ii. Only the field manager or coaches listed on the line-up card shall be entitled to ask the umpire for an explanation or interpretation of a call made by an umpire.
- iii. Physical abuse or threatening of umpires by any team personnel will not be tolerated in any manner. Any such incident, at the umpires' discretion occurring before, during or after a game will result in an automatic, indefinite suspension. The ICBA Board of Directors or their delegates will review the case for the purpose of establishing any further penalty and the review will be completed within seven (7) days after the suspension is reported.
- iv. An association that fails to ensure that two (2) properly carded umpires work any home game will be subject to a fine of up to \$150 dollars. The fine may be appealed to the Protest and Discipline Committee, which will require documentation of any extenuating circumstances.
- v. In the event that only one (1) properly carded umpire is available to work a game, this shall not be grounds for cancellation at the 11U and below levels. At all other levels, the visiting team manager may refuse to take the field if only one (1) properly carded umpire is available to work the game. If the visiting team chooses not to play under these circumstances, they must split park costs with the home team for the rescheduled game. The home team's association would be responsible for all umpiring costs.
- vi. If there are no properly carded umpires available to work a game it shall be canceled. The home team must demonstrate to the Protest and Discipline Committee why the game should not be forfeited. If the game is rescheduled, the non-offending team has the option of hosting this game at its own expense.
- vii. The above sections do not apply to situations where an umpire is forced to leave a game due to illness or injury after it has started. No fines would apply under these circumstances. Teams are expected to use their best judgement in determining how to proceed under these circumstances. In all situations, both teams are expected to be flexible and make every reasonable effort to start a game.

g. Ejections, Discipline and Suspensions:

- i. All ejections must be reported via the ICBA website by both coaches and the umpire within 24 hours of the game.
- ii. Any player, coach, or manager ejected by an umpire during an ICBA regular season or playoff game is automatically suspended for one additional game. This is to be the very next ICBA game played by the team. Any player, coach, or manager ejected

- after the completion of the game, will receive an automatic two-game suspension.
- iii. The player, coach, manager, and club may be subject to further suspension or discipline by its Affiliate Association and/or the Protest & Discipline Committee, depending on the severity of the circumstances leading to the ejection.
 - iv. If the club wishes to appeal any additional discipline (cannot appeal the automatic one-game suspension), it may do so by notifying the Convenor and posting a \$50 cheque. Should the matter only involve teams, coaches, or players from one Affiliate, then the disciplinary and appeal procedures of that Affiliate will be used. Should the matter involve teams, coaches, or players from more than one Affiliate, then reports from the various parties will be heard by three (3) neutral ICBA members (at least one to be an Executive member) and the Committee's decision will be final.

ICBA FEES FOR 2025

6. The following fees have been set for the 2025 season and will be invoiced to each club:

ICBA Local Teams (Cambridge, Stratford, & Waterloo)

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|-------------------|-------------------|
| ICBA Team Fee | \$205/team |
| OBA Team Fee | \$300/team |
| ICBA Convenor Fee | \$35/team |
| ICBA Trust Fee | <u>\$25/team</u> |
| TOTAL | \$565/team |

Note: An additional fee per player and coach is charged for OBA insurance. Last season the insurance rate was \$6.35 per person. It has not been confirmed for the 2025 season. ICBA local teams will automatically be charged this.

ICBA-Affiliated Teams (Brantford, Guelph, & Kitchener)

| | |
|-------------------|--------------------------------------------|
| ICBA Team Fee | \$205/team |
| OBA Team Fee | \$300/team |
| ICBA Convenor Fee | <u>\$35/team</u> |
| TOTAL | \$540/team + \$500 performance bond |

Note: An additional fee per player and coach is charged for OBA insurance. Last season the insurance rate was \$6.35 per person. It has not been confirmed for the 2025 season. ICBA-affiliated teams will automatically be charged this.

These teams are no longer eligible for any payouts from the ICBA Trust Fund.

Performance bonds are held for the year to ensure the team fulfills their commitment. If there are no issues and no outstanding fees/fines, the bond will be paid back at year end.

Interlock Teams (Ancaster, Hamilton, London, & Welland)

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|-------------------|--------------------------------------------|
| ICBA Team Fee | \$205/team |
| ICBA Convenor Fee | <u>\$35/team</u> |
| TOTAL | \$240/team + \$500 performance bond |

Note: These teams are responsible for paying their insurance and OBA team fee independently or through their own local/affiliate.

Performance bonds are held for the year to ensure the team fulfills their commitment. If there are no issues and no outstanding fees/fines, the bond will be paid back at year end.