

**WEBSTER
ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION**

2008

**Baseball Rules
and Regulations**

Major Blue, Gold, and Minor Leagues

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PREFACE

To: WAA Players, Coaches, Parents, and Fans

As we approach the start of another baseball season, the WAA Board of Directors would like to pass on a few comments and reminders to those involved.

First of all, good luck to all the players during the coming season. It is your spirit and enthusiasm which contribute most to a successful season for everyone involved. Second, we would like to remind everyone involved in any WAA activity (including players, head coaches, assistant coaches, parents, and fans) that all of us represent the WAA both here in Webster and in other towns. Good sportsmanship and conduct ensure continued WAA participation in youth baseball activities.

WAA is especially concerned with the following actions. These actions will not be tolerated.

1. Use of vulgarity in speech or gesture. Not only will it result in the player, coach, or fan being ejected from the game, but it will also mean dismissal from the team for the player, head coach, or assistant coach involved in repeated incidents.
2. Bat or helmet throwing. This can result in player ejection from the game as it displays extremely poor sportsmanship and is very unsafe for other participants.
3. Umpire baiting or any abuse by players, coaches or fans. This may result in a player, coach, or fan being ejected from the game, the possible forfeiture of the game by the offending team, or any action the WAA Board deems appropriate.
4. Violence of any kind.

Finally, let us all remember that this is an opportunity for the players to learn how to play baseball and have fun.

OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the Webster Athletic Association Baseball program are to:

1. Foster and maintain high standards in the field of athletics.
2. Teach those participating the fundamentals and skills of baseball.
3. Instill and maintain good sportsmanship at all times.
4. Always work in the best interest of those youth participating.
5. Insure that all youth who register get to participate
6. Structure leagues to avoid dominance by any one team.
7. Expose every player to all aspects of the sport of baseball.
8. Provide training information necessary to meet the program objectives to all
volunteers.
9. Inform all parents of the program objectives and rules.
10. As appropriate, use WAA resources to provide visible community support to
Webster youth through socially responsible community actions.

Expectations for Head Coach and Assistant Coach

1. Uphold objectives of WAA.
2. Remember that the game is for the players.
3. Attend opening coaches meeting.
4. Attend no less than 90% of practices and games.
5. Read and follow baseball rules, both Little League and Webster regulations.
6. Collect necessary fund raising money from players by date specified by fund raising coordinator.
7. Assist in preparing the field for play before the game and repairing the field after the game. [This will keep our fields in excellent condition and prevent many cancelled games due to standing water.]
8. Turn in equipment within two weeks of the end of the season.
9. Turn in ratings within two weeks of the end of the season.
10. Attend post-season coach/commissioner review if held.
11. Start on time and complete the game.
12. Report any violation of WAA rules to the League Commissioner, Player Agent, WAA President, or WAA Conduct Review Committee.

Rule Changes

1. *Clarified pitching rules.*

Section 1: General Rules – Blue, Gold, and 9-10 Year Old Leagues.

- 1.1 These are the general rules of play for the Blue, Gold, and Minor leagues of the Webster Athletic Association Baseball.
- 1.2 Rules of Play as outlined in the Little League Rule Book shall apply except where amended by WAA rules, in which case WAA rules apply. The WAA Board of Directors reserves the right to add, delete, or modify these rules in the interest of good sportsmanship at any time. A copy of these rules will be available to any parent of a participant upon request.
- 1.3 There is a limit of twelve players per team. In exceptional cases a thirteenth player will be allowed.
- 1.4 Player age group changes
 - 1.4.1 A player selected for the Blue league may elect to play in the Gold league to be with a sibling. However, a player selected for the Gold league may not elect to play in the Blue league to be with a sibling. A 10 year old player not selected for the Gold or Blue league may not elect to play in the Gold or Blue league to be with a sibling.
 - 1.4.2 Eleven year olds may elect to play in the Minor (9/10) league.
- NOTE: Post season information: 8 year olds are not eligible to play on the post-season tournament teams. 10 year olds are not eligible to play on the 11-12 yr old post-season tournament teams.
- 1.5 Starting time for all weekday games shall be 6:15 P.M. and for all Saturday games shall be 9:00 A.M., 12:00 P.M., 3:00 P.M., or 6 P.M. unless specifically noted as otherwise on the schedule. A fifteen (15) minute grace period will be allowed. Coaches must make every effort to notify the opposing head coach within 24 hours of the starting time of a game regarding any issues with attendance so the game can be rescheduled. Any team that is not at the field and ready to play at the end of the grace period may forfeit the game at the discretion of the league commissioner.
- 1.6 Per Little League rules, a minimum of nine (9) players will be necessary to constitute an official team to play a game.
- 1.7 Make - up games
 - 1.7.1 Make-up games should be played on available WAA fields within two (2) weeks of the scheduled date. The home team is responsible for obtaining the umpire for the make -up game, contacting the originally

scheduled umpire first. If the head coaches can't agree on the time for the make-up game, the League Commissioner will set the time.

- 1.7.2 If one head coach refuses to schedule a make-up game the opposing head coach will notify the League Commissioner. Upon confirmation, by the commissioner with the team refusing to play, two points will be awarded to the team willing to play.
- 1.7.3 Sunday make-up games (or practices) can not start before noon.
- 1.8 Pre-game practice for each team is limited to ten (10) minutes for each team during the thirty (30) minutes preceding the official starting time of the game. Visiting team has the field for the first ten minutes (for example: 5:45-5:55 P.M.) and the home team has the field for the next ten minutes. This leaves ten minutes for pre-game meetings with the umpire. This rule must be strictly followed if we are to minimize games called by darkness.
- 1.9 The umpire may call for the "high visibility baseball" to be put in play at any time during the game he deems it necessary. That type of baseball will be used for the remainder of the game. No inning shall start after the game is in progress for two hours and fifteen minutes. The two hour and fifteen minute limit also applies to weekend games. Note: During the weekdays no inning shall start after 8:30 even if the game has not progressed 2 hours and fifteen minutes. Furthermore, no inning shall start unless the umpire-in-charge feels there is enough daylight to have a reasonable chance of completing a full inning. If the umpire-in-charge decides, after starting an inning, that it is too dark to continue play, the game shall be called and the score shall revert to the previous full inning. During the regular season and play-offs, complete games must be four (4) innings (or three and one-half (3 and 1/2) innings if the home team is ahead). Suspended games must be resumed from the point of suspension according to Little League rules. Details of the game should be recorded (i.e. score, runners, count, etc.). Note: All pitching rules still apply. On resumption of the game the pitchers must be back on the mound or they can't pitch again in the game.
 - 1.9.1 Tie Games – In the event of a tie game, any number of extra innings **must** be played as long as there is enough light, the game has been underway for less than 2 hours and 15 minutes, and it is not later than 8:30 P.M. during the weekdays. Be sure to refer to pitching rules for extra inning games.
- 1.10 Recurrent absences from games or practices must be reported to the league commissioner. The league commissioner, after reviewing the problem with the parents, may remove a player from a team for the balance of the season.

- 1.10.1 Any player not present at the start of the game (first pitch thrown) only has to play one inning in the field, at the discretion of the head coach. No excuse will be accepted. They still must be added to the batting order (end of the lineup) as soon as they arrive at the game.
- 1.11 The umpire and head coaches shall designate the dead ball area prior to the start of the game. Exception: At Empire fields all balls remaining inside the fence will be in play. NO ONE is permitted behind the backstop during play.
- 1.12 Vocal encouragement of a positive nature is encouraged. Negative remarks are prohibited. This includes all noise that is by its nature disruptive to the opposing players. Head coaches are responsible for the behavior of their players and fans.
- 1.13 The game shall be under the control of one or more assigned umpires. The umpire-in-charge, the ball and strike umpire will be furnished by the WAA. The home team should furnish the base umpire (9/10 and 11/12 Gold – in 11/12 Blue WAA will supply both umpires). If necessary, the base umpire may be furnished by the visiting team. If players, coaches, or fans display poor sportsmanship, the opposing head coach and assistant coaches are expected to assist the umpire in restoring order and proper conduct to the game.
- NOTE: If at least one assigned umpire is not present when the game is scheduled to begin, the managers of both teams have the option to cancel the game and replay it at a later date, or to use an adult to call balls and strikes from behind the pitcher. The adult calling the plate should not call bases at the same time. The adult calling the plate should continue for the whole game unless the scheduled umpire or another WAA umpire arrives at the game. If both head coaches do not agree to a volunteer, then the game shall be canceled and rescheduled.
- 1.14 Time is out only when an umpire designates it. In situations where it is unclear if time was out, it will be the sole judgment of the umpire as to whether time was in or out.
- 1.15 Both teams will have access to both bags of WAA equipment as well as equipment stored in the equipment boxes.
- 1.16 Personal Bats - Any player may use their own personal bat (or other personal equipment) in a WAA game provided it is approved by the league's rules. If a player chooses to use their own bat, the head coaches should inform the player that the WAA cannot be responsible for any damage and will not replace it if it is broken. For this reason, the WAA no longer requires a player to make their own personal bat available to other players.

NOTE: It is the player's responsibility to insure no one else on either team uses their bat if that is their decision. Neither the WAA nor any head coach or player shall be obligated for a damaged bat no matter how it occurs.

- 1.17 No metal spikes will be allowed. All other forms of rubber or plastic spikes and cleats are permissible.
- 1.18 It is strongly recommended that players, head coaches, and assistant coaches wear the WAA provided shirts and hats. All members of a team should have the same shirt and/or hat. The shirts shall be tucked in the pants and the hats shall be worn correctly (brim forward). The Little League rule prohibiting a player from wearing a white or gray undershirt does not apply. Players may not wear watches, rings, earrings, necklaces, or any other jewelry.
- 1.19 Head coaches and assistant coaches shall instruct the players in the proper care of all equipment, especially with regard to bats, helmets, and catcher's gear.
- 1.20 Each team must provide one (1) new baseball to the umpire before the start of the game
- 1.21 Records of all games must be kept in the scorebook and said records must be available for inspection by parents and the WAA Board of Directors.
- 1.22 The umpire shall sign both teams' scorebooks. In the event of protest, he is to enter and initial his version of play in both scorebooks before the next pitch. Any umpire's decision which involves judgment, such as, but not limited to, whether a batted ball is fair or foul, whether a pitch is a strike or a ball, or whether a runner is safe or out, is final. No player, head coach, assistant coach, substitute, or spectator shall object to any such judgment decision. There is no protest allowed of an umpire's judgment call.
- 1.23 Minor league and Gold league: Head coaches and assistant coaches shall ensure that all players will sit on the bench no more than one (1) inning per game unless the game goes into extra innings or approval has been given by the league commissioner. An attempt shall be made by the head coach to expose all players to different positions. Every player must play a minimum of two (2) FULL innings at an infield position (first base, second base, shortstop, third base, pitcher, or catcher) per six (6)-inning game and one (1) FULL inning in the outfield. In this case, a single pitch DOES NOT constitute a full inning.

Blue league: Head coaches and assistant coaches shall ensure that all players play a defensive position for a minimum of four full innings of a six-inning game. No player will sit on the bench more than two innings per game. Every player will play a minimum of one full inning at an infield position (first base, second base, shortstop, third base, pitcher, or catcher) per game.

- 1.24 Minor league and Gold league: Defensively, ten (10) players are allowed on the field. The four outfielders must play a minimum of twenty-five (25) feet beyond the baselines until the ball is hit. The extra outfielder will be the tenth defensive player.

Blue league: Defensively, nine players are allowed on the field.

- 1.25 Free defensive substitution will be permitted on a per inning basis. Once a player takes the field defensively, the player cannot be removed except for injury. This rule does not apply to pitchers. It is permissible to change defensive positions of the players on the field during an inning, keeping in mind the position requirements in WAA rule 1.23.
- 1.26 The head coach will verify that all male catchers wear a cup. Every male catcher must wear a cup. The game will be canceled and replayed if a male catcher does not have a cup. **NO EXCEPTIONS!!**

NOTE: The WAA does not intend to provide every male catcher with a cup any more that it expects to provide a glove to every player. Therefore:

- a. Each male catcher must provide his own personal cup, and in fact, the WAA recommends every player have a cup.
- b. Each team may obtain a cup for emergency use from their league commissioner, in the event a male catcher forgets his own cup.

1.26.1 Catchers must wear the catcher's mask when warming up the pitcher. Male catchers must also wear a cup for warm up.

- 1.27 The WAA recommends that players who wear glasses should have safety glasses or safety goggles.

1.28 Pitching Rules:

1.28.1 Blue League following Little League pitching rules. Blue league coaches must keep a pitching record (date, pitcher, innings pitched) that can be viewed by opposing coaches and league officials at any time. Although Blue league coaches are not required to keep track of non-WAA league innings pitched, they are encouraged to consider non-WAA innings pitched and plan accordingly. Player safety and long-term skills development are the primary goals.

1.28.2 Gold league and Minor league: In addition to the Little League rules on pitching, no player may pitch more than three (3) league innings per

game, and the innings must be consecutive (see 1.28.3). The pitcher on the mound at the end of a tied regulation game may pitch a fourth consecutive inning. Pitchers must follow pitch counts, days and games of rest, and position restrictions as per Little League rules. 1.28.2 does not apply to the Blue league.

- 1.28.3 Once the pitcher is removed from the mound during the game, this player may not return to the mound during the game. The player may continue to play in the game at any other position.
- 1.28.4 If a pitcher should hit three (3) batters during the course of a game, that pitcher must be removed from the mound at that point. This player may continue to play in the game at any other position, but cannot pitch again in that game even for extra innings in the event of a tie.
- 1.28.5 A pitcher pitching any portion of an inning, even a single pitch, shall be considered as having pitched a full inning.
- 1.28.6 Pitchers are allowed up to eight (8) warm-up pitches when entering the game and between innings from the mound.
- 1.28.7 Gold league and 9-10 league strike zone - will be from the top of the shoulders to the bottom of the knees when the batter takes a natural stance.

Blue league strike zone – Per LL rules, will be from the armpits to the top of the knees when the batter takes a natural stance.
- 1.28.8 Failure to follow all rules may result in forfeiture.
- 1.28.9 For Minor league only: If a total of four (4) batters are walked or hit by a pitch in any inning, an adult selected by batting team will be brought in to pitch overhand. When the adult is pitching, no balls will be called, only strikes (called or swinging). The adult will pitch from the forty-six foot distance. The adult will attempt to pitch like an “average” Minor pitcher. The adult should not simply “lob” the ball to the batters. The player pitcher will field the position. The adult will pitch for the remainder of that inning. The player pitcher may resume pitching the following inning provided this pitcher has not hit three (3) batters or has not already pitched three (3) innings. The adult pitcher is considered part of the playing field and a batted ball striking the adult pitcher is in play.
- 1.28.10 For Gold league only: Twelve year olds are allowed to pitch.

- 1.29 For the Gold league and Minor league: On a batted ball, once the pitcher or catcher has the ball and play has stopped, all runners must advance or return

- immediately to the base. Otherwise, the umpire will call time and return all runners to their bases.
- 1.30 All players present shall bat. The batting order shall consist of all starting players and reserves present at the start of the game. If a player arrives after the start of the game, the player will be placed at the end of the batting order.
 - 1.31 If a player is injured and can't come to bat or continue to bat, their turn at bat will be passed without penalty. All balls and strikes for that batter will be eliminated. The next batter in the order will assume their time at bat. If the injury is the result of being hit by a pitch, which has entitled the batter to first base, the rule for pinch runners will apply.
 - 1.32 A pinch runner may be substituted for an injured runner. The selection of the pinch runner must be the player who is the last previous batter in the order who is not currently on base.
 - 1.33 Any injured player who has been removed from the game may return and assume their original place in the batting order. Any player injured prior to the start of the game must be included in the original batting order to allow for potential return/entry to the game.
 - 1.34 Running helmets are not allowed. The batter and all base runners are required to wear batting helmets.
 - 1.35 Length of an inning - The number of runs any team may score in an inning is limited to seven (7) for the Blue league and five (5) for the Gold league and Minor league, except for the last inning. There is no run limit for the last inning. In any inning, when the seventh (Blue) or fifth (Gold and Minor) run has scored the umpire will stop play and declare the inning over. No further runners may cross home plate and score. There is no "10 run mercy rule." If the game is shortened by darkness the last inning must be decided by agreement of the umpire and both head coaches before the start of that inning.
 - 1.36 There must not be a batter who comes out of the dugout or team area to an "on-deck" position. There are to be **NO "on-deck batters"** in these leagues. Batters may only take practice swings in the vicinity of home plate just prior to or during their turn at bat.
 - 1.37 Bunting will be allowed. REMINDER: A batter is out if he/she bunts the ball foul on the third strike.
 - 1.38 Sliding is allowed. However, sliding head first is not allowed when a runner is advancing to a base. Penalty for sliding head first into a forward base: runner is out. It is permissible to return to a base headfirst. When a fielder is at a base with the ball waiting to make a tag, the runner must attempt to avoid contact when

trying to reach the base. There is no mandatory sliding rule. The runner must attempt to avoid contact but does not have to slide.

1.39 For Minor league only: One head coach or assistant coach from the defensive team will be allowed in the outfield to instruct the defensive players. This coach must be a minimum of 10 feet beyond the base lines. Instruction can take place at any time before, during, or after the play is completed. This can be done during games played before June 1. Games scheduled before June 1 but made up after June 1 will not have the defensive coach on the field. Any batted ball hitting the defensive coach will be declared a ground rule double.

1.40 For Blue league and Gold league: Stealing as described in the LL Rulebook will be allowed. Runners may not leave base until pitched ball has crossed home plate. If any runner on any base leaves early, the Little League rule 7.13 will be used. No runner is called out for leaving early, but can be tagged out while attempting to advance. Stealing of home is permitted.

For Minor league only: Stealing will be allowed beginning on the date of fifth (5th) scheduled game. Runners may not leave base (lead) until pitched ball has crossed home plate. If any runner on any base leaves early, the Little League rule 7.13 will be used. No runner is called out for leaving early. Players can steal any base except home. Players may steal on a passed ball only – passed ball defined as when the pitched ball goes behind the umpire. Dead ball rule applies if it is not a passed ball. If there is an overthrow while a runner is stealing, the runner cannot advance to another base and neither can a second runner steal. If a runner incorrectly advances an extra base he/she is returned to the last legally obtained base without the chance of being put out. If a runner is tagged while off base, even during a prohibited steal on an overthrow, the runner is out. If an adult is pitching no stealing will be allowed.

Approved rulings for Minor league only:

Example 1: Runner on 1st base steals on passed ball, catcher overthrows 2nd and runner advances to 3rd base. Ruling: Runner is returned to 2nd base – no advance on an overthrow.

Example 2: Runner on 2nd base steals on passed ball, catcher overthrows 3rd and runner advances home. Ruling: Runner returned to 3rd base.

Example 3: Runners on 1st and 3rd, pitched ball passes umpire. Runner on 1st advances to 2nd, ball is overthrown at 2nd and runner on 3rd goes home. Ruling: Runner who went home is returned to 3rd base – can never steal home in this league. If the runner on 2nd had advanced to 3rd he/she is returned to 2nd.

Example 4: Runner on 1st steals 2nd and overruns or slides over 2nd losing contact with the base. Throw to 2nd is overthrown then returned to 2nd in time

to tag runner before runner reaches base. Ruling: Runner is out. This is not an inadvertent advance to 3rd with free passage back.

Example 5: Runner on 1st (or 2nd) steals on passed ball. Runner tags 2nd (or 3rd) and continues to next base as throw arrives. Fielder throws ball to 3rd (or home) and runner is tagged out. Ruling: Runner is out. An excuse of inadvertent advance on overthrow won't work. Runner was off a base while ball was in play and can be tagged out. Note, had the runner safely reached 3rd (or home) they would be sent back. Also, had the ball been overthrown and then runner thrown out, runner would be out.

- 1.41 For Minor league only: The infield fly rule shall not be enforced. An infield fly shall be treated as a regularly hit ball.
- 1.42 For Blue and Gold leagues: The infield fly rule is to be enforced. For clarification, this rule states that if runners are on first and second or first, second, and third, with less than two outs, the batter will be out if a routine fly ball is hit in the infield. Runners can advance at their own risk.
- 1.43 On a fenced field, any ball hit over the fence in the air shall be ruled a home run. A ball hit past the fence on the ground shall be ruled a double. If a home run fence does not exist on the playing field, then it is all the batter can get on a batted ball.
- 1.44 There **must** be a base coach at both first and third base before the first pitch of an inning. A player or adult coach may coach first and third base. An adult coach may also assist a player who is coaching first or third base. Players must wear a batting helmet while coaching the bases. An adult coach must be in the dugout at all times. Two adult base coaches may be used as long as a third adult coach is in the dugout.
- 1.45 Rules Clarification
- 1.45.1 Dropped Third Strike - a batter is automatically out on a third strike whether or not the catcher catches the ball. However, the ball is still alive, and base runners may advance at their own risk where stealing is allowed, etc.
- 1.45.2 A foul tip is defined as a ball that hits the bat and deflects directly into the catchers glove. A foul tip is a strike and the ball remains live. A foul tip not caught is not a foul tip but a foul ball.
- 1.46 Two (2) visits to the pitching mound, per pitcher per inning, by the head coach or assistant coach are allowed without changing pitchers. At the time of a third visit to the same pitcher; the pitcher must be removed as the pitcher.

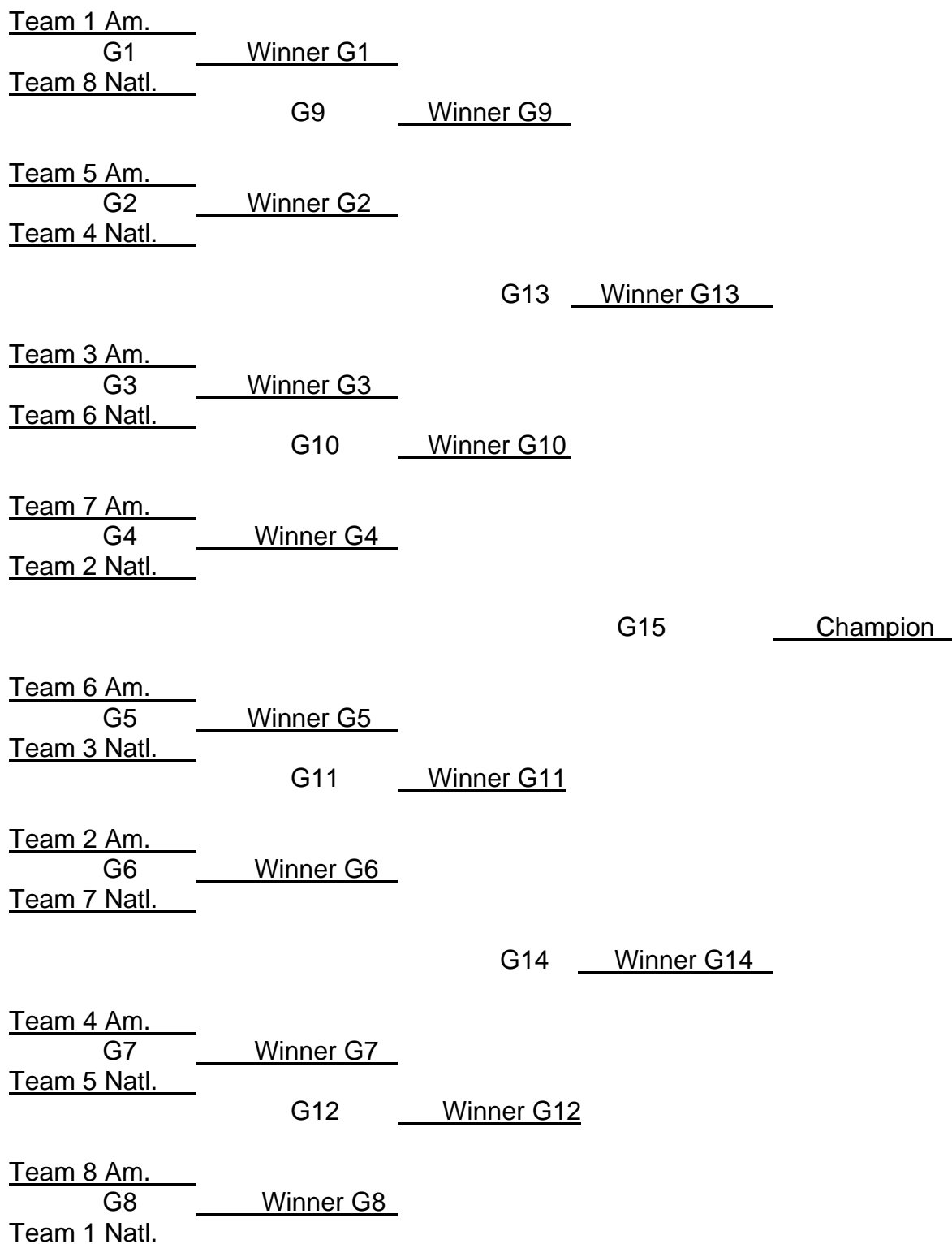
NOTE: The infielder/catcher can also visit the mound at the same time that the head coach or assistant coach is visiting the mound. However, the outfielders will not be permitted to visit the mound.

- 1.47 Lightning/Thunder - If any lightning is seen or thunder heard, the field must be cleared immediately. All people must go to their cars. No one is to remain in the dugouts or on the bleachers. The game must not be resumed until 15 minutes have passed with no lightning being seen or thunder heard. No one should leave the parking lot until the umpire/head coaches postpone the game (wait at least 15 minutes before postponing the game).
- 1.48 If a player unintentionally (due to skill level) throws a bat he/she will be warned two times. On the third occurrence he/she will be removed from the batting order for the balance of the game. The player can continue to play defensively. If a player throws the bat or any equipment intentionally (in anger) the player will be ejected, on the first occurrence, from the game. The incident must be reported to the commissioner. No out will be recorded for either incident of bat throwing.
- 1.49 The umpire and head coaches shall all agree to the correctness of the playing field dimensions prior to the start of the game for games not played at Empire Park.
- Measurements are made as follows:
- a. All measurements from home plate are made from the back tip of the plate where the first and third base foul lines intersect.
 - b. All measurements from second base are from the middle of the base.
 - c. All measurements from first base or third base are from the corner of the base that is the intersection of the foul line side of the base with the outfield side of the base.
 - d. The home team will sit on the first base side during the WAA season.
- 1.50 The umpire and head coaches shall designate the dead ball area prior to the start of the game. Exception: At Empire fields all balls remaining inside the fence will be in play. NO ONE is to position himself or herself behind the backstop during play.

Section 2: Playoff Rules

- 2.1 Because of time restrictions on games and the possibility of tie games, two (2) points will be awarded for wins and one (1) point for ties. The team with the most points at the end of the season will be declared the divisional winner.
- 2.2.1 If two or more teams are tied for first place in a division, then head to head competition records will be used to determine the first place team. If a tie still exists, then the tied teams will be declared co-winners of the division and the playoffs will be expanded to include all tied teams. For purposes of determining the seeding in the playoffs, runs against in head to head competition (least runs allowed winning) will be used to determine the higher seed.
- 2.2.2 If two teams are tied for a playoff position, then head to head competition records will be used to determine the playoff team. If a tie still exists, then the tied teams will play a game to determine the team who will be in the playoffs. If three or more teams are tied for a playoff position, then runs against in head-to-head competition (least runs winning) will be used to determine the playoff position. If there is still a tie between two teams then the two teams will play a game to determine the team who will be in the playoffs. If there is still a tie between three or more teams there will a coin flip to determine the playoff team.
The Top 16 teams in each league (8 from each division) make the play-offs. There will one less regular season game to accommodate the extra play-off game. Crossover games will still take place when the first 8 teams have been eliminated from the play-offs.
- 2.3 The playoffs may be single elimination, double elimination, round robin, or winner – second chance format at the discretion of the league commissioner.
- 2.4 The home team for all games will be the team with the best record (Winning %). If the same %, home team will be decided by a coin flip.
- 2.5 Playoffs must be completed by July 1.
- 2.6 For semi-final and final playoff rounds the league commissioner, Commissioner of Baseball or a WAA board member should be present at the entire game.

2.7 The first/second rounds of the play-offs will be configured in the following manner:



Section 3: Post-Season Tournaments

See post-season tournament section of Blue Gold Proposal