



Hillsborough Youth Athletic Association

P.O. Box 577
Hillsborough, NC 27278
(919) 732 – 4454
www.hyaabaseball.org

Diamond Division Local Rules & Playing Philosophy

The primary goal of the Diamond Division is to introduce ball players to middle/high school age rules, adding base stealing, leadoffs, and dropped third strike. The Diamond Division is for 13–16-year-olds as determined by established age scales. The game is played on a field up to 80-foot diamond, 57-foot pitching mound, and all games are called by official umpires.

The following local rules apply to the HYAA Diamond Division. Any rule, topic or situation not covered in this document will automatically default to the Babe Ruth rulebook. The league commissioner will have final ruling on any disputes.

Team Formation

1. Players shall be evaluated at the league scheduled evaluations before the spring season. Players are encouraged to attend evaluations. There will be no evaluations ahead of the fall season.
2. Following evaluations, head coaches will attend a draft to form teams.
3. At the draft, the following rules will be implemented:
 - a. Coaches will draw numbers randomly to assign draft order.
 - b. Draft shall be snake format (order reverses in even rounds)
 - c. Coaches are permitted to select one (1) assistant coach prior to the draft to be automatically added to their team.
 - d. Players who attended evaluations will be displayed for coaches to draft from with corresponding scores. For fall drafts, spring evaluation scores will be used from the previous season if available.
 - e. All players who attended the evaluations shall be selected prior drafting any players who did not attend evaluations.
 - f. The names of players who did not attend the evaluations will not be displayed to the coaches during the draft, however their age will be visible.
 - g. Requests from parents will be considered but coaches are not required to honor them during the draft.
 - h. There will be no trades by the coaches following the completion of the draft.

Uniform / Protective Gear

1. Playing uniform is defined as the HYAA team jersey, pant and hat. Jerseys must be tucked in, and hats facing forward. Uniform customization is prohibited except for a player's first name, last name or number embroidered (1/2" tall maximum) on their hat only.
2. Players must be in full uniform when playing in all intra and inter league games. (Regular or Post-Season). Uniforms are not required for practice.
3. No player will be allowed to wear jewelry during practices or games.
4. It is strongly recommended that all male players wear a protective cup for both practices and games.
5. All male catchers are required to wear a protective cup.
6. The catcher is required to wear all protective gear, including leg guards, chest protector, and approved one-piece catcher helmet/ mask with throat protection.
7. The catcher is not required to use a catcher's glove.
8. All offensive players are required to wear batting helmets when anywhere in the field of play or in the batting cage – runners should not remove their helmet until in the dugout.

Equipment

1. The batting cages are for HYAA use only. Only one player and one coach will be allowed in the batting cage. Batting cages will be vacant during games.
2. Bat Rules
 - a. Bats may not exceed 34" in length and the barrel may not exceed 2⁵/₈" in diameter. All bats marked USA Baseball or BBCOR .50 are allowed. Wood barrel bats are allowed. Bats must be -5 sized or heavier.
 - b. Only approved bats should be present in the dugout.

- c. If a player is caught using a non-approved bat before they bat, the bat will be immediately removed from the game.
- d. If a player is caught using a non-approved bat during or after their at-bat, the batter will be called out, and any runners that advanced during the at-bat will return to the bases they occupied at the beginning of the at-bat. The bat will be immediately removed from the game.

Pre-Game

1. Coaches from both teams are responsible for site preparation on game days. This includes repairing any damage caused by water, gathering player and game equipment as well as repairing/removing safety issues (fence tears/rocks/etc...). The Home team is responsible for lining the infield to specification prior to game play.
2. Players are not permitted on the field until their coach arrives and it is time for warm-ups. Only players, coaches, and adult volunteers are permitted in the dugout.
3. Coaches must provide their batting order to the opposing team at least 5 minutes before game time. A team's batting order will consist of every player that is on the roster and at the game.
4. Games must start on time.
5. Each team will provide its own scorekeeper. The home team is the official scorekeeper. Scorekeepers should confer between innings to make sure they have the same score. If they are different, scorekeepers must notify the managers and home plate umpire before play resumes. The on-site field rep will stop game play until the discrepancy is resolved.
6. Concessions (when available): The home team will be responsible for running the concession stand. Coaches will assign a parent volunteer to run the concession stand prior to the start of the game. No kids under 14 are allowed in the concession stand without adult supervision or commissioner approval.
7. Batting Cages (when available): Thirty-five minutes prior to the game start time, the Home team will have use of the batting cage for 15 minutes. Twenty minutes prior to the game start time, the Visiting team will have use of the batting cage for 15 minutes. Both teams will be ready to start the game 5 minutes prior to the start time. Batting warm-ups will not be delayed for late arriving players.
8. Thirty-five minutes prior to the game start time, the Visitor team will have use of the field to warm-up for 15 minutes. Twenty minutes prior to the game start time, the Home team will have use of the field to warm-up for 15 minutes. All on-field warm-ups will end 5 minutes prior to the stated game start time. For second games on weeknights, there may not be any infield practice depending on the status of the first game.
9. A team may begin a game with a minimum of seven players in uniform. Late arriving players will be added to the bottom of the batting order. There is no "OUT" penalty for playing with fewer than 9 players. If seven players are not available at game time then that team must forfeit. The teams may remain, and the game shall be played as a "practice" game. Players remaining may be divided among teams, that were scheduled to play. Only rostered players shall be allowed to participate in the practice game.
10. Practices are scheduled by the commissioner only. There will be no extra team practices allowed. Rained out practices can be rescheduled based on field availability and commissioner approval.

General Game Play

1. **Before the first pitch is released, coaches will agree on the game start time and the home team scorekeeper will record it.** The game can be delayed or suspended due to weather conditions. On the rescheduled game date, the game will resume where it left off, including outs already recorded, runners on base, and at the batter who was up when the game was called. No game will officially end due to weather.
2. Game duration will be a maximum of 7 innings. Regular season games cannot commence a new inning after 120 minutes. A new inning is considered "started" at the same instant that the 3rd out of the previous inning is recorded. The home team shall be entitled to complete any inning started unless leading into the bottom half of the final inning. Otherwise, the game will be called due to time limitations.
4. Each team will be allowed two time outs per inning with a time limit of one minute. The pitcher must be removed from the game on a manager's second trip to the mound in one inning.
5. Play ends if one team is ahead by 20 runs after 3 innings, 15 runs after 4 innings, or by 10 runs after 5 innings.
6. Starting players must play a complete inning in the field before they can be substituted unless there is an injury.
7. Any player may reenter the game if the player being replaced has played a complete inning.

Offensive Game Play

1. Offensive coaching will be limited to base coaches at first and third base.
2. A continuous batting order will be used. All players on the team roster will bat regardless of their play defensively.
3. The batter must have both feet in the batter's box when the ball is hit. If one foot is out of the box when the ball is hit, the batter will be called out.
4. Baserunning rules:
 - a. The Diamond Division shall allow "open bases", during live play.
 - b. Sliding: a legal slide can be either feet first or headfirst. While encouraged, runners are not required to slide.
 - c. Contact Rule: If a runner, attempting to reach home plate, intentionally and maliciously runs into a defensive player in the area of home plate, he will be called out on the play and may be ejected from the game.

- d. Blocking Home Plate: A catcher (or defensive player) may not stand on or in the path of home plate with the attempt of blocking the runner from scoring.
5. The catcher may have a pinch runner if on base with 2 outs. The pinch runner will be the player who made the last out. If less than 2 outs, the catcher must run for him/herself.
6. Drop third strike rule, player may steal 1st if the base is unoccupied or if 1st base is occupied with 2 outs. A batter who does not realize his situation on a third strike not caught and is not in the process of running to 1st base within the baseline will be called out.

Defensive Game Play

1. Each player must play a minimum of 1 inning of defense in the infield. No player can sit out a 2nd inning of defense until all players have sat out 1 inning of defense. Penalty for not following this rule is forfeiture of the game. If the player's nonparticipation is a result of the manager's deliberate action, the manager will be suspended for one game. A second violation by the same manager will result in permanent suspension from managing or coaching in HYAA. If a coach feels a player's safety is at risk with the mandatory inning of infield play, a meeting between the coach, player parent, and commissioner is required to create an exception for that player.
2. No chatter directed towards the batter will be allowed at any time.
3. Any ball hit out of bounds (ex: under the fence) is live until the defensive player holds their hands up to the umpire signaling to the ball out of play.
4. The infield fly rule is recognized and enforced.
5. The distance from the front of the pitching rubber to the back of home plate will be at 54 feet.
6. Pitchers will be permitted to pitch five innings per game. However, once a pitcher is taken out, he cannot return to the mound during that game. An inning will be counted if a single live pitch is thrown. Pitchers are limited to 8 innings in any 7 calendar-day stretch. More than 2 innings pitched requires at least 2 days of rest. Coaches are encouraged to follow Major League Baseball Pitch Smart Guidelines (refer to the bottom of this rules set).
7. Pitchers, once removed from the mound after delivering a pitch, may not return to the mound in the same game.
8. Any Pitcher hitting three batters in one game must be removed from the mound.
9. Balks shall be called and enforced by the umpire.

Post-Game

1. Visitor team is responsible for dragging the field after the game. Both teams are also responsible for cleaning the dugout and emptying the trash in the dumpster (unless the game is played at Cedar Grove Fields).
2. Managers and umpires are responsible for completion of the game report sheet at the end of the game. Failure to completely fill in these forms may result in forfeiture. These forms will be located in the concession stand.
3. All coaches need to make certain that all facilities are cleaned and locked up before leaving

Officiating / Sportsmanship

1. The umpire has authority over the field of play, and has authority to eject coaches, assistant coaches, players, and spectators at any time while at the field of play. The league commissioner or field representative may be consulted to interpret local rules; however, the umpire's ruling is final.
2. The umpire may issue one warning prior to the start of the game for the following:
 - a. Any offensive language by the manager, players, or spectators.
 - b. Any team member throwing any piece of equipment or acting in an unsportsmanlike manner.
 - c. Any player throwing a bat will be called out.
3. Only head coaches are allowed on the field to discuss any call with the umpire. If needed, scorekeepers, assistant coaches, and / or the league's nightly field supervisor may be called in. The umpire, commissioner and field supervisor have the authority to eject coaches, assistant coaches, players, and spectators at any time while at the field of play. Any person ejected must leave the premises immediately. The incident will be referred to HYAA Board of Directors for further action at the discretion of the Board up to and including expulsion from the league.
4. Any coach, player or spectator exhibiting unsportsmanlike behavior (verbal or physical), or throwing any piece of equipment in an unsportsmanlike manner while at the field of play will be ejected. The incident will be referred to HYAA Board of Directors for further action at the discretion of the Board up to and including expulsion from the league.

Weather Policy

1. Coaches will decide the adverse weather policy for their own practices. For games, the coaches will communicate and let the commissioner know 2 hours before the game time, to allow adequate notification of parents.
2. When there is any lightning visible in the area, play will immediately stop, and players will seek nearest shelter. After a minimum of 15 minutes from the last lightning strike, play may resume at the umpires' discretion, keeping safety of all the children at the highest priority.

Tournament (Spring Only):

1. A pool play tournament will be held at the conclusion of the regular season if there are 4 teams during the regular season. Pool play seeds for the post season tournament will be based on the draft order pulled at random at the pre-season coach's meeting. The pool play seeds shall be awarded in reverse of the draft order (1st to draft is last seed, last to draft is first seed). Upon completion of pool play, the top 2 teams from both pool A & B advance for semifinal game A1 vs B2, B1 vs A2. Winners play a championship game.
2. Pool play games will be played with time limit & slaughter rules in effect. Semifinals, finals, and world series will play, without a time limit, a regulation 6 inning game unless ended by slaughter rule, extended because of a tie score, or the home team is ahead leading into the bottom of the final inning.
3. Before the first pitch is released, coaches will agree on the game start time and the home team scorekeeper will record it. The game can be delayed or suspended due to darkness or weather conditions if the game duration has not reached the minimum of 4 innings (3 ½ if home team is ahead). On the rescheduled game date, the game will resume where play left off with remaining time limit left to play, including outs already recorded, runners on base, with the batter who was at bat when the game was called.
4. Each team will provide its own scorekeeper. The home team scorekeeper is the official scorekeeper for the game. Scorekeepers should confer between innings to make sure they have the same score. If they are different, scorekeepers must notify managers and home plate umpire before play resumes. The on-site field representative will stop game play until the discrepancy is resolved.
5. Managers are responsible to report the results of all tournament games to the commissioner at the conclusion of each game.
6. Penalty for not following rule 1 under defensive game play is forfeiture of the game.
7. If a team is ahead by 15 runs or more after 4 innings or 10 runs or more after 5 innings, the game is declared over. (Slaughter Rule)
8. A forfeited game results in a score of 5-0 for the winning team.
9. Determination of Pool Play Standings (Section 11.05 Playing Rules; Babe Ruth Official Playing Rules):
 - a. Win-Loss Record of Pool Play
 - b. Results of Head to Head Competition
 - c. Fewest Runs Allowed
 - d. Run Differential with a maximum of 10 per game
 - e. Coin Toss

Major League Baseball Pitch Smart Guidelines

- Players can begin using breaking pitches after developing consistent fastball and changeup
- Do not exceed 100 combined innings pitched in any 12 month period
- Take at least 4 months off from throwing every year, with at least 2-3 of those months being continuous
- Make sure to properly warm up before pitching
- Set and follow pitch-count limits and required rest periods
- Avoid playing for multiple teams at the same time
- Avoid playing catcher while not pitching
- Players should not pitch in multiple games on the same day
- Play other sports during the course of the year
- Monitor for other signs of fatigue
- A pitcher remaining in the game, but moving to a different position, can return as a pitcher anytime in the remainder of the game, but only once per game
- No pitcher shall appear in a game as a pitcher for three consecutive days, regardless of pitch counts

Age	Daily Max (Pitches in Game)	0 Days Rest	1 Days Rest	2 Days Rest	3 Days Rest	4 Days Rest
13-14	95	1-20	21-35	36-50	51-65	66+