



Playing Rules, Policies & Procedures

Season 2025/26

WARNING ABOUT INHERENT DANGERS OF BASEBALL

The rules and procedures issued by BASEBALL NSW are designed to maximise the enjoyment, fairness and safety of our game. Officials and players should be aware that baseball, just like all sports, will always have inherent dangers. Some of these dangers arise from batted balls and collisions of players. Care should be taken by all concerned to minimize such dangers through the use of appropriate equipment (including protective equipment), proper training methods and awareness of the risks.

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Abbreviations

OBR -- Official Rules of Baseball as published by MLB.

NSWBL -- New South Wales Baseball League Inc. Also known as Baseball NSW (BASEBALL NSW).

SLSC -- NSWBL State League Standing Committee.



NSWSL Club -- A club registered as a member of the SLSC also referred to as "Club".

NSWSL -- New South Wales State League

NSWBUA -- New South Wales Baseball Umpires Association Inc.

Tribunal -- BASEBALL NSW Tribunal.

CM -- Competition Manager

SLDP -- State League Disciplinary Panel

1. **RULES AND PROCEDURES** These rules and procedures will govern the NSWSL Competition. They should be read in conjunction with the OBR and if in conflict, these rules shall take precedence. The Competition Manager will resolve any exemptions or queries arising from matters not included in these Rules.
 - 1.1 No alteration to the playing schedule or venues is permitted without the approval of the SLSC.
 - 1.2 The 2025-26 NSW State League Season will be 21 Rounds + 3 Finals Series Rounds. This format will be in effect for 3 seasons, inclusive of 2025-26, and will not be eligible for reformatting until the conclusion of the 2027-28 Season.
 - 1.3 Playing times will vary according to the draw. The SLSC may make alterations to game times when necessary. Weekend Games: U18, 3rd & 2nd grade – 2 ¼ hours OR 9 innings. First Grade Wednesday Night Games will be 2 ½ hours OR 9 innings. First Grade weekend games will follow OBR.
 - 1.4 The **Scheduled Finishing Time** will be as indicated in Rule 1.2. However, during daylight saving in NSW and where the preceding game finished later than the scheduled time, the **Scheduled Finishing Time** will be adjusted by adding the normal game time as per Rule 1.2 to the new starting time for that game. The following games will commence 15 minutes after the completion of the previous game.
 - 1.5 The top half of an inning will NOT commence ten (10) minutes or less before the Scheduled Finishing Time as indicated above. However, where an inning is NOT completed at the Scheduled Finishing Time, play shall continue until the bottom half of the inning is completed or the team batting in the bottom half of the inning has scored the winning run.
 - 1.6 It shall be a regulation game in first (1st) grade (weekend) as defined by the **OBR Rule 7.01 (c) (1) (2) (3)**, and in all other grades, including mid-week games, where the Umpire in Chief certifies that sixty (60) minutes or five (5) innings of play have been completed from the scheduled start time (or start time as advised by Umpire in Chief) (4 ½ innings where the team leading is batting last.).
 - 1.7 It shall be a regulation game as defined in the OBR if one team leads by ten (10) runs after seven (7) innings **or by fifteen (15 runs) after five (5) innings. This applies to all grades.**
 - 1.8 Limits on Warm-Up Pitches – Unless a pitcher enters a game to replace a pitcher who has been injured or ejected, they shall be permitted a maximum of 60 seconds including a minimum of three (3) warm-up pitches. This same time limit shall apply to pitchers warming up prior to the start of each inning.
 - i. Should either team take longer than 60 seconds to make the changeover between innings, penalties will be invoked as per.
 - a. On the first occasion, the Team Manager will be given a warning by the Plate Umpire.
 - b. Any further transgressions shall result in a called strike (if it is the batting team that offends) or a called ball (if it is the pitching team which offends).
 - c. The 60-second time limit commences immediately after the third out of the previous inning is completed.

- ii. The active pitcher will be permitted to warm up prior to taking the mound by throwing in foul territory but beyond the 1st and 3rd base areas toward the outfield.

Umpires should use discretion to prevent conflict when applying this rule.

- 1.9 Extra Innings **OBR Rule 7.01(b)** will be in effect for **regular season games only**.
 - i. The rule surrounds a runner starting on second base to begin the top of the 10th inning.
- 1.10 Regarding Mound Visits, **OBR Rule 5.10 (m)** will be in effect. Each team is allowed 4 mound visits per 9-inning game
- 1.11 *Rules listed in OBR 2024 that will **NOT** apply to the 2025-26 NSW State League rules.*
 - i. **Rule 4.03(c) (4)** specifies that a position player may only pitch when their team is losing by equal to or more than eight (8) runs, when their team is winning by equal to or more than ten (10) runs in the ninth inning, or in extra innings.
 - ii. **Rule 2.03** to reflect the new measurements of first, second and third bases.
 - iii. **Rule 5.02(c)** to reflect the new parameters that govern defensive restrictions (ie: defensive shift positioning)
 - iv. **Pitch Timer or Pitch Clock rules.** (<https://www.mlb.com/glossary/rules/pitch-timer>)
 - v. **Rule 5.10 (g)** reflects the 3-batter minimum rule.
- 2. **GAME PRELIMINARIES - FITNESS OF GROUND.** The fitness of the ground for play will be decided by the authorities controlling the ground, the team managers, or in the event of the managers disagreeing, by the Umpire in Chief, in that order. The safety of players, officials and spectators shall be the primary concern of the officials controlling either the ground or the game. Games shall not commence, or continue, if there is a foreseeable risk of injury occurring to any player, official or spectator.
- 2.1 It is the HOME CLUB's responsibility to notify the **Wet Weather Contact on 0490 017 439, the Umpires Co-Ordinator on 0431 552 303 and the opposition** as early as possible of the closure. Failure to notify 90 minutes prior to game time will result in the Club being responsible for the Umpire Fees.
- 2.2 If a ground is closed, Clubs may, with the approval of the CM, move the game(s) to another venue. The game can only be moved on the same day, and the umpires must be in agreement. It is in the interests of the League, and the game of baseball, that the game(s) must be played if possible. The decision of the Competition Manager is final.
- 2.3 When a game is NOT being played because of the unfitness of the ground, the result shall be declared a "no game". The CM shall retain the right to reschedule the game if appropriate, and such a decision will be final (refer to washout round protocols).

3. POINT SCORE.

- 3.1 To determine semi-finalists in all SBL grades, the percentages will be calculated based on the results of games played and the number of games won, lost, tied, or forfeited. Where two or more teams are tied, the positions will be decided by:

- i. Head-to-head results in all games between all the teams involved.
- ii. If still tied, the lowest ratio of (the number of runs scored against them) divided by (defensive innings played) in the games between the tied teams.
- iii. If still tied, go to the runs allowed by each of the tied teams against the highest-ranked team, then the second-ranked team, and so on (both teams are required to have played the same number of games against the relevant team. If this does not decide the tie, proceed to point (d)).
- iv. Any further tie-break required would be based on the ratio (runs scored)/(runs conceded + runs scored).

3.2 The Club Championship shall be determined by applying the points to each game as follows:

- i. 150 points for 1st Grade (Mid-week and weekend).
- ii. 100 points for 2nd Grade.
- iii. 50 points for 3rd Grade.
- iv. 75 points for Under 18.
- v. Total = 525 points possible per round.
- vi. If a tied score, points are split evenly.
- vii. Bonus 100 points for a clean sweep in all grades/games.
- viii. Final Club Points equals the total club points for each grade divided by games the club played in that grade multiplied by the total games as per the draw for the season for that grade and then cumulated for a final total club points.

4. UNIFORMS.

- 4.1 All affiliated clubs shall register the colours, logos and design of their uniform and warm-up jackets with BASEBALL NSW. Only these shall be worn while on the field of play. No changes to the colours or design of the uniform may be made without the approval of the SLSC.
- 4.2 Only warm-up jackets of the players' registered club shall be worn on the field of play. Pitchers and relieved pitchers shall be allowed to wear warm-up Club jackets in the batting box or on the field of play, and where circumstances warrant. Other players may be allowed to wear warm-up jackets at the Umpire in Chief's discretion.
- 4.3 Each uniform is required to have **an individual number (no duplications)** not less than 150mm in size that can be seen clearly from outside the field of play.
- 4.4 Baseball caps will form part of the uniform and must be worn at all times except when the batting helmet is worn.
- 4.5 Clubs may add only three (3) sponsor patches to the uniform. The patches can only be applied to one sleeve, the back of the uniform and the left breast. The maximum area allowed for such logo is 80cm².
- 4.6 Alcohol and Tobacco advertising is not permitted. The NSWBL reserves the right to refuse other advertising which it considers to be not in the best interest of the sport. Its decision will be final.
- 4.7 Clubs can use an alternate uniform with approval from the competition manager (i.e., charity day).

5. EQUIPMENT.

- 5.1 For midweek games, both clubs will supply new match balls. For weekend games, the home club supplies the match balls for all grades. All match balls will be of the same brand (as approved by BASEBALL NSW) in any game under the control of the SLSC.
- 5.2 Only non-metal bats, i.e., wood or wood composite may be used for all NSW State League 1st, 2nd and 3rd grade games.

- i. **BBCOR Bat Rules & Regulations (via 2026 U16 & U18 AYC Technical Norms)**
 - a. Composite and aluminium bats are permitted in the **Under-18 NSW State League Competition ONLY**, provided they meet the following standards:
 - It shall not be more than 36 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.
 - 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 must meet the Batted Ball Coefficient of Restitution (BBCOR) performance standard, and such bats shall be clearly labelled with a silkscreen or other permanent certification mark.
 - The certification mark must be rectangular, a minimum of half an inch on each side, and located on the barrel of the bat in a contrasting colour.
 - Aluminium and composite bats must be permanently marked as to their material makeup (i.e., aluminium or composite). This marking must be a silkscreen or other permanent certification mark, a minimum of half an inch on each side, and clearly visible on the barrel in a contrasting colour.
 - ii. **Verification Requirement:**
 - a. All teams and coaching staff are responsible for verifying that each player's bat meets the above legal requirements prior to game use. Umpires or league officials may inspect bats at any time.
 - iii. **Penalties for Breach:**
 - a. If a player is found using an illegal bat—whether intentionally or unintentionally—both the player and the team's manager will be ejected immediately from the game and suspended for two rounds.

- 5.3 **Protective Equipment:** All clubs and players are required to provide safety and playing equipment as required by the NSWBL.
- 5.4 Only two (2) ear flap batting helmets in solid or "club" colours may be worn by batters/ runners.
- 5.5 Clubs that have bat persons are to ensure that they wear appropriate fitting protective equipment, including a two-eared helmet and protector.
- 5.6 Catchers and any person warming up the pitcher are required to wear either an approved facemask with a throat protector or a "hockey-style" helmet.
- 5.7 All Base Coaches **MUST** wear as minimum protection, a catcher-style "skull cap" while coaching either 1st or 3rd base.
- 5.8 Any person not complying with these "protection" rules will not be permitted to participate in the game.
- 5.9 The **Official Game Baseball** for the 2025-26 NSW State League will be the **Marucci MBP9**.
 - i. ***This is the only ball approved for use during the 2025-26 State League season and will be used during the Finals Series.***

6. PROHIBITED SUBSTANCES.

- 6.1 Smoking/Vaping and Alcohol - A player, team official or umpire participating in a game shall not use tobacco products (Chewing Tabaco/DIP) on the field of play. This prohibition shall also apply to “warm-up” areas, batting practice areas, dugouts and all surrounding areas including spectator areas.
- 6.2 A player, team official or umpire whilst in uniform shall not consume liquor in or near the playing field where a game is in progress or is about to commence.
- 6.3 PENALTY for breaches of 6.1 & 6.2: **The offending club will be fined \$100, and the offending person removed from the game and cited to appear at BASEBALL NSW Judiciary.**
- 6.4 **Drugs** – The Anti-Doping policy that has been adopted by the ABF will be enforced.
- 6.5 Any player who is required by doctors’ prescription to treat a medical problem with proscribed drugs as defined by ASDA guidelines shall be registered with BASEBALL NSW and or the ABF. Players are to forward details accompanied by a letter from the players’ doctor to BASEBALL NSW.
- 6.6 Clubs are to ensure that all players who have queries regarding prescribed drugs are advised to consult the [ASDA website](#) and if further information is required, contact the drug advisory hotline on 1800 020 056.

7. LEGISLATION.

- 7.1 The Commonwealth Sex Discrimination Act 1984 and the NSW Anti-Discrimination Act 1977 (as amended) particularly Section 221 now includes discrimination on the grounds of sexual harassment in sport, have been accepted by the ABF and BASEBALL NSW. Reports on any matter of this nature are to be referred immediately to the [Member Protection Officer of BASEBALL NSW](#) for attention.
- 7.2 Child Protection (Prohibited Employment) Act 1998 – The Working with Children Check requires that all clubs with players under the age of 18 require that Coaches and Managers (whether paid or unpaid) declare whether they are a prohibited person under the terms of the Act.
- 7.3 Any suspected breach of BASEBALL NSW Policy regarding inappropriate behaviour (e.g., harassment, discrimination) should be referred to the Member Protection Officer of BASEBALL NSW. Details of the resolution process can be found in the [National Integrity Framework Member Protection Policy \(July 2022\)](#).

8. REGISTRATIONS.

- 8.1 Eligibility – Unless otherwise authorised by the SLSC, each affiliate SBL Club will have to enter four (4) teams (1st, 2nd, 3rd and Under 18) to be eligible to compete in the SBL.
- 8.2 The minimum age of players registering is 15 years of age on 31st December in each competition year. (Exemptions may be requested, in writing, to the BASEBALL NSW Technical Committee prior to the commencement of the season). Players may be registered but cannot play until the player reaches the age of 15.
 - i. The minimum age for a bat person is 12 years of age.

- 8.3 All Under 18 Grade players must be Under 18 years of age on 31st December of each competition year.
- 8.4 Each SBL Club shall register the name, address, and date of birth of every player, coach (including registration number), manager, bat person and scorer into the Baseball NSW-approved **database by the date advised by the CM prior to the commencement of the season. An Excel and PDF copy of Block Registration must be submitted to the CM by the required time.**
- 8.5 Late registrations (i.e., any player/official not listed on the original block registration) may be accepted provided that the following procedures have been followed:
- i. Players' details must be entered into the relevant database.
 - ii. **An updated Block Registration must be submitted to the CM.**
- 8.6 All clubs shall register their players, coaches, and managers. The minimum number of players being registered is to be at **least 45 players.**
- 8.7 Registrations will not be accepted after 31st December in each competition year, except by the decision of the **CM**, which shall be final.
- 8.8 Only persons whose registrations have been approved by the NSWBL may participate in any competition games. The NSWBL retains the right to refuse any registration, or any registration in a particular grade, at their discretion, and this decision shall be final.
- 8.9 **IMPORT RESTRICTIONS**
- i. All requests for import exemptions will be reviewed by the technical committee. Clubs are required to submit all requests for exemptions including the following information:
 - a. The player's entire playing history including year, club/school, and level.
 - b. Copy of both visa and passport
 - c. Summary of the player's reasons for travel to Australia
 - ii. Exemptions will only be granted to players whose primary purpose for being in Australia is not related to baseball. This may be study or work.
 - iii. Players who are deemed by the technical committee to be of a professional standard will be deemed and import and included in the 2 players per club restriction regardless of visa status.
 - iv. Players who have resided in Australia for two consecutive calendar years shall no longer be considered imports regardless of playing level.
 - v. ***The total number of innings pitched by players deemed to be imports in any one series of the regular season will be 9.***
 - vi. If after an exemption is granted, it is found that the player did not disclose substantial playing history that club shall forfeit 9-0 any games that the player has participated in.
- 8.10 **A team shall be debited with a forfeit of nine to nil (9-0) for any game in which an unregistered player, coach or manager participates. The club will be fined \$300 for breach of any part of Rule 8.**

9. TRANSFERS.

- 9.1 Any player, coach or manager, registering with a CM club who has previously played for another CM club, must secure a clearance from the previous CM club stating that they have cleared all obligations to that club. The new club shall be responsible for ensuring that there are no outstanding obligations.
- i. **Note: Once a problem has been notified, the player, coach or manager CANNOT take any part in any game until the matter is resolved. Penalty – Forfeit of nine to nil (9-0) to the non-offending team.**
- 9.2 Any players, coaches etc., registered in another state **will not** participate in any competition game until they have been cleared by that State's controlling body, under penalty of the games in which they participated in being declared a forfeit of nine to nil (9-0) to the non-offending team. Players MAY NOT be registered in more than one State at the same time. Players moving from one state to another must obtain a clearance before participating.
- 9.3 A player, coach etc. may not play or coach with more than one CM Club during the same season, without the approval of the NSWBL. No change may be made after the completion of Round 9 games.
- 9.4 When any registered person changes their address, the club is required to update the relevant database within 14 days.

10. MEDICAL

- 10.1 Before registering to play, all people should notify their club officials and the BASEBALL NSW of any condition that may affect their performance or participation in the sport of baseball. Such conditions may include, for example, pregnancy, epilepsy and diabetes.
- 10.2 Players or officials with such a condition shall seek medical advice in relation to their continuing participation in the sport.
- 10.3 Information relating to an individual's medical condition shall be held confidentially (unless this is not required) but may be used by the organisation for administrative, insurance, legal or related purposes.
- 10.4 All people who register with BASEBALL NSW agree that they shall NOT contravene any medical advice in relation to their continued participation and when required, to provide a medical certificate approving their continued participation in the sport.
- 10.5 Baseball NSW will NOT be held responsible for the players or individuals' failure to seek and follow appropriate medical advice.
- 10.6 **Infection Rule:** Any player who has any visible signs of any body fluids, must stem the flow of these fluids and remove or clean or cover any visible sign of these fluids from clothing and equipment. While the player receives such treatment, the game may continue with a temporary player for a maximum of 6 defensive outs of the player's team. If the treated player is unable to return to the game, a substitution of this player must be made under OABR 3.03. Where the nature of the incident is obviously serious enough to prevent the player from returning to the game, an immediate substitution is required to avoid abuse of this rule.

- 10.7 A temporary player under rule 10.4 may be any player, whether a reserve or a player previously substituted in this game, provided the player is not:
- 10.8 The pitcher who is currently under a rest period as required by Rule 16.
- 10.9 A player who has been ejected from any game in the current competition round.
- 10.10 The temporary player for the player receiving treatment may not be replaced by another temporary player.
- 10.11 All clubs should have at their home ground a basic 1st Aid Kit for use if required. BNSW highly recommends the availability of a defibrillator. The link to apply for a Government Grant for a defibrillator is here:
<https://sport.nsw.gov.au/clubs/grants/defibrillator>.

11. UMPIRES.

- 11.1 Official Umpires will be appointed to all games by the NSW Umpires Association Inc. SBL Clubs shall not interfere in any way with appointments. The Umpires Co-Ordinator will notify the CM of any shortages of umpires and this information will be passed on to the clubs as soon as practical.
- 11.2 In the event of an Official Umpire not attending at the time set down for the game to commence, or being unable to continue, an umpire, or umpires shall be appointed by the managers of the opposing sides, and the game shall continue. Every effort shall be made to appoint accredited umpires by the NSWBUA who shall receive payment.
- 11.3 Umpires officiating in a game are required to sign the official BASEBALL NSW Result Sheet, which the scorer will complete and endorse with the result of the game and any ejections, injuries, or protests.
- 11.4 An umpire shall forward to BASEBALL NSW, by email, a report on any ejection, citing or protest by COB on the day following the game.

12. COACHES.

- 12.1 All coaches must be accredited to the levels as required by BASEBALL NSW. **(Currently, a Level B is required for on field managers for all teams in the State League.)** Exemptions to this requirement may be granted by the BASEBALL NSW Technical Committee. **PENALTY:** The offending club shall be fined \$350.
- 12.2 **Any accredited coach**, registered with a Club, but not listed on the lineup, may assume the role of a coach during the game; however, they may not participate as a player.
- 12.3 **Any approach to the Umpire must come from the on-field manager, as listed on the lineup.**

13. DEFENSIVE VISITS.

- 13.1 On a second visit in the same inning to the same pitcher, coaches must directly approach the Umpire in Chief if the pitcher is moving to another defensive position. Should the coach cross the foul line and not directly approach the Umpire in Chief, the pitcher is to be removed from the game.
- 13.2 There is no restriction on the number of players who may approach the mound conference during a visit.

Please note that there have been several changes over the past 5 years that are covered in the OBR Rule 5.10 – Substitutions and Pitching Changes (including visits to the mound). It is every coach's responsibility to be aware of these rules.

14. SCORERS.

- 14.1 Clubs playing in this Competition are required to provide an official scorer for each grade.
- 14.2 Each club shall appoint an accredited scorer as the Club's Scoring Co-Ordinator.
- 14.3 Scorers shall be seated together in a designated area behind home plate where possible.
- 14.4 The home team is required to provide a table, chairs and shelter that provide adequate cover from all forms of weather.
- 14.5 Venues for night games shall have adequate lighting in the designated scorer's area for scorers to be able to see their scorebooks.
- 14.6 Club scorers are to ensure that all relevant details (injuries, ejections etc.) are recorded on the game result sheet presented to the Umpire(s) for signature.

15. NOTIFICATION OF RESULTS.

- 15.1 Each home CM Club shall upload a result sheet via email to stateleague@baseballnsw.com by noon on Thursday for midweek games and by 12 noon on Mondays for weekend games.
- 15.2 Penalty: Failure to comply with these rules will result in a fine of \$50 for each offence.
- 15.3 Results of all games will be available on the BASEBALL NSW website: and, on the State Baseball League Facebook page.

16. PITCHING RESTRICTIONS. (MLB PitchSmart Guidelines.)

- 16.1 This policy does not differentiate between genders and abilities.

- 16.2 The word Assignment means any game or trial situation in which a player delivers a pitch or the aggregate of all pitches thrown in a single game.
- 16.3 If any pitcher delivers one pitch, they shall be charged for the relative Assignment.
- 16.4 A pitcher reaching the maximum number of pitches for a **MAXIMUM** Assignment is to be removed from the game once finishing the batter in the box. However, if the pitcher retires that batter as the 3rd out of an inning, that pitcher is entitled to remain as a batter only.
- 16.5 A Balk Pitch delivered to the plate whether it is hit safely or not shall be valid for the purpose of recording the “number of pitches”.
- 16.6 A “no pitch” i.e., Batter steps out of the batter’s box and the pitcher delivers the pitch, shall not be included in the pitch count.
- 16.7 In the event any Umpire calls an “Illegal Pitch”, the pitched ball will count toward the pitcher’s count.
- 16.8 The Umpire has the authority to police the Pitching Rule; however, coaches are responsible for complying with these rules.
- 16.9 **Pitchers Game or Trial Situation.**
- i. The primary risk management components of this policy concern:
 - a. The number of pitches thrown (classified as Assignments).
 - b. The desirable rest periods following an assignment.
 - c. The relationship between pitching and catching.

The Assignment Table is based on a player’s age on the day of the assignment

Pitch Count Limits and Required Rest Recommendations						
The Pitcher may Finish the Batter						
Age	Daily Limit	Short	Moderate	Substantial	Major	Maximum
Days Rest		0 Days	1 Day	2 Days	3 Days	4 Days
15-16	95	1-30	31-45	46-60	61-75	76+
17-18	105	1-30	31-45	46-60	61-80	81+
19-22	120	1-30	31-45	46-60	61-80	81-105
23+	N/A					

16.10 Pitching Assignments and Rest Periods

- i. Rest periods relate to Pitching workload (pitch counts), as outlined above.
- ii. No rest is required after a **SHORT** assignment.
- iii. A day of rest is defined as **ONE FULL CALENDAR DAY** and not calculated as a 24-hour period.
- iv. **Players aged 22 and under** must adhere strictly to the **PitchSmart rest schedule** based on total pitches thrown. There is no differentiation between playing positions or additional rest restrictions beyond PitchSmart guidance.
- v. **If a pitcher reaches the pitch limit for a rest category during an at-bat**, they may complete that at-bat before being removed.
- vi. No player may pitch and then catch in the same game.

16.11 Junior Players

- i. Any player under 18 years of age (as at 31st December in the current playing season) shall be classified as a junior.
- ii. Should a junior pitcher be selected in a team above their age group, pitching will be applicable to the pitchers age, not to the League or Tournament in which they are playing.
- iii. A Junior Player:
 - a. Can come to the mound from any position provided they have properly warmed up.
 - b. May only undertake ONE Pitching Assignment in any one game.
 - c. Having pitched; cannot catch in the same day.
 - d. Having caught; may pitch on the same day, but only for a MINOR Assignment.

16.12 Penalties for any breaches of Rule 16.

- i. 9-0 forfeit to the offending team and a \$100 fine for the first breach in any season
- ii. Any subsequent breach by the club in the same season will also result in a 9-0 forfeit to the offending team, a \$300 fine and suspension of the team head coach.
- iii. All notice of breaches is to be brought to the CM's attention within 3 days of the game.

17. DESIGNATED HITTER

17.1 The Designated Hitter Rules refers to 2025 OBR [Rule 5.11](#).

- i. Basic Principles:
 - a. Where a DH is to be utilised, **DH MUST** be named as such in the starting line-up.
 - b. Where a team is seeking to utilise the SP as the DH, the player needs to be **NAMED TWICE** on the line-up. Once as the DH **AND** once as the SP.
 - c. The named DH must come to bat at least once unless the opposing team changes pitchers, or is otherwise ill, injured etc.
 - d. The player listed as the **Designated Hitter in the starting lineup** must record **at least one plate appearance** before they are eligible to be substituted, unless removed due to injury.

- This plate appearance can occur as the DH or after entering the game in a **defensive position** (e.g., pitcher or fielder).
 - e. Once the DH moves to a defensive position, or once the Pitcher moves to a defensive position, the DH role is terminated.
 - f. The Pitcher may only Pinch Hit or Pinch Run for the DH.
- ii. With regards to the SP/DH single player:
- a. Once substituted from their starting pitching assignment they may continue to act as the DH for subsequent relief pitchers that come from the bench.
 - b. While maintaining their role as the SP, the DH may be substituted for (noting compliance with the DH requirements) and the SP can continue to pitch. However, once the player is substituted as the pitcher they are to be removed from the game.

18. ELIGIBILITY OF PLAYERS

18.1 Only registered players of the NSWBL are eligible to compete and it is the intention that any player shall NOT appear in more than one (1) SBL team starting lineup in the same round.

- i. 3rd Grade substitutes must be 3rd Grade reserves or Under 18 players from the same round.
- ii. 2nd Grade substitutes must be 2nd Grade reserves or 3rd Grade or Under 18 players from the same round.
- iii. 1st Grade reserves may be any player registered with the Club.
- iv. If a player has not participated in a lower Grade in the same round, they must be listed on the lineup as a fresh reserve.
- v. **U18 Double Up Rule - No more than 3 Under 18 players may start in a 1st or 2nd-grade game as well as a U/18 game in the same round. The names of the U/18 players being doubled up must be marked with an asterisk on the team sheet of the 1st or 2nd grade team which is handed to the umpire at the plate meeting.**
- vi. Reserves in mid-week games can be listed as "CLUB".
- vii. Any exceptions to Rule 18 will be at the discretion of the CM. Verification will need to be provided by the requesting club, suitable to the SLDP otherwise a 9-0 forfeit may be awarded to the offending team.

18.2 The names of the starting team and fresh reserves must appear on the original team lineup sheet. Any player who is scheduled to start in a higher-grade game on any day in the same weekend will not be permitted to enter a game in progress. To be eligible to enter a game they must be listed as a fresh reserve or have played in a lower-grade game in the same round.

18.3 In the event of an injury or the ejection of a player(s), and no other player is available, a replaced player(s) may return to the field of play. However, they may not return to be part of the battery, and any ejected player WILL NOT be permitted to return under this rule.

18.4 Any player who has participated or will participate in a lower-grade game in the same round shall not enter a game in progress until after three (3) innings have been completed.

18.5 Where a club does not have enough players to have four fresh starting lineups in a weekend, players may be allowed to “double up” subject to the following conditions:

- i. First grade only may use a DH and may have 1 (ONE) fresh pitcher on the bench.
- ii. Players may only appear in the starting line-up in 2 grades and may not have entered another previous game as a substitute.
- iii. The reason for doubling up must be submitted in writing (email or SMS) to the CM prior to the game.
- iv. Failure to comply with conditions (a) to (c) will result in the game in which the “double up” occurred being declared a forfeit and a nine-to-nil win recorded to the non-offending team. The offending team shall also be fined \$100.
- v. All notice of breaches is to be brought to the CM’s attention within 3 days of the game.

18.6 Any player that appears on the ABL 22-man roster excluding development players can only play in 1st grade team. Nominated pitchers in the ABL 22-man roster can DH and play as a positional player in 2nd grade only. Any player age-eligible can still play in the under-18 competitions without restriction.

CLUB PENALTY FOR BREACHES OF RULE 18 SHALL BE THAT: the game in which the player participates will be declared a forfeit and a nine to nil (9-0) win recorded to the non-offending team. The club shall also incur a fine of \$100.

19. FINAL SERIES

19.1 A separate set of Rules and Procedures will be issued each season prior to the commencement of the Final Series.

19.2 If games are washed out during the Final Series, the Procedures as listed in the Final Series Schedule shall be followed.

19.3 To be eligible to play in the Final Series, a player:

- i. Must be listed on the Clubs Block Registration List as held by the CM.
- ii. Unless authorised by the CM, must have participated for that club in at least 50% of the **competition games** played by the club during the current season.
- iii. Non-ABL 1st Grade pitchers must have participated in 50% of all eligible rounds.

19.4 The grade in which a player shall be eligible to participate in the Final Series shall be determined according to the following criteria:

- i. Each round a player’s grade shall be determined by the highest grade in which the player formed part of the starting lineup (or participated in the game as a fresh reserve) i.e., they had not already participated in any other grade in that round.
- ii. The player shall be eligible for playoffs in the grade in which they played the majority of their games during the season.
- iii. Forfeits are not included in the games used to calculate qualifications.
- iv. U18 players doubling up may only participate in the higher-grade playoffs in which they qualified.

19.5 ABL/TEAM AUSTRALIA PLAYER COVER RULE

In cases where clubs in the NSW State League need to cover players who are participating in the professional Australian Baseball League (ABL) and for Team Australia (TA), the following provisions shall apply:

- i. **Covering Players:** Teams may select players from lower grades within their State League Club to cover for a 1st Grade player who is fulfilling his obligations to the ABL/TA, provided that:
 - a. The covering player meets all eligibility requirements for the grade they are covering.
 - b. The covering player's selection does not violate any rules regarding player eligibility set forth by the State League.
 - c. The club notifies the State League of their intention to utilise the ABL/TA player cover rule.
 - d. The covering player must participate in the nominated game.
- ii. **Notification of Coverage:** Teams must submit a covering player form to the league authorities indicating:
 - a. The name of the covering player.
 - b. The grade of the covering player.
 - c. The name of the ABL/TA player being covered for.
 - d. The specific game(s) for which the covering player is selected.
 - e. **ABL/TAPC** Form filled out, dated and signed by a nominated member of the club head coach or executive committee.
 - f. This information must be indicated on the scoresheet, which will be recorded on GameChanger by the team scorer(s).
- iii. **Reporting Timeline:** Covers must be reported to the NSW State League Competition Manager prior to 11:59 PM on Monday following the weekend's games a team intends to use a cover for where the ABL/TA Player Cover Rule is intended to be used.
 - a. Failure to report within this timeframe results in the player covering having that round counted against his eligibility in lower grades.
 - b. **NOTE:** If a club anticipates a player being on an ABL/TA Roster for the entirety of the ABL/TA season, they may designate a coverage player for the entirety of the season, OR each round they intend to use that player as an ABL/TA cover player.
- iv. **Documentation and Reporting:** Failure to report within this timeframe (unless a player is called up to the ABL/TA after the window has expired) will result in the player covering having that round counted against his eligibility in lower grades.
- v. **Approval Process:** The NSW State League Competition Manager will review covering player requests and retain evidence (ABL/TA Player Cover Form) that the cover was indicated within the required reporting window. The CM does not need to "approve" requests prior to game time for the report to be considered valid so long as the form was submitted in a timely manner, and all conditions of the cover are met.

- vi. **Duration of Coverage:** Players may cover for ABL/TA players in 1st Grade and subsequently cover players in higher grades for any round that occurs during the ABL/TA season. (i.e.: 2nd Grader covers for 1st Grade ABL/TA Player, 3rd Grade Player may cover in 2nd Grade for covering 2nd Grade Player.)
- a. The ABL/TA season may include any Exhibition Rounds where rostered players are required to attend, as well as any postseason play.
- vii. **Qualification for Finals Series:** Players who cover for ABL/TA players in higher grades for an entire ABL/TA season and subsequently wish to participate in the finals series of a lower grade must meet the following criteria:
- a. The player must have played a minimum of [50%] of eligible played regular season games in the lower grade to be eligible for finals participation.
 - **NOTE: If a player is designated as a player cover for 7 rounds, and all 21 rounds are played, they must have appeared in no less than 7 of the 14 remaining team games in the lower grade to be considered eligible.**
 - b. Any exemption requests for approval for participation in the finals series must be submitted to the Competition Manager, whose decision will be final.
- viii. **Review and Amendments:** These covering rules shall be subject to periodic review and may be amended as necessary by league authorities to ensure fairness and integrity in player participation across grades.
- ix. **Wednesday Games:** Midweek games will remain as club games throughout the season.
- a. Wednesday Games: Midweek games during the ABL/TA season are considered eligible games for ABL/TA players to participate in unless their ABL club/TA does not allow them to play.
 - b. Midweek games are considered "club games" and do not count towards the ABL/TA player cover designation.
 - c. Midweek games have no effect on specific grade eligibility for players. Whether a player starts, enters the game as an injury replacement, or is substituted after the for non-injury reasons, their grade eligibility remains unaffected.
- 19.6 Position players must have participated in 40% of all games they are eligible to play in. Midweek games during the ABL/TA season count as eligible games.
- 19.7 ABL/TA Pitchers must have pitched in **9 games** to be eligible. (If a pitcher can provide evidence that they have been restricted from a State, National and or Professional Organisation to be supplied to the CM within 14 days of the notification).

- i. Eligible games will be determined as all games prior to and post-ABL/TA participation.
- ii. Dual State registered players are not eligible to qualify under rules 19.5(a) & (b) and must qualify for the final series as per rules 19.3 (i), (ii), and (iii).

19.8 Representative Under 18 Players (NSW, NSW Country, Baseball Australia, and Sydney Blue Sox) may not play in the 3rd grade competition. However, representatives under 16 Players are permitted to play in the 3rd-grade competition (this refers to the final series only).

19.9 A player qualified in a lower grade is eligible to play in a higher grade in the Final Series as per 19.4 (iv).

19.10 Players who, due to extenuating circumstances, do not meet the qualification criteria for the Final Series may be considered for qualification by the Competition Manager (CM) immediately prior to the Final Series.

- i. Extenuating circumstances include, but are not limited to:
 - a. **Late Registrations:**
 - Players registered late and, as a result, were unable to play the required number of games.
 - b. **Weather-Related Disruptions:**
 - Players affected by washouts or cancellations due to inclement weather conditions, resulting in the inability to play the requisite number of games.
 - These disruptions must be documented and verified by match officials or relevant authorities.
 - c. **Opposition Forfeits:**
 - Players who missed games because their scheduled opponents forfeited the match.
 - The forfeits must be officially recorded and acknowledged by the CM.
 - d. **Injuries:**
 - Players who were injured and therefore unable to participate in the required number of games.
 - To qualify for an exemption, players must provide sufficient proof of injury, such as a doctor's notice, medical certificate, or any other relevant medical documentation.
 - e. **Other Valid Reasons:**
 - Any other circumstances deemed reasonable and valid by the CM, which prevented the player from meeting the qualification criteria.
 - These circumstances will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis, with consideration of supporting evidence and documentation.

20. ON-FIELD BEHAVIOUR

- 20.1 Wilfully violent or unsportsmanlike action, including unnecessary body contact, abuse of playing equipment or facilities, fighting, or other behaviour considered by an umpire to be dangerous, injurious or to bring the game into criticism or disrepute, will result in the player or team official responsible being ejected from the field and/or cited to appear before the TRIBUNAL.
- 20.2 All registered members are responsible to BASEBALL NSW for their conduct and behaviour at games and events conducted by the League, whether playing or not.
- 20.3 All clubs are required to make their players aware that SPORTING COMPETITORS OWE A DUTY OF CARE TO ONE ANOTHER. There is a fine line between an error in judgment on the field and negligent conduct. Competitors should endeavour to exercise reasonable care not to injure other players in playing a game or match.
- 20.4 **Deliberate Collision:** Clubs are to ensure that all players are aware that intentional contact, under certain circumstances, will NOT be tolerated.
- 20.5 Provision for game situation contact between players should be taken into consideration when an umpire makes any interpretation of this requirement. Any player adjudged by the umpire to have deliberately or recklessly caused a collision to occur should be ejected from the game.

21. SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

- 21.1 All registered club personnel, including players, volunteers and officials are subject to the [BA Social Media Policy](#).
- 21.2 Dispute Management will be handled in accordance with the [Baseball Australia Member Protection Policy](#) as well as the [Baseball Australia Photography Policy](#).

22. PROTESTS & DISPUTES

- 22.1 The provisions of the OABR will apply to all competition games of BASEBALL NSW and in the event of an umpire giving an erroneous decision on a point of law and refusing to alter his decision, although their attention was drawn to the fact at the time, on the field, by the coach/manager of the team which has suffered such wrong decision.
- 22.2 The team so suffering shall have the right to protest to the CM, provided that the intention to protest is indicated to the Umpire in Chief at the time of the disputed decision and before the next ball is pitched or before any intervening play occurs.
- 22.3 The final protest is confirmed with the umpire-in-chief within fifteen (15) minutes of the completion of the game.
- 22.4 A judgment decision by an Umpire will NOT be accepted as grounds for a protest.

- 22.5 This process does not apply to breaches of Rules 16 or 18 which will be dealt with by CM.
- 22.6 Any club wishing the SLDP to adjudicate on any dispute arising from any game shall forward to the SBL CM a clear statement on the matter in dispute. The report, along with the \$100 lodgement fee, shall be received within three (3) days of the game. The \$100 fee shall be forfeited should the protest be considered denied.
- 22.7 Failure to observe the CORRECT PROCEDURE shall render the protest invalid.
- 22.8 The SLDP shall be the authority as to whether a protest is to be upheld and any subsequent decision. They may call upon any person to assist them in any way they consider appropriate.
- 22.9 The SLDP will make the necessary rulings where penalties are not stipulated for rule infringements.
- 22.10 Any breach of Rules 16 and/or 18 will result in a breach notice being issued to the Club concerned.
- i. The club concerned may choose to accept the penalty imposed or contest it at the next SLSC Meeting.
 - ii. If contesting the breach, a written submission explaining the breach must be sent to the CM prior to the next SLSC Meeting. Clubs have the right to appeal any decision of the SLDP to the BNSW Appeals Committee.
- 22.11 Any Club wishing to appeal to the BNSW Appeal Committee shall forward to the CM a clear statement of the grounds for the appeal. The appeal, along with the \$100 lodgement fee, shall be received within three (3) days of the SLDP's original decision. The \$100 will be forfeited should the appeal be dismissed.
- 22.12 The decision of the BNSW Appeals Committee shall be FINAL.
- 22.13 Clubs who are found to breach the Playing Rules more than five (5) times in a season will be asked to show cause for continuation in future seasons. Conditions may be imposed on such a club should they continue in the competition.

23. FORFEITS

- 23.1 **Game forfeited during play:** A forfeited game is a game declared ended by the Umpire in Chief in accordance with the OABR. Umpires are required to submit to the CM a report on such declarations outlining the reasons for the forfeit.
- 23.2 **Game forfeited prior to play:** If a club is unable to field a team of 9 players, having made all reasonable effort, then a forfeit shall be declared. Clubs may "double up" players (with permission of CM), to avoid having to forfeit.
- 23.3 Clubs whose team(s) forfeit will be responsible for the payment of umpire's fees for that game/round. In addition, the club responsible for the forfeit will be fined:
- i. \$50 for the first breach.

- ii. \$100 for the second breach.
- iii. \$200 for each subsequent breach.

23.4 Clubs who forfeit more than five (5) games in a season will be asked to show cause for continuation in future seasons. Conditions may be imposed on such a club should they continue in the Competition.

24. TRIBUNAL

24.1 All participants under the control of BASEBALL NSW will abide by and be subject to the OBR (or suitable addendums), these Playing Rules and any other instruction regarding the conduct of the game of baseball by the NSWBL.

24.2 Any player or team/club official who contravenes these requirements may be:

- i. Ejected from a game by the Umpire.
- ii. Cited by an Umpire for an incident that occurs after the game has been "called".
- iii. Cited by the CM, SLSC or BASEBALL NSW.

24.3 The NSWBL appoints the BASEBALL NSW Tribunal to process all incidents referred to in Rule 24.1.

24.4 When a person is ejected from a game of baseball, or cited, he/she will:

- i. Conform strictly to the OBR.
- ii. Not participate in another game of baseball with a Club, League or Association affiliated with BASEBALL NSW until such time as the matter has been processed by the BASEBALL NSW Tribunal
- iii. Clubs will be issued with a Charge Sheet for the player(s) concerned and will be advised of all applicable penalties and options.
- iv. **Any person who is ejected from a game must leave the field immediately and take no further part in the game. They should change into street clothes and should remain well removed from the team dugout or bullpen areas. This same restriction applies to any person who is serving a suspension.**

25. SEASON AWARDS

25.1 The Coaches **Awards Selection Meeting** will take place **prior to the start of the Finals Series**.

25.2 The winners of the Individual Awards (excluding Team of the Year) will have their ticket to attend to the NSW State League Presentation Night covered by the NSW State League if they choose to attend.

25.3 Annual Awards will be given for the NSW State League Competition in the categories below in each grade (1st, 2nd, 3rd, U18) and shall be judged under the following criteria:

- i. Most Valuable Player of the Season (MVP)
- ii. Lionel Harris Medal (**1st Grade Only**)
- iii. Batting Award.

- iv. Pitching Award.
- v. Albert Pearce Rookie of the Year (**1st Grade Only**)
- vi. Head Coach of the Year
- vii. 1st Grade Team of the Year

The above awards shall be made for each grade conducted in that season of the NSW State League competition.

25.4 Most Valuable Player

- i. For 2nd Grade, 3rd Grade and U18s, the MVP award will be decided by the head coaches during the end-of-season awards meeting following the conclusion of the regular season. Players will be considered based on their overall stats and voted on accordingly.
- ii. The coaches will select a winner and 2 nominees from each grade.
- iii. The MVP Awards will be announced at the annual Baseball New South Wales Awards Night following the conclusion of the Finals Series.

25.5 Lionel Harris Medal

- i. For 1st Grade, the MVP award, or **Lionel Harris Medal**, will be voted on by the coaches after the coaches nominate 5 players as nominees who will then be placed on a ballot form and sent out to the coaches by the Competition Manager following the conclusion of the Coaches Awards Meeting.
- ii. The voting process is as follows:
 - a. Once the nominees are finalised, each club receives one ballot.
 - b. Each club submits their ballot with the players ranked 1-5.
 - c. The votes will be tallied based on a points system, like that of Major League Baseball's MVP Awards (see below table).
 - d. The player who receives the most points will be awarded the Lionel Harris Medal.
 - e. In the event of a tie, there will be Co-Winners of the Lionel Harris Medal.
 - f. The **Lionel Harris Medal** winner will be announced at the annual Baseball New South Wales Awards Night following the conclusion of the Finals Series.

LIONEL HARRIS MEDAL	
1st Place	7 Points
2nd Place	4 Points
3rd Place	3 Points
4th Place	2 Points
5th Place	1 Point

25.6 Batting Awards

- i. For all grades (1st Grade, 2nd Grade, 3rd Grade and U18s) the Batting Award will be decided by the head coaches during the end-of-season awards meeting following the conclusion of the regular season. Players will be considered based on their overall stats and voted on accordingly.
- ii. The coaches will select a winner and 2 nominees from each grade.
- iii. To qualify for the Batting Award, a player must have an average of **2 Plate Appearances** per team game played.
- iv. The **Batting Awards** will be announced at the annual Baseball New South Wales Awards Night following the conclusion of the Finals Series.
- v. The decision of the coaches in determining the award shall be final and no further correspondence will be entered into.

25.7 Pitching Awards

- i. For all grades (1st Grade, 2nd Grade, 3rd Grade and U18s) the Pitching Award will be decided by the head coaches during the end-of-season awards meeting following the conclusion of the regular season. Players will be considered based on their overall stats and voted on accordingly.
- ii. The coaches will select a winner and 2 nominees from each grade.
- iii. To qualify for the Pitching Award, a player must have an average of **1 inning pitched** per team game played. (see table below)
- iv. The Pitching Awards will be announced at the annual Baseball New South Wales Awards Night following the conclusion of the Finals Series.
- v. The decision of the coaches in determining the award shall be final and no correspondence will be entered into.
- vi. The decision of the delegated authority in determining the award shall be final and no further correspondence will be entered into.

25.8 Albert Pearce Rookie of the Year Award

- i. **Albert Pearce Rookie of the Year Award** will be awarded to the player(s) considered by the NSW State League Coaches to be the best first-year player in the NSW State League's 1st Grade Competition.
- ii. The coaches will select a winner and two nominees.
- iii. In the event of a tie, the award will be awarded to both parties involved in the tie.
- iv. The decision of the coaches in determining the award shall be final and no further correspondence will be entered into.

25.9 Head Coach of the Year

- i. The Head Coach of the Year award will be selected by the Chairman of the NSW State League and the Competition Manager.

- ii. There will be a winner and two nominees.
- iii. The Award is selected based on overall club success and is not aligned with any one grade.
- iv. The **Coach of the Year** will be announced at the annual Baseball New South Wales Awards Night following the conclusion of the Finals Series.
- v. The decision of the Chairman and Competition Manager in determining the award shall be final and no further correspondence will be entered into.

25.10 1st Grade Team of the Year

- i. The NSW State League 1st Grade Team of the Year will be selected by the State League coaches or whoever the club appoints to attend the meeting in place of their coach.
- ii. The positions that receive an award on the NSW State League Team of the Year are:
 - a. Starting Pitcher
 - b. Relief Pitcher
 - c. Catcher
 - d. 1st Base
 - e. 2nd Base
 - f. 3rd Base
 - g. Shortstop
 - h. Outfield
 - i. Outfield
 - j. Outfield
 - k. Designated Hitter
 - l. Utility Player
 - m. Manager
- iii. Head Coaches from each club will submit **nominations for the 1st Grade Team of the Year**.
 - a. A formal submission form will be distributed to clubs and will include options for coaches to nominate **1st, 2nd, and 3rd place selections** for each position (e.g., starting pitcher, catcher, infield, outfield, etc.).
 - b. The final Team of the Year will then be selected **by Baseball NSW** based upon the nomination submissions.
- iv. Players who play the same outfield position are eligible to win all three outfield awards. (ie: 3 players whose primary positions are right field can win the three outfield spots.)
- v. Each position will have 1 winner and two nominees.
- vi. The **NSW 1st Grade Team of the Year** will be announced at the annual Baseball New South Wales Awards Night following the conclusion of the Finals Series.
- vii. The decision of the coaches in determining these awards shall be final and no further correspondence will be entered into.

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