

2024 RAIL YARD CLASSIC PLAYING RULES

Please print these rules. You should not dispute a rule without providing this document.

General Rules

1. There will be no protests. The Umpire must consult the tournament director for final rules disputes. Once a pitch is thrown, the ruling can no longer be contested.
 2. Games will be **6** innings and they can end in a tie. Semi-finals and Championships will play to completion. Based on weather, games may be shorter in length based on Director's discretion to complete the tournament.
 3. No inning is to begin after 2 hours from the start of the game. Playoff games are to be played to completion. If a game's start is delayed, coaches should make notation of start time with the umpire and opposing coach.
 - a. The umpire may award additional time if it is judged there are intentional delays, stalls, or stoppage in play by the team with the lead during the last 15 minutes (Examples include coach visits to the batter or defense, mid-inning defensive changes, injury, equipment malfunction, delays in taking the field)
 4. Each team will play with **10 defensive players** on the field. A rover is permitted; however, the rover must remain in the outfield grass at time of pitch.
 5. The home team is decided by coin-flip for all games. Dugouts are pre-determined.
 6. A team must forfeit a game if at least eight players are not present for the start of the game. If a team should drop below the eight-player minimum during the game, the forfeiture rule shall apply.
 7. **Each batter will receive 5 pitches.** A batter can strike out. A batter can only record a strike by a swing resulting in a foul or miss. If the 5th pitch is fouled off or an errant pitch (umpire judgment), the batter is still alive for another pitch. Foul balls keep the batter alive.
 8. The fielder in the **pitcher position** must have *at least* one foot on the dirt/round of the mound when the ball is released.
 9. There is no stealing or leading off. Runners may not leave the base until the ball crosses the plate or is struck. One warning per team for leaving early. If the ball is put in play, the runner leaving early cannot advance beyond a base he was forced to by batter or trailing runner. The second team offense, runner to be called out and the ball is dead. The ball cannot be batted.
 10. **The Infield Fly Rule is *not* in effect.**
 11. Bat diameter shall not exceed 2^{3/4}"
 12. The batting team will provide an operator for the pitching machine. He/she may not coach or instruct from the playing field while the ball is in play. The machine operator may direct/advise the batter prior to release.
 13. **Runners may advance no more than one base on an initial **overthrow**.**
 14. **Play stops when the ball is in possession of any player within the arc of the infield (extending into foul territory).** Any runner off base** at time of possession can advance or recede to either base. An infielder at any time may attempt to get a runner out. Upon the runner safely reaching base or being tagged out, play is over. No other runners can advance beyond the base they were heading to or occupying at the time the ball was first possessed in the infield. A player may not leave a base once possession is established in the infield. A ball thrown from the outfield cannot be considered an overthrow. ---SEE CLARIFICATIONS AND EXAMPLES BELOW---
- **Off base is not intended to be judged as a close call. Anything within roughly 10 feet on a continuous run through a base is to be considered on base. The runner must be clearly off base and advancing to the next base. On close calls the runner must go back. A single ump will have difficulty watching four bases and the ball, so **base coaching sportsmanship is required.****
15. A Continuous-Batting Rule will be used. All Players on the bench will be in the batting line-up. **There will be unlimited defensive substitution.** All players present must play at least 2 full innings in the field. If a player is injured and cannot continue to play the player's position in the continuous batting order, the player will be crossed out. A player cannot re-enter the game if batting position is passed. Players arriving late will be added to the bottom of the batting order. Players cannot be added after the 3rd inning.
 16. There will be a **six-run limit per inning** with exception of the 6th inning or any extra inning. This will not be in effect for any presumed "last inning" prior to the 6th inning.
 17. **10-Run Rule** will be in effect so long as the team with fewer runs has had at least 4 at bats. This rule will also apply in all Playoff & Championship Games.
 18. A team down by more than 16 runs after the third inning can score as needed to nullify the 10-run rule from being applied in the fourth. This rule is only used in the fourth inning.

Example 1: After 3 innings the score is 18-0. In the 4th inning, the team down by 18 is allowed to score 9 runs in order to avoid ruling their fourth at bat meaningless.

Example 2: Home team down 0-20 in the bottom of the fourth. The home team can then score up to 11 runs in the bottom of the fourth.

19. Batters can be put out at first base from the outfield.
20. Outfielders (including the rover) cannot record a putout on a force out. They are not permitted to step on a bag for a force out (or a tag in lieu of a force out). At least four fielders must be in the grass of the outfield at the time of the pitch. Outfielders can participate in a rundown or cover an abandoned base provided there is no force out.
21. **No bunting.** A fair ball judged to be bunted by the umpire shall result in the batter being called out. Runners may not advance.
22. If the batted ball **strikes the machine or machine operator**, it is an automatic re-do and the pitch count returns to zero pitches thrown.
23. Machine Operators may only adjust the nub, (which contacts the ball) between innings, batters or pitches. All other adjustments will be at the discretion of the Umpire or Tournament Director.
24. With two outs, a pinch runner should be provided for the catcher if he/she is on base. The replacement should be the last batted out.
25. There is **no on-deck circle** and there is no swinging of bats or playing catch outside of a fenced-in field by players or spectators.
26. All players, coaches and equipment must remain in the dugout, behind the fencing on cement. Players are not permitted to leave the dugout during a game.
27. A ball thrown out of play will result in the advancement of two bases from the *time of the throw*. A pitched ball that goes out of play is a dead ball with no advancement.
28. Throwing a bat will result in a team warning. The next team thrown bat will be a dead ball and the batter called out.
29. There is no electronic music allowed during games. This specifically refers to "Walk Up" music.
30. Any player or coach ejected from a game must sit out the following game.
31. Any spectator ejected cannot return for the balance of the tournament.
32. All rules not covered above will default to the tournament director's rule book of record.

Playoff Tie Breakers*

2 Team Tie

- Head-to-head
- Least Runs allowed
- Run differential (no game to exceed a 10 run win)
- Coin flip

3 or more team tie (cycle through until one team declared winner, then cycle through again).

- Least runs allowed.
- Run differential (no game to exceed a 10 run win)
- Coin Flip

***Tournament Director reserves the right to over-ride playoff placement.**

Stoppage in Play Clarification and Examples

A runner cannot leave a base once possession is established within the infield. If a runner is off base, he can proceed to one base or the other at his own risk, but cannot advance beyond the highest base of the two, regardless of defensive action (ex: ball over-thrown to outfield).

Exception: Infield fielded over-throw. When a batted ball is fielded by an infielder and a play is made to get a runner or the batter out, all runners may advance 1 more base at their own peril. They cannot advance beyond that next base.

Example 1: No runners on, batter hits ground ball to shortstop, bad throw gets by 1st baseman. Runner can advance to 2nd at his own risk (assumes ball remains in play). Runner can be safe or out at second, or can recede to 1st based on the throw. Under no circumstances can he/she end up at third.

Example 2: Runner on first, same situation, overthrow to first, the runner on first can run to third on an overthrow, but not beyond, regardless of action taken on defense.

Example 3: Runner on 2nd, ball hit to 1st base. First baseman fields ground ball and steps on first. At this time, the batter is out and the runner on second cannot advance beyond 3rd base, regardless of the throw.

Example 4: Runner on 2nd, ball hit to 1st base (same situation), first baseman fields ground ball and DOES NOT step on first, but throws to 3rd in an attempt to get the runner. The runner may proceed home at his/her own peril on an overthrow and the batter/runner may not advance beyond 2nd base.

Example 5: Runner on first, ball hit to center field. Runner rounds second as ball thrown in, and fielded by pitcher. The pitcher attempts to get the runner out at 3rd. The throw goes over the 3rd baseman's head. The runner must remain on third base as possession was established and the batted ball was not fielded in the infield.

Example 6: Runner on first. A hard ground ball is hit to right field. The right fielder throws to second base in an attempt to get the force out. The ball goes over the shortstop's head and into left field. This is not considered an overthrow and play is live as possession has not been established in the infield.

Example 7: Runner on first base with 1 out. Pop-up to third baseman. Catch made and attempt to double up the runner on first with an overthrow. Since the initial out was made, and the ball was possessed in the infield, the runner may not advance to 2nd base.

Recap: You cannot advance beyond the base you are headed to once possession is established in the infield other than one base if the defense is attempting to make the first out on a batted ball fielded in the infield.

The intent is to encourage the defense to get the ball into the infield and allow infielders the chance to throw out over-aggressive runners without repercussion.