



# YARDBALL

2006

Rules and Interpretations





## The Commission of Major League Yardball

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# Rule 1

## The Game, Playing Field and Equipment

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### Philosophy of the Game Section 1

There are many different ways to play bat and ball games with the wiffle ball®. However, it is the belief of Major League Yardball and its Commission that the officially adopted rules of this league mirror the game of baseball as much as possible, and that the overall appearance of Yardball resemble baseball in as many facets allowable by available playing fields and equipment.

### The Game Section 2

a.) An official game shall be played between two eligible teams (team eligibly see 1-2-b) and consist of six innings, each inning having a top and bottom half in which each team bats one complete time.

After six innings or after the losing team has batted six times, the team with the greater number of runs shall be the winner. If after six complete innings the score is tied, the game shall continue until the tie is broken (rule 4-2).

#### b.) Teams

For a team to be eligible to begin a game it must have no fewer than 2 and no more than 8 players present.

c.) In the event a situation cannot be clearly addressed by the rules listed in this book, NCAA rules of baseball shall govern.

### The Defense Section 3

The defense is comprised of one pitcher and 2-3 defensive players whose goal is to retire batters and base runners by recording outs. The total number of defensive players on the field at any time is not to exceed 4, including the pitcher. The minimum number of defensive players is not to be fewer than 2, including the pitcher.

## **The Offense**

### **Section 4**

The offense is comprised of all batters and base runners whose goal is to score runs by forcing runners around all bases by batting the ball into play safely. A team's game line up may not exceed 8 players. Therefore, the maximum number of players a team may bat is 8. However, all batters **must** bat their turn in the lineup and in the correct order. Failure to appear at the plate or batting out of order is an out.

## **The Playing Field**

### **Section 5**

Major League Yardball has no official regulations pertaining to field dimensions, with the following exceptions:

- a.) the distance between the pitching rubber and home plate shall not be less than or exceeded 45 feet.
- b.) A clearly marked batter's area shall exist around the plate and strike zone. There is no regulation on the size of this area, but it must be large enough for the batter to keep his/her entire body within the area while batting.
- c.) a clearly marked pitcher's area shall exist around the pitching rubber. There is no regulation on the size of this area, but it must be large enough for the pitcher to keep his/her entire body within the area while pitching.
- d.) The Strike Zone

A strike zone shall be anchored firmly into or on top of the ground and shall stand 2' behind home plate. The zone shall measure nine inches above the ground, be 22" wide and 18" in height. The zone shall be free standing, made of a firm material, and not move from the force of the ball striking. The zone may be one single piece or a large piece with the zone dimensions appearing as a painted box in the center. Any ball that hits the line of the outline is a strike (see rules 6-1, 8-4).

## **Conduct**

### **Section 6**

Players are expected to exhibit good sportsmanship at all times. Because the game is played without umpires, it is expected that certain courtesies be extended to opposing teams players in terms of calls and benefit of doubt.

**Equipment**  
**Section 7**

**a.) Bats**

All bats are to be made of plastic and are to be hollow from end to end. The bat shall be clearly marked at 18 inches from the knob and no substance shall be present on the bat between this mark and the barrel end, this includes tape, tar or any other substance foreign to the bat's construction. There are no limits to bat length. However, no part of the bat may surpass 2 5/8 inches in diameter. A grip is required on all bats used in game play. Bats may have either a tape or leather grip on the handle.

**b.) Gloves**

Any player may wear a baseball glove while on defense. However, gloves are not required of any defensive player at any time. Any glove is legal in Yardball, provided it is legal to be worn in baseball.

**c.) Bases**

Bases may be of either the flat variety or of the elevated canvas type. Bases may be anchored or not. The MLY Commission strongly recommends that all bases, with the exception of home plate, be left unanchored for the purposes of safety.

**d.) The Ball**

The ball is to be the wiffle ball® brand. The ball may not be intentionally discolored, scuffed or altered in any way.

**e.) Uniforms**

Team uniforms are not required. However, if a team has uniforms, all members of the team must be in the same uniform shirt. Mismatching hats and pants are allowed.

# Rule 2

## Definitions

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### **Pegging**

To throw a live ball at an advancing base runner and hit him/her, making that runner out. This is only allowed with runners attempting to advance between third base and home plate (see rule 7-3).

### **Batter-runner**

Once a batter hits a pitched ball into play, he/she becomes a batter-runner until safely reaching base and the play ends.

### **Pitcher's Mound Out for First**

Using the area around the pitcher's rubber as an alternate first base. Controlled possession of a batted ball by any player in the pitcher's area prior to the batter-runner reaching first base is an out (rule 7-5).

### **Rise ball**

Any pitched ball that elevates as it approaches the strike zone.

### **Stem**

The plank or beam anchored in the ground to which the strike zone is attached. Balls that hit this portion of the zone are not strikes.

### **No Pitch**

A pitched ball that reaches the strike zone, but is not counted as a ball or a strike.

### **Obstruction**

Any action on behalf of a defensive player that impedes hinders or alters the actions of a runner or batter-runner (Rule 5-2).

### **Interference**

Any action on behalf of an offensive player that impedes hinders or alters the actions of a defensive player attempting to make a play (Rule 5-3).

### **Single Area**

If a batted ball becomes lodged in a single area the ball is immediately dead and all runners are advanced one base from the time of the pitch. The batter is awarded a single (Rule 5-4).

# Rule 3

## Pregame Procedures

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### Pregame Responsibilities

#### Section 1

The home team is responsible for providing the visiting team with adequate seating in an area away from spectator areas. Also, the home team must provide game balls only. This does not include warm-up balls or batting practice balls. The home team is responsible for insuring that the playing field is safe and well marked for play. The home team captain is responsible for explaining all ground rules.

Game time is the official start time. All pregame activities, such as practice or National Anthem, should be scheduled well in advance of game time so as to not delay the start of the game.

### Team Selection

#### Section 2

Teams are determined two ways: (a) established before the game or (b) by selection. Selection is a drafting format whereby two captains select from a pool of available players. This can be done openly or with a blind method such as pulling hats from a pile.

### Ground Rules

#### Section 3

Ground rules vary from park to park. With the exception of the rules listed in this book, all parks are responsible for their own ground rules.

All unique ground rules are to be discussed and agreed upon by both team captains prior to the start of the game. Any possible problems with the field or equipment should be addressed during this pregame conference.

# Rule 4

## The Game – Its Beginning and End

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### Start of Game

#### Section 1

The official start of the game is when the batter is entirely in the batter's area and verbally acknowledges that he/she is ready to receive a pitch. At this point the ball is live and the game has begun. If lineup cards have been exchanged between teams they shall be considered official at this point – any change will be considered a substitution (see rules 8-3, 6-3).

### Regulation Game

#### Section 2

A regulation game shall be six innings unless:

- (a) extended due to a tie
- (b) shortened because the home team needs none or only part of its half in the final inning.

### Defensive Substitutions

#### Section 3

Players may enter and exit defensive positions throughout the game as often as desired. There is unlimited reentry and free substitution in regard to defense.

### Doubleheaders

#### Section 4

Doubleheaders can be scheduled either as two six-inning games or two four-inning games. The second game will start no later than 20 minutes after the completion of the first.

### Suspended Games

#### Section 5

Any game that is forced to stop due to lighting or weather prior to the official end shall be a suspended game. The game will resume at a date agreed upon by both captains. The resumed game will pick up at the exact point it was halted (count, outs, runners). Lineups shall remain the same. However, if a player or players cannot be present for the resumed game the batting substitution rule (see rule 6-3) shall be ignored. A new player may enter into the batting order for a missing player. This applies only in the case of a suspended game.

**No Contest**  
**Section 6**

In the event that a team does not show to a game site, the game shall not be considered a forfeit.

**Alcohol**  
**Section 7**

Alcohol is permitted at MLY contests. However, if facility management requests that no alcohol be consumed on or near the field, players shall satisfy that request.

# Rule 5

## Ball In Play, Out of Play

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### Live ball

#### Section 1

The ball is live at all times until it is batted, thrown, carried into dead ball territory or until a player asks for time, at which point the ball becomes dead and remains so until the batter and pitcher both return to their areas and the batter acknowledges his/her readiness to receive the pitch.

While the ball is live, runners may advance at their own risk, but only if the attempt to advance is clearly related to a continuous play. A runner may not attempt to advance while the pitcher is in the pitching area. This would be considered an attempt to steal a base, which is not permitted (see rule 7-2). Defensive changes may not be made while the ball is live.

If a ball is fielded and then carried out of play, the player may throw the ball from dead ball territory unless he/she falls, in which case the ball becomes dead and all runners advance one base from the time of the fall.

### Delayed Dead Ball

#### Section 2

#### Obstruction

Any defensive player who impedes, hinders or alters the actions of a base runner or batter-runner shall be charged with obstruction regardless of intent. However, the play will remain live until it is completed. Once the play ends, the obstructed runner will be awarded at least one base from the last occupied base unless the runner would have clearly obtained more than one base, in which case the appropriate number bases are to be awarded. If the obstructed runner obtains more bases than he/she was entitled from the obstruction, the infraction will be ignored. Any other runners who are retired during the play will remain out.

### Immediate Dead Ball

#### Section 3

#### Interference

Any base runner that impedes, hinders or alters the actions of a defensive player shall be charged with interference regardless of intent. The ball will become dead immediately upon the infraction and the offending runner is out. All other runners advance one base from the time of the pitch.

## **Live Ball Objects**

### **Section 4**

A batted or thrown ball that hits anything designated as a live ball object prior to the start of the game can be played as a live.

## **Single Area**

### **Section 5**

Prior to the start of the game any single area(s) shall be declared by the home team and explained to the visiting captain. If a batted ball becomes lodged in a single area the ball is immediately dead and all runners are advanced one base from the time of the pitch. The batter is awarded a single. If the ball enters a single area and then exits under its own momentum, the ball may be played as live. Players who field a ball in play and are then carried into a single area may throw from the single area unless they fall, in which case the ball becomes dead and all runners advance one base from the time of the pitch.

# Rule 6

## Batting

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### The Count

#### Section 1

a. An official count shall consist of six balls and three strikes. Upon six balls a batter is awarded first base. Upon three strikes the batter is out.

b. Ball

Any pitch that does not hit the strike zone and at which the hitter does not swing is a ball. Any pitch that strikes the hitter is a ball unless the batter swings at the pitch.

**AR- First base shall be awarded to a batter after six balls.**

c. Strike

Any pitch at which a hitter swings and misses is a strike. Any ball that is batted into foul territory is a strike unless for the third strike. Pitches fouled straight back into the strike zone with two strikes are not considered an out. If a pitched ball strikes a part of the batter's body or uniform that is in front of the strike zone, a strike shall be called. If this occurs with two strikes, the hitter shall be out.

### Batter's Area (Box)

#### Section 2

The batter shall have both feet in the batter's area (box) while receiving pitches. Any ball batted in fair territory while the hitter is out of the box will be an out. Runners will not advance. If a hitter's swing makes contact with the strike zone and then hits the pitched ball into fair territory, the ball shall be live.

### Offensive Substitutions

#### Section 3

There is no pinch hitting or substituting for hitters. If a batter is removed for injury, illness or ejection, then all subsequent hitters will move up one position in the batting order. This does not apply in the event a player from a suspended game is not present for the resumed game. In this case the missing player may have a new player placed in his/her batting slot. The intent of this rule is to promote participation by all players in hitting.

## **Bunting**

### **Section 4**

**Bunting is legal.**

## **Strike Zone Obstruction**

### **Section 5**

**Any batter who, with obvious intent, prevents a pitched ball from hitting the strike zone by extending a part of his or her body into the path of the ball shall be called for strike zone obstruction.**

**Penalty—called strike. If for strike three the batter is out.**

# Rule 7

## Base Running

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### Order of Bases

#### Section 1

All runners are to run the bases in the proper order. If a runner is required to return to a base he/she must return and retouch each base in the reverse order – failure to do this is an out, dead ball, all runners advance one base.

A runner may not surpass another runner who has not been retired. If two runners pass, the offending runner will be out, the ball will be dead, and all runners will advance one base from the time of the infraction.

### Leading Off and Stealing

#### Section 2

- a. There is no leading off or stealing of bases at any time. Runners may not leave the base until the hitter bats the ball in fair territory. Stretching from a base, provided the runner keeps at least one foot in contact with the base, is not considered leading off.
- b. Runners may not attempt to advance to another base if the pitcher has possession of the ball within the pitcher's area if immediately following the conclusion of a play. At that point, the ball is considered dead and the play ended; any attempt to advance will be considered stealing.

**Penalty** – Leading off or stealing is an immediate dead ball. The runner is out and other runners must return to the previous bases occupied.

### Advancing From Third Base

#### Section 3

Once a runner touches third base and steps towards home plate, completely leaving the base, the runner may be pegged with the ball for an out. Any step towards home plate will place this rule into effect, regardless of the intent of the runner. This is only applies to runners attempting to advance to home plate.

If the defensive player misses the runner and the throw goes out of play, the ball will become dead and all runners will advance one base from the time of the throw.

### Awarded Bases

#### Section 4

**Obstruction**  
(See rule 5-2)

Over-throw (Rule 7-3)  
Base on balls (Rule 6-1b-AR)

**Pitcher's Mound Out For First**  
**Section 5**

The pitcher's area may be used as an alternate first base only when retiring a batter-runner attempting to reach first base. Controlled possession of the ball within the pitcher's area by any player before the batter-runner reaches first will be an out. The ball remains live and all other runners may advance at their own risk.

This rule only applies to force plays at first base. Additionally, defensive players may retire runners at first by tagging the batter-runner or by touching the first base while in controlled possession of the ball.

If a runner at first does not tag up on a fly ball, that runner may be retired using the alternate first base while attempting to return to the base. Controlled possession of the ball within the pitcher's area by any player before the runner returns to first will be an out.

# Rule 8

## Pitching

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### Pitching Section 1

The pitcher may begin from either the set or wind-up position. However, the pitcher must make all pitched while in contact with the pitching rubber and with all parts of his/her body within the pitcher's area. The ball must be delivered to the plate with an overhand delivery.

Pitchers may stop and set in their motion or may choose to make one continuous motion to the plate. There are no balks.

### The Pitcher's Area Section 2

The pitcher may not throw to any base from inside the pitcher's area. Because runners are prohibited from advancing while the pitcher is in the pitcher's area, the pitcher is equally restricted from making plays on runners while in this area.

### Substitutions Section 3

A pitcher may be replaced once in regulation game and remain eligible to reenter as the pitcher at a later point. However, once pitcher A has been removed for the second time, he/she may not pitch again.

### Doubleheaders

Pitchers who loose eligibility in the first game of a double header are eligible to pitch in the second game, if the total number of innings pitched in both games does not exceed 10.

### The Pitcher as an Official Section 4

The pitcher has authority to call pitches balls or strikes that are questionable in relation to strike zone location, this includes a pitch that hits the strike zone line. The pitcher also has final judgment whether a batter-runner is safe or out in a force play at first involving the pitcher's area being used as an alternate first base (See rule 7-5).

## **Pitching Speed**

### **Section 5**

There are no restrictions on how fast a pitcher may throw during day games. However, if both teams agree, pitchers may pitch under speed restrictions. Any pitch judged to be “too fast” will be ruled a ball.

### **Night Games**

During night games all pitchers must not exceed 75% arm strength. Any pitch judged to be “too fast” will be ruled a ball.

## **Intentional Walks**

### **Section 6**

Each team is allowed one intentional walk per six innings. If the game goes into extra innings, each team is allowed one additional intentional pass. If a team does not use its intentional pass in regulation innings, it **DOES NOT** carry over into the extra frames.

The intent of this rule is to allow pitchers an option for negotiating game situations without consistently avoiding one specific hitter.