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Melbourne Winter Baseball League (inc.)  
REG.NO. A0014011Y

**PLAYING AND MATCH CONDITIONS  
FOR SENIORS, WOMEN'S AND JUNIOR GAMES**

**SEASON 2024**



## GROUND LOCATIONS - 2024

Bundoora.....	Yulong Reserve, Cnr. Cameron Parade & Bent Street, Bundoora
Croydon.....	Barngcong Reserve, Bamba Street, Croydon North
Diamond Creek.....	Campbell Street Reserve, Diamond Creek
Doncaster.....	Deep Creek Reserve, Warrandyte Road (Near Anderson Creek Road)
Essendon.....	Boeing Reserve, Boeing Road, Strathmore Heights
Footscray.....	Mclvor Reserve, 339b Francis Street, Yarraville
Forest Hill.....	Billabong Park, Weeden Drive, Vermont South
Glen Iris.....	Wadsworth Field, Kooyong Park, Glenferrie Road, Kooyong
GMBC.....	Malcolm Blair Reserve, Karingal Drive, Greensborough
Greensborough.....	Elder Street Reserve, Manfred Street, Watsonia
Heathmont.....	Heathmont Reserve, Waterloo Street, Heathmont
Knox.....	Gilbert Park, Forbes Close, Knoxfield
Latrobe University.....	Charles La Trobe College, Cnr Kingsbury Drive & Wiaora Road, Macleod
Melbourne University.....	Ross Straw Field, Manningham Street, Parkville
Monash University.....	Gladeswood Reserve, Gladeswood Drive, Mulgrave
Mitchell Majors.....	Pinniger Street, Broadford ( Next To Broadford College)
Newport.....	K C White Reserve, Park Crescent, Williamstown
North Balwyn.....	Myrtle Park, Gildan Street, Nth Balwyn
North Coburg Rebels.....	Parker Reserve, Keady Street, North Coburg
North Western Titans.....	MacPherson Park, 783-857 Coburns Road Melton
Northcote Lions.....	Merri Park, St Georges Road, Northcote
Port Melbourne.....	JL Murphy Reserve, Williamstown Road, Port Melbourne
Research.....	Glenauburn Park, Glenauburn Road, Lower Plenty
Ringwood.....	Proclamation Park, Sylvia Grove, Ringwood
St Kilda.....	Tom O'Halloran Field, Albert Park Reserve, Hockey Drive, Albert Park
Sunshine.....	Barclay Reserve, Talmage Street, Albion
Watsonia A, AR, A3, A4.....	Loyola Reserve, Gleeson Drive, Bundoora
Watsonia Other Teams.....	Yulong Reserve, Cnr Cameron Parade & Bent Street, Bundoora
Waverley.....	Napier Park, High Street Road, Glen Waverley
Werribee.....	President's Park, Mcgrath Road, Wyndham Vale
Westgarth.....	Merri Park, St Georges Road, Northcote
Warriors.....	250 Brady Road, Endeavour Hills
Williamstown.....	Greenwich Reserve, The Strand, Newport
Diamond Valley Under 13.....	Mill Park Reserve, Morang Road. Mill Park

## BASEBALL VICTORIA WINTER CARNIVALS FOR 2024 DATES FOR SENIOR & JUNIOR CHAMPIONSHIPS

SENIORS.....	Geelong.....	8 – 10 June
UNDER 18.....	Wangaratta.....	6 -8 July
UNDER 14.....	Bendigo.....	29 – 30 June
UNDER 12.....	Werribee.....	20 – 21 July
UNDER 16.....	Morwell.....	13 – 14 July

# MELBOURNE WINTER BASEBALL LEAGUE INC. LEAGUE OFFICIALS & CLUB SECRETARIES – 2024 SEASON

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**MELBOURNE WINTER BASEBALL LEAGUE INC (MWBL)**  
**FORMERLY VICTORIAN WINTER BASEBALL LEAGUE**

**SENIORS, WOMEN'S & JUNIOR PLAYING AND MATCH CONDITIONS UPDATED 2024**

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**NOTES: 1. The MWBL reserves the right to amend these match conditions in accordance with the current Victorian State Government covid virus guide lines**

**2. 'Seniors' - means any men's or women's competition**

**'Juniors' - means any junior competition or any player under 18 years of age**

**1. AGE LIMIT - Seniors:**

No player under the age of 14 years shall be permitted to play Senior Men's baseball.

No Player under the age of 13 years shall be permitted to play Senior Women's baseball.

Penalty of \$50.00 fine and loss of match points, further penalties may apply as determined by the MWBL Pennant

Committee All players under the age of 18 will be deemed a junior player – as defined by Baseball Australia

**AGE LIMIT - Juniors - AGE QUALIFICATION:** REFER to Junior Match Conditions.

**2. BASEBALLS - Seniors:**

A, B, C, grades, min 2 new balls, leather, waterproof and same make of Approved Winter Baseballs. All other grades, min 1 new ball and 1 in good condition leather, waterproof and same make of Approved Winter Baseballs. The Home team is to provide match balls and have sufficient reserve balls in match condition to enable the game to continue without undue delay. The Umpire shall be sole judge of fitness of ball for play. Failure to supply correct match balls shall incur a \$10.00 fine and the match shall continue.

**NOTE:** If appropriate ground conditions allow - non waterproof baseballs may be used BUT both teams are to agree to the ball change prior to the game and not at the plate meeting. If one team does not agree to the ball change then waterproof baseballs to be used as per above.

**BASEBALLS: - Juniors**

Baseballs used in any match shall be of same make, specified size, waterproof, approved baseballs in good condition.

**BALL TYPES:** U11/Rookie Ball Approved 9" Reduced Injury Ball

U13 Minor .....Approved same type Waterproof Leather Baseballs or Approved 9" Reduced Injury Ball.

Reduced Injury Ball to be used only with prior approval of Junior League Chairperson

U13 Major, U15 & U17 - Approved same type Waterproof Leather Baseballs

**3. BASEBALL BATS - Seniors**

Baseball bats for all senior MEN'S GRADES must be wood or wood composite / laminated as approved by the Baseball Australia. Baseball bats for all senior WOMEN'S GRADES must be wood or wood composite / laminate and aluminium bats may be used and must conform with the Rule of Baseball 3.02.

**BASEBALL BATS - Juniors**

**7 to 12 years old**

USA Baseball marking 2-5/8 barrel maximum bat

The bat must be a baseball bat, which meets Little League specifications, and standards as noted in this rule. It shall be a smooth, rounded stick and made of wood or of material and colour tested and proved acceptable to Little League standards. Little League (Majors) and below:

**EXCEPTION:** Little League (Majors) and below, for regular season play and Tournament, composite barrel bats are prohibited unless approved by Little League International. A list of approved and licensed composite barrel bats can be found on the Little League website at [www.LittleLeague.org](http://www.LittleLeague.org).

**13 and 14 years old**

USA baseball marking 2-5/8 maximum barrel Or 2-5/8" composite barrel with USA Baseball or BBCOR Marking

The Bat shall not be more than 34 inches in length; nor more than 2-5/8 inches in diameter, and if wood, not less than fifteen-sixteenths (15/16) inches in diameter (7/8 inch for bats less than 30") at its smallest part. All composite barrel bats shall meet the Batted Ball Coefficient of Restitution (BBCOR) performance standard, and such bats shall be so labelled with a silkscreen or other permanent certification mark. The certification mark shall be rectangular, a minimum of a half-inch on each side and located on the barrel of the bat in any contrasting colour.

(NOTE: Solid wooded barrel bats do not require a BPF label.)

Players playing out of age group (with approved dispensation) are restricted to the bat restrictions as listed (ie) a 12 year old playing in the Under 15 grade is permitted to use a bat as per players under 12 years old and under

**15 and 16 years old:**

All aluminium or composite bats must be BBCOR stamped - 2-5/8" maximum barrel diameter – 34" (86.35cm) maximum bat length and if wood, not less than fifteen-sixteenths (15/16) inches in diameter (7/8 inch for bats less than 30") at its smallest part.

The bat shall not weigh, numerically, more than three ounces less than the length of the bat (e.g., a 33-inch long bat cannot weigh less than 30 ounces). All bats not made of a single piece of wood shall meet the Batted Ball Coefficient of Restitution (BBCOR) performance standard, and such bats shall be so labelled with a silkscreen or other permanent certification mark.

The certification mark shall be rectangular, a minimum of a half-inch on each side and located on the barrel of the bat in any contrasting colour. Aluminium/alloy and composite bats shall be marked as to their material makeup being aluminium/alloy or composite. This marking shall be silkscreen or other permanent certification mark, a minimum of one-half-inch on each side and located on the barrel of the bat in any contrasting colour.

Players playing out of age group (with approved dispensation) are restricted to the bat restrictions as listed (ie) a 13 year old playing in the Under 17 grade is permitted to use a bat as per players 13 years old

Under 17 "Division 1" grade will be wood bats as per the senior rules for bats

Any other Under 17 grades to be aluminium or wood bat competitions.

**PENALTY:** If a batter is found to be using an illegal bat, then the batter will be asked to change the bat to an approved bat. If the player refuses to change the bat then the player will be declared out.

#### **4. BASE COACHES - HELMETS:**

All base coaches in **Senior and Junior** matches must wear a helmet at all levels of baseball at all times. Helmets can be skull caps. Junior players are to wear two eared helmets if they are base coaching in both Senior and Junior matches. Junior players must have attained the age of 14 years old to base coach in a senior match.

#### **5. BATTER to REMAIN in BATTERS BOX**

Batter's shall be required to remain in the batter's box unless they make a request for 'time' and the umpire feels that the request is reasonable. Only then shall the umpire grant time out. If no runners are on base, the batter should not be granted time and not permitted to leave the Batter's box unless, in the opinion of the umpire, unusual circumstances exist which make the request a reasonable one.

**NOTE:** For games umpired by a club umpire – the club umpire is to keep in mind what the intent of the rule is (to stop time wasting) and is not to be used in an unreasonable manner to create unnecessary issues during the game.

As per the Rules of Baseball 6.02

The batter shall keep at least one foot in the batter's box throughout the batter's time at bat, unless one of the following exceptions applies, in which case the batter may leave the batter's box but not the dirt area surrounding home plate:

- (i) The batter swings at a pitch;
- (ii) The batter is forced out of the batter's box by a pitch;
- (iii) A member of either team requests and is granted time;
- (iv) A defensive player attempts a play on a runner at any base;
- (v) The batter feints a bunt;
- (vi) A wild pitch or passed ball occurs;
- (vii) The pitcher leaves the dirt area of the pitching mound after receiving the ball; or
- (viii) The catcher leaves the catcher's box to give defensive signals.

#### **6. BATTING HELMETS - Seniors:**

All batters and runners **MUST** wear helmets. Any player refusing to do so will be declared out. Any runner deliberately discarding or carrying a helmet will be declared out. It is **COMPULSORY** for all batters and runners to wear **DOUBLE-EARED** helmets

#### **BATTING HELMETS - Juniors:**

- (a) Double-eared batting helmets **MUST** be worn by all players during their time at bat and for the entire duration of their time on the base paths in all matches. Batting helmets must have double ear guards.
- (b) It is recommended that all persons of the batting team, (i.e.) batters, on-deck batter, base runners, base coaches and bat-persons wear a batting helmet, as required above, during each offensive half innings. Any runner deliberately discarding or carrying a helmet will be warned once and then will be declared out for a second offence.
- (c) Before the start of every game, the Umpire-in-Chief should inspect both teams' helmets, and not permit the use of any helmet which, in his opinion, is either unsafe, or does not comply with the above requirements. Should a batter appear at the plate without a helmet, the Umpire shall call **TIME** and instruct the defaulting player to obtain a helmet before they will be allowed to take their time at bat.

#### **7. BEHAVIOUR OF PLAYERS, COACHES, OFFICIALS AND SPECTATORS:**

Players and Officials are required to:

Abide by the MWBL "Code of Conduct" and all other Rules, By-Laws and Statement of Purposes and Match Conditions that shall be binding on all members of the Melbourne Winter Baseball League Inc. For information, please refer to MWBL Code of Conduct – Players and Officials for details **IN PARTICULAR**

Good relationships must be fostered between clubs and their teams before, during and particularly after games. The authority and decisions of the Umpire must be respected. Abuse and intimidating language and tactics must not be directed to any Umpire by any person.

The Coach of each team must insist that his/her players behave in a sportsmanlike manner, especially towards members of the opposing team, at all times. The use of intemperate or unseemly language by players or coaches is absolutely forbidden. Spectators should not only support their own team, but show appreciation of good play by the .



opposition, and never barrack against or belittle their opponents.

Club representatives of each team, including coaches and managers, are required to draw the attention of their spectators or own players to the above conditions, regarding behaviour, if these conditions are being disregarded.

**8. BENCH AREAS (Dugouts) - Senior & Junior Matches:**

Clubs are required to provide bench areas for both the home and away teams of a similar standard. Failure to do so will result in an appearance before the MWBL Executive and a penalty may be applied by the MWBL Executive. All benches are to have protection screens in front – either permanent or temporary to protect the players from stray balls. Failure to comply will result in loss of 2 match points for first offence and after second offence games will not be scheduled at that ground until protection is provided to the satisfaction of the Pennant Committee.

**9. BEST PLAYER VOTES - SENIORS**

In all grades the Plate Umpire shall award votes for the best player on the basis of 3 votes for the best player, 2 votes for the second best player, 1 vote for the third best player and noted on the match card. Any player suspended for an offence by the Tribunal shall be ineligible to win a Best Player Award.

**10a. BYES – Senior**

When a senior team has a bye – any player of the team having the bye that played in the previous round shall NOT be permitted to play in a lower graded team for that round. In round 2 any player that played in a lower graded team in round 1, shall NOT play in a higher graded team that had a bye in round 1.

**10b. FORFEITED GAME:**

If either team has less than the required regulation team of seven players in attendance at the scheduled starting time, the defaulting team will be given TEN MINUTES grace in which to find the required number of players. If after ten minutes a team is unable to find seven players the match will be forfeited to their opponent and a score of nil runs to nine will be recorded against them. The team winning by default will be credited with a score of nine runs to nil. Should both teams be at fault the Umpire will declare a “NO GAME” and both teams will have a score of nil runs to nine debited against them. For forfeiting a match or conceding a walk-over a fine will be imposed, plus any other penalty the MWBL may decide.

**10c. FORFEITS/ WALKOVERS:**

**Prior to game day:**

Clubs giving a walkover prior to game day are required to forfeit the clubs lowest grade team and to notify the opposing club and the League Administrator as soon as possible.

Penalty for teams giving the walkover prior to game day:

Senior Team - \$50 fine and no match points. Junior Team - \$30 fine and no match points

Clubs that do not forfeit the lowest grade team will be fined as above and also two match points will be deducted from all teams below the grade that forfeited.

Walkovers will be scrutinized by the Pennant Committee and clubs found to not have followed protocol may have a further penalty applied at the discretion of the Pennant Committee

**At the ground on game day:**

The team giving a walkover must report on the match card the names of the players in attendance.

The team receiving the forfeit must record on the card not less than 7 players.

Players named on the match card are ineligible to play in another match of the same round.

Penalty for teams giving the walkover on game day:

Senior Team - \$50 fine plus appointed umpires fees (if in attendance) and no match points.

Junior Team - \$30 fine plus appointed umpires fees (if in attendance) and no match points

**11. CATCH AND CARRY RULE:**

To clarify the legality of catches made next to the Dead Ball Line (DBL), on open grounds the following interpretation is to be used.

1. For a catch to be legal any part of the fielder's body must be inside the DBL.  
If part of the fielder's body over the DBL is in the air at the time of the catch, the catch is still legal.
2. If the catch is taken in Live Ball Territory (LBT) and the fielder's momentum carries him over the DBL line the catch is legal and the ball is dead and any base runner's will advance one base. If a fielder's momentum carries him into DBT there can be no spectator interference. The fielder enters the DBT at their own risk.

**12. CATCHERS – Senior & Junior:**

All catchers **MUST** wear helmets or combined mask/helmet combination.

**All players warming up pitchers MUST wear masks.**

**CATCHER'S HELMETS, MASKS or FULL MASK/HELMET COMBINATION TO BE USED:**

It is compulsory for junior catchers to wear helmet, mask, throat guard, chest plate and leggings when catching.

Catchers, coaches, parents and other junior players will wear catcher's helmet, mask, and throat guard when warming up pitchers.

Senior players participating in a senior game must wear catchers mask as a minimum standard when warming up pitcher.



### **13a. CLEARANCES – Seniors and Juniors:**

#### **Refer to MWBL Rules and By-Laws**

Clearances close on 30th June for players registered within Victoria for the MWBL and/or other competing Winter baseball leagues/Associations.

All correct clearance paperwork must be lodged with the MWBL Administrator prior to this date.

For all other circumstances, please refer to the MWBL Rules & By-Laws.

### **13b. REGISTRATION OF PLAYERS – Refer to MWBL Rules & By-Laws (Rule 15)**

### **14. COLLISIONS AT HOME PLATE**

A runner attempting to score may not deviate from their direct pathway to the plate in order to initiate contact with the Catcher (or other player covering home plate). If, in the judgment of the Umpire, a runner attempting to score initiates contact with the catcher (or other player covering home plate) in such a manner, the Umpire shall declare the runner out (even if the player covering home plate loses possession of the ball). In such circumstances, the Umpire shall call the ball dead and all other base runners shall return to the last base touched at the time of the collision.

Rule 7.13 Comment: The failure by the runner to make an effort to touch the plate, the runner's lowering of the shoulder, or the runner's pushing through with their hands, elbows or arms, would support a determination that the runner deviated from the pathway in order to initiate contact with the catcher in violation of Rule 7.13. If the runner slides into the plate in an appropriate manner, they shall not be adjudged to have violated Rule 7.13. A slide shall be deemed appropriate, in the case of a feet first slide, if the runner's buttocks and legs should hit the ground before contact with the catcher. In the case of a head first slide, a runner shall be deemed to have slid appropriately if their body should hit the ground before contact with the catcher.

Unless the catcher is in possession of the ball, the catcher cannot block the pathway of the runner as they are attempting to score. If, in the judgment of the Umpire, the catcher without possession of the ball blocks the pathway of the runner, the Umpire shall call or signal the runner safe. Notwithstanding the above, it shall not be considered a violation of this Rule 7.13 if the catcher blocks the pathway of the runner in order to field a throw, and the Umpire determines that the catcher could not have fielded the ball without blocking the pathway of the runner and that contact with the runner was unavoidable.

### **15. DEFENSIVE VISITS: (Visits to the Mound) (As per the Rules of Baseball – Rule 8.06)**

- (a) This rule limits the number of trips a manager or coach may make to any one pitcher in any one inning.
- (b) A second trip to the same pitcher in the same inning will cause the pitcher's automatic removal from the mound but can remain in the game.
- (c) The manager or coach is prohibited from making a second visit to the mound while the same batter is at bat; but,
- (d) If a pinch hitter is substituted for the batter, the manager or coach may make a second visit to the mound, but must remove the pitcher. A manager or coach is considered to have concluded a visit to the mound when having left the 18 foot circle surrounding the pitching rubber.

If the manager or coach goes to the catcher or infielder and that player then goes to the mound or the pitcher goes to that player at that player's position before there is an intervening play (a pitch or other play), that will be the same as the manager or coach going to the mound.

Any attempt to evade or circumvent this rule by the manager or coach going to the catcher or an infielder and then that player going to the mound to confer with the pitcher shall constitute a trip to the mound.

**It will remain solely the umpire's judgement as to whether a visit to the mound by an on field manager, coach or player to converse with the pitcher is considered an official pitching visit or as a visit 'in play' and not for coaching purposes.**

If the coach goes to the mound and removes a pitcher and then the manager goes to the mound to talk with the new pitcher, that will constitute one trip to that new pitcher in that inning.

In the case where a manager has made a first trip to the mound and then returns the second time to the mound in the same inning with the same pitcher in the game and the same batter at bat after being warned by the umpire not to return to the mound, then the manager shall be removed from the game and the pitcher is required to pitch to the batter until the batter is retired or gets on base. After the batter is retired, or becomes a base runner, then this pitcher must be removed from the game. The manager should be notified that the pitcher will be removed from the game after pitching to one hitter so a substitute pitcher can be warmed up. The substitute pitcher will be allowed eight warm up pitches or more if, in the umpire's judgement, circumstances justify.

### **16. DESIGNATED HITTER – Seniors only:**

May be used in - A Grade, A Reserve, B Grade, B Reserve, C Grade, C Reserves, A3 Grade, A4 Grade - grades only.

### **17. DESIGNATED PITCHER RULE – Seniors only:**

The principle of the rule is to allow first nine players, who are under 26 years of age and less than top rating as pitchers, to pitch in the Reserves game. This player shall then start in the first nine (late) game on the same day other than as a pitcher. A player who is no longer eligible to play juniors but has not attained the age of 18 may be approved

as a D.P. provided that the player complies with the requirements as set out in these rules. If approved then that player will be restricted to Under 18 pitching rules as laid out in the Match Conditions under the heading of PITCHERS: APPLICABLE TO A RESERVE, B RESERVE, C RESERVE, A4 GRADE - GRADES ONLY.

- (a) A club may use a player, to be the starting pitcher and only pitch in the Reserves game, then play other than as a pitcher in the later first nine game on the same day. This player is known as the Designated Pitcher - DP.
- (b) Before a designated pitcher is allowed to play in any game there must be nine other players present and named on the scoresheet.
- (c) All designated pitchers are to be approved by the Pennant Committee before being used by the club.  
A maximum of **TWO (2)** designated pitchers per club nominated in their higher grade, and ONE (1) for any lower grade where paired teams are graded. This is restricted to C / C Reserves and D / D Reserves only.  
EXCEPTION: A club competing in both A Grade & B Grade will be allowed **TWO** approved DP's in each of these grades.  
AFTER: a player has had 6 starts in the Reserves or 2 starting assignments in a Higher grade or 4 relief assignments in a Higher grade that designated pitchers approval will be revoked by the Pennant Committee.
- (d) In the Reserves game a Designated Hitter shall be used for the DP. The use of a DP shall be declared to the umpire before the game commences. If the DP then plays in the Reserves game other than as a pitcher, or bats, the DP becomes a normal Reserves game player and may not participate in the late game on the same day except by the provisions of the Re-entry Rule.
- (e) On the batting order list and Match Report Card any DP used in the Reserves game shall be marked "DP" and all pitchers in the late game shall be marked "P". Umpires and Managers are to ensure correct recording.
- (f) The Administrator shall keep eligibility of DP's and report any breaches to the Pennant Committee.
- (g) Umpires shall administer this rule as to participating in both Reserves and the late game on the same day.  
An umpire has the right to direct that a DP may not, if in contravention of this rule, participate in either game.
- (h) Penalty for contravention is forfeiture of the game in which such contravention took place.
- (i) Participation in each game shall count as a game played for each grade, for finals eligibility.
- (j) This rule is not available for the finals.

## 18. DISPUTES AND PROTESTS:

### Refer to MWBL Rules & By-Laws.

In the event of any dispute or protest (other than a judgement decision, which may not be disputed) the protest must be lodged at the time of the objection with the umpire who must be given the opportunity to consider the point raised by the manager. Should the Manager decide to continue the protest the umpire shall be advised and before play continues the scorers must endorse both score books, ensuring the following details are marked:

- (i) Position of runners on base
  - (ii) Time of day
  - (iii) Ball and strike count on batter,
  - (iv) Score at time of protest
  - (v) Number of outs
- (a) The Manager of the protesting team shall, at the conclusion of the match, advise the umpire whether the protest is to be proceeded with.  
It is then the responsibility of the protesting Manager to request the umpires to endorse upon the Match Report Card that a protest has been lodged.
  - (b) Notice of the protest must be lodged in writing, be in the hands of the Administrator within forty eight (48) hours of completion of the game and be accompanied by a one hundred dollar (\$100.00) fee, which shall be returned if the Pennant Committee does not consider the protest frivolous.  
The notice of protest shall include reference to the Baseball Rule being protested and full reasons why the protest is being entered.

## 19a. ELIGIBILITY FOR FINALS – Senior

No player shall be eligible to participate in the Senior Final Series for a Club unless the player has played at least six (6) rounds of Competition Matches in the MWBL during the season of finals eligibility. Only senior rounds competed in will count for grading of players in senior grade finals. Junior rounds completed can count towards total number of rounds for senior finals eligibility. But only one senior or junior game on the same weekend will be counted.

A player, coach or manager representing the MWBL senior or junior representative teams will have that representation counted for one (1) round only. Players will be credited with only one (1) representative team selection. Players must be present at all representative matches for their selected team for this round to be counted towards finals eligibility.

**\*\*EXCEPTION\*\*** A player *that has played exactly half the games in different grades* is eligible to play in a lower grade provided that the higher grade/s that the player has played in is also competing in the finals. If the higher grade team is eliminated then the player is still eligible to continue to play in the lower grade provided he/she has played more than half the total games in a lower grade(s) including finals games. If a player goes up in a later final, they cannot come back down unless the higher grade team that the player played in is still competing.

EXAMPLE 1 –

*Player A plays 8 games in A Grade and 9 Games in A Reserve is eligible to play A Grade and A Reserve Finals.*

If Player A plays 1st week final in A Grade he is deemed to have played 9 Games in A Grade and 9 Games in A Reserve. If the A Grade team is eliminated, he cannot return to A Reserve as he has played an even amount of games and the higher graded team has been eliminated.

**EXAMPLE 2 –**

Player A plays **7 Games in C Grade and 9 Games in C Reserve & 1 game in D Grade** is eligible to play in C Grade and C Reserve Finals and above. If Player A plays in C Grade finals and this team is eliminated, he is still eligible to play C Reserve Finals and can return at any point as he will have played more total games in lower grades than C Grade  
After Week 1 – **8 Games in C Grade, 9 Games in C Reserve & 1 game in D grade**  
After Week 2 – **9 Games in C Grade, 9 Games in C Reserve & 1 game in D grade**

**NOTE:** A club can apply for a manager to be granted finals eligibility. The club must ensure the listed manager appears on the line-up sheet presented to the umpire and noted on the match report sheet. The managers name must be indicated to both scorers prior to the commencement of the game and must be noted on both scorebooks. The managers current season and previous season(s) match report sheet notations may be taken into account Should such a dispensation appeal be lodged.

**19b. ELIGIBILITY FOR FINALS – Junior**

For junior grade/s finals, a junior player must play at least 5 rounds of Competition Matches in the MWBL during the season of finals eligibility to be able to compete in junior finals. Refer to Junior Specific Playing and Match Conditions Section for Eligibility for Finals Rules.

**19c. JUNIOR PLAYER REQUIREMENTS FOR A GRADE CLUBS:**

A minimum of 24 registered junior players competing in the current winter season are required per club for the club to be able to participate in the A Grade and A Reserves final series games as well as for consideration for promotion/relegation. Each junior player must play a minimum of 8 games of the seasons games (except T Ball) to be countered as a player

**19d. JUNIOR PLAYER REQUIREMENTS FOR B GRADE CLUBS**

A minimum of 16 registered junior players competing in the current winter season are required per club for the club to be able to participate in the B Grade and B Reserves final series games as well as for consideration for promotion /relegation. Each junior player must play a minimum of 8 games of the seasons games (except T Ball) to be countered as a player

**19e DEFINITION OF A JUNIOR PLAYER:**

All players under the age of 18 will be deemed a junior player – as defined by Baseball Australia

- NOTE:**
1. Clubs with teams competing in both A Grade and B Grade in the same season will be required to field a minimum of 24 junior players to participate in A Grade and/or B Grade Finals
  2. No player will be double counted (i.e.) player plays Under 13 as well as T Ball will only be counted once.
  3. Junior players can play in any age eligible appropriate team for their club or with any other club and includes composite teams with other clubs.
  4. Players in composite teams are permitted to play in their clubs uniform

**20. EXTENDED BATTING LINE-UP (Senior games only)**

Extended batting line-up (15 players maximum) may be used for A3 & A4 Grades, B3 & B4 Grades, C Res, D Grade, D Reserves, EL & EE Grades and Women's Competition. (Not available for A, A Reserves, B, B Reserves, C Grade)  
Any team wishing to use the extended line-up must indicate their intention to do so prior to the start of the game, with the umpire/s and opposition coach/manager in attendance. It is not compulsory for both teams to use this rule. If a player on the extended batting line up does not take their turn at bat for any reason, then that batter is deemed to have been removed from the game and is then removed from the batting line up and can no longer participate in the game, then a blank will be declared which will result in an automatic out for the fielding team. (ie) batting line up is not to be compressed. Bench players who have not participated in the game may take the place of an injured or removed player If teams do not use the extended line-up, then they are bound by the traditional removal of players and bench players coming into the game.

**21. FINALS – Seniors:**

All finals playing formats and games will be determined by the Pennant Committee and will be subject to a separate set of rules. Contingency rules for finals washouts will be as follows –

Week 1 – Semi Finals – All Grades - Saturday Game Day / Sunday in case of Saturday washout.

Highest placed team moves to next round if Week 1 is washed out.

Week 2 – Preliminary Finals – All Grades – Saturday Game Day / Sunday in case of Saturday washout.

Highest placed team moves to next round if Week 2 is washed out.

Week 3 – Grand Finals – All Grades – Saturday Game Day / Sunday in case of Saturday washout.

Week 4 – For Grand Finals – Saturday Game Day / Sunday available if required.

If Week 4 washed out, dual premiers declared

The home team is determined as being the higher placed team after the home and away seasons for weeks 1 & 2, and for the Grand Final, the home team is determined as being the first team to qualify for the Grand Final. The home team will occupy the 3rd base dugout for finals games played at neutral venues. Home teams will occupy their usual dugout at non-neutral venues.

#### **FINALS - Juniors:**

All finals playing formats and games will be determined by the MWBL Pennant Committee and Junior Sub Committees and will be subject to separate set of rules. Please refer to Junior Section of MWBL Match Conditions for more information. No contingency rules are in place for junior finals other than for the Grand Final.

#### **21a. Finals Venues for Seniors and Juniors.**

All venues for senior and junior finals games will be decided by the pennant committee taking into account current ground conditions, grounds that cope better with wet conditions, grounds with playing lights and use of grounds outside of the MWBL club's grounds.

The pennant committee will decide that games be played at certain venues with better ground conditions, grounds with lights or better seeing grounds for double header games so that clubs with teams competing in two adjacent grades (i.e. A3 & A4) can take advantage of player re-entry and a more efficient use of umpires for finals games. The pennant committee will also take into account club's grounds general conditions and amenities that may make some grounds unsuitable for finals (i.e.) playing surface – infield and outfield, home run fence, batting warm up area, dugouts, suitable change areas/showers/toilets, canteen facility, spectator areas, sufficient car parking. This means that games may not be scheduled at home grounds of teams that finished first or third for semifinals or home teams for preliminary or grand finals and may be scheduled at grounds of teams that finished second or fourth or at neutral grounds.

#### **22a. LENGTH / STARTING / REGULATION / FINISH OF GAMES – For Senior Games**

All grades – 2 hours or 9 innings with 5 minute rule - 10 run rule after 7 innings (For Juniors refer to age specific Match Conditions) If time permits extra innings can be played

#### **22b. STARTING TIME OF GAMES:**

**Early Games** – 12:15pm, unless otherwise stated.

**Single Games** – Scheduled start time as per the grade fixtures

**Late Game** – Scheduled start time 25 minutes after early game finish but not before the scheduled start time unless agreed to by both managers and umpires and is to remain 2 hour or 9 innings game weather and light permitting.

#### **22c. REGULATION GAME - Seniors:**

A legal minimum game shall consist of 5 innings (4.5 innings if home team ahead) in accordance with Rules of Baseball or not less than 65 minutes play.

##### **Early Game:**

If there is any stoppage after 2.00pm due to bad weather, the game is to be stopped and scores will revert back to equal innings. For night games if there is any stoppage due to bad weather 2 hours after scheduled starting time the game is to be stopped and scores will revert back to equal innings.

##### **Late Game:**

The Second game to commence 25 minutes after completion of the first game but not before the scheduled start time unless agreed to by both managers and umpires. The game will not start unless there is 65 minutes playing time left, the 5 minute rule may apply after 65 minutes, but any stoppage during the 65 minutes and the 5 minute rule will not apply. For night games if there is any stoppage due to bad weather 2 hours after scheduled starting time the game is to be stopped and scores will revert back to equal innings.

#### **22d. Less than Seven Players:**

A team with less than seven players in attendance at a game start time may claim a 10 minute period for additional players to arrive. Play will commence as soon as both teams have seven or more players present.

No extra time will be added to the scheduled finishing time

A team with less than seven players, 10 minutes after schedule starting time will forfeit the game and be fined \$50.00, plus the full umpiring fees for the match when officially appointed umpires are present.

#### **23a. FIVE MINUTE RULE: Late Games and Single Games – Seniors:**

All late games and single games with a scheduled finish time shall be subject to the 'Five Minute Rule'. If, at the completion of even innings from the call of 'side out' and there remains more than five minutes of time before the scheduled completion time a further innings shall be played. If, at five minutes or less before the scheduled time of completion, and with the home team to bat, then:

- If the HOME TEAM is AHEAD – the game ceases immediately

- If the HOME TEAM is BEHIND or the game TIED – game continues until the winning run is scored or side is retired.

### **23b. FIVE MINUTE RULE: Early Games of Double Header**

The 5 minute rule shall apply to all early games of a double header with the following variation.

If the five minute rule applies a maximum of **10 minutes** from the scheduled finish time will be allowed for the completion of the innings which commenced as per criteria listed above.

This extension of time is only applicable to the early game of a double header. The 10 minute time extension will apply to all situations and no time lost during the game will be added on to the extension of play

**EXAMPLE:** A match with a scheduled finish time of 2.15pm will have 10 minutes of allowable time added on should the 5 minute rule be declared by the umpire. At 2.25pm (10 minutes after the scheduled finish time) if there is no result (teams tied) or the innings has not been completed, the match will cease (end of game) and the scores revert back to the last even Innings prior to the 5 minute rule commencing (unless the home team has tied the game at 2.25pm)

**NOTE:** Time is not to be added on to the length of games due to wet weather interruptions, unsafe ground conditions, etc. Games tied at the game time end (after equal innings) shall be recorded as a tied game.

When the extra 10 minutes time has elapsed – umpires are to allow that batter to finish their time at bat or when the next subsequent out is made before ending the game

**When the extra 10 minutes time has elapsed – umpires are to allow that batter to finish their time at bat or when the next subsequent out is made before ending the game**

### **24. FITNESS OF GROUND / ADVERSE WEATHER – Senior & Juniors**

A MWBL appointed umpire will be the sole judge of the fitness to play of any ground.

#### **For the early game**

Where two umpires are appointed at one ground, the senior umpire (late game plate) will decide on the fitness of the ground. Once the umpires have informed both clubs of their decision, this decision will be final.

#### **For the late game**

A team shall be allowed not more than 15 minutes from scheduled starting time to prepare the ground and ground markings to the Before the Umpire will decide on the fitness to play on the ground. In the absence of a MWBL appointed umpire, or a MWBL Official then the Club appointed umpire will be the sole judge of the fitness of the ground for play.

**NOTE 1:** Appointed umpires to remain in attendance for adjudication for the late game if the early game is not played due to unplayable ground conditions

**NOTE 2:** No scheduled match shall be relocated or scheduled for an alternate time without the prior approval of the MWBL Pennant Committee Chairperson or nominee.

**FOR JUNIORS** – if at a centre then the centre manager shall be the sole judge of whether or not at what time games will start or not start at all in the advent of adverse or wet weather conditions. If at club grounds, then the two coaches to get together and judge the game start time or not at all in the event of adverse weather. If the coaches cannot agree then the Umpire in Chief will be the sole judge.

#### **Lightning:**

Players and spectators should note that the risk of injury from lightning is real, especially for people playing outdoors. On game day, the Umpires have the responsibility to decide when it is safe to play baseball, giving the consideration to the risk of injury from lightning. Players, officials and guests must take shelter in the club rooms or their cars while play is suspended. The dugouts do not provide appropriate protection.

### **25. FOOTWEAR:**

**Metal cleats must NOT be worn by any junior player in junior games.**

Umpires can inspect shoes at the start of the game. If a player is found to be wearing metal cleats during the game then the player is to be ejected from the game and / or \$25 fine. Only moulded rubber/plastic stops, plastic cleats, sandshoes, gym boots, sneakers are permitted. Plastic stops are permitted as long as there is no metal protruding through the plastic stops. **NOTE:** Junior players can wear metal cleats in senior games.

### **26. GROUND EQUIPMENT – Seniors and Juniors:**

It is required that back nets must be provided for all games. Pitching mats may be used in all games.

All mounds must have a regulation approved pitching plate affixed to the mound, with a rubber (or similar material) strip in the front of the pitching plate, minimum 400mm in length & minimum width of the pitching plate.

All bases, pitcher's plate and home plate must be whitened at start of game, or be of an acceptable standard.

The bases and pitching plate must be pegged. **PENALTY:** Fine of \$10.00 for each item unpegged.

The home plate must not be fixed or pegged unless flush with the surface.

The Plate Umpire will be the sole judges of fitness and marking of grounds.

**SUPPLY OF BASES, PITCHING PLATE, HOME PLATE ETC:** The home team is to supply ALL bases and other field equipment unless other arrangements have been made.

## **27. HOME RUN FENCE MARSHALS:**

On open grounds, home run markers must be supplied. A white line must be drawn between each foul line to define the home run fence. It is encouraged that home run marshals be provided by each competing team - otherwise the "HONESTY SYSTEM" of outfielders will prevail.

Home run marshals must be provided for finals games – refer to Rules for Finals.

## **28. Blood Rule & Concussion Policy:**

### **28a. BLOOD RULE:**

1. An Umpire shall immediately direct a player to leave the playing field if the player is bleeding or has blood on any part of the uniform or body. The player's name and the time that the player is directed to leave the playing field shall be marked in the scorebook.
2. When the umpire removes a player from the field under this Rule, a reserve player can take his place and field and bat in his place until the removed player is able to return. If he cannot return before the expiry of one complete inning (6 outs from the removal) the reserve player becomes a normal substitute. The umpire's judgement as to whether the removed player is able to return will prevail. He would take into consideration the extent of the injury.
3. In the case where there is no reserve player to take his place, another player who has previously been substituted can run and field in his place and can bat in the replacement batting position of the replaced player, as long as this at bat falls within the allotted 6 outs from the removal of the injured player. Outside of these 6 outs, the replacement player in this instance cannot bat. This would create a blank in the batting order and be an out in the inning. If no reserve is available then a team member is allowed to run only for the removed player as a proxy runner, but the runner must not be in the next 4 batters in the batting order after the batter at the plate.
4. If, ten minutes after the player was directed to leave the field, the player has been unable to stop the bleeding and/or remove or cover the affected uniform area, the player must be replaced in the normal substitution manner.

### **28b. CONCUSSION RULE**

1. A player for any reason suspected of having sustained concussion during a game is to be removed immediately from the game in accordance with the Baseball Victoria – Concussion Policy. The game umpire is to be informed that the player is being removed due to concussion and the player's name and the time that the player is directed to leave the playing field shall be marked in the scorebook.
2. A reserve player can take his/her place and field and bat in his/her place until the removed player has had the recommended concussion test and is able to return to play.
3. If the player cannot return, then the replacement player then becomes a normal substitute and bats and fields in his/her place.
4. A replacement player can be either a reserve player that has not previously played in that game or in the case of no reserve player then another player that has previously been substituted in that game. Any replacement player that has played until the player removed has been cleared to be able return to play following a concussion test can then return to the bench and is now a legal reserve player and can re-enter the game as a normal substitute player.

## **29. JEWELLERY:**

- (a) Exposed jewellery such as wrist watches, bracelets and types of earrings, neck chains, or any other items judged as dangerous by the umpire may not be worn during the game. Medical bracelets or necklaces are not considered jewellery, but if worn must be taped to the body.
- (b) Players must be asked to remove jewellery and if they fail to do so will be ejected from the game.

## **30. LIGHTS - ARTIFICIAL:**

Clubs with Baseball Victoria approved lights are permitted to use artificial lighting during games to supplement natural light due to dark conditions.

Artificial Lights are to be approved by Baseball Victoria prior to use for scheduled night games as fixtured.

## **31. MANAGER'S/COACH'S NAME ON TEAM SHEET – for Senior Games**

The Team Managers/coaches name is to be put on team sheets. Unless advised otherwise to the umpires at the plate meeting prior to the game start, the person that attends the plate meeting will be recognised at the manager of that team and will be the only person approved to discuss issues with and inform the umpire/s during the game. Any player/manager not previously identified at the plate meeting that approaches the umpire to discuss issues, may be ejected from the game along with the nominated manager.

### **32a. MANAGING AND COACHING - Juniors:**

- (a) Two adult Managers or Coaches may be used on the base line at either first or third base.
- (b) Players, Managers and Coaches must remain on the benches or in the prescribed area during a game.
- (c) If a Manager or Coach goes onto the playing field (crosses a base line) more than once during the defensive half of an inning while the same player is pitching, such a Manager or Coach must make a pitching change. A third visit or any subsequent visit will also force the Manager or Coach to make a pitching change. This rule will be enforced by the Umpire. A Manager or Coach may, at any time, without penalty, go onto the ground for the sole purpose of giving aid to a sick or injured player.
- (d) In Rookie Ball one Adult defensive coach is permitted on the field during play to coach and encourage but must be situated behind second base and is not allowed on the field.
- (e) Adult Manager or coaches in junior games are NOT to wear steel cleats.
- (f) In the event of a ZERO TOLERANCE ejection as prescribed in Match Conditions, the nominated manager will be ejected along with the player. The team must then nominate the manager to take over from this point.

### **32b. MANAGING AND COACHING - Seniors:**

- (a) Each team will nominate the team manager on the line up card and make this clear to the umpire.
- (b) During the match, the nominated team manager will be the only person to approach the umpires unless otherwise instructed.
- (c) In the event of a ZERO TOLERANCE ejection as prescribed in Match Conditions, the nominated manager will be ejected along with the player. The team must then nominate the manager to take over from this point.
- (d) The nominated manager (at the end of the match) is responsible for sighting and signing all match or report cards on behalf of their club. If a protest or dispute is referred to the MWBL, the person signing the Match Card as manager will be deemed by the MWBL as being that manager on the day and will represent as such at any subsequent hearing.

### **33. MATCH REPORT SHEETS & SCORES – Seniors & Juniors:**

For all games – both team managers/captains are to report to the scorer's area to check and sign the Match Report Sheet - which shall include the box scores of the game – full names printed of all players of both teams who competed in the game – junior pitch counts for junior players – with best player votes also noted on the card. Both Home and Away teams are responsible for correct information submitted on the Match Report Sheet. Fines will be applied to both clubs for incorrect Match Report Sheet

**Please Note:** No team member may enter any remarks on the MATCH REPORT SHEET.

Fine of \$25.00 for first offence. Second offence shall be as determined by the Pennant Committee.

#### **Emailing Of Scores:**

**Scores must be emailed to the MWBL Administrator by 8.00pm the day of the game**

**\$20 fine per score for no or late advice of match day score. Email: [scores@mwbl.com.au](mailto:scores@mwbl.com.au)**

HOME TEAMS are to email scores - During the Home and Away Games

APPOINTED UMPIRES are to email scores - During the Finals Series

#### **Match Report Sheet:**

Match Report Sheets can be sent to the MWBL Administrator by email or by hand within 72 hours after day of game. Sheets sent via email or other electronic means MUST be legible to be accepted as received. \$10 fine – per sheet – per week for late sheets will be applied HOME TEAMS are to forward Match Report Sheets - During the Home and Away Games APPOINTED UMPIRES are to forward Match Report Sheets - During the Finals Series

**ROOKIE BALL GAMES** are not played for match points. All details of the game shall be recorded on a Match Report Sheets as normal forwarded to the MWBL Administrator. However no ladders will be maintained and finals not played.

### **34. MELEE RULE**

If team/s are found by the league to have been involved in a melee, prior, during or after a game, then the club/s involved will be fined \$500 (not a bond) and if any second offence by the club in any grade, then that team (players actually playing in the game – not bench players) will be suspended for at least one game. Player/s involved in the melee can still be reported by the umpire/s for any other offence and face possible discipline by the league tribunal.

### **35. MERCY RULE**

**10 RUN RULE Applicable in all grades (except as noted for B3, B4, D Grade, D Reserves and EE & EL Grades and Women's games) and is ALSO APPLICABLE IN FINALS:**

If after 7 equal innings a team in any grade is leading by more than 10 runs, the game shall be called.

COMMENT: It is the intention of this rule to prevent, as far as practicable, games which are so dominated by one team, that their opponents lose interest in the game.

**FOR – B3, B4, D, D Res, EE, EL GRADES and Women's - A SEVEN RUN MERCY RULE (per batting innings) applies and is ALSO APPLICABLE IN FINALS:**

Should seven runs score during the one innings and there are less than three outs, the umpire shall call time.

The batting side will be retired with seven runs being scored for the innings.



**36. NO PITCH - INTENTIONAL WALK – For A Grade, A Reserves, B Grade, B Reserves ONLY**

If a batter is to be intentionally walked by the fielding team at any time during the batters turn at bat - a no pitch intentional walk can be awarded to the batter by the plate umpire.

The intentional walk must be signalled by the fielding team manager (and only by the manager) – directly to and acknowledged by the plate umpire. The plate umpire shall signal the no pitch intentional walk by holding up four fingers. The plate umpire will also inform the scorers of the no pitch intentional walk.

**37. OUT OF PLAY:**

For consistency throughout the league, boundaries defined by witches’ hats, metal uprights or the like will be regarded as out of play. Any ball rebounding from such an object will be declared DEAD.

Batters and runners will advance, in accordance with the OFFICIAL RULES OF BASEBALL.

**38. PERCENTAGE:**

If teams in any grade have equal match points for that grade, then their position on the ladder shall be determined by percentage. Percentage shall be calculated by using the formula:

$$\frac{RF}{RF + RA} \times 1000$$

**39. PITCH/CATCH RULE:**

A junior player under 18 years old may not pitch and catch in the same day.

Any junior player under 16 years old can only pitch or catch in one game in a day.

**Any junior player aged 16 or 17 years old can catch a maximum nine (9) innings in the one day with a maximum of three innings in the seniors if also caught in the juniors in the morning. Scorers to mark junior catchers and innings caught on the match sheets. Clubs to apply to the Pennant Committee for approval for catchers to be able to catch in the juniors and then in the seniors prior to use of this rule.**

**40a. PITCHERS – Seniors and Juniors:**

Players are not permitted to pitch in two games in the one day.

If a player pitches in a JUNIOR game, that player may not pitch in a SENIOR game on the same day or in the same round. Any junior player scheduled to pitch in a mid-week night game can only pitch a minor or substantial outing on the Saturday prior to and subsequent to the mid-week night outing.

**APPLICABLE FOR SENIOR GAMES ONLY – Refer to junior rules for junior games pitching restrictions**

Age	Daily Max Pitchers in Game	Required Days Rest				4 Days
		0 Day	1 Day	2 Days	3 Days	
14	80	1-20	21-35	36-50	51-65	66 plus
15-16	90	1-30	31-45	46-60	61-75	76 plus
17-18	100	1-30	31-45	46-60	61-75	76 plus

- (a) A Player, playing in a higher age group is still restricted to the lower age pitch group.
- (b) A pitcher reaching his/her maximum number of pitches is immediately removed from the mound after he/she has completed that batter.
- (c) Scorers are to notify the Plate Umpire and each team when a pitcher is within 10 pitches of a maximum allowable number.
- (d) Any ball delivered to the plate (e.g.) Baulk or an illegal pitch whether it be hit or not shall be considered to be valid for the purpose of recording the “number of pitches”

Elite development **JUNIOR** pitchers are limited to a minor outing when playing games midweek.

For the purpose of this rule players cease to be in a particular age group the day they reach that age (i.e.) Under 18 player turns 18.

**All pitch counts for junior age players shall be marked on match card.**

Coaches are responsible for overseeing this rule. If this rule is violated the penalty to apply will be as follows:

Loss of match points or game in which violation occurred

Fine to apply and any further penalty will be determined by the Pennant Committee.

**40b. PITCHING RULES – JUNIOR MATCHES ONLY: REFER to Junior Match Conditions.**

**41a. PRE-MATCH DIAMOND WARM-UP - Seniors:**

- Twenty minutes before the scheduled starting time of a game, the home team shall be entitled to pre-game warm up on the playing field not to exceed seven minutes.
- Twelve minutes before the scheduled starting time of a game, the away team shall be entitled to pre-game warm up on the playing field not to exceed seven minutes. If the home team declines to take the field for their pre-game warm up - the away team can take the field
- Team captains by mutual agreement can reverse order of team’s pre-game warm up.
- Five minutes before the scheduled starting time of a game, both managers must meet with the Umpire(s) to determine ground rules and the like.

#### **41b. PRE-MATCH DIAMOND WARM-UP - Juniors:**

- Fifteen minutes before the scheduled starting time of a game the VISITING team shall be entitled to a warm-up on the playing diamond, not to exceed five minutes.
- Ten minutes before the scheduled starting time of a game the HOME team shall be entitled to a warm-up on the playing diamond, not to exceed five minutes.
- Five minutes before the scheduled starting time of a game the playing diamond must be vacated.
- Both Managers or Captains must meet the Umpire(s) to determine ground rules, etc.

#### **42. PROMOTION / RELEGATION:**

Promotion to a higher grade or relegation to a lower grade is by application in writing by clubs to the MWBL for consideration by the MWBL Pennant Committee, who will consider all applications and decide on the promotion and relegation of teams. \*\* Please refer to Junior Participation Requirements for finals participation in A Grade and B Grade, which may be taken into account when deciding any applicable application. All other grades will be determined by the MWBL Pennant Committee upon application or for grading purposes.

#### **43. PROTECTORS & MOUTH GUARDS – Seniors and Juniors:**

It is recommended that players wear appropriate protection whilst on the field during a game.

#### **44a. RE-ENTRY RULE - Applicable to Senior A Grade & B Grade - only. (NOTE – Adopted in 2015)**

A player who has participated in A Reserve, B Reserve - games may also participate in the late game **at the same venue** on the same day, but may not jump more than 1 grade to do so, provided that the player does not enter the late game before the end of the second innings, except in the case of a Designated Pitcher from early game who should start in the late game.

##### **A maximum of 15 players may be used in any game**

(ie) nine starting players and six re-entry players or any combination of 15 maximum (Names of potential re-entry players **are NOT required** to be submitted to the home plate umpire before the game.)

It is the responsibility of each team coach or manager to apply the rule as written.

A pitcher in the A Reserve, B Reserve (including designated pitcher) cannot then pitch in the late game. Re-entry games will not be counted towards finals eligibility.

**Exception:** That if any re-entry player pitches in the late game then that player will be recorded with a game played in the late game and not recorded with a game played in the early game.

**NOTE:** Misuse of this rule shall mean loss of match points and fine as per schedule. Points and a score will be awarded to opposing side, that score will be 9-0 unless it is to the disadvantage of that side.

(i.e.) The opposing side may have won the game by a greater margin than 9-0.

If a team uses a substitute player as a fielder at the start of the game then that player CANNOT be used as a re-entry player after the second innings and shall be immediately removed from the game and may not take any further part in the game except in a coaching capacity. These players will be counted as one of the 15 maximum  
Should the Pennant Committee believe any club is using the re-entry rule for a competitive advantage, it deserves the right to penalise that club accordingly, which could include loss of match points in either or both games, as well as the possible suspension of coach/s or club official/s deemed to be abusing the rule.

#### **44b TWO GAMES / ONE DAY RULE - Applicable to ALL other senior Grades (NOTE – Adopted in 2015)**

Any player who participates in any of these grades - A4, B4, C Res, D Res, & EE Grade can participate from any point in a game later that day **at the same venue**, including from the start.

(Example: A D Reserves player can start in any C Grade game on the same day)

A pitcher in the early game cannot then pitch in the late game.

Participation in each game shall count as a game played for each grade for finals eligibility.

Contravention of this Match Condition shall result in forfeiture of the second game, and an impose of a "Forfeiture" fine on the offending club

#### **45a REPORTED PERSONS & TRIBUNAL Senior and Juniors:**

##### **REFER MWBL RULES & BY-LAWS.**

##### **APPEARANCE BEFORE TRIBUNAL BY REPORTED PLAYERS:**

Any player who is reported may be required appear before the Tribunal at a day, venue and time as advised by the MWBL Tribunal Secretary:

- If an Umpire removes any player or Coach or Manager or other club official from a game for any reason, the Umpire shall forward a report in writing to the MWBL Administrator within 48 hours of the conclusion of the game.
- All such reported persons may be required to appear before the MWBL Executive or any special sub-committee appointed by it and the MWBL shall deal with the matter and, if warranted, impose penalties.

- (c) The Report Review Person may offer any reported player a suspension or penalty without appearance at an official hearing. The player may choose to accept this offer of suspension or penalty or choose to appear before the MWBL Tribunal
- (d) Any reported player or person and their club will be notified of the time and venue of any hearing or tribunal.
- (e) Any player/coach/spectator that is suspended by the Tribunal – then that suspension will commence from the playing of the first available next round in which the team the player was reported and suspended plays.

**Any junior player reported MUST be accompanied to such a hearing by a parent/guardian and/or a club representative**

#### 45b. UMPIRE REPORTS - Seniors and Juniors:

The MWBL reserves the right to investigate reports on umpiring, and take such action as it deems necessary. If a manager or coach of a senior or junior team feels that the umpire has not acted correctly in their duties, they should inform the MWBL Administrator in writing, including the reasons to justify the report so the report can be forwarded to the Pennant Committee to deal with.

#### 46. RUNS SCORED FOR AND AGAINST – Seniors and Juniors:

In regard to final scores in TIME matches, various examples are given below.

**Definition: An innings refers to when each team has had a time at bat**

The basic principle to keep in mind is: When an UNEQUAL number of innings has been played, the score reverts back to the last completed number of equal innings except where:

- (a) The team last at bat is ahead
- (b) The team last at bat, having scored an equal number to, or less runs than the team first at bat by the end of the last completed number of innings, has in the incomplete inning, scored sufficient runs to make the score a TIE. In each of the following examples, “A” is the team first at bat, and “B” the team last at bat.

EXAMPLE	TEAM	6TH	7TH	TOTAL RUNS	CORRECT SCORE
1	A	6	1	7	Reverts back to 6th
	B	4	2 (incomplete)	6	A6 B4
2	A	6	0	6	Game is a tie
	B	4	2 (incomplete)	6	A6 B6
3	A	6	0	6	Win for B
	B	4	3 (incomplete)	7	A6 B7
4	A	5	0	5	Win for B
	B	5	1 (incomplete)	6	A5 B6
5	A	5	1	6	Reverts back to 6th
	B	5	0 (incomplete)	5	Tie A5 B5
6	A	5	1	6	Game is a tie
	B	5	1 (incomplete)	6	A6 B6
7	A	4	2	6	Win for B
	B	7	- (did not bat)	7	A6 B7
8	A	4	1	5	Win for B
	B	7	3 (incomplete)	10	A5 B10
9	A	4	4	8	Reverts back to 6th
	B	7	0 (incomplete)	7	A4 B7
10	A	4	4	8	Reverts back to 6th
	B	7	1 (incomplete)	7	A4 B7
11	A	4	1	5	Win for B
	B	7	0 (incomplete)	7	A5 B7

#### 47. SCORERS – Seniors and Juniors:

- a) Scorers shall be responsible for recording of match details and will sit together.
- b) Clubs shall provide suitable facility for scorers.
- c) The home team shall advise the Association of the match details as directed.
- d) Scorer's must follow the CABS Scorer's Code of Conduct at all times, regardless of their level of accreditation.
- e) Scorer's must notify the plate umpire when a Junior reaches 10 pitches remaining in their pitch count. The umpire will notify the Manager of the appropriate team. Scorer's must cross reference their pitch count with the opposition scorer on a regular basis to ensure they have the correct count. If one count is higher, the higher count shall be deemed correct.

#### 48. PROHIBITED SUBSTANCES:

No smoking/vaping, consuming an alcoholic beverage or chewing/dipping of tobacco will be allowed on the playing field or benches, offenders will be ejected from the game without warning and the club fined \$50.00 for each offence. Umpires shall enter each offence on match sheet.

For the purpose of this Playing Condition, a game is deemed to commence when the umpire enters the playing field in

compliance with Rule of Baseball 4.03(e). Any player, coach or official who, at or from that time, indulges in any of the activities mentioned in this Playing Condition will be reported for breach of this Playing Condition.

**49. SPEED UP RULE – Available for all Senior grades, Women's and U17 Division 1**

A substitute runner (SR) can be used for both the pitcher and catcher when they reach base.

The substitute runner shall be a bench player and may be a player substituted from the game or in the case of team having only nine players available the player last out can be used. The current Designated Hitter (DH) may not be used. If there is none or one out it is optional to use a substitute runner for the pitcher or catcher when they reach base. If there is two out then it is mandatory that the pitcher and catcher be replaced with a substitute runner when they reach base. If after reaching base the pitcher or catcher is not to continue in the role as the pitcher or catcher then the substitution is to be advised to the umpire and that a substitute runner is not required.

**50. SUBSITUTE PLAYERS**

A Grade, B Grade teams must start with nine (9) players. If a team has only seven or eight players at the start of the game then a player can be used as a substitute fielder (ie substitute fielder but does not bat) until the completion of the second innings when a re-entry player/s can be used.

If a team uses a substitute player as a fielder at the start of the game then that player CANNOT be used as a re-entry player after the second innings and shall be immediately removed from the game and may not take any further part in the game except in a coaching capacity

**51. UMPIRES – GAME DAY – Seniors and Juniors**

Where no league appointed umpire is present at the game

The Home Club shall appoint an "Umpire-in-Chief" to call balls and strikes

The Visiting team should supply a "Base Umpire"

Club Umpires shall have the same authority as an MWBL appointed umpire

If the home team is not able to supply an "Umpire-in-Chief" then the away side is permitted to.

It is desirable that the "Umpire-in-Chief" call from behind the catcher.

It should be undertaken to ensure that only one person umpire the entire game.

If this is not practical then only one change shall be permitted

PENALTY - Failure by a Club to comply with any of the conditions concerning umpires may result in the offending Club being fined for each offence.

**52. UMPIRES – Change Areas**

Clubs are to provide appropriately clean and clear of equipment separate private area for umpires to be able to change into their gear and clothing without being exposed to the general public. If the change area is within the general pavilion area then appropriate screening (temporary or permanent) are required to be provided. Failure to comply with this requirement may result in the club being brought before the pennant committee, fine applied and non-appointment of umpires to games at that ground.

**53. UMPIRES HELMETS:**

All umpires – including appointed and club umpires - when umpiring as a single umpire from behind the pitching mound is required to wear a skull cap type helmet. Normal line umpires are not required to wear skull helmets.

This is a requirement for Senior and Junior games.

**54. UNIFORMS – Senior and Junior:**

All players and coaches must wear approved uniform of the club. A & A Reserve, B & B Reserve - Grades must have ALL players in approved uniform. All other grades must have a minimum 7 players in approved uniform.

Caps when worn MUST be approved club cap. If catcher is used as a coach his breastplate must not be visible.

Fine of \$10.00 for each player wearing an incorrect uniform.

**Advertising on Uniforms:**

(a) Selective advertising is permissible on the back or sleeve of senior & junior uniforms.

(b) All such advertising must be approved by the MWBL. Clubs are cautioned that cigarette, liquor and hotel advertising will not be permitted.

**55. WASHOUT OF GAMES:**

Where games are abandoned due to adverse wet weather or unsuitable ground conditions, etc., the following procedure is to be followed:

- (1) Where games do not commence then the match card is to be completed to reflect abandoned game and to be signed by both clubs and umpires and forwarded to the MWBL Administrator.
- (2) Clubs may enter a minimum of seven players names on the match card and may only enter the names of players that have played previously with the club in that season prior to the washout, etc. or any new player registrations as per the "Registrations of Players" By-Law.

- (3) Players who have not previously played prior to the washout, etc., are not permitted to be entered on the match card.
- (4) Players names that appear on the match card that have not played previously will be an illegal player and the penalty will be \$50 per player and the loss of match point.
- (5) If the washout, etc, occurs in round 1 – then clubs are permitted to use names of currently registered players or new registrations.
- (6) In the advent that clubs call off games early and notify the away club to prevent unnecessary travel then the away club are not required to sign the match card or enter names on the match card.
- (7) The away team may submit a separate match card to the league Administrator with a minimum of seven eligible players' names within seven days after the abandoned game.
- (8) If no more than one match in the one grade is completed, the whole grade will be deemed a washout
- (9) Refer to **Rule 24. FITNESS OF GROUND/ADVERSE WEATHER – Senior and Juniors** for additional information

#### **56. WASTING OF TIME – Seniors and Juniors:**

It is contrary to the spirit of Senior & Junior Baseball for teams to engage in the practice of wasting time, particularly in the closing minutes of a time-limit match. Umpires are hereby instructed to take all necessary steps to prevent malpractice, and adults in charge of teams are warned that the MWBL will not tolerate such tactics. Umpires should allow no more than 90 seconds between changeover of innings (from time of “Side Away” to “Batter Up” for next innings).

#### **57. YELLOW CARD RULE – Seniors and Juniors:**

- (a) The principle of this rule is to allow an umpire to issue a formal warning to persons committing minor offences without the necessity of ejection from the game and subsequent Tribunal appearances.
- (b) Offences for which this rule may be invoked shall include, but not be limited to : Dangerous play, Dissent, Equipment abuse, Minor offensive language, Misconduct.
- (c) If, in the opinion of the umpire, an offence has occurred as provided for by this rule, the player shall be informed of a Yellow Card offence and where possible a yellow card shown to the offender and the team manager be informed of the nature of the offence.
- (d) The umpire shall complete the details required on the Yellow Card and return it to the MWBL Administrator with match report card.
- (e) A register of Yellow Card offences shall be maintained by the MWBL Administrator.
- (f) The first and second Yellow Card issued to a person will incur no penalty but the third, and any subsequent Yellow Card offence by that player during the currency of a season shall incur suspension of that player from participating in any team until the competition round after the next in which the team from where the third or subsequent offence occurred competes (not inclusive of any bye).

**For Example:** A player that receives their third and fourth Yellow Card in the same will game will be subject to a 2 games suspension

- (g) A person who receives two Yellow Cards in the same game shall be ejected from the game after the second offence but will not be required to attend a Tribunal hearing.
- (h) A person suspended under clause (f), will be notified by the MWBL Administrator via their Club.
- (i) When a person incurs a Yellow Card suspension in the last round of the season or a finals game, the matter will be referred to the Tribunal to determine the timing of the suspension.
- (j) A person may appeal to the Tribunal Chairperson against the issue of a Yellow Card, such appeal to be lodged in writing stating reasons for the appeal to the MWBL Administrator within 48 hours of the game in which the offence occurred and shall be accompanied by a \$20 deposit which will be returned only if the Tribunal Chairperson deems the appeal not to be frivolous. Mere denial of the offence does not constitute grounds for referral to the Tribunal and will result in loss of the deposit.
- (k) Upon receiving an appeal in accordance with clause (j), the Tribunal Chairman shall decide if the matter should be referred to the Tribunal for resolution, such decision being final.
- (l) The Tribunal will here an appeal referred to it under clause (k) by convening a hearing with the offender and the umpire. The Tribunal may determine to:
  - i. Uphold the appeal, cancel the Yellow Card and advise the umpire or
  - ii. Dismiss the appeal and confirm the Yellow Card, or
  - iii. Consider the offence warranted an ejection and impose a penalty,
  - iv. Decide to return or retain the deposit.
 Such decisions of the Tribunal are final and not subject to further appeal.

#### **58. BLUE CARD RULE – Seniors and Juniors:**

- (a) The principle of the rule is to allow an umpire to issue a blue card to a player for offences committed with immediate ejection from the game without facing the Tribunal.
- (b) Players ejected under the blue card rule will serve a further one game suspension without a Tribunal appearance..
- (c) Offences for which this rule may be invoked shall include, but not be limited to: **Audible Offensive Language, Misconduct.**
- (d) If, in the opinion of the umpire, an offence has occurred as provided for by this rule, the player shall be informed of a Blue Card offence and where possible a blue card shown to the offender and the team manager be informed of the nature of the offence.

- (f) The umpire shall complete the details required on the Blue Card and return it to the MWBL Administrator with match report card.
- (f) A register of Blue Card offences shall be maintained by the MWBL Administrator.
- (g) A second Blue Card issued to a person will incur an automatic two game suspension.
- (h) A third Blue Card offence by a player during the currency of a season will mean an automatic appearance before the Tribunal.
- (i) A person suspended under clause (e) and (f) will be notified by the MWBL Administrator via the Club.
- (j) When a person incurs a Blue Card suspension in the last round of the season or a finals game, the suspension will be served at the start of the next season and/or matter can be referred to the Tribunal to determine the timing of the suspension.
- (k) A person may appeal to the Tribunal Chairman against the issue of a Blue Card, such appeal to be made to the MWBL Administrator within 48 hours of the game in which the card is issued.
- (l) Upon receiving an appeal in accordance with clause (j), the matter shall be referred to the Tribunal Chairperson who shall decide if the matter should be referred to the Tribunal for resolution. Such decision will be final.
- (m) The Tribunal will hear an appeal referred to it under clause (k) by convening a hearing with the offender. The Tribunal may determine to:
  - (a) Uphold the appeal, cancel the Blue Card and advise the umpire or
  - (b) Dismiss the appeal and confirm the Blue Card, or
  - (c) Consider the offence warranted and increase the penalty

**Such decisions of the Tribunal are final and not subject to further appeal.**

#### **59. ZERO TOLERANCE – Seniors and Juniors**

The MWBL practices the concept of ZERO TOLERANCE in order to ensure that coaches / managers take a proactive role in eliminating umpire abuse.

Zero Tolerance will relate to all ejectable offences that include

##### **Abuse of umpire**

##### **Dissent**

##### **Arguing decisions (balls/strikes, safe/outs, etc.)**

***THESE RULES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE BY THE PENNANT COMMITTEE.***

#### **60. M.W.B.L. CODE OF CONDUCT – PLAYERS & OFFICIALS**

This Code shall be read in conjunction with the Statement of Purposes and Rules, By Laws and Match Conditions, and shall be binding on all Members of the: **MELBOURNE WINTER BASEBALL LEAGUE INC., (the M.W.B.L.)**.

##### **Interpretations:**

For the purpose of the Code "Players and Officials" means any person who is a registered member of a Club in this League, a Coach, a Scorer, a Team Manager, or an Umpire, or any person who acts in any official capacity within a Club in this League.

Players and Officials are required to:

- (a) Abide by the "Code of Conduct" and all other rules of the M.W.B.L., and to accept all disciplinary measures, including suspension, imposed for any breach of the Code and Rules.
- (b) Refrain from assaulting or attempting to assault an umpire, other players, any officials of the games or spectators.
- (c) Refrain from verbal abuse against umpires, scorers, opposing players or spectators.
- (d) Refrain from using crude or abusive language, or using crude or abusive hand signals, or engage in conduct detrimental to the game.
- (e) Refrain from reacting with unnecessary obvious dissension, displeasure or disapproval either toward an umpire, his decision, or generally, following an umpiring decision.
- (f) Neither take nor use drugs or stimulants nor participate in other doping practices prohibited by the Australian Sports Commission and the Australian Baseball Federation.
- (g) Co-operate with all team members. Show respect for opponents and their skills, be friendly to all participants.
- (h) Refrain from profanity at all times.
- (i) Refrain from any activity likely to result in loss or wilful damage to private property or to cause a disturbance.
- (j) Accept victory and defeat with dignity and grace.
- (k) Refrain from equipment abuse such as throwing helmets and bats.
- (l) Abide by the rules and spirit of baseball.

#### **61. M.W.B.L. CODE OF CONDUCT - SCORERS**

The Council of Australian Baseball Scorers (CABS) Code of Conduct has been developed for all scorers to abide by whilst participating in an official capacity at any baseball game.

It is recognised that scorers play an integral role in our sport and their performance and professionalism is observed by all in the baseball community in their capacity as a scorer.

CABS Scorers acknowledge responsibility and agree to:

- Accept responsibility for all their actions/decisions
- Sit with the opposition scorer in a neutral scoring location
- Remain in the designated scoring location until all post game duties have been completed
- Be impartial on scoring deliberations
- Ensure scoring deliberations are made solely by the appointed scoring panel
- Declare a conflict of interest as necessary
- Keep abreast of rules and changing techniques of scoring
- Be respectful and open to discussion
- Share scoring expertise and knowledge with other scorers and be a good role model for other officials

In the role as a scorer - shall not:

- Be guilty of barracking whilst scoring
- Be guilty of making criticism of other scorers, umpires, coaches or team players by word or gesture
- Draw players or coaches attention to rule infringements, during the progress of the game
- Prompt the umpire about a ruling or status of pitch count unless invited
- Change a recorded scoring decision without regard for the recognised official procedure for the instance
- Use mobile telephone whilst scoring
- Smoke or drink alcohol whilst scoring
- Make comment to the media unless authorised by the appropriate personnel
- Discretion should be used prior to releasing information during a game to a non team or tournament Official

Unofficial visitors are not to be encouraged to remain in the score box / game scoring area

## 62. ANTIDISCRIMINATION

Under Victoria's Equal Opportunity Act 1995, anti-discrimination laws also apply to all Sporting Organisations. Members are reminded that it is unlawful to discriminate or vilify against a person on the basis of:

Age, Disability, Industrial activity, Lawful sexual activity / sexual orientation, Marital, parental or carer status, Physical features, Political beliefs or activity, Pregnancy, Race, Religious belief or activity, Sex Personal association with a person who is identified by reference to any of the above attributes.

**Any violation of the Act will be dealt with in accordance of the rules of the M.W.B.L. & B.A., and those of the Equal Opportunity Commission.**

For detailed information regarding MWBL / Baseball Victoria Policy Documents, please refer to the Baseball Victoria Policy Overview Document. This document can be supplied upon request or can be found at [www.baseballvictoria.com.au](http://www.baseballvictoria.com.au) or [www.mwbl.baseball.com.au](http://www.mwbl.baseball.com.au).

The Melbourne Winter Baseball League Inc. is a full member of Baseball Victoria and endorses the Policy Overview Document. The Melbourne Winter Baseball League Inc. is an independently run sporting organisation, therefore all member clubs are required to abide by the Constitution, By-Laws, Rules and Match Conditions as presented by the Melbourne Winter Baseball League Inc.

## 63. NON NATIONAL PLAYERS

- (a) Pitching Restrictions are applicable for All Non-National Junior or Senior players  
Any player deemed to be a Non-National player will be allowed to only pitch in every second game for that teams scheduled games during the Regular Season. This is applicable to all grades.

**For the Finals Series the following shall apply.**

A non-national player may only pitch a maximum of 5 (five) innings for each finals game over the final's series.

For a non-national player to be eligible to play in the finals series they must have played a minimum of 8 (eight) rounds.

- (b) Definition of Non-National Player  
A player will be deemed 'non-national' if they are not an Australian Citizen or Permanent Resident or have not continuously resided in Australia for a period of twelve calendar months immediately prior to the commencement of the season in which a Club wishes to register them as a player.  
A 'non-national' player that is studying at an approved University or Tafe course and on an appropriate visa will not be subject to the 'non-national' rule
- (c) The Melbourne Winter Baseball League accepts no responsibility for fulfilling of any obligations or requirements for the entry of a non-national player into Australia, or any obligations or requirements noted within any contractual agreements between a Club and a non-national player.
- (d) A Club may only register and play one (1) non-national player in their senior firsts team for any season.
- (e) There is no restriction on the number of non-national players a Club may register and play in any other team for the season of registration.
- (f) A Club wishing to register non-national players for a season must identify the non-national players at the time of registration and nominate the non-national player that is to play in the firsts senior team, for the season of registration at the time of registration.
- (g) The non-national nomination must be received and approved by the Pennant Committee prior to the player being able to participate in the Melbourne Winter Baseball League competition.
- (h) A Club may request approval from the Pennant Committee to change the non-national player nominated to play in the



- firsts senior team for the season of registration due to injury or other extenuating circumstances.
- (i) The Pennant Committee or the Administrator of the Melbourne Winter Baseball League may seek evidence on any player it deems to be possibly a non-national that has not been declared by their Club. The Pennant Committee or the Administrator of the Melbourne Winter Baseball League may determine the form of this evidence at the time of the request.
  - (j) Junior players who are non-nationals and are eligible to play in the firsts senior team of a Club will not count towards the non-national player limit specified in this Playing Condition if selected by the Club to play in the firsts senior team.
  - (k) Failure of a club to comply with this Playing Condition will result in forfeiture of all games and imposition of an "Illegal Player" fine by Melbourne Winter Baseball League as per Schedule 1.
  - (l) At the end of a season a Club that has registered non-national players is to submit a statement to the Pennant Committee advising whether the non-national players fulfilled their contractual obligations to the Club and, where the Club alleges that a player did not fulfil their contractual obligations, provide details of the alleged breaches of their obligations. Such statements will only be used by the Pennant Committee in considering granting approval for future registration or clearance of that player.
  - (m) All non-national players shall be subject to the clearance provisions set out in these Playing Conditions.
  - (n) A non-national player who has not participated in the Melbourne Winter Baseball League competition for one (1) season, despite being registered by a Club, shall be deemed a free agent if the Club with which that player was registered nominates and registers a different non-national player as the first nine player in any succeeding season. A clearance from the original Club shall not be required for the player who becomes a free agent under this playing condition, should a different Club desire to register the player provided that the Pennant Committee is satisfied that there was no breach of the player's contract with the original Club.

#### 64. REPORTED PERSONS ALTERNATE PENALTY

Players and coach's that are reported and accept a penalty offer from the Report Review Person or found guilty of an offence at the tribunal may be offered the option of an alternate penalty by umpiring games instead of serving the full penalty. The Pennant Committee will be the responsible body for offering the alternate penalty option of umpiring. The Pennant Committee reserves the right to not offer persons the alternate penalty. Persons that accept the alternate penalty to umpire will not be paid for games umpired and will not umpire their club games. The umpiring of games will be under the supervision of an appointed MWBL umpire. The alternate penalty offer cannot be served during the finals but will carry over until the following season. Persons that FAIL to carry out the alternate penalty of umpiring will have an additional one week added to their original penalty and the umpiring option withdrawn

Example: If a person has agreed to a penalty offer or been found guilty of an offence at the tribunal with a four match penalty applied then that person can accept the pennant committee offered alternate penalty of umpiring for two weeks (two double header of games)  
 If a player has a three match alternate penalty applied then one week (a double header of games) of umpiring will be required.

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**MELBOURNE WINTER BASEBALL LEAGUE INC. (MWBL)  
FORMERLY VICTORIAN WINTER BASEBALL LEAGUE**

**JUNIOR SPECIFIC PLAYING  
AND MATCH CONDITIONS**

**UPDATED 2024**

**THESE MATCH CONDITIONS ARE RELATED TO JUNIOR BASEBALL  
AND ARE TO BE APPLIED IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE  
MWBL PLAYING AND MATCH CONDITIONS – 2024.**

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## 1. AGE LIMIT - Juniors - AGE QUALIFICATION

A player is eligible to take part in any match in the respective age groupings, provided he/she is under the age as at 31st August in the season of the competition.

**Note:** A player whose date of birth is 31st August must play in the higher age group.

A player whose date of birth is 1st September is eligible to play in the lower age group.

No Player may participate in Under 11/Rookie Ball until he/she attains their SIXTH (6) birthday

No Player may participate in Under 13 Minor until he/she attains their EIGHTH (8) birthday

No Player may participate in Under 13 Major until he/she attains their NINTH (9) birthday

No Player may participate in Under 15's until he/she attains their ELEVENTH (11) birthday

No Player may participate in Under 17's until he/she attains their THIRTEENTH (13) birthday

## 1a. PLAYING PLAYERS OUT OF AGE GROUP

- (a) Clubs seeking permission to play junior players out of their age group shall submit in writing (on the proper form) to the MWBL Administrator with the reason/s for the special consideration.

The MWBL Executive or an appointed sub-committee shall review and may receive advice and recommendations on all special consideration applications before approval is granted or not granted.

- (b) Penalties will apply for misleading information or wrong information supplied to the MWBL

## 2. BYES: (ALL AGE GROUPS)

When a junior team has a bye – any player of the team having the bye may play in any other junior team that the player is eligible to play in – including teams of the same club in the same grade.

## 3. COLLISION RULE: (ALL AGE GROUPS)

Where there is a play at the home plate, the runner must slide.

Penalty: If a collision occurs at the home plate and the runner has failed to slide then the runner will be given out.

## 4. CORE PLAYERS OF A TEAM

Clubs with multiple team entries must nominate after four rounds, five core players in each team.

Nominated core players are not permitted to change teams within that grade during the season without permission from the MWBL Pennant Committee

## 5. DROPPED THIRD STRIKE

U13 Minor and U11/Rookie Ball:

The batter is "OUT" when a third strike is indicated by the Umpire, whether or not the pitch is legally caught by the catcher.

A third strike which is not caught by the catcher is alive until it goes out of play and base runners may advance at their own risk.

U13 Major, U15 and U17 – Normal baseball rules apply

## 6. MERCY RULE - SEVEN RUN RULE – ALSO APPLICABLE IN FINALS:

Should seven runs score during the one innings and there are less than three outs, the umpire shall call time.

The batting side will be retired with seven runs being scored for the innings.

For Under 11/Rookie Ball & Under 13 Minor - four run rule will apply

Mercy rule after 5 innings – If a team is leading by more than 10 runs after 5 equal innings then the game shall be called.

COMMENT: It is the intention of this rule to prevent, as far as practicable, games which are so dominated by one team, that their opponents lose interest in the game, and as a result may be lost to Junior Baseball.

## 7. PASSED BALL

For Under 13's – Minor and Rookie Ball:

Base Runners are permitted to advance extra bases if the ball passes the catcher and remains in play.

Players are permitted to steal home from third base if the ball passes the catcher and remains in play.

If the ball goes out of play the runners must return to third base.

Any pitched ball crossing the pass ball-line or striking the back-net shall be called a pass ball and no player may advance beyond 3rd base on such pass ball.

For Under 13 Major, U15 and U17 – normal baseball rules apply.



## 8. PITCHERS HITTING BATTERS

### Under 11/Rookie Ball

At the discretion of the umpire, if the batter is hit and is hurt the batter will be awarded first base.

If the batter is not hurt, then they shall be allowed to hit.

### Under 13, U15 and U17

If a pitcher hits two batters in the same innings the umpire and coaches must confer to decide whether the pitcher should continue or be removed. If the player is not removed, then there is no right of appeal at the end of the game.

## 9. PITCHING RULES – JUNIOR MATCHES ONLY: (Baseball Victoria approved changes to By-Law 20 – March 2012)

Maximum number of defensive outs or pitches (whichever is completed first) a pitcher can deliver are as follows.

UNDER 11/ROOKIE BALL – 9 defensive outs or 50 pitches

UNDER 13's MINOR – 9 defensive outs or 60 pitches

UNDER 13's MAJOR – 9 defensive outs or 60 pitches

Under 15 – 12 defensive outs or 70 pitches

Under 17 – 12 defensive outs or 80 pitches

- (a) A Player, playing in a higher age group is still restricted to the lower age pitch group.
- (b) A pitcher reaching his/her maximum number of pitches is immediately removed from the mound after he/she has completed that batter.
- (c) Scorers are to notify the Plate Umpire and each team when a pitcher is within 10 pitches of a maximum allowable number.
- (d) Any ball delivered to the plate (e.g.) Baulk or an illegal pitch whether it is hit or not shall be considered to be valid for the purpose of recording the "number of pitches"
- (e) Under 17's and Under 15's **ARE** permitted to throw curveballs/sliders  
UNDER 11/ROOKIE BALL, UNDER 13 are **NOT** allowed to throw curve balls/sliders.  
If a curve ball/slider is thrown, "NO PITCH" to be called by the Plate Umpire, but it will be considered to be valid for the purpose of recording the "number of pitches".
- (f) Pitching Changes:- The provisions of Rule 8.03 for pitching changes (of the Official Rules of Baseball) shall be strictly enforced - eight (8) warm up pitches.
- (g) A player that pitches during junior games in the morning shall not be permitted to pitch in any senior games in the afternoon on the same day. One pitch constitutes pitching in the morning.  
For UNDER 13 MINOR GAMES ONLY - FOR **RINGWOOD DISTRICT JUNIOR BASEBALL LEAGUE ONLY**:  
Any player removed as a pitcher may pitch again in the same game, provided that the pitcher has not pitched 25 or more pitches in his first appearance and can only pitch once more in the game and only permitted to pitch the maximum number of pitches for the grade over the two appearances.
- (h) If a pitchers defensive outs are exceeded as a result of a 'Triple' or 'Double' play, then the play will stand and the pitcher then replaced.
- (i) If a pitchers defensive outs are reached as a result of a 'pick off' or 'rundown' play then the play will stand and the pitcher is permitted to still pitch to the batter at bat even if he has not pitched to the batter before the 'pick off' or 'run down' play.

## 10. PITCHING/CATCHING: (All Age Groups)

A player shall not pitch and catch or catch and pitch in the same game.

## 11. PLAYERS PLAYING OUT OF AGE GROUP:

- (a) Whilst a player is allowed permission to play in a higher age group, such player will not be allowed to play in the finals of a lower age group if he/she has played more games in the higher age group during the season.
- (b) Players will be permitted to play in a higher age group each week. No written permission needs to be sought from the MWBL.
- (c) If a club has special circumstances where permission is sought for players other than those outlined above, then the club can make application to the MWBL in writing on the prescribed form.

Failure by a club to comply with any of the rules of the Playing Conditions Rules 9, 10, 11 will result in the offending club forfeiting any match points gained whilst playing such ineligible player(s).

Any other penalty as determined by the MWBL will be imposed.

## 12. PLAYING FIELD DIMENSIONS:

The following conditions will apply to the playing fields for Under 13, Under 15, and Under 17 competitions:

	Under 11/Rookie Ball & Under 13 Minor	Under 13 Major	Under 15	Under 17
Pitching Distance	43' (13.10)	46' (14.03)	54' (16.65)	60'6" (18.44)
Base Paths	60' (18.28)	60' (18.28)	80' (24.67)	90' (27.43)
Diagonal	84'10" (25.85)	84' 10" (25.85)	113'3" (34.93)	127'3 3/8" (38.79)
Passed Ball Line	25' (7.62)	25' (7.62)	40' (12.20)	60' (18.28)
Bases	Full Size	Full Size	Full Size	Full Size
Home & Pitching Plates	Full Size	Full Size	Full Size	Full Size
Home Run Fence	200' L&R (61) 200' C/F (61)	200' L&R (61) 200' C/F (61)	250' L&R (76.25) 300' C/F (90)	Senior Size
Coaches Box	8'x4' (2.44x1.22)	8 x 4 (2.44x1.22)	16'x8' (4.88x2.44)	20'x10' (6.0x3.0)
Batting Box	6'x3' (1.83x0.91)	6 x 3 (1.83x0.91)	6'x4' (1.83x1.22)	6'x4' (1.83x1.22)
Catcher's Box	Senior Size	Senior Size	Senior Size	Senior Size

## 13. UNDER 11/ROOKIE BALL – BATTING:

If a pitcher throws four balls, then a batting Tee shall be placed on the home plate, the game then proceeds as normal. When the ball is hit into the field, if contact is not made with the ball or the batter hits the Tee, it is classed as a strike, if the batter does this three times the batter is then out. No bunting is permitted from the Tee. It is up to the umpire's discretion to decide if the batter made a full swing at the ball. The batter is permitted to take one step with their front foot towards the ball, before making contact with the ball.

## 14. UNDER 11/ROOKIE BALL – PITCHING:

For Rookie league games Coach Pitch may be used. The conditions will be: Coach to Kneel and Pitch over arm Balls and Strikes as per normal rules to be called. 4 Balls called player walks to first base. After three strikes then the Tee is used for the player to hit. If the ball hits the coach pitcher the ball remains in play. Rules pertaining to Rookie Ball Batting and Pitching will be decided upon by the Chairperson of the MWBL Junior Sub-Committee. The rules are to be applied at all times.

## 15. RULES APPLICABLE TO FINAL SERIES:

The following rules apply to Finals Series and should be read in conjunction with the Senior & Junior Playing Conditions and the Official Rules of Baseball and the Rules and By-Laws of the MWBL.

### (a) PLAYER ELIGIBILITY FOR FINALS SERIES (SINGLE TEAM CLUBS)

For junior grade/s finals, a junior player must play 5 games in the Home and Away Junior competition played to be able to compete in junior finals. The MWBL Junior Sub Committee and/or MWBL Pennant Committee reserve the right to set or change the qualification rules as deemed necessary due to fixturing and/or calendar anomalies.

**Only one bye will count towards qualification.**

**Senior grade rounds will NOT count towards junior finals eligibility.**

### (b) PLAYER ELIGIBILITY FOR FINALS SERIES (MULTIPLE TEAM CLUBS)

Clubs with two or more teams in the same age group/section are advised that a player is only eligible to play with the team in which they have played the most number of games during the current season.

If a player has played equal number of games with two or more teams during the home and away Games, then written application must be made to the MWBL Administrator for permission and determination as to the team in which they are eligible to play for.

NOTE: Whilst a player is allowed permission to play in a higher age group, such player will not be allowed to play in the Finals of a lower age group if he/she has played more games in the higher age group during the season.

### (c) TIME OF PLAY FOR JUNIOR FINALS SERIES MATCHES

Time of play for all **Under 13's** - Finals Series matches will be from 9.00am to 10.30am.

Time of play for all **Under 15's** - Finals Series matches will be from 8.45am to 10.30am.

Time of play for all **Under 17's** - Finals Series matches will be from 8.45am to 10.30am.

### (d) The five minute rule will apply in all finals matches for all age groups.

### (e) APPLICATION OF THE FIVE MINUTE RULE

All games with a scheduled finish time shall be subject to the 'Five Minute Rule'. If, at the completion of even innings, from the call of 'side out' there remains more than five minutes of time before the scheduled completion time, a further complete innings shall be played. If, at five minutes before the scheduled time of completion, and with the home team to bat, then:

- If the **HOME TEAM** is **AHEAD** – the game ceases immediately
  - If the **HOME TEAM** is **BEHIND** or the game **TIED** – the game continues until the winning run is scored or the side is retired.
- (f) If after application of the five minute rule the game is tied at 10.30, the Umpire shall require the teams to continue play in order to achieve a result. Such extended play SHALL NOT CONTINUE BEYOND 11.00am. ....  
 If a result is achieved between 10.30am and 11.00am the match shall finish immediately.  
 If there is no result after the game being extended to 11.00am then the higher placed team will be declared the winner and advance to the next final.

- (1) If game is tied in the GRAND FINAL after extra time then the game shall be played the following Saturday. If game not played for any reason the following Saturday then the highest placed team will be declared the premiers.
- (2) For any Semi or Preliminary Finals, where wet weather or ground conditions prevents a result of a game (a minimum of 45 minutes play for Under 13 and Under 15 and 65 minutes for Under 17) and finishing no later than 11.00am then the highest placed team will continue to the next final.

- (3) The appointed umpire for the finals games will make the decision in respect of adverse weather or condition of ground
- (g) **INSUFFICIENT PLAYERS FOR A TEAM(S) IN FINAL SERIES MATCHES**  
 All Umpires are instructed to start the game at the scheduled time if both teams have seven or more players present. Failure to take to the field when instructed by the Umpire will result in the offending team having the game called against them, except in the following cases:

Should a team have less than seven players present at the scheduled starting time the Umpire shall allow up to ten minutes grace to find the required number of players. If, at the expiration of ten minutes grace, the team is still short of the minimum number of players, the Umpire must award the game against the offending team.

NOTE: It is essential that the watches of the Umpires and the Managers/Coaches be synchronised before the start of play.

- (h) **COMPLETION AND FORWARDING OF MATCH REPORT SHEETS FOR FINALS**  
 The HOME teams must forward completed Match Report Sheet to the MWBL Administrator within 72 hours of the completion of the match as well as informing the MWBL Administrator the game score in the prescribed manner by 8.00pm on the day of the game.
- (i) **SUPPLY OF BASEBALLS FOR FINAL SERIES** - Baseballs for Finals Series will be supplied by the MWBL.
- (j) **SUPPLY OF UMPIRES FOR FINALS SERIES**  
 Umpires will be appointed to the Finals games. Should official(s) fail to appear, it will be necessary for the Manager/Coaches of the competing teams to appoint a person to umpire the match.
- (k) **MARKING AND DEFINING OF GROUNDS USED FOR FINALS SERIES**  
 All clubs providing a ground for finals series are expected to have the playing field properly marked and defined with particular emphasis on the boundary limits. A back-net must be provided. The club is also responsible for the provision of bases, home and pitcher's plates and foul flags. Bases etc., must be whitened. Player's benches must be provided for games.
- (l) **FINALS PLAY-OFF GROUPING**  
 The final four teams in each grouping will play in the Final Series – or as otherwise determined by MWBL. Except as otherwise determined by the Pennant Committee the Play-Off series will be played over two weeks  
 Week 1 - Semi Finals - 1 v 4, 2 v 3  
 Week 2 - Grand Finals winners of each semi-final series.  
 The HOME teams shall be that team which finished higher on the ladder during the home and away series.

**16. RULES GOVERNING BASE RUNNING FOR - UNDER 13 AND UNDER 11/ROOKIE BALL:**

- (a) **BASE RUNNING - NO LEADS** there will be no leads off bases  
 When a pitcher is in contact with the pitcher's plate with the ball in their possession and the catcher is in the catcher's box ready to receive delivery of the ball, base runners shall not leave the base until the ball has been delivered by the pitcher and has reached the batter.

NOTE: When an Umpire detects a base runner leaving a base too soon, time shall be called and a warning Given and runners shall return to the base occupied before the pitch.

Two warnings per team will be given for violation of this rule.

Subsequent violations shall result in the offending player(s) being given OUT.

For the purpose of these examples, it is assumed that the batter runner remains at the base they last acquired safely. If the batter does not hit the ball, the result of the pitch (ball or strike) shall be maintained on the batter.

If a runner leaves early and the pitch is a wild pitch or a pass ball, no runner may advance unless forced by reason of the pitch being a fourth ball. The violation by one base runner shall affect all other base runners

- (b) When a runner leaves their base before the pitcher has released the ball and the batter does not hit the ball, the runner is permitted to continue. If a play is made on the runner and an out occurs, the out stands.



If the runner reaches the next base safely, to which they are advancing, they must be returned to the base they occupied before the pitch was made and no out results.

- (c) When a base runner leaves their base before the pitcher has released the ball and the batter hits the ball, the base runner or runners are permitted to continue. If a play is made and the runner or runners are put out, the out or outs will stand. If not put out, the runner or runners must return to the original base or bases or to the unoccupied base nearest the one that was left. In no event shall the batter advance beyond the first base on a single or error, second base on a double or third base on a triple. The Umpire-in-Chief shall determine the value of the hit ball.
- (d) When any base runner leaves their base before the pitcher has released the ball and the batter bunts or hits a ball within the in-field no run shall be allowed to score. If three runners were on the bases and the batter reaches first base safely, each runner shall advance to the base beyond which they occupied at the start of the play except the runner who occupied third base at the start of the play, then the runner shall be removed from the base without a run being scored.

**EXCEPTION:** If at the conclusion of the play there is an open base, paragraphs (a) and (b) will apply.

**EXAMPLES:**

1. Runner on first leaves too soon, batter reaches first safely. Runner goes to second.
2. Runner on second leaves too soon, batter reaches first safely. Runner returns to second.
3. Runner on third leaves too soon, batter reaches first safely. Runner returns to third.
4. Runner on first leaves too soon, batter hits clean double. Runner goes to third only.
5. Runner on second leaves too soon, batter hits clean double. Runner goes to third only.
6. Runner on third leaves too soon, batter hits clean double. Runner returns to third.
7. All runners on base will be allowed to score when the batter hits a triple or home run regardless of whether any runners left too soon.
8. Runners on first and second, either leaves too soon, batter reaches first safely. Runners go to second and third.
9. Runners on first and second, either leaves too soon, batter hits clean double. Runner on second scores.
10. Runners on first and third, either leaves too soon, batter reaches first safely. Runner on third remains on third, runner on first advances to second.
11. Runner on first and third, either leaves too soon, batter hits a clean double. Runner on first goes to third, runner on third scores.
12. Runners on second and third, either leaves too soon, batter reaches first safely. Neither runner can advance.
13. Runners on second and third, either leaves too soon, batter hits a clean double. Runner on third scores, runner on second goes to third.
14. Bases full, any runner leaves too soon, batter hits a clean double. Runners on second and third score, runner on first goes to third.
15. Bases full, any runner leaves too soon, batter reaches first safely on any ball bunted or hit within the in-field. All runners advance one base except runner on third, who is removed, scoring no run and no out is charged. If on the play, a put out at any base results in an open base, runner who occupied third returns to third base.
16. Bases full, any runner leaves too soon, batter receives a base on balls or is hit by a pitch, each runner will advance one base and a run will score.

**17-1. SHORTAGE OF PLAYERS – Juniors – ON GAME Day:**

If a junior team is unable to field the regulation nine players, during the home and away season, permission is hereby granted for players from another team to compete, without transfer, clearance or permit, for the team which is deficient.

- (a) Any such player(s) shall field and bat as if they were members of the deficient team, except they will not be permitted to pitch or catch unless by agreement of both coaches.
- (b) If the deficient team is able to field seven or eight players, the result of the match shall be recorded as if there had been no shortage.
- (c) If the opposing team is unable to field seven players, the opposing team shall have forfeit score 9-0 “for” and 0-9 “against”, as the result of the match.

In (c) above, the deficient team shall incur the appropriate fine for a forfeit.

The purpose of the rule is to prevent walk-overs if possible, and give junior players every opportunity to play.

Clubs with an excess number of players are encouraged to give these players a chance to compete.

The MWBL will not however, allow shortages to occur without additional action against defaulting clubs

## **17-2. SHORTAGE OF PLAYERS – Juniors – COMPOSITE Teams:**

A junior team that is deficient of players and is unable to field the regulation nine players during the home and away season, then Permission is hereby granted for players from another team to compete, week by week, for a different team without clearance, permit, or transfer for those deficient teams to field the regulation nine players.

- (d) Any such player(s) shall field and bat as if they were members of the deficient team, except they will not be permitted to pitch or catch unless by agreement of both coaches.
- (e) If the deficient team is able to field seven or eight players, the result of the match shall be recorded as if there had been no shortage.
- (f) If the opposing team is unable to field seven players, the opposing team shall have forfeit score 9-0 “for” and 0-9 “against”, as the result of the match. In (c) above, the deficient team shall incur the appropriate fine for a forfeit. The purpose of the rule is to prevent walk-overs if possible, and give junior players every opportunity to play. Clubs with an excess number of players are encouraged to give these players a chance to compete. The MWBL will not however, allow shortages to occur without additional action against defaulting clubs

## **18. STARTING TIME - LENGTH OF GAME - FINISHING TIME - Juniors:**

- (a) UNDER 17: All matches will be 9 innings or 105 minutes duration - starting at 8.45am.  
Regardless of the time of starting, no match may proceed beyond 10.30am.
- (d) UNDER 15: All matches will be 9 innings or 105 minutes duration - starting at 8.45am.  
Regardless of the time of starting, no match may proceed beyond 10.30am.
- (c) UNDER 13 & UNDER 11/ROOKIE BALL  
All matches will be 7 innings or 90 minutes duration - starting at 9.00am.  
Regardless of the time of starting, no match may proceed beyond 10.30am

### **EXCEPTION FOR ALL JUNIOR GRADES**

If the game is tied after equal (max) innings, the match will proceed until 10.30am or until a result is achieved, but no match will proceed after 10.30am.

### **REGULATION GAME - Juniors:**

- (a) It shall become a regulation game when the Umpire terminates play due to adverse weather or ground conditions after three completed innings OR a total of forty - five minutes playing time for U 11/Rookie Ball U 13's and sixty – five minutes for U15's and U17's.
- (b) If in the opinion of the umpire and/or coaches a doubt arises as to the ground conditions being not fit for play then the game will be declared a No Game and each team will awarded one point. Coaches are to ensure that all players in attendance be named on the Match Report Card.

## **19. TEAMS BATTING THROUGH LINE-UP – UNDER 11/ROOKIE BALL, UNDER 13's, UNDER 15's, UNDER 17's**

Teams are to bat through the line-ups. (e.g.) If there are 12 players in the team then the team is to bat 1 to 12 and keep the batting order the same regardless of the fielding nine or bench players.

## **20. SUBSTITUTION OF PLAYERS – UNDER 11/ROOKIE BALL, UNDER 13's, UNDER 15's, UNDER 17's**

There is no limit to the number of times a player can come on and off the bench (substituted). The batting order is to remain the same as per rule 19. Players should be rotated at the change of innings. Coaches are encouraged to rotate bench players as often as possible to allow as much on field involvement as possible for all players.

## **21. MIDWEEK NIGHT GAMES – PLAYER ELIGIBILITY**

Under 15 & U13

For midweek night games any player that played in a higher grade on the previous Saturday and is eligible to play in a lower age group will NOT be permitted to play in the following midweek night games.

### **MIDWEEK NIGHT GAMES PITCHING RESTRICTIONS (NOTE – Adopted in 2015)**

For Under 15 Night Games - If any pitcher exceeds 55 pitches (maximum 70) then three (3) full days rest before pitching (cannot then pitch on Saturday)

If any pitcher pitches 54 or less then able to pitch on Saturday as normal  
For Under 13 Night Games - If any pitcher exceeds 45 pitches (maximum 60)

then three (3) full days rest before pitching (cannot then pitch on Saturday)  
If any pitcher pitches 44 or less then able to pitch on Saturday as normal

For Rookie Ball Night Games - If any pitcher exceeds 35 pitches (maximum 50) then three (3) full days rest before pitching (cannot then pitch on Saturday)

If any pitcher pitches 34 or less then able to pitch on Saturday as normal

