Sansei Baseball League
2026 Majors Division Ground Rules

GENERAL

1. These Ground Rules are to act as a "pocket guide" for the official Sansei Baseball League Rulebook. Any definitions, clarifications or apparent contradictions shall be resolved through the Division Commissioner.
2. For Inter-Divisional games, the rules for the lower Division will apply
3. The distance between bases shall be: **70 feet** for Major 1 and Major 2; **90 feet** for Major 3.
   The pitching distance shall be: **50 feet** for Major 1 and Major 2; **60 feet 6 inches** for Major 3.
4. Players must stay in the protected area of the dugout or outside the fenced area when not required on the playing field. They may not stand in the doorway of the dugout.
5. Base Coaches: Players *may* act as base coaches, as long as the player wears a batting helmet at all times.
6. **The home team** dugout is on the third base side, shall provide the official ScoreKeeper, and provide three (3) new balls for each game
7. Game Length is the shorter of **6 innings** or **2hrs**. No new innings will be started with less than 15 minutes remaining, unless both teams and the umpire concur.
8. The mercy rule is in effect for all games. The half-inning will end after 5 runs have scored. The exception is the 6th inning, when runs are unlimited. If after the time limit has been reached and the game is not complete, the score will revert back to the last complete inning (*or, if the home team is ahead in the bottom of the inning, the score will stand). Anytime after 5 innings, if a team is behind by **17** or more runs, that team has the option of ending the game.
9. A player may leave early or arrive late if the opposing Coach and ScoreKeeper is notified prior to the start of the game or as soon as possible thereafter. The late player will be added at the last spot in the lineup.
10. A team is allowed to start and play games with eight (8) players. The Coach should make a reasonable effort to field 9 players by working with the opposing Coach and/or Division Commissioner. Borrowed players can only defend outfield positions and shall bat at the bottom of the lineup.

PITCHING

11. A pitcher shall pitch no more than:
    - League Age 11/12**: 85 pitches** per game/day
    - League Age 13/14**: 95 pitches** per game/day
    AND maximum 3 innings per game/day. This is inclusive of any pitching done for other teams/leagues by that pitcher. The Coach is ultimately responsible for knowing the pitch count for the pitcher's safety, and violations may be referred to the Division Commissioner for review.
12. Balk rule is in effect; in general, any motion by the pitcher to deceive the runner may be considered a balk by the umpire. For a detailed explanation, refer to the official rules. If a balk is called base runner(s) advance 1 base and a ball will be called for the batter.
13. Any pitcher hitting 3 batters in one game shall be removed from pitching after hitting the third batter.
14. Intentional walks are allowed. The defensive Coach must notify the umpire. The ball is dead and four (4) pitches are added to the pitch count.

BATTING/BASE RUNNING

15. Penalty for using an illegal bat is an automatic out; all bats **MUST** be USABat or BBCOR certified.
16. Each team shall bat the entire lineup. If a player refuses to bat then that batter is automatically assessed an out and the next player in the lineup bats.
    - Exception: No penalty if borrowed players from lower divisions elect to not bat for safety concerns
17. Bunting is allowed.
18. Infield Fly Rule in effect ("catchable" fair fly ball in *infield*, with runners on 1st&2nd or bases loaded, with less than 2 outs): Batter is out, **whether or not the ball is caught**. Runners **must tag-up** if ball is caught or **may advance** if the ball is not caught.
19. Dropped Third Strike in effect (less than 2 outs: 1st base must be unoccupied; 2 outs: 1st can be occupied).
20. **Major 1**: Head first sliding is NOT permitted. **Major 2 & 3**: Head first sliding is permitted.
21. Base stealing is permitted for all bases.
22. Leadoffs are allowed.
23. Defensive players shall keep clear of their base / base path if there is not a play imminent. Catchers shall stand considerably in front of or behind home plate if there is no play imminent.

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24. Base runners are to avoid collisions with defensive players whenever possible. **The runner will be called out** if they do not slide or avoid the defensive player. The umpires shall have ultimate judgment.
25. A courtesy runner is allowed for the catcher, regardless of the number of outs (*mandatory if two outs*). The last out is the courtesy runner. This rule is to help expedite the start of the next half inning and warm up the pitcher.

Head Commissioner Kevin Arima	headcommissioner@sanseibaseball.com	310-343-8434
Major 1 Commissioner Greg Tsujiuchi	gtsujiuchi@socal.rr.com	310-918-8956
Major 3 Commissioner Shozo Yoshikawa Shuji Yamada	shozo21@yahoo.com shuji.yamada@gmail.com	562-225-6301 562-254-6895
Umpire Coordinator	umpire@sansebaseball.com	