

# 2004 – OFFICIAL RULES – 2004

## AGE LIMIT FOR 2004

**CLASS AA – YOUTH BORN ON OR AFTER AUGUST 1, 1986**

**CLASS A – YOUTH BORN ON OR AFTER AUGUST 1, 1988**

**CLASS B – YOUTH BORN ON OR AFTER AUGUST 1, 1990**

**CLASS C – YOUTH BORN ON OR AFTER AUGUST 1, 1992**

**CLASS D – YOUTH BORN ON OR AFTER AUGUST 1, 1994**

In order to participate in the 2004 season, a player must attain the age of six on or before July 31, 2004.

A certified record of birth date must accompany the agreement of any player whose birthday is not on record in Hamilton, Adams, Brown, Butler, Clermont, Clinton, Highland, or Warren Counties, Ohio. Boone, Campbell, Gallatin, Grant, Kenton, Pendleton, or Mason Counties, Kentucky. Dearborn or Ohio Counties, Indiana.

1. **INDIVIDUAL AGREEMENTS:** (a) Players agreements are for the 2004 playing season which starts when the player signs the agreement and ends when the player's team finishes its regular playing season and is determined not to be eligible for the Greater Cincinnati Tournament or when the player's team is eliminated from the Greater Cincinnati Tournament. Each player and the parent or guardian must have signed an Agreement before a player participates in a regular season game. (b) Except as provided in Rule 24, a Knothole player may not play on any other team except a school team. A school team is a team participating in a program sanctioned by the applicable governing body for the school's athletic program such as OHSA, KHSAA, IHSA, or CYO in play against other sanctioned school programs. (c) **PENALTY** – Forfeiture of game in which player participates. (d) No team may be allowed to play in two leagues. Any district allowing a team to play in two leagues at the same time will not be eligible to enter a team in the City Tournament in that class. Example: If a team in Class C is also playing in another league, the district will not be allowed to enter any Class C team from their district in the City Tournament.
2. **ALL PLAYERS** must have access to a birth certificate. It is recommended that all players have a physical examination and have a Doctor's permission to participate in the baseball program. The player's Manager or the District Supervisor may require the birth certificate or the Doctor's permission, or both before placing any player on a team.
3. **LEGAL TEAM:** (a) Not less than eleven or more than twenty players, including playing manager, shall constitute a legal Knothole team. (b) If the team roster falls below eleven players due to releases, the legality of the team is not affected providing no other rule applies. (c) District Supervisor may establish a standard number of players per team between 11 and 20 players. (d) Tryouts may not be used to determine team rosters. **PENALTY:** Violation of this provision is forfeiture of ALL games.
4. **LEAGUE** – Knothole is composed of the following Divisions: Division I, Division II, and AA. These rules apply to Division II. The rules for Division I and AA are provided separately. Any situation not specifically covered by the rules for Division I or AA shall be controlled by these rules.
  - (a) Division II is made up of teams playing on a District level.
  - (b) When Districts combine to form a league, an Agreement must be reached on a League Supervisor. If no agreement can be reached on a League Supervisor, the Executive Board of Greater Cincinnati Knothole will appoint the League Supervisor.
- (c) All teams from the same league must go to the same Regional Tournament.

During the regular season, a minimum of four (no maximum) teams in any one class will constitute a league. Where three or less teams exist in one class, they must be transferred to another **contiguous** district whose supervisor will have jurisdiction, except for practice fields. When a district has less than eight but more than three teams, the district may, at the supervisor's discretion, elect to transfer to another **contiguous district**. **No district shall be allowed to combine with more than three other districts for regular season play except with the express written consent of the Board of Directors.**
5. **KNOTHOLE DISTRICTS:** (a) Knothole districts are composed of geographical areas depicted upon maps kept on file by the Knothole Club of Greater Cincinnati, Inc. subject only to the exceptions listed below:
  - (1) A player will play in the district in which he resides.
  - (2) If a player is a member and in good standing with a parish, church, or school which provides a Knothole team, the player will be permitted to play on the parish, church, or school team in spite of the fact that he may not reside in the District in which the parish, church, or school is located. (This rule applies to any denomination of churches.)
  - (3) A player may play in an adjoining District providing both District Supervisors agree in writing.
  - (4) If a player moves to a District in which he did not participate in the preceding year, the player shall be permitted to participate in the player's former District provided the player had a valid contract in the former District for the preceding year and provided that the player secures the approval of both District Supervisors.
  - (5) If a player's residence is such that it is unclear in which District he resides, the player shall be assigned to a District by the President of the Knothole Club.
- (b) **PENALTY** – Forfeiture of game in which player participates.
6. **NEW PLAYER(S) AND RELEASES:** (a) New Player(s) When a team roster declines below its standard number of player(s), new player(s) may be signed no later than June 1. Class AA – June 21, of the current season. A team may sign up to and including 5 new player(s) consisting of added player(s), and replacements for released player(s), providing the maximum is not exceeded at any time. New player Agreement(s) must be submitted to the District

- Supervisor prior to the player participating in a regular season game. After June 1, a District Supervisor may allow a team to add a player if required for the team to be able to finish its season, (e.g. a team's roster falls below nine players). When this permission is granted, the team will not be eligible for District champion, Runner-up or participation in the City Tournament.
- (b) Release(s) – Provide a procedure whereby player(s) are afforded the opportunity to participate on a Knothole Baseball Team when:
    - (1) Player(s) are relocated because of action by the court in a custody hearing, or
    - (2) Player(s) are needed to complete a team roster when player(s) have quit or moved.
  - (c) All other requested release(s) will be resolved by the District Supervisor within 4 weeks prior to the start of the season, and within 2 weeks after the season opens. If no decision is made by said District Supervisor in the time allotted, then said release shall be deemed approved. When a player is released, the official release form must be completed and delivered to the District Supervisor.
  - (d) Under no circumstance may a player have two signed player Agreement(s) on file at the same time.
  - (e) PENALTY – Forfeiture of game in which player participates.
7. **(a) THE REGULAR PLAYING SEASON** consists of a minimum of a twelve game schedule that must be played during the season and prior to the Greater Cincinnati Tournament. The official starting date for the Greater Cincinnati Tournament will be July 1 or thereafter. The regional director will determine the starting date. Any District that does not provide teams for games on or after the official date will have their tournament games forfeited at scheduled game times.
- (b) All teams playing in the City Tournament must have players in that class during the regular season. **EXAMPLE** A Class D team playing in Class C during the regular season must compete in Class C in the City Tournament.
8. **OFFICIAL GAME** – Class AA=7 innings; Class A=7 innings; Class B=6 innings; Class C=5 innings; Class D=5 innings.
9. **PITCHING DISTANCE** – Class AA=60 feet, 6 inches; Class A=60 feet, 6 inches; Class B=54 feet; Class C=48 feet; Class D=45 feet.
10. **BASE DISTANCE** – Class AA=90 feet; Class A=90 feet; Class B=80 feet; Class C=70 feet; Class D=60 feet.
11. **INCOMPLETE GAMES:** (a) Any scheduled game stopped because of rain or darkness shall be considered an official game after 4 ½ innings are completed in Classes AA, A, and B; and after 3 ½ innings in Classes C and D, providing home team is leading in each case. (b) A District Supervisor may uniformly invoke a suspended game rule and not be in conflict with this Knothole Rule. (Does not apply to City Tournament.)
12. **PERSONNEL ON PLAYING FIELD** – Only the official Manager or the designated coaches and the participating players shall be allowed on the players' benches or on the playing field during the progress of an officially scheduled game. Failure to comply with this rule can result in forfeiture of the game by action of the umpire in chief.
13. **DISPUTED PLAYS** – Only the official manager or designated coach of any team participating in a scheduled game may address the umpire on any disputed play during the progress of the game.
14. **FORMAL PROTEST:** Any formal protest on a field play must be made to the umpire-in-chief who shall be the plate umpire and the opposing manager must be notified before the next legal pitch is made. Both score books must be noted and signed by both umpires and managers. (b) A written (preferably typewritten) statement of fact, setting forth the date, time, and all matters covering the formal protest must be submitted by the official team manager in person to the District Supervisor (or his designated representative) prior to Noon of the next day. Include a full

statement of facts such as number of outs, men on base, ball and strike count and rule number violated.

15. **BATS** – Baseball bats approved are as follows: Any unaltered commercially manufactured bats available for retail purchase. Per official baseball rule 1.10(a) maximum diameter is 2 and ¾ inches. Note: Softball bats are not allowed to be used. Penalty – Player is out and ball is dead immediately.
16. **PROTECTIVE HEADGEAR & EQUIPMENT:** (a) The batter and the base runner must wear a double ear helmet while at the plate and while running the bases. Penalty for not wearing a helmet shall be that the player will be declared "OUT" if the player refuses to wear a helmet after being reminded by the umpire that the player is not wearing the proper headgear. (b) **Catchers are required to wear a chest protector, a mask (with throat protector), shin guards, and a protective headgear covering** on top of the head while catching behind the plate. It is recommended that all male catchers wear an athletic supporter with a cup. (c) **Any player warming up the pitcher before the game and between innings shall wear a catcher's mask (with throat protector). Refusal to do so after being reminded by the umpire shall result in the ejection of the offender.**
17. **THE KNOTHOLE PITCHER – 1. Rest Between Pitching Assignments** – (a) Any player who pitches in any portion of a game (including practice games) shall not be permitted to pitch again without two complete nights' rest between pitching assignments. (b) A pitcher may pitch in two games in the same day provided that: (1) The pitcher has had two nights rest prior to the day of the games; (2) The pitcher pitches no more innings than the length of a normal game in his class in his District. Note: A single pitch in any inning counts as an inning pitched. (c) This rule cannot be changed by any Knothole Supervisor. (d) Penalty for violation shall be that the manager shall be suspended for two games and forfeit one league ballgame. **2. Trips To The Mound** – (a) Two trips to the mound by a manager or coach will be enforced in Classes AA, A, and B. (b) In Classes C and D, a pitcher shall be removed upon the third trip up to the mound by a manager or coach in any one inning. (c) When a pitcher is removed, as provided in this rule, he shall only be removed from the pitching assignment and he may otherwise remain in the game. (d) Once removed, due to trips to the mound, the player shall not be permitted to resume the pitching assignment until the following inning. **3. Taking Signals** The National League rule that requires the pitcher to take his signals on the pitching rubber shall only be enforced in Classes AA and A.
18. **KNOTHOLE MODIFICATION TO PERMIT RE-ENTRY:** (a) ~~Any of the starting players~~ may be withdrawn and re-entered once, providing such player occupies the same batting position whenever he is in the lineup. Penalty for violation of this section shall be ejection of the manager and player involved. (b) If a player is injured or ejected and cannot be replaced because all substitutes have played, then the opposing manager will choose any player from the bench to replace the injured or ejected player.
19. **ADDITIONAL HITTER:** A tenth batter may be added to the batting order at the start of the game. Any nine (9) of the ten (10) batters may play on defense. If a team using the AH drops from ten (10) to nine (9) players available the spot on the lineup is left open and is not an out. The continuous batting order may be used.
20. **SLIDING BASE RULE:** (a) When a runner goes into a base standing up and the runner and the base move more than the width of the base in any fashion whatsoever, and the runner is tagged, the runner is out. (b) If the runner gets back to the spot where the base was before being tagged, the runner is safe. (c) When sliding, the runner shall remain on the ground until the umpire calls time. If the player gets up and moves before the umpire calls time, the runner will be called OUT if tagged and not standing on the original spot of the base. If the player moves the base

- and gets up and makes the next base, the future runner will go to the original spot of the base. (d) If the base is tied down the runner must stay with the base. (e) If a tied down base becomes loose or broken because of a slide and the base moves away, the runner is not in jeopardy. (f) **Pegged or weighted bases may be used.**
21. **Each manager is responsible for the conduct of the team's fans and coaches before, during and after the game. (b) The use of alcoholic beverages, profane language, or improper conduct will not be permitted on any baseball field while a Knothole game or practice is in progress. Violation will result in immediate ejection from the field and further disciplinary action by the League Supervisor. (c) No game shall continue until the offender or offenders have left, or all persons shall be cleared from the field and the game will continue with the spectators removed.**
  22. **MANAGERS' AGREEMENT RESPONSABILITIES** – The official team manager will be held responsible for the correct birth date and permanent address being shown on players' agreement. The manager of each team must deliver No. 1 and No. 2 copies of each agreement to the District Supervisor as soon as the team is organized, and in no case later than the official district opening game.
  23. **INELIGIBLE PLAYER:** (a) An ineligible player is defined as any player who has: (1) Not signed or whose parent or guardian has not signed his player's agreement, or whose player's agreement has not been accepted by his team manager prior to his participation in any regularly scheduled game;
    - (2) A player who is currently playing on more than one baseball team other than his school team, except as provided by Rule 24.
    - (3) A player who is playing on a Knothole team contrary to Rule 5 or 6 of the "Official Rules" or contrary to the Local Rules of the Knothole District in which he resides;
    - (4) **A player whose age exceeds the permissible age limitation of the Class in which he is participating.**
    - (5) A player who has played in a non-approved event as defined in Rule 23 of the "Official Rules".
    - (b) Manager and / or teams using an ineligible player will be penalized by forfeiture of each game in which an ineligible player participated.
  24. **APPROVED BASEBALL PROGRAM:** (a) **During the regular playing season,** no player / team agreement signed by a player, parent, guardian, manager, or other authorized person with the Knothole Club of Greater Cincinnati, Inc., shall be valid in any tournament play of any kind outside their district from the first official game in the district the contract represents to the last official game within the same district unless:
    - (1) Except as provided below, the player plays for the team his contract represents.
    - (2) Player / Team does not violate any Knothole rules.
    - (3) Team fulfills all obligations to their district.
    - (4) A team can play in a tournament during the regular season with the written approval from their District Supervisor prior to the event. It cannot affect regular scheduled games.
    - (5) A team that qualifies for the Knothole Regional and Final Tournaments cannot play in any other tournament until eliminated from the Knothole tournament. Provided, however, that a player may play in a tournament with another Knothole team from the player's district with the approval of the district supervisor. This rule does not apply to any Knothole District League Tournament and does not apply to the City Tournament. City Tournament scheduling shall take priority.
    - (b) If a player / team violates any of the conditions above, the player / team will be disciplined by the District Supervisor or the Knothole Tournament Supervisor in accordance with Knothole rules.
  25. **SUPERVISION:** (a) During the regular season, each Executive District Supervisor is authorized within his District to schedule games, regulate activities, decide protests and

render all necessary decisions. (b) National League Official Playing Rules are the standard of the Knothole Club of Greater Cincinnati, Inc., and will govern in all baseball activities except wherein rules of the Knothole Club take precedence. (c) An individual District Supervisor may alter, modify, or add to these rules providing the rules are not in direct conflict with Knothole rules and are written and deposited at Knothole headquarters and sanctioned by the Rules Committee before the season starts.

26. Intentional fighting by participants including players, managers, coaches and other team personnel may result in a one year "Calendar" suspension of said participant. Any striking or offensive touch not in the normal course of a baseball game by a player, coach, or manager of an umpire before, during or after a baseball game shall result in a one year "Calendar" automatic suspension.
27. **"FAKE TAG" – No defensive player may make a tag attempt on a base runner if that defensive player does not have the ball in his possession. This is to ensure the safety of the base runners by eliminating unnecessary slides that may result in injuries to the base runner. The penalty for infraction of this rule is that the base runner shall be declared "Safe" and the offender may be ejected from the game.**
28. **NO METAL SPIKES WILL BE PERMITTED IN KNOTHOLE EXCEPT IN "AA" AND "A". PENALTY – EJECTION OF PLAYER FROM GAME.**
29. **HURDLING OR PLOWING OVER THE CATCHER OR OTHER BASEMAN** – (Will be a judgement call and could result in unsportsmanlike conduct.)
30. (a) **First and second place teams** in each division of each District are **eligible** to play in the Greater Cincinnati Tournament. (b) Teams may be added with the approval of the regional Tournament Committees, as long as this does not prolong the completion date of the Regional Tournament. Priority for adding teams to the Tournament should be given to the Districts with more teams in that division. (c) Maximum 16 teams.
31. **The pitching plate will be used in all Greater Cincinnati City Tournament games for Classes "AA", "A", "B", "C", and "D".**
32. **In the event a team entered in a Greater Cincinnati Knothole Tournament game is given incorrect instructions, as to the time or place to report for a tournament game, by a District Supervisor, the team shall not lose the game by forfeit, provided the facts are reported to the Regional Tournament Director by the District Supervisor the same day the game was scheduled. The Regional Tournament Director shall schedule the game for play no later than the next playable day.**

## **ADAPTED BASEBALL**

Organized youth baseball programs are available for children with disabilities. For information on the Adapted Baseball Program, call the Cincinnati Recreation Commission, Division of Therapeutic Recreation, at 352 – 3865.