

2025 Northland Big League Rules Supplement Modified

The following rules and regulations will govern play in the Northland Big League (NBL) for the 2025 regular season and the all-inclusive playoffs. The list of rules and regulations is **NOT** intended to cover all of the playing rules, but rather highlight areas that are referenced most often by the coaches and players. In general, NBL uses the Gopher State Baseball League (GSBL) rules except where noted. If the rule is not referenced in this document, the National Federation of State High School Associations baseball rules will apply.

I. PLAYER REGISTRATION/ELIGIBILITY

Players in their respective age groups must not reach the next age before May 1, 2025, or may have been in seventh grade during the 2024/2025. A player who does not make the age requirement but does make the grade requirement must petition to play to the local association. The association will grant this petition if they deem that the player's skill level is at that level. Furthermore, each association can move a player down a level if they deem that the child playing at their age appropriate level would put the child at great risk of harm. It is permissible for a player to play up at most **one** level from their designated age division. For example, a 9 year old may play in the 11 year old division, but a 9 year old may NOT play in the 13 year old division.

II. RESIDENCY

The Northland Big League is a community-based program. NBL teams are composed of players who are from the community in which their parent or legal guardian resides or in which they attend school. Communities may come together to

III. FIELD DIMENSIONS FOR COMMUNITIES

- A. **The following base length is recommended:**
U13's: 75 feet but can be as little as 70 feet
- B. **The following pitching distance is recommended:**
U13's: 52 feet but can be as little as 50 feet

III. EQUIPMENT

- A. **Shoes:** Players in the GSBL 13 year old leagues are allowed to wear metal spikes, provided the site allows. Sites with turf field and or mounds may not allow metal spikes for some or all, at their discretion.
- B. **Baseballs:** Each team must supply two new baseball for the start of each game (additional baseballs to be supplied alternately as needed). Baseballs must be age appropriate
- C. **Catcher Chest Protectors:** The new NOCSAE standard for chest protectors in catcher's gear is not required however it is HIGHLY recommended.
- D. **Bats:** Please see pages next page for Northland Big League Bat Standards and Penalties.

revised 5.21.25

Big Barrel Bats (larger than 2¼ inches in diameter) - only the following big barrel bats made by approved USSSA or USA licensed manufacturers will be allowed: 1) Bats made with the USSSA or USA mark (see image at right) 2) Qualified BBCOR bats 3) Wooden bats

Small Barrel Bats (2¼ inches in diameter or less) - only the following small barrel bats made by approved USSSA or USA licensed manufacturers will be allowed: 1) Bats made with the USSSA or USA mark (see image above right) 2) Wooden bats

The Northland Big League has adopted the USSSA baseball bat performance standards. The standards that were implemented prior to the 2012 season encompass the regulation of big barrel (larger than 2¼" in diameter) and small barrel (2¼" or less) bats. These standards must be used in all MYAS/ Gopher State baseball programs. As part of the USSSA baseball bat standards, USA Baseball marked bats will be allowed in competition under USSSA standards. All bats must be manufactured by an approved USSSA or USA bat licensee and have the corresponding mark on its taper, or be a qualified BBCOR bat or a wood bat. The USSSA finger print of 1.15 BPF is based on fundamental laws of physics that measure the relative performance of bats to be used in USSSA play. A qualified BBCOR bat stands for "Batted Ball Coefficient of Restitution" and it focuses on how much of a trampoline effect the barrel of a bat has on a ball. Bat manufacturers will have to in effect "deaden" the trampoline bounce that pitched balls experience when a batter makes contact. Basically, aluminum bats will theoretically be the same as wooden bats. The following describes the legality of bats for all MYAS/Gopher State programs: 14 year old teams: Big Barrel Bats (larger than 2¼ inches in diameter) - only the following big barrel bats made by approved USSSA or USA licensed manufacturers will be allowed: 1) Bats made with the USSSA or USA mark (see image at right) 2) Qualified BBCOR bats (see image at right) 3) Wooden bats

NFHS BASEBALL RULES

Rule 1-3-2: The bat which may be a wood or non-wood product shall be a smooth implement, from the top of the cap to the top of the knob. All non-wood bats shall meet the Batted Ball Coefficient of Restitution (BBCOR) performance standard, and such bats shall be labeled with a silk screen or other permanent certification mark.

Listed below are bat specifications for u13's participating in NBL. Note, two different bat requirements exist depending upon the age of the player. This specification is in addition to the USSSA Bat Performance Standards. All bats must include the USSSA Mark, USA Mark OR is a qualified BBCOR bat and also MUST follow the size and/or weight differential listed in the chart below.

Age	Maximum diameter	Length	Weight Differential	Example
	2¼"	Unlimited	Unlimited	Unlimited
12's & 13's	2½"	36" or less	-10	31-inch bat cannot
	2⅝"	36" or less	-10	weigh less than 21
	2¾"	36" or less	-10	ounces

All require graphics, including USSSA and BPF, USA or BBCOR markings, must be permanent and cannot be applied as decals or by any other method that would allow the key graphics to be easily removed or added to the bat.

Example of bats with a USSSA 1.15 BPF fingerprint, USA stamp and a BBCOR stamp:



VERIFYING BATS

A team representative must present all bats that will be used by their team in front of their respective dugout prior to the pre-game conference. It is up to the opposing coach to verify that each bat has all required graphics, including USSSA and BPF, USA or BBCOR markings.

PENALTY FOR USING ILLEGAL BAT

First Offense: If the umpire discovers that the bat does not conform to USSSA Rule 7.01C until a time during or after which the bat has been used in play, it shall not be grounds for declaring the batter out and/or ejection from the game. If the umpire discovers that a bat has been used to put the ball in play and before the next legal pitch, the defensive team will have the choice of the result of play or the batter being called out and all runners returning to the base occupied before the pitch.

Second Offense: If a team is found in violation of this rule a second time, then the manager will be ejected in addition to the First Offense penalty.

IV. GENERAL RULES

- A. There is a 10-minute optional warm-up for infield practice
 - 1. Home team will take the infield at 30 minutes before game time.
 - 2. Visiting team will take the infield at 20 minutes before game time.
 - 3. The last 10 minutes is for pitchers to get ready and for coaches and umpires to have a pregame.
 - 4. The outfield will be used for batting practice with whiffle balls or fly balls for outfielders.
- B. The home team will keep the official scorebook.
- C. All field preparations, which include line markings and bases, are the responsibility of the home team. The home team is expected to have the field prepared at least one hour prior to the start of the game.
- D. "Uniforms of all team members should be of the same color and style" (NFHS Rule 1-4-1).
- E. Each team's lineup will list a minimum of nine players to start a game. A game will be forfeited to the offended team when a team is unable to provide nine players to start the game or cannot provide eight players to finish the game (NFHS Rule 4-4-1f).
- F. A courtesy runner (the last runner to be put out) will be allowed only for the catcher and ***only*** when there are two outs. Projected substitutions are not allowed.
- G. Exception: Courtesy runner for an injured player will be the player making the most recent out. (NFHS Suggested Speed-Up Rules)
- H. Bench Personnel: The number of coaches on the bench is limited to a Head Coach, Two Assistants and a designated Scorekeeper.

V. CONTINUOUS BATTING & FREE SUBSTITUTION

- A. Continuous batting and free substitution (except pitchers) will be used in all U 13's leagues.
 - 1. An injured batter or runner that cannot continue to participate will be replaced by the last player to be put out. This will end the injured player's participation for the remainder of the game.

2. An out will be called at that spot in the batting order ONLY if a team drops below NINE players.
- B. Each team's lineup must list a minimum of eight players to start a game. A game will be forfeited to the offended team when a team is unable to provide eight players to start the game or cannot provide eight players to finish the game (NFHS Rule 4-4-1f).
 1. A "rostered" player may be placed at the end of your lineup if he/she is not present at the start of the game (this applies to teams that start a game with nine players).
 2. An injured batter or runner that cannot continue to participate will be replaced by the last player to be put out. This will end the injured player's participation for the remainder of the game.
 3. An out will be called at that spot in the batting order ONLY if a team drops below NINE players.

VI. PITCHING RESTRICTIONS
(Please refer to Rule 6 of the NFHS Rule Book)

- A. In the NBL Modified leagues, a pitcher may pitch a 95 pitches per day or FOUR innings per game,. The number of calendar days of required rest until the pitcher is allowed to pitch again is dependent upon the number of pitches thrown in their previous outing.
- B. The first pitch to the last batter faced will be the pitch number used to determine days rest.

Pitch Count	Calendar Days of Rest Required After Pitching
1-25	0
26-40	1
41-55	2
56-70	3
71 or more	4

Example: If a player throws 50 pitches on Monday, the earliest they may pitch again is on Thursday. If a player reaches their maximum number (95 pitches) of allowed pitches during an at-bat, they may finish pitching to that batter but then must immediately be removed from the pitching position.

NOTE: This restriction applies for all GSBL regular and postseason games.

Penalties for Violation of Pitch Count Rule:

1st Offense: If the violation is caught during a game, the head coach is suspended for the remainder of that game and the team's next GSBL regular season or playoff game. If the violation is caught after the completion of the game, the suspension will be in effect for the team's next GSBL regular season or playoff game.

2nd Offense in the Same Season: The game in which the violation occurred is forfeited. The head coach is suspended immediately after the violation is caught and for the remainder of the GSBL regular season and playoffs, pending an appeal of the team's association board.

Teams shall keep a pitch log of their players and their opponents. This log shall be made available upon request of the opposing coach and/or commissioner.

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Recommendations for preventing injuries in youth baseball pitchers:

- Watch and respond to signs of fatigue (such as decreased ball velocity, decreased accuracy, upright trunk during pitching, dropped elbow during pitching, or increased time between pitches). If a youth pitcher complains of fatigue or looks fatigued, let him rest from pitching and other throwing.
- No overhead throwing of any kind for at least 2-3 months per year (4 months is preferred). No competitive baseball pitching for at least 4 months per year.
- Do not pitch more than 100 innings in games in any calendar year.
- Follow limits for pitch counts and days rest.
- Avoid pitching on multiple teams with overlapping seasons.
- Learn good throwing mechanics as soon as possible. The first steps should be to learn, in order: 1) basic throwing, 2) fastball pitching, 3) change-up pitching.
- Avoid using radar guns.
- A pitcher should not also be a catcher for his team. The pitcher-catcher combination results in many throws and may increase the risk of injury.
- If a pitcher complains of pain in his elbow or shoulder, discontinue pitching until evaluated by a sports medicine physician. Inspire youth pitchers to have fun playing baseball and other sports. Participation and enjoyment of various physical activities will increase the youth's athleticism and interest in sports.

References: American Sports Medicine Institute & USA Baseball Medical & Safety Advisory Committee;

<http://www.asmi.org/research.php?page=research§ion=positionStatement>

Dun S, Loftice J, Fleisig GS, Kingsley D, Andrews JR. A biomechanical comparison of youth baseball pitches: is the curveball potentially harmful? *Am J Sports Med.* 2008; 36(4):686-692. Fleisig GS, Andrews JR, Cutter GR, Weber A, Loftice J, McMichael C, Hassell N, Lyman S. Risk of serious injury for young baseball pitchers: a 10-year prospective study. *Am J Sports Med.* 2011; 39(2):253-257. Fleisig GS, Andrews JR, Dillman CJ, Escamilla RF. Kinetics of baseball pitching with implications about injury mechanisms. *Am J Sports Med.* 1995; 23:233-239. Fleisig GS, Weber A, Hassell N, Andrews JR. Prevention of elbow injuries in youth baseball pitchers. *Curr Sports Med Rep* 2009; 8(5):250-254. Lyman S, Fleisig GS, Andrews JR, Osinski ED. Effect of pitch type, pitch count, and pitching mechanics on risk of elbow and shoulder pain in youth baseball pitchers. *Am J Sports Med.* 2002; 30(4):463-468. Matsuo T, Fleisig GS, Zheng N, Andrews JR. Influence of shoulder abduction and lateral trunk tilt on peak elbow varus torque for college baseball pitchers during simulated pitching. *J Appl Biomech.* 2006; 22(2): 93-102. Nissen CW, Westwell M, Öunpuu S, Patel M, Solomito M, Tate J. A biomechanical comparison of the fastball and curveball in adolescent baseball pitchers. *Am J Sports Med.* 2009 37(8):1492-1498. Olsen SJ, Fleisig GS, Dun S, Loftice J, Andrews JR. Risk factors for shoulder and elbow injuries in adolescent baseball pitchers. *Am J Sports Med.* 2006; 34(6):905-912. Petty DH, Andrews JR, Fleisig GS, et al. Ulnar collateral ligament reconstruction in high school baseball players: clinical results and injury risk factors. *Am J Sports Med* 2004; 32:1158-1164.

VII. BASE RUNNING

- A. A runner may lead off and/or steal at any time (NFHS rules apply).
- B. Interference (NFHS Rule 2-21):
 - Offensive interference is an act (physical or verbal) by the team at bat:
 - 1. which interferes with, obstructs, impedes, hinders or confuses any fielder attempting to make a play; or
 - 2. which happens when a runner creates malicious contact with any fielder, with or without the ball, in or out of the baseline; or
 - 3. which happens when a coach physically assists a runner during playing action.
- C. Obstruction (NFHS Rule 2-22):
 - 1. Obstruction is the act (intentional or unintentional, as well as physical or verbal) by a fielder, any member of the defensive team or its team personnel that hinders a runner or changes the pattern of play.
 - 2. A fake tag is considered obstruction.
- D. Runners are never required to slide but if a runner elects to slide, the slide must be legal. Jumping, hurdling, and leaping are all legal attempts to avoid a fielder as long as the fielder is lying on the ground. Diving over a fielder is illegal (NFHS rule 8-4-2-b-2).

VIII. PROTESTS

- A. Protests must be made verbally with the umpire by the offended team at the time of the play and before the next pitch. A fee of \$100.00 cash (refunded if upheld) must accompany the protest. All decisions of the committee are final.
- B. The protest committee will be composed of three presidents not involved with either team as selected by the commissioner.
- C. No protests will be allowed in matters involving solely the official's judgment. Only decisions involving the misinterpretation or misapplication of a rule may be protested.

IX. BENCH AND FIELD CONDUCT

- A. All players, coaches and spectators are to behave in a manner that reflects the positive fun associated with the game of baseball. Unsportsmanlike conduct will not be tolerated, and includes but is not limited to (modified from the NFHS Baseball Rules Book, Rule 3-3)
 - * Verbal abuse
 - * Arguing umpire judgment calls
 - * Physical aggression
 - * Profanity
 - * Tantrum-like acts
- B. Any player, coach or spectator ejected from a game will immediately be removed from the game and must exit the vicinity of the ballpark. Failure to comply with the ejection in a timely manner will result in the game being forfeited. Note: If a player, coach or spectator is ejected from a game the head coach of that team will be ejected as well. Any coach, player, bench personnel or spectator ejected from a game will be immediately suspended for the remainder of the 2021 season, pending an appeal to your home association's Board of Directors.
 - 1. A Head Coach ejected due to a player, assistant coach or spectator's conduct will be considered an "Indirect Ejection." Indirect Ejections do not automatically trigger a season long suspension and will be reviewed on a case by case basis initially by their local association Board of Directors.
 - 2. The umpire involved and individual(s) ejected from the game MUST notify Shawn Northey, league

commissioner, at 218-481-5559 within 12 hours of the incident. A hearing may be scheduled with the home association/community to determine the future of the ejected player, coach or spectator. The minimum a suspension can be lowered to is one game for the individual(s) who was ejected. Any decision of reinstatement, after the one game minimum suspension, into the league by the home association/community will be upheld by the NBL Board of Advisors.

- C. A second game disqualification occurrence does not warrant an appeal and will result in suspension from the remainder of the team's regular season, league playoffs. Keep in mind that you are participating in youth baseball. Therefore, unsportsmanlike conduct will NOT be tolerated.

NOTE: If any unsportsmanlike conduct is displayed during a league game by a coach, player or spectator, please notify your association's player representative.

X. GAME LENGTH

(Please refer to Rule 4 of the NFHS Rule Book for proper procedure)

- A. Completed games are FINAL after seven innings. In the event of a tie, extra innings will be allowed based on weather conditions, field conditions and daylight (NFHS Rule 4-2).
- B. Ties will stand after curfew or darkness. Try to make every effort to complete the game but do not risk injury due to darkness. To ensure the playing of the full seven innings, hustle between half innings and retrieve all foul balls in a timely manner. It is ultimately the judgment of the umpire to determine if the game should be completed or allowed to continue.
- C. The 10-run rule will take effect after 4½ innings if the home team is ahead, or after five innings if the visiting team is ahead.
- D. If weather or darkness interferes with play so the game is called by the umpire, it is a regulation game (NFHS Rule Book 4-2-3 and also under Lightning Disturbances on page 78):
 - 1. after 4½ innings if the home team is ahead, or after five innings if the visiting team is ahead.
 - 2. if more than five innings have been completed.
- E. If a game is called when the teams have not had an equal number of completed terms at bat, the score will revert to the score at the end of the last completed inning unless the home team, in its half of the incomplete inning, scores a run(s) and equals or exceeds the opponent's score. In that case, the final score will be recorded as the score when the game is called (NFHS Rule 4-2-3).
- F. If weather or darkness interferes with play so the game is called by the umpire but does not reach a regulation game, then it is considered an incomplete game and it will be completed at a later date. The game must be rescheduled 24 hours after it was suspended. Please remember that the umpire's final decision on weather or darkness cannot be questioned and is a judgment made by them alone with no persuasion from a coach (NFHS Rule 4-2).
- G. Any forfeited game must be reported to the league office within 24 hour of the forfeit. The game in question will be recorded as a 7-0 score on the schedule.
- H. If a field without lights has an evening double header scheduled on it, no new inning may begin after 6:45. Game will be called at 7:00 and score reverts back to last full inning played

XII. GAME CHANGES/CANCELLATION SYSTEM & PROCEDURE

Any game changes or cancellations reported to Shawn Northey 218-481-5559. It is the responsibility of the home team coach to notify the visiting team of the cancellation. If the league office is not notified of a cancellation of a game, it will be assumed that the game is still on as scheduled.

XIII. STANDINGS

- A. The NBL will maintain current standings, schedules and all pertinent league information at hometeamsonline.com.
- B. Both coaches must submit/input their completed game scores to Shawn Northey 218-481-5559. The system helps ensure an accurate score for each completed game.
- C. Teams will be contacted if scores are not reported. It is imperative that both coaches report their scores within 24 hours of the completion of each game.

XIV. REGULAR SEASON POINT SYSTEM AND TIE-BREAKERS

Ties in the standings following the completion of the regular season will be broken by the following procedure:

- 1) Head to head competition
- 2) Best winning percentage (games won divided by games played)
- 3) Least runs allowed
- 4) Most runs scored
- 5) If still tied, a one-game playoff will determine the winner (time permitting)
- 6) Coin flip

XV. ALL-INCLUSIVE PLAYOFFS

- A. Playoff Format:
 - 1. Tiers may be divided into multiple divisions based on total points.
NOTE: If a team's season is not completed by the final play date, no points will be awarded for each game not played. This is intended to motivate teams to play all games. Forfeits will only be awarded when both teams agree upon the forfeit.
 - 2. Format will vary depending on number of teams in each division
- B. Playoff Dates: Playoffs will be July 21st- July 31st weekdays only.
- C. Playoff Game Times: All playoff games will begin at 6:00pm unless lights are available. Games need to be finished the night of the game.
- D. Playoff Locations: Games will be played at the site of the highest seed pending field availability. Because of time constraints, if the higher seeded team cannot provide a home field for the assigned days for play, the opposing team will be given the opportunity to host that particular game if they can supply a field.

2024 NBL Modified Baseball Rules Highlights

- 4-A Players may wear metal spikes. Home teams may require molded or turf shoes if the game is played or pitched on artificial turf
- 4-D Bats must have USSSA, USA or BBCOR stamp located on it. Additional specifications can be found at rule 4-D
- 5-E A courtesy runner (the last runner to be put out) will be allowed only for the catcher and only when there are two outs. Projected substitutions are not allowed.
- 6-A Continuous batting and free substitution will be used in all NBL U13 year old leagues.
- 6-B Each team's lineup must list a minimum of eight players to start a game and end the game. An out will be charged in the 9th spot if a team has only 8 eligible players.
- 7-B Pitch count will be used to determine how long a player can pitch per day and how long of rest period before they can return to the pitching position. The first pitch to the last batter faced will be used to determine days rest.
- 8-A A runner may lead off and/or steal at any time (NFHS rules apply).
- 10-B Anyone ejected during a league game will be immediately suspended for the remainder of the 2024 season, pending an appeal to your home association's Board of Directors. The shortest suspension that can be granted from an appeal is one game.
- 11-A Completed games are FINAL after seven innings—13u leagues
- 11-C The 10-run rule will take effect after: 4½ innings if the home team is ahead, or after five innings if the visiting team is ahead.
- 12 Any game changes or cancellations need to be reported to Shawn Northey 218-481-5559
- 13-B Both coaches should report their game scores to Shawn Northey 218-481-5559 within 24 hours after each game is completed.