

Shetland League Rules

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# About This Document

This document will oversee all of the rules and operations of the Shetland League. It will act as a binding document for any player, coach, parent or spectator at our games, practices and/or facility. Any further questions about this document please reach out to the League Director.

If you see a problem at the park, game or facility please report it immediately to the Acworth Baseball Association (“ABA”) Board, contacts can be found at https://www.acworthbaseball.org/board-contact-information

# Hierarchy of Rules

This section will determine in which order the rule books will apply, starting with the top and working toward the bottom.

For example, if it’s not a Shetland or Dizzy Dean rule then we would follow whatever the MLB ruling is for that particular case. However, if it is a Shetland rule listed below then that would be the ruling document and would be called in the game. Dizzy Dean or MLB stance on the situation would be moot at that point.

1. Shetland In Park Rules (This Document)
2. Acworth Baseball Association Park Rules.
	1. The link for this document can be found here:
	https://www.acworthbaseball.org/important-handouts
3. Official Dizzy Dean Rulebook
	1. The link for this document can be found here:
	http://dizzydeanbbinc.org/rules.htm
4. Major League Baseball Rules
	1. The link for this document can be found here:
	http://mlb.mlb.com/mlb/official\_info/official\_rules/official\_rules.jsp

# Zero Tolerance & Sportsmanship

This section will outline what is expected from coaches, players, parents and spectators during league events, games and practices. We want to ensure that our players and families have the best experience possible. It starts with sportsmanship and teaching our kids the right ways to treat their competition, teammates, coaches and family.

### Zero Tolerance Policy

1. Any player or coach that has conducted themselves inappropriate manner or has violated any of the rules or regulations in this document either on the field or off will be grounds for disciplinary action which range from game suspension(s) to removal from the park.
2. ABA will not tolerate any form of poor sportsmanship by player(s), coach(es), parent(s) and/or spectator(s) including, but not limited to:
	1. Throwing bats, gloves, helmets, other equipment or items;
	2. Making undo comments to any player, umpire, parent or spectator; and
	3. Any behavior exhibiting poor sportsmanship
3. Any player, coach, parent or spectator exhibiting poor behavior will be reported to the League Director and/or an appropriate ABA board member.
	1. Penalties include anything from game suspensions to permanent removal from the park, based on the number of incidents and severity.
4. Any coach attempting to strike out batters, or intentionally get his player out to speed up the game, or delay the game will not be tolerated. The offending coach is subject to immediate ejection from the ball game and the team is subject to forfeit the game whether they are winning or losing the game at that time.

# Coach Selection

1. Any parent or volunteer willing to coach or assistant coach should fill out a coaching application.
	1. The link for this document can be found here:
	https://www.acworthbaseball.org/important-handouts
2. All coaches must pass an Acworth background check that is provided to our park by the city.
	1. The link for this document can be found here:
	https://www.acworthbaseball.org/important-handouts
3. Coaches will be selected based on prior experience with the park and order in which applications are received.
4. All coaches are subject to approval by the ABA Board.

# Team Selection & Draft

## Players Wanting to Play Up

1. Player(s) wishing to play into a different age group or league need to complete the following things:
	1. Notify the league director of your current age bracket league.
		1. Parents should notify the league director of intentions prior to skills assessments.
	2. Any player wishing to play in another league must skills test in their respective league first.
	3. Skills assessed in the top 10% of all registered players in that league.
	4. Attain 2 approvals
		1. Current leagues director
		2. Receiving leagues director

## Skills Assessment

1. All players should attend skills assessment to be eligible for the draft.
	1. Any player not able to attend will be assigned to a team based on availability and number of players on each team.
2. Skills Assessment will take place prior to the draft as ordered by the ABA Board of Directors and scheduling directors
	1. Rainouts do occur and a secondary date/time will be selected and families will be notified.
3. Players will be assessed by coaches, assistant coaches and league directors on a score 1-25 for different skill types which include but may not be limited to:
	1. Batting
	2. Throwing
	3. Catching
	4. Speed
4. Concluding skills assessments, coaches will turn in their calculated score sheets to the League Director, they will be averaged and a draft list will be produced.
	1. Scores may also be weighted based against assessments performed by coaches the prior season to prevent any kids being instructed to perform poorly on skills assessments. Any coach caught instructing players to perform poorly will be removed from the park.
	2. Players that have scores from the fall may also be weighted in to adjust for any big deviations.
	3. Unassessed players that are known by directors may also receive a score; this will be done at the director’s discretion.

## Draft

1. Draft sheets will be produced by the League Director and provided to the coaches on draft night.
2. Teams will draft in order based on a lottery system (pulling a number out of a hat).
	1. Each coach is allowed only 2 locked players (including their own).
		1. Coaches that have siblings on the same team we will lock the sibling with the highest score and the other sibling must be selected in their respective round.
	2. Sibling(s) must be drafted to the same team if they are playing in the same leagues. Sibling(s) will need to be drafted in their respective rounds.
		1. If the round has already passed, they must be picked up on the next available pick until all sibling(s) are selected or are in future rounds.
3. Once all scored players have been selected teams will be assigned any player(s) that did not complete skills assessments.
4. Coaches should attempt to make contact with all of their parents within 48 hours of draft.
5. No trades will take place after the draft without approval from the league director.

# General Gameplay

## Length of Play

1. Game time will consist of 6 innings or 1 hour 15 minutes
	1. No new innings shall start after 1 hour 10 minutes
	2. Regular season games can end in a tie.
	3. Tournament games cannot end in a tie thus must continue on past the 1:15 timeframe..
		1. After the 8th inning teams will move to a 5-pitch rule, 3 strikes you’re out. Any player not striking the ball after 3rd strike or the 5th pitch will result in an out.
	4. Once an inning is started, it shall be completed unless the home team is ahead after the visiting team has batted or mathematical elimination.
2. The maximum number of runs scored by a team in an inning cannot exceed 5. Once 5 runs are scored that half of the inning will conclude.

## Equipment

### Catchers Gear

1. Catchers are required to wear at minimum a catcher’s mask (hockey style) and a chest protector.
	1. If a catcher chooses to squat behind the plate, they must wear a cup and shin protectors (not provided by ABA).
2. Catchers gear can be provided by the park to each head coach.
	1. A deposit will be taken at the time of you receiving the gear.
	2. The deposit check will be returned upon you returning the gear to ABA.
3. Any team without gear can ask to borrow the opposing teams gear.
	1. Should both teams be without gear the game will be forfeited in a tie.

### Masks

1. Any player playing in the P position must wear facial protection at all times.
	1. These can include softball face masks, batting helmets with cages and/or catchers helmets.

### Bats

1. Any bat with the following stamps or specifications are eligible for play:
	1. Wood Bats
	2. USABat stamped
	3. USSSA stamped
2. Any player(s) using illegal bats will be out at their current and next at-bat. Upon the 2nd offense in the same game the head coach and player(s) will be removed from the ballgame.
	1. Any coach with multiple infractions will be subject to the terms as outlined in the Zero Tolerance section of this document.

### Baseballs

1. The Shetland league will also use standard baseballs, not soft and/or compression baseballs.
	1. Soft Core balls are not eligible for any type of official league play.
		1. Coaches are allowed to use them during instructions and practices, just not in games.

### Uniforms

1. Jerseys will include names and numbers. We do not need to collect money at the season start for uniforms. These fees have been added into the registration fees.
2. There are no specific uniform guidelines but please make sure your players look neat and organized best you can. Shirts stay tucked and no floppy pockets (pockets inside out). Look professional, act professional, play professional.

## Pre-Game Checklist

1. Proper field lines including but not limited to safety hash-mark halfway down the baseline from home plate to first base and home plate to third, foul lines, foul arc, and proper batter boxes.
2. Each team shall supply a game ball to be used during the game.
3. The visiting team is responsible to maintain the game’s official scorebook.
4. The home team’s responsible to maintain the game’s scoreboard.

## Player Rules

1. A minimum of 8 players is required to play a game.
	1. A maximum of two fill-in players will be allowed.
	2. Any team not able to field at least 8 players with fill-in players will forfeit the game.
2. Fill-In Players
	1. Coaches should discuss any fill-in players they are fielding during the pre-game umpire meeting.
	2. Fill-In player(s) may only be allowed to play in right field and right center field.
	3. Fill-In player(s) must bat last in the lineup.
	4. Fill-In player(s) may be any of the following:
		1. Any Colt player.
		2. Any Shetland player that is not an All-Star from the previous season.
3. **Due to Covid-19, this rule will not be enforced by the umpire. If a team has less than 8 players but wishes to play, they may do so.**

## Dugouts

1. Dugouts should have at least 1 team coach or parent to prepare kids to play. However, this is at the coach’s discretion and should be maintained by the coach.
2. Throwing of equipment of any kind should be prohibited by the coach and/or team parent.
3. Any safety issues and/or concerns should be directed toward the head coach to be addressed with the parent(s).
4. Cleanup of the dugout at the conclusion of the game is the coach’s responsibility.

## Offense

### Coaches

1. Coach(es) should not enter the field of play at any point, unless pitching.
2. The offensive team may have 3 coaches present on the field during live play. These include:
	1. Pitcher
	2. 1st Base Coach
	3. 3rd Base Coach
3. Base coaches must stay within their respective coaches’ boxes and should not enter the field of play during a live ball.

### Pitching

1. Pitchers shall clear the plate area after a ball is put into the field of play and ensure that no new batter enters the box until after the play is called dead.
2. The pitching coach will be from the batting team.
3. Pitching must be thrown overhand and from a standing position.
4. Pitchers may be switched at the beginning of each inning, before any pitches have been thrown.
5. Any coach that is removed during the middle of an inning shall no longer be allowed to pitch for the remainder of the inning.
6. A coach will pitch 4 balls to the batter. If none of these pitches are put in play by the batter, the coach will give the batter 2 swings off the tee.
	1. If the batter fouls on the 6th try or hits the tee, the batter is out.

### Batting

1. All players shall be included in the batting order.
2. The batting order cannot be changed or modified after gameplay begins except for:
	1. Removal due to injury;
	2. A late arriving player, who shall be entered as the last batter in the batting order.
3. A coach will pitch 4 balls to the batter. If none of these pitches are put in play by the batter, the coach will give the batter 2 swings off the tee.
	1. If the batter fouls on the 6th try or hits the tee, the batter is out.
4. Slinging or throwing of a bat will result in a verbal warning to the player and coach after the first offense and an automatic out after the second offense. This will be the umpire’s discretion.

### Base Running

1. No stealing or leading off will be allowed.
	1. Any player that leaves a base before the pitch is contacted by the batter will be called out.
2. Player(s) can advance at their own risk during a live ball.
	1. If player is tagged out at any point during while there is a live ball, that player is out.
3. Player(s) will be only allowed 1 base on the first over throw. (see overthrow rules).
	1. Any player tagged out during a live ball, will be counted as out.
	2. If there are multiple overthrows, the player(s) may still only advance the original 1 base. They don’t get any additional bases for the subsequent overthrows.
	3. Any player advancing past the 1 base and safe upon time being called will be returned back to their respective base after the initial over throw.
		1. Players advancing further than the 1 base and are tagged out, are out since it’s still a live ball.
	4. Players not advancing will not be given any bases, meaning you have to run to get the base but are at risk or being tagged out.

## Defense

### Coaches

1. The defensive team may have 3 coaches present on the field during live play. These include:
	1. Right Outfield Coach
	2. Left Outfield Coach
	3. Dugout Coach
2. A maximum of 2 coaches are allowed in fair territory in the outfield.
	1. They should remain behind the players at all times.
3. A maximum of 1 coach is allowed outside his/her dugout

### Player Positioning

1. All infielders must be behind the safety marks on the 1st and 3rd baselines.
	1. As a safety precaution no player will start an at bat in front of or parallel to this line.
2. All outfielders must be in the grass at the start of an at-bat.
3. All catchers not wearing shin guards must stand behind home plate. Players wearing proper shin protection and a cup (for males) are eligible to squat if desired.

### Player Rotation

1. No player is allowed to play the entire game in the outfield.
	1. The bench, LF, LCF, RCF, and RF all consist of a single OF position.
		1. Moving a player from LF to RF would not consist of a position change.
		2. Sitting a player for a single inning would consist of an outfield position played.
2. No player may be benched more than one inning per game.
	1. The bench will reset only after every available player has sat a full inning.
3. Players cannot play the same infield position more than 2 innings per 5 innings.
	1. At the top of the 6th inning the rotation may reset.
	2. Any player, playing the same position more than twice before rotation has concluded, that player will be relegated to the OF for the remainder of the game.
	3. Any coach not rotating players shall be reported by the opposing coach. The coach reported will be subject to the Zero Tolerance Policy as outlined in this document.
4. Exceptions
	1. The rule is based on a 6-inning game, shall the game go longer than 6 innings the lineup may be reset.
	2. Any player playing as a fill-in player will be exempt from the rule and must play RF/RC for the entire game.
	3. Any player that has a waiver signed by the parent allowing the coach to subsequently not be an infielder due to personality of that player or concern of the parent.
		1. This should be addressed at the start of each game, and the waiver should be presented to the opposing coach.

### Throwing Rules

1. Every attempt must be made to throw the player(s) out.
2. Players cannot leave their respective areas to tag players out.
	1. Catchers have the ability to tag players out running to first if the case arises.
	2. Player(s) in OF positions do not have the ability to complete force outs or complete a tag to get a player out.
	3. Infielders must stay on their respective sides of the infield.
		1. 3B, SS must stay on the left and 1B, 2B must stay on the right.
		2. For example: 1B player cannot run to the 3rd baseline and tag a player. He must make an attempt to throw the ball to a player on their respective side of the field.
	4. Pitchers must make a throwing attempt if fielding an infield hit.
		1. A tag cannot be applied on the 1st baseline by the pitcher even if the hit leads him/her to the 1st baseline.
	5. Catchers should not leave the home plate area, but are able to tag runners in or around the 1st and 3rd baselines.
3. 3B, P or C can tag runners in the 3rd baseline so long as the ball leads them in that direction and they don’t supersede the rules above.
4. Pitchers cannot back- up 1st and run across the field and tag someone.
5. Pitcher can make a force out at home as long as momentum leads them to the play.

### Overthrow Rules

1. Definition:
	1. Any ball that passes the defensive person. This can include but not limited to:
		1. Balls thrown over the head of a player
		2. Balls thrown wide of a player
		3. Balls thrown that bounce by a player
		4. Balls thrown that hit a player’s mitt, body, or person and get behind the fielder.
		5. Any other type of passed ball.
		6. Exceptions:
			1. The only base the overthrow rule applies to is 1st base.
	2. Runner(s) may attempt to take bases on an overthrow. The player(s) are still able to be tagged or forced out until time is called by the umpire.
	3. No bases are awarded to runner(s), they must advance at their own risk.
2. The ball will continue to be “live” until runners are stopped or the play is called dead by the umpire.

## Concluding a Game

1. All coaches and players shall shake hands of all opposing coaches and players.
	1. Any coach or player not able to comply with this rule will be at minimum will be subject the penalties under our Zero Tolerance section.
	2. Any coach not allowing his/her team shake opposing teams’ hands will be subject to the penalties under our Zero Tolerance section.
		1. **This rule will be superseded by the ABA COVID-19 policy until notified by the League Director.**
2. For now, coaches will line teams up on the baseline outside their respective dugout and tip their hats to the opposing team.