

## 2024 Western Wisconsin Baseball League Rules

The Western Wisconsin Baseball League (WWBL) is a league for players in a recreational program, but is considered on par with the "A" level of traveling baseball. The "A" level is defined as: *An intermediate level essentially designed to be a developmental league to provide a competitive experience until they are ready to advance to a higher competitive level.*

The following basic rules and regulations will govern play in the Western Wisconsin Baseball League. Except for the modifications below, the league will follow the National Federation High School League (NFHS) rules. A copy of the High School rules can be found at [www.hudsonboosters.org](http://www.hudsonboosters.org) under the "[Baseball / WWBL](#)" link.

WWBL e-mail address: [wwbleague@yahoo.com](mailto:wwbleague@yahoo.com)

WWBL web page: [www.hudsonboosters.org](http://www.hudsonboosters.org) – "Baseball tab / WWBL tab"

### EQUIPMENT

- Metal spikes are allowed
- Bats - bats with a length/weight ratio of -4 and higher must have either **the 2012 USSSA 1.15 BPF** or **USA Baseball stamp**. Bats with a drop of minus 3 (-3) must have either the BBCOR .50 or **USA Baseball stamp**.
  - Small barrel bats (2 1/4" barrel) ..... Unlimited length/weight ratio
  - Maximum diameter at the thickest part: ... 2 3/4" barrel
  - Maximum length/weight ratio for big barrel bats
    - USSSA and USA bats cannot have a length to weight ratio over -10 for bats with greater than 2 ¼ barrel
  - In length: ..... 36" or less
  - All wooden bats are legal
- Chest Protector: The new NOCSAE stamp on the catcher's chest protector is not required, but highly recommended.

### FIELD DIMENSIONS

- Base lengths 75-80 feet (recommended distance is 80 feet)
- Pitching distances 52-54 feet (recommended distance is 54 feet)

### FIELD LOCATIONS

- Directions to the WWBL fields can be found at: [www.hudsonboosters.org](http://www.hudsonboosters.org) – Baseball / WWBL

### PLAYER ELIGIBILITY

- Each community will decide whether to use age or grade for determining participants in this league
  - Age: Cannot reach 15<sup>th</sup> birthday prior to **Aug 1st** of the current year.
  - Grade: Must be in grade 8 or lower at the beginning of the season.
- Special circumstances can be considered. For example, a home-schooled player who is in the 9<sup>th</sup> grade academically but meets the age criteria can petition the home association. Forward special circumstances to the league administrator.

### USING NON-ROSTERED PLAYERS

- On a single game basis, special circumstances can be used to supplement a team's roster. Coach must contact the other coach to inform them that a supplemental player is needed.
  - Fill in players should not be rostered on a traveling team, but if that is your only option, you must notify the other coach of that fact.
  - Fill in players are not allowed to play in a game if there are 9 available rostered players.
  - Fill in players are not allowed to pitch or catch during the game.
- Non-rostered players will not be allowed during the end of year playoffs.

### GENERAL RULES

- Except for the modifications below, the league will follow the **National Federation High School League** (NFHS) rules.
  - A copy of the High School rules can be found at [www.hudsonboosters.org](http://www.hudsonboosters.org) under the "[Baseball / WWBL](#)" link
  - No new inning can begin **2 hr. 15 min.** after the start of the game
  - Start of game begins when the home team takes the field at the top of the 1<sup>st</sup> inning, not the first pitch.
    - Both teams must agree upon start time.
  - Home team keeps official clock and gives the umpire time updates.
- Time limit for 2 WWBL games scheduled at lighted field
  - Game 1 starts at 5:30
    - No new inning can begin on or after 2 hrs. (7:30)
    - If you are in the middle of an inning when reaching the cut-off limit (2 hrs. after beginning) you are allowed to finish the inning (both top and bottom (if needed))

- Game 2 starts at 7:30
  - Teams should arrive 15 minutes before scheduled start time in case the first game gets over prior to the cutoff time
  - No new inning can begin after the 2-hr. time limit has been reached
  - If you are in the middle of an inning when reaching the cut-off limit (2 ½ hrs. after beginning) you are allowed to finish the inning (both top and bottom (if needed))
  - At umpire's discretion, can play extra innings if score is tied at end of cutoff time.
- Games can be started and played if each team has at least 8 players.
  - If agreed to by the head coaches, players from one team may play defense on the opponent's team so that each team has 9 fielders.
- If the score is tied at the end of the game (7 innings or Time Limit)
  - Extra innings will be allowed based on weather conditions and sunlight. (Umpire's decision) Do not risk injury due to darkness.
- The 10-run rule will take effect after 4 ½ innings if the home team is ahead, and after 5 or more complete innings if the visiting team is ahead.
- If the game is called for any reason after 4 ½ innings and the home team is winning, or 5 complete innings, the game is considered complete.
  - Games called before that time are incomplete games, and will need to be rescheduled unless the coaches agree that it is a complete game.
- If the game is called for any reason in mid-inning, the score will revert to the score at the end of the last completed ½ inning.
  - Exception: If the home team has scored enough runs to tie or go ahead in the ½ inning that has been called, the score of the game will be the score when the game was called.
- Hosting team is responsible for providing an umpire.
  - Only one umpire need be scheduled for each game.
- Each team must supply 1 new game ball for each game
- Home team shall keep the official scorebook. It is recommended both teams reconcile their scorebooks after every inning.
  - In case of a dispute, the home team's scorebook will be the one to determine the final score.
- Continuous batting and free substitution will be used. (See pitching restrictions)
  - All rostered players in attendance must be in the batting lineup and play at **least 3 innings in the field.**
    - Playing time exemption will be allowed for shortened games due to weather or the 10-run rule.
    - If a team has more than 14 players on their roster, they may "trim" their roster to 14 players for an individual game.
      - If a non-trimmed player gets injured, you can substitute a trimmed player in that batting position.
      - Players cannot be "trimmed" in consecutive games. (Includes Playoff games)
      - Coach must keep a record of what players were trimmed for each game, and should be available to the opposing coach. (This becomes more important in the play offs)
  - If a player is injured during the game, simply collapse the batting order. There is no automatic out for his batting place in the original lineup. If the player returns, simply reinstate him in the original batting order.
    - If a rostered player is sitting out because of the "trim" rule, insert that player into the batting order for the injured player.
- Batter may advance on a dropped 3<sup>rd</sup> strike if there are less than 2 outs and 1<sup>st</sup> base is not occupied at the time of the pitch.
  - A runner on 1<sup>st</sup> attempting to steal 2<sup>nd</sup> base at time of pitch, 1<sup>st</sup> base is considered occupied.
  - If there are 2 outs, batter may advance whether 1<sup>st</sup> base is occupied or not at the time of the pitch

#### **BASE RUNNING:**

- A player may lead off and steal at any time.
- A runner will be called out for:
  - Running out of the baseline to avoid a tag out
    - Exception for running out of the baseline to avoid contact with a defensive player who does not have possession of the ball and is blocking the direct line to the base.
  - Hurdling over an offensive player unless the player is prone on the ground (kneeling is not prone)
  - Making contact with a fielder coming into a base or home without sliding (No contact, no penalty)
    - Interfering with a defensive player trying to field a hit ball
    - Being hit with a batted ball before a defensive player has a chance to field the ball
    - A head first slide, except when returning to a base or in a rundown play.
- Courtesy runners:
  - The last batted player to be put out will be allowed to run for:
    - The player who will be the catcher in the next defensive half inning.
    - An injured player.

- If the ball goes **out of bounds** (over/behind the fence, behind the backstop, etc.), the runners are awarded 2 bases from the start of the play.
  - If the overthrow is from the infield, all runners will advance 2 bases from the base they occupied when the ball was hit.
    - (e.g.) Runner on 1<sup>st</sup> base, ball hit to the SS. SS throws the ball over the 1<sup>st</sup> baseman's head and it goes out of bounds. Runner on 1<sup>st</sup> is awarded 3<sup>rd</sup> base, Batter/runner is awarded 2<sup>nd</sup> base.
  - If the overthrow is from the outfield, runners may advance 2 bases from the last base they occupied when the throw by the outfielder was made. (Start of play).
    - (e.g.) If a runner on 1<sup>st</sup> base has touched 2<sup>nd</sup> base before the throw by the outfielder that goes out of bounds, the runner is awarded Home. If the runner on 1<sup>st</sup> base has not touched 2<sup>nd</sup> base before the throw by the outfielder, the runner is awarded 3<sup>rd</sup> base.

## PITCHING

- A player may pitch a maximum of 4 innings per game and a maximum of 12 innings per week.
  - One pitch in an inning constitutes an inning pitched.
  - Restrictions may be modified for the end of year tournament.
  - Once a player has been removed from pitching, that player may only reenter once as a pitcher in a normal 7-inning game.
- If a game goes into extra innings, pitchers are allowed an extra 2 innings and a single re-entry.
- Between inning pitching restrictions
  - For a pitcher's 1<sup>st</sup> inning, the pitcher is allowed 8 warm-up throws, including the throw to 2<sup>nd</sup> base.
    - For a mid-inning replacement, the pitcher is allowed 8 warm-up throws if they have not pitched previously in the game.
  - Succeeding innings, including re-entry, the pitcher is allowed 5 warm-up throws including the throw to 2<sup>nd</sup> base.
  - If catcher is delayed in getting to warm up the pitcher, have a coach or another player assigned to catch warm ups until the catcher is ready. If a non-catching player is warming up the pitcher, he must be wearing a catcher's mask.
- **Declared Intentional walks are not allowed.**
  - **You may intentionally throw 4 balls to a batter**

## PITCH COUNT

By rule, the WWBL limits pitchers to 4 innings per game. It does not follow the High School pitch count restriction. However, please keep in mind that these are young arms and need to be protected from overuse.

Please use the WIAA (Wisc. Interscholastic Athletic Assn) pitching restrictions for 13 & 14 yr. olds as a guideline as to how many pitches per game that a player is allowed. I understand that some teams may be short of pitchers, but to avoid potential injury, please try to develop more pitchers to help distribute the pitching load.

## WIAA RECOMMENDATION FOR 13 & 14 Yr olds

Pitches per game	Recommended days Rest
Max 95	4
66 +	4
Up to 65	3
Up to 50	2
Up to 35	1
Up to 20	0

[CLICK HERE](#) to see the WIAA Pitch Count Restriction document

## COACHES

- Each coach must be registered by e-mail to the WWBL e-Mail address (wwbleague@yahoo.com)
- Information required for each coach or Team Manager assigned to a team:
  - Team name (Include community e.g.: Hudson Navy)
  - Coach(es) name
  - Coach(es) e-mail(s)
    - team **MUST** have an e-mail contact. If the coach does not have/use e-mail, then another coach or parent on the team should be the designated e-mail contact for that team.
  - Coach(es) Primary phone
- A coach's list will be sent to each coach via e-mail address plus be posted on the WWBL website.

## COACH/PLAYER/SPECTATOR BEHAVIOR

**Coaches, managers, and parents are to set good role models and high standards of conduct for the players. Players will be expected to follow this example by exhibiting good sportsmanship, conduct, and citizenship.**

There is a zero-tolerance policy as it relates to coach, player, or spectator behaving badly.

- Any player, coach or spectator ejected from a game will be removed from the vicinity of the ballpark immediately.
  - Failure to comply with the ejection in a timely manner will result in the game being forfeited.
- Any player or coach ejected during a league game will be immediately suspended for the next played game.
  - The umpire and/or association that ejects a participant must inform the association of the ejected participant and the WWBL Administrator via email at [wwbleague@yahoo.com](mailto:wwbleague@yahoo.com)
  - A hearing may be scheduled with the home association/community to determine the future of the player, coach or spectator that was ejected.
  - The decision on reinstatement back into the league by the home association/community will be upheld by the WWBL Committee.
- A second game ejection will result in suspension from the remainder of the team's regular season and playoff games. Please keep in mind that you are participating in youth baseball. Therefore, unsportsmanlike conduct will NOT be tolerated.

## UMPIRES

- Remember that these are mostly high school kids, and need all the support you can give them. Their job is hard enough without added pressure for coaches, players, and spectators.
  - If you see/hear someone acting badly towards an umpire, it's the coach's job to end this behavior
- Help them out if they misinterpret a rule, even if it means that the call goes against your team. Do not take the attitude that the umpire doesn't know a rule it's not your fault. Take the attitude that you are creating better umpires for the league.
- No coach may stand behind the backstop or make any attempt to influence a strike/ball call by an umpire.
- Any parent behind the backstop that interferes or attempts to influence a strike/ball call must leave that area before the game resumes.

**STANDINGS** (found at the Baseball/WWBL page on the Hudson Booster web site.

- Each team will receive 4 points for a win, 2 points for a tie and 1 point for a loss.
- Teams tied in the standings will be placed by the following precedence:
  1. Head-to-Head competition
  2. Best winning percentage (games won divided by games played)
  3. Least runs allowed head-to-head
  4. Least runs allowed - All games
  5. Best positive run differential in all games played

## REPORTING SCORES

- The **winning team is responsible** for reporting game scores.
  - In the event of a tie, the Home team will report the score.
- Scores should be reported no later than the Saturday of the current week.
- Current standings will be available on the Hudson Booster website ([www.hudsonboosters.org](http://www.hudsonboosters.org)) and be e-mailed to the registered coaches or team contacts.
- To report a score, send an e-mail to: [wwbleague@yahoo.com](mailto:wwbleague@yahoo.com). Include the following information:
  - Game date,
  - Winning team and score
  - Losing team and score e.g. 6/14, Hudson Navy 6, New Richmond Black 5
- Games that are not played will not count for tournament seeding
  - Make every effort to reschedule.
  - Exception for not being used for All Star and Tournament seeding is a game being "Awarded" because of an administrative decision.
    - Awarded game (forfeit) score will be reported as 7-0

## RAIN-OUT OR RESCHEDULE PROCEDURES

- If a field is unplayable due to weather or a game needs to be rescheduled, the home team coach must:
  - Notify the other coach as soon as the decision is made not to play the game. This should be done as soon as possible
  - Home team coach is responsible to work with their association to reschedule the game. Both coaches must agree on a specific date.

## LIGHTNING RULE

- When thunder is heard within 30 seconds of a visible lightning strike, or a cloud-to-ground lightning bolt is seen, the thunderstorm is close enough to strike your location with lightning. Suspend play for 30 minutes and take shelter immediately.
- Any subsequent thunder or lightning after the beginning of the 30-minute count will reset the clock and another 30-minute count should begin.
- If a game cannot resume because of weather, don't even try. Safety is always your first priority and erring on the side of caution is never an error.

## HEAT INDEX RULE from the Wisconsin Interscholastic Athletic Assn (WIAA)

- Games to be cancelled if there is a heat index is higher than 104<sup>0</sup>
- Heat index of 104<sup>0</sup> or less, make sure players are keeping hydrated and doing what they can to keep cool.
- A link to a Heat Index calculator can be found on the WWBL web page
- Home team coach is responsible to determine the Heat Index at their field and relay the game status to the Visiting coach.

## SCHEDULE INFORMATION

### DIVISIONS

The WWBL will have 2 divisions, the American and National which will be used for the All-Star game and the End of Year tournament seeding purposes. Teams will play against teams from both divisions and all games will count towards division standings.

#### American Division

BW Blackhawks  
GC Hilltoppers  
CSCR Thunder  
Hudson Gray  
Hudson Navy  
NR Orange  
RF Blue  
Somerset Red

#### National Division

CSCR Lightning  
Hudson Cardinal  
Hudson Navy-Gray  
NR Black  
NR Silver  
RF Gold  
Somerset Gray

### SCHEDULES

- Each team will be scheduled for 16 games, 8-Home and 8-Visitor
  - An attempt will be made to schedule each team to play twice per week, but because of field or date restrictions that may not be possible.
- If you need to reschedule a game, both coaches must agree on a specific date. Home team will be responsible for field and umpire.
- Home team determined by schedule, not by playing site.
- All games up to the seeding cut-off date will be used for tournament seeding. Games played after that date will count for final Divisional standings.

## WESTERN WISCONSIN BASEBALL LEAGUE ALL STAR GAME

### DATES

- Sat. June 13 - Player Selection by coaches
- Fri. June 21 – All Star Practice at Hudson Town Hall field
- Sat. June 22 – All Star Game at Star Prairie field

### GENERAL

- National and American division teams made up of players from each team in the division.
- Practices will be held at the **Hudson Town Hall Lower field.**
- **Game to be played at 6:00 on the Star Prairie field.**
  - Rain date TBD

## PLAYER SELECTION

- All Star rosters to be 13 players.
- Each team/association can determine how players are selected, but they should be the best (better) players on each team. It should be considered an honor to be selected. Do not want a “random draw”.
  - Both Divisions will supply the following number of players:
    - American Division: 1<sup>st</sup> thru 5<sup>th</sup> teams will send 2 players, 6<sup>th</sup> thru 8<sup>th</sup> place 1 player
    - National Division: 1<sup>st</sup> thru 6<sup>th</sup> teams will send 2 players, 7<sup>th</sup> team 1 player.
- Selected players will:
  - Need to commit to attend this game. If they cannot, then the team must select alternates.
  - Be expected to participate in both a Friday practice and Saturday Game.
    - Friday Practice schedule:
      - American Div. All Stars: 5:30 – 7:00
      - National Div. All Stars: 7:00 – 8:30
- Coach of each team must send the following information to [wwbleague@yahoo.com](mailto:wwbleague@yahoo.com):
  - Team (e.g., River Falls Blue)
  - Players Names
  - Player’s e-mail and phone #
- Information will be sent to Divisional All-Star team coaches so they can contact players about Friday practice and Saturday game.

## COACH SELECTION

- The Head coach of the team in 1<sup>st</sup> place within their division on the Week 4 standings will be assigned to coach the Divisional Team
  - If that coach cannot commit to the game, then the coach of the 2<sup>nd</sup> place (or succeeding places) will be named as Head coach.
- The Assistant coaches will be the coaches of the other teams in the division.
  - Assistant coaches need to contact the Head coach about their intent to help coach.
- **UNIFORMS**
  - Jersey - Each player will receive an All-Star jersey at the Friday practice
  - Hats and Pants – Use their regular team hats and pants

## END OF YEAR PLAYOFFS

### PHILOSOPHY

The end of year tournament philosophy is that this is a “new season” where all teams start with a 0 – 0 record.

### DATES:

- Pool Play starts Mon. July 22<sup>nd</sup> at community fields
- Final 4 Bracket games Sat. July 27<sup>th</sup> at either Star Prairie or Hatfield Park

### FORMAT:

- Format will be Pool Play followed by a Final 4 Championship bracket tournament
  - All teams are guaranteed 2 games.
- **Seeding for the playoffs will be determined based on the league standings at the end of week 7**
  - Top 2 teams in each division at the cut-off date will be seeded in pool play.
  - Filling the rest of the pools will be done to equalize the pools as closely as possible and giving each team a game at their home field.
- The teams with the best records in each pool will advance to bracket play.
- 1<sup>st</sup> – 3<sup>rd</sup> place awards will be awarded from bracket play.

## TOURNAMENT RULES

- Unless otherwise specified, rules will be same as during the regular season.
- All players must have played in at least ½ of the teams WWBL regular season games to be eligible to participate in the end-of-year playoffs
  - Exceptions will be made for players who missed during the season because of injury.
- Tournament games cannot end in a tie.
  - If a tournament game is tied at the end of the 7<sup>th</sup> inning, the following tie-game procedures will be used:
    - The player that who had the last official at-bat for the last out in the previous inning will be placed on 2<sup>nd</sup> base to start each half of the 8<sup>th</sup> inning and each consecutive half-inning needed to complete the game.
- Pitchers are limited to 4 innings per game with one re-entry and no weekly inning count.
  - Pitchers will be allowed 2 extra innings (6 innings total per game) and a single re-entry in the event of a game going into extra innings.
- No new inning may start 2 hours 15 minutes after the start of the game.
  - Time limit exception if the game is tied when the time limit is reached.
- Home team is decided by a flip of a coin before each playoff game.

## TOURNAMENT RESPONSIBILITIES

- Hosting community must supply umpires and field prep for tournament games.
- All disputes must be resolved at the game, there is no protest mechanism.
- Winning team in Pool games must report the game score to wwbleague@yahoo.com **the same night** as the game or **early** the next morning.
  - You can call-in or text your score to 651-442-4438. Leave score on answering machine if not picked up

## POOL PLAY TIE BREAKERS

- Tie breakers ONLY APPLY if teams are tied for 1<sup>st</sup> place at the end of Pool Play.
- If multiple teams are tied at the end of pool play, then the tie breakers may be used to determine pool 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> place, and then re-applied to determine 1<sup>st</sup> place.
- Pool tie breakers in order of precedence:
  1. Head-to-Head game.
  2. Least Total runs allowed in pool play
  3. Most Total runs scored in pool play
  4. Coin flip

### Tie Breaker Example: 3 team pool, all 3 teams have a 1-1 record

Game 1	A=5, B=4	Team A: 1 – 1	Allowed 10 runs in pool play
Game 2	A=3, C=6	Team B: 1 – 1	Allowed 7 runs in pool play
Game 3	B=6, C=2	Team C: 1 – 1	Allowed 9 runs in pool play

- Cannot use “head-to-head” tie breaker, all 3 teams are 1-1

- The “Runs allowed” tie breaker eliminates team A (highest # of runs allowed) and leaves teams B & C

- Re-apply tie breakers and team B is pool 1<sup>st</sup> place due to head-to-head win over team C.

## RAIN OUT RULES

Below are the scenarios when a game gets called because of weather or darkness:

- The game is considered **FINAL** if:
  - 5 or more innings completed and the teams have had the same number of at-bats.
  - 4 ½ innings have been completed and the Home team is ahead at the time the game was called.
  - 5 or more innings have been completed and the teams have not had the same number of at-bats
    - the score will be that of the **LAST COMPLETED INNING** unless the Home team is ahead at the time the game was called.
- The game is considered **POSTPONED** and must be completed if:
  - The game is called before 5 completed innings (or 4 ½ if Home team is ahead at the time the game was called)
    - The postponed game will start with the score at the **LAST COMPLETED ½ INNING**
    - The lineup and pitcher do not have to be the same as when the original game was called.
      - Pitchers will have 4 innings allowed and 1 re-entry in postponed game.
  - 1st rained out game, play Thursday at originally scheduled field
  - 2nd rained out game, play Friday on originally scheduled field
    - In either scenario, If the scheduled field is unavailable, move the game to the other team's field