

High School Recreational LEVEL IV: Modified Rules

Fort Collins Baseball Club uses the **National Federation of State High School Associations** baseball rules. The following are the **League Modifications** to those rules for all age groups and divisions with references to NFHS rules where appropriate. All coaches are expected to familiarize themselves with the rules regarding conduct of coaches, spectators, and players toward FCBC Umpires.

Whether it is during a practice, or during pre-game warm-ups, do not hit any balls against chain fencing.

Dugouts are first-come, first-claimed.

RULE 1 - Players, Field And Equipment

- 1-2-1 The diamond shall be **90** feet between bases.
- 1-2-11 The pitching rubber shall be **60** feet from the point of home plate to the front of the rubber.
- 1-3-1 The official ball shall be provided by FCBC.**
- 1-3-2 Bats in this league must have a bat-drop (length to weight ratio) of -3.
Bat Restrictions: Per National Federation Guidelines and USSSA, FCBC Level III, and Recreational rules, only the following bats are to be used:
- BBCOR certified
 - or Wood Bats
- 1-3-4 Hitting aids: Only bats (including weighted warm-up bats) and items designed to remain part of the bat while warming up may be used for on-field, in-game warm-up.
- In other words, hitting aids – other than bat-weights (donuts, sleeves) – are not allowed for warm-up anywhere on the field (inside the fence in fair or foul territory) during a game. This includes Hurricanes, hitting sticks, Ts, and nets.
- 1-3-6 The size of gloves/mitts is not restricted.
- 1-4-1 Metal cleats may be worn.
- 1-5 **It is strongly recommended that every player wears a protective cup.**
- 1-5-1 It is mandatory for on-deck batters, batters, runners, and retired runners to wear a batting helmet that meets the NOCSAE standard.
- 1-5-4 Catchers must wear a helmet that includes ear protection. The mask must have a separate, attached throat protector. The chest protector shall have a tail that protects the groin area. **All male catchers must wear protective cups.**
- 1-5-11 Non-traditional playing equipment must be reviewed by the League Commissioner(s) before it will be permitted.
- 1-5-12 Jewelry shall not be worn (See 3.3.1d) except for religious or medical medals ... these items must be taped and worn under the uniform.

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Rule 2 - Playing Terms and Definitions

2-4-3 An intentional base on balls may be given by the defensive team by having its catcher or coach request the umpire to award the batter first base. This may be done before pitching to the batter or on any ball and strike count. The ball shall be declared dead before making the award.

In this situation, the pitcher is not required to throw four called balls.

RULE 3 - Substituting - Coaching - Bench & Field Conduct

3-1-1 **Substitution:** On defense, free substitution shall be allowed. All players will play – at minimum – every other inning. Coaches are encouraged to give all players one full defensive inning in the infield.

Base-runners may only be substituted in the case of injury. In such case, the player who made the last out may be inserted for an injured base-runner.

Late Players: In the situation where a player is late arriving for a game, whether this is pre-announced to the coach or not, the player shall still be allowed to play. Offensively, the late player is placed at the last spot in the line-up (because we bat the entire roster, a late player may not be used merely as a substitute for another player). Defensively, the player may be freely substituted.

Benching and Ejection: If a *Coach* elects to remove a player from the game due to misconduct, an automatic out will be charged in the batting order. If a player is ejected from the game by the *Umpire*, an automatic out will be charged in the batting order for each of the ejected player's subsequent at bats.

3-1-2 Pitcher Re-entry: Only the starting pitcher will be allowed re-entry as a pitcher - and this only once per game. A pitcher who re-enters is still bound by the League Pitching Restrictions as outlined below (Rule 6.1.6).

3-1-4 On offense the batting order shall contain the entire roster of players present.

3-1-5 **Injury Removal:** If a player is forced to leave the game due to injury or illness, an automatic out will not be charged in the batting order.

If a player is removed from the game due to injury while the team is on offense, the player who made the last out shall be inserted as a courtesy runner.

With any injury that requires the removal of a player from a game, the player must have written permission from a parent (or legal guardian) to resume play.

3-2-1 **Coach Uniform:** Coaches are not required to be in team uniform. However, coaches should wear athletic attire that corresponds to the team's uniform colors. A player base-coach is required to wear a batting helmet. Players and coaches will show respect for the game by wearing league issued or approved baseball hats bill-forward except while playing catcher.

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- 3-3-1c, m Due to safety concerns, we reiterate the following NFHS rule as written:
A coach, player, substitute, attendant or other bench personnel shall not:
- c. carelessly throw a bat
Penalty: ... the umpire shall issue a warning to the coach of the team involved and the next offender on that team shall be ejected ...
 - m. deliberately throw a bat, helmet, etc.
Penalty: The umpire shall eject the offender from the game.

3-3-1g **Bench and Field Conduct**

- A Coach, player, substitute, attendant or other bench personnel shall not:
commit any unsportsmanlike act to include, but not limited to,
- 6. any member of the coaching staff who was not the head coach (or designee) in 3.2.4 leaves the vicinity of the dugout or coaching box to dispute a judgment call by an umpire.

The rules further state: For the head coach, the duties of controlling the dugout and team behavior includes being both accountable and responsible for the actions of assistant coaches and all other team personnel ... the head coach is the only coach responsible for communications with umpires, and it is not the role of the assistant coach to dispute or appeal play situations and rulings. (p.65, Points of Emphasis, paragraph 2)

PENALTY: The umpire shall eject the offender from the game, unless the offense is judged to be of a minor nature. The umpire may warn the offender and then eject him if he/she repeats the offense. **FCBC Reserves the right to suspend any assistant coach who violates this rule.**

- 3-3-1j A Coach, player, substitute, attendant or other bench personnel shall not:
be outside the designated dugout (bench) or bullpen area if not a batter, runner, on-deck batter, in the coach's box or one of the nine players on defense.

We insert this rule not as a modification, but as a reminder to coaches. When your team is on Offense you are allowed two base-coaches (3-3-1). When your team is on Defense the entire coaching staff should be in the dugout.

Warm-up protection: The safety of the pitcher and catcher should be considered when selecting a warm-up location. Every effort should be made to have Pitchers warm-up outside of the field of play. In the event that this is not possible, Pitchers and Catchers who are warming up within the foul area of the ball field must have a Coach or an Adult provide a protective glove between them and the field of play.

- 3-3-1p Use of tobacco or tobacco-like products within 250 feet of the dugout is prohibited for all players, coaches, and team personnel (scorekeepers, attendants, etc.). Offenders shall be ejected immediately upon discovery, and the league may impose additional sanctions.

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RULE 4 - Starting and Ending the Game

Note: Dugouts are first-come, first-claimed. *Don't let this become a pointless source of dispute.*

4-1-1 The Umpire-in-Chief shall decide if the grounds and conditions are suitable for play at game-time. Every effort will be made by umpires to start the game even if it necessitates a delay.

4-1-3 A team may start and play a game with 8 players and not be charged with an automatic out for the missing 9th player.

4-1-3 **No On-Field Pre-Game Warm-Up:** *No* on-field pre-game warm-up. Teams are encouraged to practice ground balls in foul territory and/or fly balls in the outfield. Pitchers may warm-up (“bullpen”) pre-game in foul territory or outside of the field.

4-2-1 **Ending a Regulation Game**

Games shall start and end on time. **A game shall consist of 7 innings or 2 hours.** The game clock starts immediately at the conclusion of the umpire/coach pre-game conference. A new inning begins the instant the third out is made in the bottom half of the previous inning. No new inning shall start after the time limit has expired.

The game ends when one team is ahead after the completion of regulation innings; or, time has expired (if time expires, and the home team is ahead, the game is over); or, after the Mercy Rule is applied, or, if the game is “Called” (4-2-3); or, if applicable, Tie-Breaking provisions produces a winner.

4-2-2 **Mercy Rules and Extra Innings**

The 10-run rule is in effect after 5 full innings (or 4.5 innings if the home team is ahead).

Extra Innings: Tie-Breaker (Note – HS Rec is the only rec league that plays an extra inning)

- If after the completion of seven innings or if time has expired and the game is tied, a one-inning tie-breaker shall be played.
- During the extra inning the last scheduled batter for that inning will be placed on second base. There will be zero (0) outs to start the inning.
- If a game’s outcome has not been decided at the end of the extra inning, the game will be scored as a tie and treated as a complete game.

4-2-3 **Called Game**

If weather or darkness interferes with play so that the game is called (ended) by the umpire, it is a regulation game if one hour has been played or if the necessary number of innings for an official game have been played (varies by age division).

If the game is called when the teams have not had an equal number of complete turns at bat, the score shall be the same as it was at the end of the last completed inning; except that if the home team in its half of the incomplete inning scores a run (or runs) which equals or exceeds the opponent’s score, the final score shall be as recorded when the game is called.

Suspended Game: There are no Suspended Game provisions. Coaches may reschedule un-played or called games at their option, but they will not be recorded for standings.

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- 4-4-1 **Forfeited Games:** A game shall be forfeited to the offended team by the umpire (or the League) when a team:
- Is unable to provide at least eight (8) players to start a game.
 - If both sanctioned coaches are ejected.
 - If neither team shows up for a game. Teams must play all games on the published League Schedule. If both teams fail to show up for a scheduled game, each team will be credited a loss and no score will be entered.
- 4-4-2 Forfeited games will be scored as a 7-0 win for the offended team, and will count in the league standings.
- 4-5 **Protested Game:** No protests will be permitted.

RULE 6 - Pitching

- 6-1-6 Pitchers are limited to pitching 10 innings per week (a week being defined as Monday – Sunday). One pitch is considered an inning (no “thirds” of an inning – only complete innings for an appearance by a pitcher).

RULE 8- Base Running

- 8-4-2b1 **Any runner is out when he ... does not legally slide and causes illegal contact ...**
As point 2 of the rule clearly states, “Runners are never required to slide, but if a runner elects to slide, the slide must be legal.” There is no “must slide” rule. If a runner elects not to slide, he/she may not initiate contact with a defensive player, including the catcher. The rule is in place for the safety of both the runner and the defender.

FCBC Additional Rules and Protocol

Non-Game Team Functions: Any use of alcohol by team personnel – before games, at tournaments, team parties, or any other functions where the players are present – is prohibited

Suspension and Ejection Policy: The following league ejection and suspension policies will be in effect for all League games and Tournaments, including the End-of-Season Playoff:

Definition of terms:

- Ejection: A penalty for un-sportsmanlike conduct or other violation penalized by ejection as outlined by NFHS baseball rules. An ejection is served during the game in which the ejection occurred.
- Suspension: A penalty for un-sportsmanlike or other inappropriate conduct. The League Recreational Committee governs suspensions. A suspension is additional punishment to an ejection. A player, coach, or other person associated with a team may be suspended even if they haven’t been previously ejected.

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Ejections:

- Coach Ejections: All coach ejections are governed by the NFHS baseball rules.
- Player Ejections: All player ejections are governed by the NFHS baseball rules.

Suspensions:

- Coach Suspensions: **A coach, or other person associated with the team, who is ejected from any league game will be suspended for a minimum of one (1) additional game, and is not allowed on site at the game or warm-up. A coach, or other person associated with the team, may be suspended for more than one game.** A coach, or other person associated with the team, may be suspended without having been previously ejected. If both sanctioned coaches are ejected from the same game then the head coach is suspended from the next league game and the manager is suspended from the subsequent league game.
- Player Suspensions: All player ejections will be reviewed by the Competitive Committee to determine if a suspension is necessary.