

# 2026 BLUENOSE LEAGUE HANDBOOK



BASEBALL NOVA SCOTIA

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## 1. Objectives

1.1 To provide a competitive baseball league for all areas of the province which fosters fun, learning and supports the spirit of good sportsmanship.

1.2 The Bluenose League is a FAIR PLAY LEAGUE WITH AN EMPHASIS ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF PLAYERS.

## 2. Organization

2.1 The Program Manager shall be responsible for the administration of all leagues organized by BNS. The Program Manager shall appoint administrators to oversee the day-to-day operation of the league(s).

2.2 The league operating rules and procedures shall be evaluated at the conclusion of the season and revisions shall be approved by the Board of Directors.

2.3 Teams wishing to enter the Bluenose league must register no later than the date specified in the Baseball Nova Scotia Calendar of Events (found on the BNS website).

2.4 The following fees are due on the date specified in the calendar of events:

- The cost to register for the Bluenose League is \$400.00.

2.5 The following information must be submitted with registration:

- Association
- Age Category
- Classification
- Home Night
- Home Field
- Home Night Game Start Time
- Team Name
- Contact info for all coaches, assistant coaches and managers (e-mail & phone number)
- Blackout Dates
- Notes: ensure special requests or important additional information is included.

2.6 Blackout dates must be provided in two segments, dates provided in the calendar of events.

- When registering for Bluenose League, blackout dates must be submitted for late May to mid July (when the initial schedule ends).
- By the date noted in the calendar of events for the beginning of the new schedule (early July) until the season's end (end of August).

2.7 Teams or associations hosting tournaments at the A, AA, or AAA levels must have tournaments approved/sanctioned by BNS. Teams will be required to submit dates, location, and competition level prior to two dates listed in the calendar of events to be considered sanctioned by BNS. If not submitted by the communicated date, the tournament will not be sanctioned or posted to the BNS website, be eligible for BNS umpires, or BNS insurance. Only tournaments posted to the BNS website will be considered sanctioned. The dates to submit association tournaments are:

- Bluenose Registration Date: Tournaments being held from the beginning of the Bluenose schedule to the end of the first half schedule must be submitted by this date to be considered sanctioned BNS Association tournaments.
- Classification Meeting Date: Tournaments being held from the start of the new schedule to the end of the season must be submitted by this date to be considered sanctioned BNS Association tournaments.

2.8 Rosters must be submitted online prior to the beginning of the league start. Association registrars have access to do this.

2.9 Any permanent changes to rosters (i.e., for the remainder of the season) must be brought to the attention of the Program Manager prior to a new player being permitted to play.

### 3. Procedures

3.1 Fan Control - Both teams are required to instruct their fans that comments should only be directed to their players and should be of a POSITIVE nature. See BNS Handbook for Fan Behaviour Policy.

3.2 Uniforms, as supplied, shall be worn properly. Shirts are to be tucked in at all times. Baseball caps are to be worn by players at all times. Coaches can wear a Golf Shirt and Shorts. Please refer to the BNS coach's dress code in the Handbook for more information.

3.3 Poor Field Conditions - It is the responsibility of the home coach to determine if a field is fit for play.

3.3.1 If the game has to be cancelled, the home teams shall attempt to provide as much notice time as possible to the visiting coach and umpire assignor (or the minimum time required due to travel circumstances if three hours is insufficient).

3.4 Insufficient Players - Coaches are responsible for ensuring that enough players are available for a game. At the 18U AA division and below, teams are permitted to compete with 8 players in the line-up.

3.5 Rescheduling and Cancelling Games (regarding weather/extenuating circumstances).

3.5.1 The home team is responsible for rescheduling a cancelled game(s) and is to notify the visiting coach, umpires assignor and the Technical Assistant. The home team will contact the visiting coach within a week to reschedule the cancelled game(s).

3.6 Teams will be in direct violation of Bluenose League rules and may be subject to penalty should they be deemed guilty of the following infractions:

3.6.1 Cancel any league game to attend a tournament which was not approved by BNS prior to the Tournament Submission dates (teams attending out of Province tournaments must include these intentions in the Blackout dates).

3.6.2 Not follow appropriate rescheduling procedures in the event of cancellations due to rainouts or other extenuating circumstances.

3.6.3 Late cancellations or no-shows that result in umpire or field costs being incurred may result in the offending team being responsible for costs, upon further investigation. BNS would invoice the offending team and funds will be refunded to the affected team.

3.7 The Technical Assistant (programs@baseballnovascotia.com) must be copied on all emails regarding the cancellation and attempted rescheduling of games. This is done to ensure all parties involved are making a valid effort have the games rescheduled.

3.7.1 Upon further investigation, if it is determined that one of the parties involved made no effort to reschedule the canceled game or purposely avoided travel, then the offending team will be removed from the league and fined \$500. The offending team will also be removed from provincial play downs until the fine is paid. It is of extreme importance that the Technical Assistant be copied on all attempts at rescheduling games.

3.8 BNS acknowledges there could be individual situations where rescheduling may not be possible due to time restraints and pre-existing commitments. This will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

3.9 Player Pickups - Teams may pick up players from any of their association's teams playing at a lower level or lower division, provided they are registered members of BNS. This is intended for individual games where a team cannot field 9 players.

Note: A player added to a league game roster, whether from a house league team or from a lower-level rep team, does not affect rosters for BNS Provincial play downs.

3.9.1 Teams can pick up from a higher classified team (at a lower age division) within their association only if all other options have been exhausted. (Example: a 15U AA team may only pick up from a 13U AAA team if there were no available 15U A, 15U Recreational, or 13U AA players available).

3.9.2 Teams can only pick up from one classification higher. (Example: 15U A teams can pick-up from 13U AA, but not 13U AAA).

3.9.2.1 Pick-ups from a higher classified team can only be done for scheduled double headers.

3.9.2.2 Pick-ups from a higher classified team are not eligible to pitch.

3.9.2.3 Pick-ups from a higher classified team must be communicated to the Technical Assistant. Regular pick ups do not need to be communicated.

3.9.3 Pick-ups from older age divisions are not permitted.

3.10 Batting Order - Coaches shall give their batting order, in duplicate, to the home plate umpire prior to starting each game. The home plate umpire shall have any obvious errors corrected, confirm

that the original and copies of each batting order are identical, initial all copies and give a copy of each batting order to the opposing coach. It is mandatory for all players, including substitutes, to be listed on the batting order presented to the home plate umpire.

3.11 For Bluenose League games for 18U AA and lower divisions, all players must bat in the batting order.

3.12 Forfeit Games 18U AA (including all levels of 18U Girls) and below - Teams must have a minimum of eight registered players ready for the start of the scheduled game.

3.12.1 If 8 registered players are not present by the scheduled starting time the team will have 15 minutes to put 8 registered players on the field. At no time can unregistered players be used.

3.12.2 Teams forfeiting two games on the field will have their status reviewed by the Technical Assistant. If a third game is forfeited on the field, then the team will be removed from the league.

3.12.3 If the visiting team is responsible for the forfeiture, they will be responsible for payment of any umpire fees required to be paid. (The home team shall pay the umpires and be reimbursed by the visiting team).

3.13 Umpires - Umpires shall be scheduled by an assignor and shall be registered BNSUD umpires. Two umpires are required for regular season games.

3.13.1 In cases where the umpire(s) do not show up, both teams will attempt to find suitable replacements and agree to placement on the field.

3.13.2 The umpires shall be in full authority of the game once commenced.

3.14 Scores - The Home team is responsible for submitting the game results online within 24 hours of the game being played. Instructions for entering game results will be sent to team contacts via email. It is imperative that the scores be submitted to BNS. While it is the home team's responsibility to submit the score either team can submit the game score.

3.15 Pitch Counts - Both teams are responsible for keeping track of pitch counts for both teams. These are to be entered when submitting scores.

3.16 Complaints - Any concerns regarding the conduct of umpires, opposing players, coaches, or fans must be brought to the attention of the Program Manager ASAP in the form of an email. These concerns will be documented and reviewed by the Program Manager. Upon further investigation; action may or may not be taken.

## 4. Rules

4.1 Unless otherwise specified in the following clauses, all rules of Baseball Canada Rule Book and/or the BNS Handbook shall apply. If there is any conflict between these rules, the BNS Handbook has priority.

4.2 A game consists of 7 innings (6 innings for 11U/12U Girls). If the score is tied after 7 innings (or 6 innings for 11U/12U Girls), there shall be one extra inning of play if time permits. The score will stay tied if there is no clear winner after one extra inning of play.

#### 4.3 Extra Inning

If the game is tied at the completion of regulation (7 innings – 6 for 11U/12U Girls), the following procedures will be implemented during the extra inning:

4.3.1 Each team will begin the extra inning (and any subsequent necessary extra innings) with a player on first and second, no outs. (See example below to confirm who is on first and second).

4.3.2 The batting order of the extra inning or any subsequent innings will be determined by how the previous inning ended. (See example below to confirm who is at bat).

4.3.3 The traditional system of the visiting team hitting in the top of the inning and the home team hitting in the bottom of the inning will remain in effect until a winner is determined.

Example: If the last regulation innings with the #6 hitter having the last plate appearance (PA), then the extra inning begins with the #7 hitter at bat, the #5 hitter at second base and the #6 hitter at first base. With the exception of beginning the inning with runners on first and second base with no one out, all other “official baseball rules” and “Canadian Rules” will remain in effect during extra innings required to determine a winner.

4.4 In 11U and 12U Girls, players must play a minimum of two (2) innings in the field; in 13U, 14U Girls, 15U, 18U, and 18U Girls, players must play at least three (3) innings in the field (unless game is shortened by mercy rule, rain, etc.).

4.4.1 An exemption of the above rule may be used by a coach for “disciplinary” reasons. The coach of the other team is to be advised prior to the game.

#### 4.5 Run Limits (Please note these may be different than the Provincial Championship Handbook rules)

4.5.1 11U A, AA & AAA – Teams cannot score more than 5 runs in an inning with the exception of the last inning (6<sup>th</sup> inning) being an open inning.

4.5.2 13U A, AA & AAA – Teams cannot score more than 5 runs per inning with the exception of the last inning (7<sup>th</sup> inning) being an open inning.

4.5.3 15U A & AA - Teams cannot score more than 5 runs per inning with the exception of the last inning (7<sup>th</sup> inning) being an open inning.

4.5.4 18U A - Teams cannot score more than 5 runs per inning with the exception of the last inning (7<sup>th</sup> inning) being an open inning.

4.5.5 All girls divisions will abide by the BNS Handbook’s ‘*Division Specific Rules*’, which are a 3 runs per inning limit with the final inning (6<sup>th</sup> for 12U and 14U, and 7<sup>th</sup> for the 18U) having a ten-run limit.

#### 4.6 Game Time Limits

4.6.1 11U/12U Girls All divisions – games must be completed in **1 hour and 45 minutes (1:45)**. Should a game reach the end of the time limit, the current inning is to be completed (top and bottom).

4.6.2 13U/14U Girls All divisions – games must be completed in **2 hours and 00 minutes (2:00)**. Should a game reach the end of the time limit the current inning is to be completed (top and bottom).

4.6.3 15U/18U Girls All divisions – games must be completed in **2 hours and 15 minutes (2:15)**. Should a game reach the end of the time limit the current inning is to be completed (top and bottom).

4.6.4 18U All divisions – games must be completed in **2 hour and 15 minutes (2:15)**. Should a game reach the end of the time limit the current inning is to be completed (top and bottom).

4.6.5 22U/Intermediate All divisions – games must be completed in **2 hour and 15 minutes (2:15)**. Should a game reach the end of the time limit the current inning is to be completed (top and bottom).

4.6.6 In all age categories and at all divisions the time between innings shall be ninety (90) seconds.

4.6.7 Time restrictions and run limits described above are applicable to Bluenose League play only. Different run limits may apply to the Provincial Championships.

4.7 The mercy rule shall be applied in the following situations: a team is ahead; 20 runs after 3 innings (2.5 innings with the home team ahead), 15 runs (or 12 runs for Girls Divisions) after 4 innings (3.5 innings with the home team ahead) and 10 runs after 5 innings (4.5 innings with the home team ahead).

4.8 In divisions with a run limit per inning, even if it is not mathematically possible for a team to come back in a game, the game can continue (unless the mercy rule in 4.7 or a time limit in 4.6 can be applied). This rule is different for Championship play (per the Championship Handbook).

4.9 In all divisions with unlimited substitutions (18U AA and below), if the catcher is on base and there are two outs in the inning, the last offensive player declared out may replace the catcher on base.

4.10 Catchers will be limited to one (1) visit with the pitcher per inning. A visit is defined as an interaction that involves the catcher leaving their position to visit the pitcher. It does not include catcher giving signs to fielders or any interaction where the catcher is exchanging the ball with the pitcher provided the catcher does not meet with the pitcher to exchange the ball.

4.11 Should a game be suspended because of weather or other unforeseen circumstance prior to four (4) complete innings, the game must be rescheduled to start from the beginning.

4.12 Should a game be suspended because of weather or other unforeseen circumstance after four (4) complete innings, the game will be considered official. If the game is called in the middle of an inning, the score will revert back to the last complete inning of play.

## 5. Division Rules

### 5.1 11U

5.1.1 11U A Only – A runner on 3rd base cannot score on a pass ball or wild pitch. A runner on 3rd base cannot advance home as a result of any interaction between the pitcher and the catcher. In all cases where the pitcher pitches the ball to the catcher and there is a pass ball or the catcher throws the ball back to the pitcher, regardless of the results of that throw, no advancement shall be permitted from 3rd. This includes attempted throws to 2nd base in a 1st and 3rd scenario. Runners can only score as a result of the hitter being walked or hit by a pitch with the bases loaded, or baseball plays as a result of a ball being hit into play.

5.1.2 No balk shall be called in 11U division.

### 5.2 12U Girls

5.2.1 Stealing all bases is allowed ONCE THE BALL CROSSES THE PLATE.

- If a runner leaves early and is thrown OUT – the out shall stand.
- If a runner leaves early and would have been safe – the runner is returned to the base from which they left.

5.2.2 Runners are not permitted to advance further than ONE BASE on a steal attempt. If a throw errantly goes into the outfield on a runner attempting to steal second base, that runner IS NOT permitted to advance to third base. If a throw errantly goes into the outfield on a runner attempting to steal third base, that runner IS NOT permitted to advance to home.

5.2.3 A runner on 3rd base cannot score on a pass ball or wild pitch. A runner on 3rd base cannot advance home as a result of any interaction between the pitcher and the catcher. In all cases where the pitcher pitches the ball to the catcher and there is a pass ball or the catcher throws the ball back to the pitcher, regardless of the results of that throw, no advancement shall be permitted from 3rd.

5.2.4 In the event there are runners on first and third base and the runner from first attempts to steal second base, the runner from third IS NOT permitted to attempt to steal home.

5.2.5 No balk shall be called in the 12U Girls division.

5.2.6 Until the end of June, there will be no walks granted during play. If a batter reaches four balls, a tee will be set up on, or in front of home plate, and the batter will have the opportunity to put the ball in play. The batter will carry the count over to the tee, which will determine the number of attempts permitted to hit the ball in fair territory.

Example: if the batter reaches Ball 4 with 1 strike already called, the batter gets 2 (two) attempts to put the ball in play. Should the batter run out of attempts, they will be called out.

- If a batter hits the tee, it shall be deemed an attempt.
- If the ball is hit and doesn't advance the necessary 12 feet, it counts as an attempt.
- If the batter hits the ball and the tee and the ball goes beyond the 12 feet mark, it is in play.
- If the tee is struck without contact of the ball, and the ball manages to travel 12 feet, it is an attempt but not in play.
- A missed swing result in an attempt.
- Foul balls count as attempts, but a batter cannot be called out on a third attempt foul ball (as with two strikes in a normal scenario).

5.2.7 Baserunners will not be permitted to steal bases when the tee is in play.

5.2.8 Bunting off the tee is not permitted. The ball must travel at least twelve feet from home plate.

5.2.9 For the months of July and August, the tee will no longer be used, and 'coach pitch' will be used.

5.2.10 Coaches are to throw a maximum of three pitches, in continuation of the count that the batter held upon the coach stepping in. If one of the (maximum) three pitches is not hit, the batter is out regardless of pitch location from the coach.

Example: if the batter reaches Ball 4 with 1 strike already called, the batter gets 2 (two) pitches from the coach to put the ball in play. Should the batter run out of attempts, they will be called out.

5.2.11 Any ball hit back up the middle, contacting the coach, will be considered an automatic re-pitch.

5.2.12 No bunting or stealing shall be permitted when the coach is pitching

5.2.13 Coaches are permitted to pitch from standing or one knee. Coaches must wear a mask if pitching from one knee. All pitches must be thrown overhand.

5.2.14 Overage players are permitted to pitch in Bluenose League play. Please note this differs in Championship play.

### 5.3 14U Girls

5.3.1 Runners are not permitted to advance further than ONE BASE on a steal attempt. If a throw errantly goes into the outfield on a runner attempting to steal second base, that runner IS NOT permitted to advance to third base. If a throw errantly goes into the outfield on a runner attempting to steal third base, that runner IS NOT permitted to advance to home.

5.3.2 Overage players are permitted to pitch in Bluenose League play. Please note this differs in Championship play.

## Appendix A: Bluenose League and Championship Handbook Comparison

Scenario	Bluenose League	Section	Championships	Section
<b>Time Limits</b>	Yes	4.6 (Bluenose)	No	1.17 (Championship)
<b>Game Lengths (Girls divisions)</b>	As outlined	4.2 (Bluenose)	Modified	1.8 (Championship)
<b>Run Limits</b>	Yes	4.5 (Bluenose)	Yes (with modifications)	1.9 and 1.10 (Championship)
<b>Courtesy Runner for Catcher</b>	Permitted (with restrictions)	4.9 (Bluenose)	Not permitted	1.14 (Championship)
<b>Over Age Players (12U + 14U Girls Only)</b>	Permitted	5.2.14 and 5.3.2 (Bluenose)  2.7.8 (BNS Handbook)	Permitted (with restrictions)	1.21 (Championship)
<b>Affiliate Call Ups</b>	Permitted (per Bluenose Handbook)	3.9 (Bluenose)	Permitted (with restrictions; per BNS Handbook)	2.8 and 2.9 (BNS Handbook)
<b>Minimum Players (to start game)</b>	8 players	3.12 (Bluenose)	9 players	1.16 (Championship)
<b>Defensive Inning Minimums</b>	Yes (at all divisions)	4.4 (Bluenose)	Yes (only at A and Girls divisions)	1.18 and 1.19 (Championship)
<b>Mercy Rule</b>	Yes, but game can continue in one scenario	4.7 and 4.8 (Bluenose)	Yes, game is over	1.11 and 1.12 (Championship)
<b>Extra Innings</b>	Yes, with restrictions	4.3 (Bluenose)	Yes, with no restrictions (different between round robin and elimination round)	1.15 (Championship)
<b>Shortened Games (due to weather, daylight, etc.)</b>	Made official or rescheduled from the beginning	4.11 and 4.12 (Bluenose)	Must continue at exact point where the game was called	9.5 (Championship)