

**OFFICIAL HANDBOOK
2007**

**RULES AND REGULATIONS
OF
WEST TEXAS BASEBALL LEAGUE, INC.**

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WEST TEXAS BASEBALL LEAGUE OFFICIAL HANDBOOK

GENERAL INFORMATION

Mission Statement

The West Texas Baseball League (WTBL) will provide competitive summer baseball for players with high school eligibility remaining to improve the quality of baseball at the high schools that are WTBL members.

The WTBL email and mailing addresses are:

scottgwinn@suddenlink.net

West Texas Baseball League, Inc., 8708 Savannah Ave, Lubbock, Texas 79414

Alignment of Teams

The WTBL is divided into two divisions: Large School for teams from 5A & 4A schools and Small School for teams from 3A, 2A & 1A schools plus Junior Varsity and Freshman teams from 5A & 4A schools.

In addition, teams in both divisions may be assigned to zones based upon geographic location (i.e., north, south, central, east & west) for the selection of all-star teams in each division and to develop brackets for the championship series in each division. Assignments of teams to zones will be determined by the Executive Committee.

Special Events

The WTBL sponsors a championship series in four divisions. These events are to promote a competitive atmosphere and enable managers and coaches to evaluate the improvement of their teams.



RULES AND REGULATIONS

The WTBL has adopted the following rules and regulations:

I. Rules Governing Games

The WTBL will use Texas High School Federation Rules in all games unless agreed upon by both coaches. In addition, the WTBL emphasizes safety. Catchers must wear protective helmets and all players must remain in their respective dugouts unless they are batting, on deck, retrieving foul balls, at their position in the field, or in the bullpen. Umpires will enforce these rules.

Single games during the week have a two hour fifteen minute (2hr.15min.) time limit, with no inning started after that time unless game is tied. Single games will be played until tie is broken. However, double-headers and triple-headers have two (2) hour time limits on all games. In the event the score of a double-header or triple-header game is tied at the end of the two hour time limit, one extra inning may be played.

The WTBL Executive Committee will determine rules, time limits, etc., for the kick-off tournaments, all-star games and championship series.



II. Player Eligibility

No graduated seniors will be allowed to play in the large school division.

A maximum of three (3) graduated seniors will be allowed to play on a team in the small school division. Only one (1) of the three graduated seniors can be a pitcher. Graduated seniors are designated on the team's roster prior to the beginning of the season when rosters are submitted to the WTBL office. No substitutions or additions of graduated seniors will be allowed after the season begins. (Teams may substitute, add or delete players with high school eligibility remaining at any time.)

In the event a team in the small school division needs more than three graduated seniors in order to field a team, that team may request a waiver from the WTBL President. If a waiver is granted, the waiver will not set a precedent and will not mean an automatic waiver for another team. The WTBL President will consider waiver requests on a situation-by-situation basis.

The WTBL stresses that the league exists to help in the development of high school baseball programs. Although graduated seniors are allowed in the small school division, the use of graduated seniors does not help in the development of high school programs.



III. Conduct of Players, Managers and Coaches

The WTBL emphasizes sportsmanship and stresses proper conduct by players, managers, coaches and spectators. Accordingly, the WTBL will not tolerate inappropriate conduct at any time. The WTBL instructs umpires to enforce WTBL rules and notify WTBL Board President regarding improper conduct as follows:

1. There will be ***no tolerance of abusive language, violent actions or excessive arguments*** from managers, coaches, players or spectators directed toward umpires. It is the manager's responsibility to control the behavior of himself, his coaches, players, parents and his team's fans immediately before, during and immediately after a WTBL game.
2. There will be no ***tolerance of profanity***, whether directed at the umpire, coaches, fans or other players. If the umpire can hear it, it is too loud.
3. There will be ***no tolerance of trash talking***. Consequently, direct personal verbal assault using vulgar, demeaning, or racist remarks will ***not*** be tolerated.

The penalty for violation of No. 1 above is as follows:

A ***manager or coach*** ejected from a game by an umpire for any reason will be suspended immediately for one game. The WTBL reserves the right to impose a stricter penalty, including expulsion from the WTBL for the remainder of the season, depending on the severity of the offense for which the manager or coach was ejected.

A ***manager or coach*** ejected by an umpire for a second time during the season is automatically and immediately expelled from the WTBL for the remainder of the season. The WTBL President may elect to expel the involved team.

These penalties also will be enforced if the manager or coach is ejected for failure to control the behavior of his team's players and/or fans.

A ***player*** is ejected from a game by an umpire, the WTBL recommends and encourages the player's manager to enforce some form of discipline. Regardless, the WTBL will impose a minimum next and sequential one game suspension on the offending player. The WTBL also reserves the right to impose a stricter penalty, including expulsion from the WTBL for the remainder of the season, depending on the severity of the offense for which the player was ejected.

The penalties for violation of No. 2 or No. 3 above are as follows:

If the umpire feels that the first remark was extreme, he can eject the offending person(s) immediately without a warning. However, the umpire may warn the offending person(s) first. If the remarks occur again, the person(s) will be ejected.

Any person who is ejected must leave the baseball complex immediately and can be no closer than the parking lot.

IV. Use of Tobacco

The use of tobacco, in any form, by players, managers, or coaches is prohibited during WTBL games.

V. Umpires

WTBL teams are to use umpires assigned by their local umpires association. The WTBL stresses importance of teams using professional umpires to officiate games rather than “volunteers from the bleachers”. Under no circumstances is a team to contract with specific umpires to officiate its games unless such action is approved by the WTBL President. Under no circumstances is a team to pay any umpire in excess of the regular negotiated fee set by WTBL and the umpires association.

Penalties for violation of the aforementioned rules are as follows:

Any team violating a rule established by the WTBL regarding umpires will be placed on probation for the first offense and expelled from the WTBL for the second offense. In the case of expulsion from the WTBL, the team being expelled will forfeit its WTBL entry fee, including the performance deposit.

The WTBL realizes that certain circumstances will arise, particularly in the small school division, that may prevent the use of assigned association umpires. When such a situation occurs, the host team is to make every effort to find the best umpires available and to be sure the umpires are dressed like umpires. However, under no circumstances are the umpires to be paid a fee in excess of the fee that would have been paid to an assigned association umpire unless approved by the WTBL Executive Committee.

The following conditions also apply to umpires:

1. Umpires are to be paid prior to the start of the game.
2. If only one umpire works a game, he or she is to be paid the amount 1 1/2 umpires would have earned and must work behind the plate.
3. In the event a forfeit is declared before a game starts and the umpires are already at the game site, the umpires are to be paid \$15.00 each.
4. If a game has started but ended due to forfeit or termination resulting from a conduct problem, the umpires are to be paid the normal fee.

V. Umpires (contd.)

5. In the event that a rain-out is declared prior to starting a game and the umpires are already at the game site, the umpires are to be paid \$15.00 each. (The host team manager is to call the umpires association coordinator, or the umpire directly, if he knows that a game will be forfeited or postponed. Also, a visiting manager must call the opposing manager if he must forfeit or postpone a game so that the host team manager can contact the umpires.)
6. If a game has started but is declared a rain-out before completion of the game, the umpires are to be paid the normal fee.
7. Host team managers should contact the local umpires association coordinator on game day to be sure umpires are assigned to the game.

VI. Uniforms

During games, players on a team are to wear baseball uniforms that match.

Managers and coaches are to dress similar to the players. However, managers and coaches are not required to wear baseball pants.

The WTBL does not require nor expect teams to spend exorbitant amounts of money on uniforms. However, the WTBL does expect each team to be dressed like a baseball team. Be aware that Texas UIL rules prevent WTBL teams in Texas from wearing any items such as caps or shirts that represent a team's high school name or mascot. Also, the New York Yankees, Texas A&M, Nike and other symbols are not WTBL members. Managers are not to allow players to wear any items during games, including caps, which are not part of the team's uniform.

VII. Roster Size

There is no limit to the number of players on a team's roster.

VIII. Number of Coaches

There is no limit to the number of coaches that a team may have.

IX. Games and Scheduling

A team may schedule as many games as it wants.

X. Host Team Responsibilities

Unless other arrangements have been made, the host team is responsible for the following:

1. Providing a playing field that is in good condition to play.
2. Game balls will be split by the teams.
3. Assuring the assignment of umpires.
4. Umpires fees will be split by teams
5. Calling visiting team managers as early as possible in the case of rain-outs or other situations that will cause the game(s) to be postponed or canceled.
6. Providing official scorekeeper/score book.

Host team responsibilities are applicable to single games, double-headers and triple-headers. Also, the host team should provide a public address announcer and concession stand if adequate equipment and facilities are available. In any case, a representative from the host team should be at the game site at all times during double headers and triple headers even if the host team is not playing.

XI. Entry Fee

The WTBL requires each team to pay an entry fee to become a WTBL member and to participate in the league. Entry fees are set by the WTBL board of directors and must be paid at or before the WTBL Scheduling Meeting.

Entry fees include medical and liability insurance, which is required by the WTBL.



XII. Insurance

Each WTBL team must carry medical and liability insurance. Proof of such coverage must be on file with the WTBL office prior to the beginning of the season.

MISCELLANEOUS

End of Year Tournaments That Determine Post Season Play

Teams will be required to declare, before the first game, if they will go on to play in post season.

Waiver Form

Every player is required to sign a release form prior to participation and will not be allowed to participate without this form on file. These should be signed and retained by the coach.

THE OFFICIAL HANDBOOK CONTAINS THE RULES AND REGULATIONS FOR THE WEST TEXAS BASEBALL LEAGUE, INC., AS ADOPTED BY THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE WEST TEXAS BASEBALL LEAGUE, INC. THE OFFICIAL HANDBOOK SUPERSEDES AND/OR REPLACES ANY WTBL PUBLICATION PREVIOUSLY DISTRIBUTED. WTBL MEMBER TEAMS MAY HAVE RULES OR REGULATIONS FOR THEIR OWN OPERATIONS THAT ARE NOT A PART OF THE OFFICIAL HANDBOOK AND THAT ARE NOT ADOPTED, CONTROLLED, OR ENFORCED BY THE WEST TEXAS BASEBALL LEAGUE, INC. HOWEVER, TEAMS MUST ABIDE BY RULES AND REGULATIONS IN THE OFFICIAL HANDBOOK TO PARTICIPATE IN THE WTBL.