

# What's the Score?

## With Official Scoring Rules for All Divisions of Little League Baseball® and Little League Softball®



### THE OFFICIAL SCORER

Being the Official Scorer involves many responsibilities in reports of Little League Baseball/Softball games.

Like umpires, scorers cannot satisfy everybody — sometimes not even themselves. Afterthoughts sometimes contradict original judgments.

The scorer must realize that he or she is passing judgment on the feats and the failures of players of school age, and keep in mind the necessity of encouraging the players. The Little League scorer has to use good and impartial judgment, even if he or she is affiliated with one of the teams in some way.

Official scoring, the basis of all records in baseball and softball, was originally devised by Pop Henry Chadwick before the Civil War. A reporter for the old "New York Clipper," Chadwick invented a system of keeping track of a ball game by cryptic signs, and instituted the system of assembling the data of games and season.

Scoring is a means of compiling a record of what happens during the progress of a baseball game. It is an engaging pastime that makes spectator involvement with a ball game much more enjoyable. For people involved in Little League — parents, managers, coaches, fans, as well as Official Scorekeepers — it is a must. A system of basic symbols, letters and numbers substitute for a written account of the action and make possible graphic recap through the running play-by-play record of the game.

The most commonly used symbols for scoring can be found in the Official Little League Scorebook, available at your nearest Regional Center. The official rules for scoring follow this introductory section.

Learning to score is not difficult, although there are many variations in the individual adaptation. Each scorer usually develops a style and technique by experience. But overall, the object is to set down, either in detail or in rough form, the sequence of events and how they relate to the winning, or the losing, of the game.

Little League games are recorded by a person designated as Official Scorer, as well as by team scorers, newspapermen, radio and television announcers and often, by spectators. However, as the title implies, the Official Scorer keeps the Official Record for the league. A scorer must never make a decision that conflicts with the Official Rules and Regulations of Little League Baseball/Softball or with an umpire's decision.

Because young boys and girls are involved in Little League games, scoring requires mature and sound judgment, consistent with ideals of the program. As a rule of thumb, Little League scorers use common sense and some latitude in judgment without sacrificing the basic principles of scoring.

The scorer is the official designee of the League President and his/her decisions in entering the game record in the book must be recognized as essential to the league.

### ACCURACY

A system of cross-checking your records is of prime importance. It enables you to keep a close tab of the record in your scorebook.

Knowing the score is more important than distinguishing between hits and errors. But it is still important to prove out each inning as you go along, totaling runs, hits and errors at the bottom of each inning. Double check to make sure and don't hesitate to consult the umpire when it is necessary. The umpire decides whether runs count.

Accuracy is important, but you may make mistakes. If you find that you scored a play incorrectly in violation of the rules, correct your mistake before finalizing your totals. GETTING IT RIGHT should be the creed of every scorekeeper.

Be sure that you have correctly spelled the names of each player. First names are important, too. If your score is to be used for newspaper or other published accounts of game, correct spelling and complete names are essential. Don't guess. Get it right. Never give out a box score without carefully checking everything.

The formula for double-checking your totals is: At bats plus bases on balls, plus hit batters, plus sacrifices, plus number of batters reaching first on interference by catcher must equal the following: runs, plus left on bases, plus opponents' putouts.

## POSITION NUMBERS

The most widely accepted system of numbering players by position is as follows:

Pitcher 1; Catcher 2; First Baseman 3; Second Baseman 4; Third Baseman 5; Shortstop 6; Left Fielder 7; Center Fielder 8; Right Fielder 9.

## PITCHING RECORDS

The necessity to maintain totals of number of innings pitched during a calendar week requires that sufficient space to record these situations is provided in the score page. This is one of the several features of the Official Little League Scorebook. Remember, delivery of a single pitch in an inning constitutes having pitched that entire inning for the purposes of pitching eligibility records.

Another important factor is knowing the difference between an ineligible pitcher/player, and batting out of order. An Official Scorer should ALWAYS inform the umpire if an ineligible pitcher or player is about to enter a game, thus preventing a protest. However, the Official Scorer should NEVER inform anyone if a player is about to bat out of order. (It's the defensive team's job to watch for that.)

The Official Scorer should know before a game begins if there are any players on either roster who are ineligible to pitch, or if they may be limited to a certain number of innings. Note: The manager is ultimately responsible for preventing an ineligible player/pitcher from entering the game.

## PLAYING RULES

Because judgment is often a factor in recording the relative values of what happens on the field of play, Official Scorers should be familiar with Playing Rules as well as with the basic guidelines of scoring.

Scorekeepers are not incapable of making mistakes. However, once a judgment decision is made by a scorekeeper and entered, it must stand. Erasures in a scorebook, other than to correct a misused symbol, expose the scorekeeper to deserved criticism.

For those who would like to touch every base in the techniques of scoring, many complete manuals on the subject are available from a variety of sources. A good one may be your local sporting goods dealer or general book store. However, for the purposes of Little League and recognizing that scoring is a volunteer effort, often by those who do not have the experience, the following are capsule guidelines that should be helpful.

**Base Hit** — Usually, a base hit is scored when the batter reaches first (or any succeeding base) safely on a fair ball that strikes the ground or a fence or goes over it before being gathered in by a fielder. It is a base hit when the batter reaches base safely on a ball hit with such force, or so slowly, that any fielder attempting to make a play has no opportunity to do so. This also applies to a ball which takes an unusual bounce and makes it impossible for a fielder to cleanly handle. Always score a hit when good fielding of a ball does not result in a putout.

**Force Out** — However puzzling to some parents and spectators, not every batted ball on which the player reaches base safely can be credited as a base hit. For example, when another runner is forced out as the result of a batted ball, no hit is scored. Nor is it a hit if a fielder fails in attempting to retire a preceding runner, and in the judgment of the scorer, the batter-runner could have been retired at first base. In both cases, the batter-runner is credited with reaching base on a fielder's choice.

It is a prime rule of scoring that some indication be made in the book to account for every movement of batter-runner or preceding runners.

**Value of a Base Hit** — The scorer's judgment is most critical in determining the value of a base hit. Usually a one-base hit (or single) is credited if the batter-runner stops at first base; a two-base hit (double) if the runner stops at second and a three-base hit (triple) if he/she stops at third.

With runners advancing as the result of a safe hit and the batter advancing to second base as the result of the defensive team making a play in an attempt to put out one of these runners, the scorer must determine whether the batter is entitled to a two-base hit or whether he or she advanced to second base on the option by the defensive team. In this event, the scorer would indicate that the batter reached base on a one-base hit, but advanced to second on a fielder's choice.

There are many situations in which the scorer must use judgment in evaluating a base hit. Example: A batter/runner overslides second base and is tagged out before getting back to the base. The runner is credited with a one-base hit because it was the last base reached safely. However, if the runner runs past second base after reaching it on his/her feet and is put out attempting to get back, credit a two-base hit.

A situation which comes up often in Little League is that of a batter-runner missing a base after having made a safe hit. If he/she is called out for missing any base, he/she is credited only with a hit equivalent to the last base he/she did touch. If he/she misses first base and is called out, no hit is scored, but a time at bat shall be charged.

When a base hit ends the game by driving home the winning run in the last half of the final inning, the batter gets credit only for as many bases (one-base, two-base, three-base hit) as necessary to advance the runner who scores the winning run. However the batter-runner must run out the hit for as many bases as are advanced by the runner who scores the winning run. In scoring, credit only the winning run in the final score, except in the case where the batter hits a home run. Then all runs shall count. A home run counts for four bases at any stage of the game and in any situation on the bases.

**Sacrifices** — Scorers sometimes experience difficulty in determining how to record the action of the batter in trying to advance a base-runner. As the term indicates, the batter is deliberately sacrificing his/her chance to hit safely by bunting the ball in order to force the defensive team to make a usually easy play on him/her at first base for an out, thus advancing a preceding runner into a more favorable position. Even if, as the result of an error, the batter is not put out at first base, but his/her action enables the preceding runner to advance, he/she gets credit for a sacrifice (not a base hit) and no time at bat is charged.

It is NOT a sacrifice if the preceding runner is put out during this sequence of the defensive team's action in playing the bunt. The batter is charged with a time at bat and if he/she reaches first base safely, the action is recorded as a fielder's choice.

It is also a sacrifice if with less than two out, the batter hits a fly ball or line drive which is caught in the outfield, and a run scores. (See Scoring Rule 10.09.)

**Assists** — Action of defensive players in throwing, catching and retiring batters or base runners should be recorded.

An assist is the action of a defensive player in throwing or deflecting a batted or thrown ball so that a putout is accomplished. Scorers don't have to rely on judgment in the matter of assists. The procedure is clearly defined in the action, but like most other aspects of rules interpretation, there are many situations that can come up.

Generally, credit an assist when continuous throwing action by the defensive team results in a putout. The most important exception to remember is that any interruption in the continuity of the play as the result of an error, even though a putout may later result, removes credit for assists. From the point of the error it is a new play and the player who makes the error is not credited with an assist, until he or she takes part in the new play leading to a putout.

**Errors** — In Little League, scorers should favor the batter if a decision of judgment is on the border line of hit versus error. However, this is not to say that obvious errors should be glossed over. Generally, when a defensive player (through ordinary effort) muffs a batted or thrown ball, throws the ball widely or drops the ball, the error must be charged. Being able to recognize the difference between a hit and error is often the toughest job for a scorekeeper — and the most controversial.

The key is to determine the value of ordinary effort by a fielder. If the fielder should have made the play, with ordinary effort, and failed to, an error may be charged. However, in the case of a fielder, for example, who has to range far from his/her usual position to make a play, and fails to make the play (even if he/she touches the batted ball), no error should be charged.

Remember that Little Leaguers are not professionals. The benefit of the doubt should always go to the batter. If a field's play on a batted ball is affected by some outside force, such as bright sunlight, a collision with a fence or another fielder, or a "bad hop," it should be scored a hit if the fielder fails to make the play.

Errors of omission, such as indecision to throw the ball, etc., cannot be charged. But in the case of a baseman, for example, who neglects to have his/her foot on the base when he/she receives a throw has committed a chargeable error.

Some misplays by the catcher or pitcher — passed balls or wild pitches — are recorded in the scorebook as such and no error is charged.

**Winning and losing pitcher** — The starting pitcher cannot be credited with the victory, regardless of his/her effectiveness, unless he or she pitched three full innings. With that in mind, the winning pitcher is generally the person on the winning team who was the pitcher of record at the time the winning team took the lead and maintained it for the remainder of the game. If the starting pitcher leaves the game with a lead before three innings, and the lead is maintained, that starting pitcher cannot qualify for the victory. In that event, the Official Scorer determines the winning pitcher based on his/her judgment as to which of the relief pitchers was most effective.

The losing pitcher is the generally the pitcher of record on the losing team when the winning team took the lead and maintained the lead for the remainder of the game.

Individual exceptions are listed in Rule 10.19.

**In General** — This booklet is intended as a general guideline to some of the basic elements of scoring. Each of the previous segments could be further embellished to cover all situations that might come up in a game. As noted, there are authoritative manuals on the subject for a thorough review of scoring rules, but we have sampled only a few basic situations in order to avoid a lengthy book, and to give first-time scorers a basic understanding of the rules.

The best way to learn is to jump right in. Watch several experienced scorekeepers, and keep a parallel book, to see what system is best for you. Watching professional ball games on television, and paying attention to the scoring decisions, is also helpful.

As you become more familiar with the rules and gain experience, you will become more expert. It is not a chore lightly assumed, but it can be fun and will add a new dimension to your enjoyment of baseball and softball.

## OFFICIAL SCORING RULES

### INDEX

Assists, 10.11	Percentages, how determined, 10.21
Base hits, 10.05 10.06, 10.07	Pitch Count, 10.22
Bases on balls, 10.16	Putouts, 10.10
Box scores, 10.02, 10.03	Runs, batted in, 10.04
Caught stealing, 10.08	Sacrifices, 10.09
Determine value of hits, 10.07	Saves for relief pitchers, 10.20
Earned runs, 10.18	Stolen bases, 10.08
Errors, 10.13, 10.14	Strikeouts, 10.17
Official scorer, 10.01	Wild pitches, 10.15
Passed balls, 10.15	Winning-losing pitcher, 10.19

### 10.01 -

- (a) The league president shall appoint an Official Scorer for each league. The scorer shall have sole authority to make all decisions involving judgment, such as whether a batter's advance to first base is the result of a hit or an error. The scorer shall communicate such decisions to the press by hand signals or over the loudspeaker system and shall advise the announcer of such decisions if requested. In the event of a question of eligibility of a pitcher, the record of the Official Scorer shall be deemed official.
- (b)
  - (1) To achieve uniformity in keeping the records, the scorer shall conform strictly to the Scoring Rules. The scorer shall have authority to rule on any point not specifically covered in these rules.
  - (2) If the teams change sides before three are put out, the scorer shall immediately inform the umpire of the mistake.
  - (3) If the game is protested or play suspended, the scorer shall make note of the exact situation at the time of the protest or suspension, including the score, the number of outs, the position of any runners, and the ball and strike count on the batter.
  - (4) The scorer shall not make any decision conflicting with the Official Playing rules, or with an umpire's decision.

- (5) The scorer shall not call attention to the umpire or of any member of either team to the fact that a player is batting out of turn.
- (c) The scorer is an official representative of the league, and is entitled to the respect and dignity of the office.

**10.02** - The official score report shall make provisions for entering the information listed below, in a form convenient for the compilation of permanent statistical records.

(a) The following records for each batter and runner:

- (1) Number of times they batted, except that no time at bat shall be charged against a player when -
  - (i) the player hits a sacrifice bunt or sacrifice fly;
  - (ii) the player is awarded first base on four called balls;
  - (iii) the player is hit by a pitched ball;
  - (iv) the player is awarded first base because of interference or obstruction.
- (2) Number of runs scored
- (3) Number of safe hits
- (4) Number of runs batted in
- (5) Two-base hits
- (6) Three-base hits
- (7) Home runs
- (8) Total bases on safe hits
- (9) Stolen bases
- (10) Sacrifice bunts
- (11) Sacrifice flies
- (12) Total number of bases on balls
- (13) Separate listing of any intentional bases on balls
- (14) Number of times hit by a pitched ball
- (15) Number of times awarded first base for interference or obstruction
- (16) Strikeouts

(b) The following records for each fielder:

- (1) Number of putouts
- (2) Number of assists
- (3) Number of errors
- (4) Number of double plays participated in
- (5) Number of triple plays participated in

(c) The following records for each pitcher:

- (1) Number of innings pitched  
NOTE: In computing innings pitched for statistical purposes, count each putout as one-third of an inning. If a starting pitcher is replaced with one out in an inning, credit that pitcher 1/3 inning. If a relief pitcher retires two batters and is replaced, credit that pitcher with 2/3 inning pitched. For pitching eligibility purposes, charge a full inning pitched if the pitcher delivers one or more pitches to a batter in that inning.
- (2) Total number of batters faced
- (3) Number of batters officially at bat against pitcher, computed according to 10.02 (a) (1)
- (4) Number of hits allowed
- (5) Number of runs allowed
- (6) Number of earned runs allowed
- (7) Number of home runs allowed
- (8) Number of sacrifice hits allowed
- (9) Number of sacrifice flies allowed
- (10) Total number of bases on balls allowed
- (11) Separate listing of any intentional bases on balls allowed
- (12) Number of batters hit by pitched balls
- (13) Number of strikeouts

- (14) Number of wild pitches
- (15) Number of balks (baseball only)
- (16) Number of pitches thrown by each pitcher (required in baseball only)
- (d) The following additional data:
  - (1) Name of the winning pitcher
  - (2) Name of the losing pitcher
  - (3) Names of the starting pitcher and the finishing pitcher for each team
- (e) Number of passed balls allowed by each catcher.
- (f) Names of players participating in double plays and triple plays. EXAMPLE: (1) Double plays - Jones and Smith; (2) Triple plays - Jones, Roberts and Smith
- (g) Number of runners left on base by each team. This total shall include all runners who get on base by any means and who do not score and are not put out. Include in this total a batter-runner whose batted ball results in another runner being retired for the third out.
- (h) Names of batters who hit home runs with bases full.
- (i) Names of batters who ground into force double plays and reverse force double plays.
- (j) Names of runners caught stealing.
- (k) Number of outs when winning run scored, if game is won in last half-inning.
- (l) The score by innings for each team.
- (m) Names of umpires, listed in this order (1) plate umpire, (2) first base umpire, (3) second base umpire, (4) third base umpire, (5) left field foul-line umpire, (6) right field foul-line umpire.
- (n) Time required to play the game, with delays for weather or light failure deducted.

### **10.03 -**

- (a) The Official Scorer shall list each player's name and fielding position or positions in the order in which the player batted, or would have batted if the game ends before the player gets to bat. NOTE: When a player does not exchange positions with another fielder, but is merely placed in a different spot for a particular batter, do not list this as a new position.
- (b) Any player who enters the game as a substitute batter or substitute runner, whether or not continuing in the game thereafter, shall be identified in the batting order by a special symbol which shall refer to a separate record of substitute batters and runners. Lower case letters are recommended as symbols for substitute batters, and numerals for substitute runners. The record of substitute batters shall describe what the substitute batter did.  
EXAMPLES: a-Singled for in third inning; b-Flied out for in sixth inning; c-Forced for in seventh inning; d-Grounded out for in ninth inning; e-Ran for in ninth inning.

### **HOW TO PROVE A BOX SCORE**

- (c) A box score is in balance (or proved) when the total of team's time at bat, bases on balls received, hit batters, sacrifice bunts, sacrifice flies and batters awarded first base because of interference or obstruction, equals the total of that team's runs, players left on base and the opposing team's putouts.
- (d) When a player bats out of turn, and is put out, and the proper batter is called out before the ball is pitched to the next batter, charge the proper batter with a time at bat and score the putout and any assists the same as if the correct batting order had been followed. If an improper batter becomes a runner and the proper batter is called out for having missed a turn at bat, charge the proper batter with a time at bat, credit the put out to the catcher and ignore everything entering into the improper batter's safe arrival on base. If more than one batter bats out of turn in succession, score all plays just as they occur, skipping the turn at bat of the player or players who first missed batting in the proper order.

## **CALLED AND FORFEITED GAMES**

- (e) (1) If a regulation game is called, include the record of all individual and team actions up to the moment the game ends, as defined in Rules 4.10 and 4.11. If it is a tie game, do not enter a winning or losing pitcher.
- (2) If a regulation game is forfeited, include the record of all individual and team actions up to the time of forfeit. If the winning team by forfeit is ahead at the time of forfeit, enter as winning and losing pitchers the players who would have qualified if the game had been called at the time of forfeit. If the winning team by forfeit is behind or if the score is tied at the time of forfeit, do not enter in winning or losing pitcher. If a game is forfeited before it becomes a regulation game, include no records. Report only the fact of the forfeit. NOTE: Innings pitched, for purposes of eligibility, will count on that pitcher's record in a forfeited game, provided more than one inning was physically played.

## **RUNS BATTED IN**

### **10.04 -**

- (a) Credit the batter with a run batted in for every run which reaches home base because of the batter's safe hit, sacrifice bunt, sacrifice fly, infield out or fielder's choice; or which is forced over the plate by reason of the batter becoming a runner with the bases full (on a base on balls, or an award of first base for being touched by a pitched ball, or for interference or obstruction).
  - (1) Credit a run batted in for the run scored by the batter who hits a home run. Credit a run batted in for each runner who is on base when the home run is hit and who scores ahead of the batter who hits the home run.
  - (2) Credit a run batted in for the run scored when, before two are out, an error is made on a play on which a runner from third base ordinarily would score.
- (b) Do not credit a run batted in when the batter grounds into a force double play or a reverse double play.
- (c) Do not credit a run batted in when a fielder is charged with an error because of muffing a throw at first base which would have completed a force double play.
- (d) Scorer's judgment must determine whether a run batted in shall be credited for a run which scores when a fielder holds the ball, or throws to a wrong base. Ordinarily, if the runner keeps going, credit a run batted in; if the runner stops and takes off again when noticing the misplay, credit the run as scored on a fielder's choice.

## **BASE HITS**

### **10.05 -** A base hit shall be scored in the following cases, when -

- (a) a batter reaches first base (or any succeeding base) safely on a fair ball which settles on the ground or touches a fence before being touched by a fielder, or which clears a fence;
- (b) a batter reaches first base safely on a fair ball hit with such force, or so slowly that any fielder attempting to make a play with it has no opportunity to do so; NOTE: A hit shall be scored if the fielder attempting to handle the ball cannot make a play, even if such fielder deflects the ball from or cuts off another fielder who could have put out a runner.
- (c) a batter reaches first base safely on a fair ball which takes an unnatural bounce so that a fielder cannot handle it with ordinary effort, or which touches the pitcher's plate or any base (including home plate) before being touched by a fielder and bounces so that a fielder cannot handle it with ordinary effort;
- (d) a batter reaches first base safely on a fair ball which has not been touched by a fielder and which is in fair territory when it reaches the outfield unless in the scorer's judgment it could have been handled with ordinary effort;
- (e) a fair ball which has not been touched by a fielder touches a runner or an umpire; EXCEPTION: Do not score a hit when a runner is called out for having been touched by an Infield Fly.
- (f) a fielder unsuccessfully attempts to put out a preceding runner, and in scorer's judgment the batter-runner would not have been put out at first base by ordinary effort.

NOTE: In applying the above rules, always give the batter the benefit of the doubt. A safe course to follow is to score a hit when exceptionally good fielding of a ball fails to result in a putout.

**10.06** - A base hit shall not be scored in the following cases, when -

- (a) a runner is forced out by a batted ball, or would have been forced out except for a fielding error;
- (b) a batter apparently hits safely and a runner who is forced to advance by reason of the batter becoming a runner, fails to touch the first base to which that runner is advancing, is called out on appeal. Charge the batter with a time at bat but no hit;
- (c) the pitcher, the catcher or any infielder handles a batted ball and puts out a preceding runner who is attempting to advance one base or return to an original base, or would have put out such runner with ordinary effort except for a fielding error. Charge the batter with a time at bat but no hit;
- (d) a fielder fails in an attempt to put out a preceding runner, and in the scorer's judgment the batter-runner could have been put out at first base; NOTE: This shall not apply if the fielder merely looks toward or feints toward another base before attempting to make the putout at first base;
- (e) a runner is called out for interference with a fielder attempting to field a batted ball, unless in the scorer's judgment the batter-runner would have been safe had the interference not occurred.

## **DETERMINING VALUE OF BASE HITS**

**10.07** - Whether a safe hit shall be scored as a one-base hit, two-base hit, three-base hit or home run when no error or putout results shall be determined as follows:

- (a) Subject to the provisions of 10.07 (b) and (c), it is a one-base hit if the batter stops at first base; it is a two-base hit if the batter stops at second base; it is a three-base hit if the batter stops at third base; it is a home run if the batter touches all bases and scores.
- (b) When, with one or more runners on base, the batter advances more than one base on a safe hit and the defensive team makes an attempt to put out a preceding runner, the scorer shall determine whether the batter made a legitimate two-base hit or three-base hit or whether the batter advanced beyond first base on the fielder's choice.

NOTE: Do not credit the batter with a three-base hit when a preceding runner is put out at the plate, or would have been out but for an error. Do not credit the batter with a two-base hit when a preceding runner trying to advance from first base is put out at third base, or would have been put out but for an error. However, with the exception of the above, do not determine the value of base hits by the number of bases advanced by the preceding runner. A batter may deserve a two-base hit even though a preceding runner advanced one or no bases; a batter may deserve only a one-base hit even though the batter reaches second base and a preceding runner advanced two bases.

EXAMPLES: (1) Runner on first, batter hits to right fielder, who throws to third base in an unsuccessful attempt to put out runner. Batter takes second base. Credit batter with one-base hit. (2) Runner on second. Batter hits fair fly ball. Runner holds up to determine if ball is caught and advances only to third base, while batter takes second. Credit batter with two-base hit. (3) Runner on third. Batter hits high fair fly. Runner takes lead, then runs back to tag up, thinking ball will be caught. Ball falls safe, but runner cannot score, although batter has reached second. Credit batter with two-base hit.

- (c) When the batter attempts to make a two-base hit or a three-base hit by sliding, that batter must hold the last base to which said batter advances. If the batter overslides and is tagged out before getting back to the base safely, that batter shall be credited with as many bases as were attained safely. If that batter overslides second base and is tagged out, that batter shall be credited with a one-base hit; if the batter overslides third base, and is tagged out, that batter shall be credited with a two-base hit.

NOTE: If the batter overruns second or third base and is tagged out trying to return, that batter shall be credited with the last base touched. If the batter runs past second after reaching that base standing, attempts to return and is tagged out, said batter shall be credited with a two-base hit. If the batter runs past third base after reaching that base standing, attempts to return and is tagged out, said batter shall be credited with a three-base hit.

- (d) When the batter, after making a safe hit, is called out for having failed to touch a base, the last base reached safely shall determine if that batter shall be credited with a one-base hit, a two-base hit or a three-base hit. If the batter is called out after missing home base, that batter shall be credited with a three-base hit. If the batter



is called out for missing third base, that batter shall be credited with a two-base hit. If the batter is called out for missing second base, that batter shall be credited with a one-base hit. If the batter is called out for missing first base, that batter shall be charged with a time at bat, but no hit.

- (e) When the batter-runner is awarded two bases, three bases or a home run under the provisions of Playing Rules 7.05 or 7.06 (a), that batter-runner shall be credited with a two-base hit, a three-base hit or a home run, as the case may be.

## **GAME-ENDING HITS**

- (f) Subject to the provisions of 10.07 (g), when the batter ends a game with a safe hit which drives in as many runs as are necessary to put the team in the lead, the batter shall be credited with only as many bases on the hit as are advanced by the runner who scores the winning run, and then only if the batter runs out the hit for as many bases as are advanced by the runner who scores the winning run. NOTE: Apply this rule even when the batter is theoretically entitled to more bases because of being awarded an “automatic” extra base hit under various provisions of Playing Rules 6.09 and 7.05.
- (g) When the batter ends a game with a home run hit out of the playing field, that batter and any runners on base are entitled to score.

## **STOLEN BASES**

**10.08** - A stolen base shall be credited to a runner who advances one base unaided by a hit, a balk (baseball only), a putout, an error, a force-out, a fielder’s choice, a passed ball or a wild pitch, subject to the following:

- (a) When a runner starts for the next base:

(Little League Baseball and Softball) - after the ball reaches the batter,

(Senior League/Big League Softball) - after the ball is released by the pitcher,

(Junior League/Senior League/Big League Baseball) - before the pitcher delivers the ball,

- and the pitch results in what ordinarily is scored a wild pitch or passed ball, credit the runner with a stolen base and do not charge the misplay.

EXCEPTION: If, as a result of the misplay, the stealing runner advances an extra base, or another runner also advances, score the wild pitch or passed ball as well as the stolen base.

- (b) When a runner is attempting to steal, and the catcher, after receiving the pitch, makes a wild throw trying to prevent the stolen base, credit a stolen base. Do not charge an error unless the wild throw permits the stealing runner to advance one or more extra bases, or permits another runner to advance, in which case credit it the stolen base and charge one error to the catcher.
- (c) When a runner, attempting to steal, and or after being picked off base, evades being put out in a run-down play and advances to the next base without the aid of an error, credit the runner with a stolen base. If another runner also advances on the play, credit both runners with stolen bases. If a runner advances while another runner, attempting to steal, evades being put out in a run-down play and returns safely, without the aid of an error, to the base originally occupied, credit a stolen base to the runner who advances.
- (d) When a double or triple steal is attempted and one runner is thrown out before reaching and holding the base that runner is attempting to steal, no other runner shall be credited with the stolen base.
- (e) When a runner is tagged out after oversliding a base, while attempting either to return to that base or to advance to the next base that runner shall not be credited with a stolen base.
- (f) When in the scorer’s judgment, a runner attempting to steal is safe because of a muffed throw, do not credit a stolen base. Credit an assist to the fielder who made the throw; charge an error to the fielder who muffed the throw, and charge the runner with “Caught Stealing.”
- (g) No stolen base shall be scored when a runner advances solely because of the defensive team’s indifference to the advance. Score as a fielder’s choice.

## **CAUGHT STEALING**

- (h) A runner shall be charged as “Caught Stealing” if that runner is put out, or would have been put out by errorless play, when the runner:
  1. tries to steal;

2. is picked off a base and tries to advance;
3. overslides while stealing.

NOTE: Do not charge “Caught Stealing” unless the runner has an opportunity to be credited with a stolen base when the play starts.

## SACRIFICES

### 10.09 -

- (a) Score a sacrifice bunt when, before two are out, the batter advances one or more runners with a bunt and is put out at first base, or would have been put out except for a fielding error.
- (b) Score a sacrifice bunt when, before two are out, the fielders handle a bunted ball without error in an unsuccessful attempt to put out a preceding runner advancing one base.  
EXCEPTION: When an attempt to turn a bunt into a putout of a preceding runner fails, and in the scorer’s judgment perfect play would not have put out the batter at first base, the batter shall be credited with a one-base hit and not a sacrifice.
- (c) Do not score a sacrifice bunt when any runner is put out attempting to advance one base on a bunt. Charge the batter with a time at bat.
- (d) Do not score a sacrifice bunt when, in the judgment of the scorer, the batter is bunting primarily for a base hit and not for the purpose of advancing a runner or runners. Charge the batter with a time at bat.  
NOTE: In applying the above rule, always give the batter the benefit of the doubt.
- (e) Score a sacrifice fly when, before two are out, the batter hits a fly ball or a line drive handled by an outfielder which:
  - (1) is caught, and a runner scores after the catch, or
  - (2) is dropped, and a runner scores, if in the scorer’s judgment the runner could have scored after the catch had the fly been caught.
 NOTE: Score a sacrifice fly in accordance with 10.09 (e) (2) even though another runner is forced out by reason of the batter becoming a runner.

## PUTOUTS

**10.10** - A putout shall be credited to each fielder who: (1) catches a fly ball or a line drive, whether fair or foul; (2) catches a thrown ball which puts out a batter or runner; or (3) tags a runner when the runner is off the base to which that runner legally is entitled.

- (a) Automatic putouts shall be credited to the catcher as follows when -
  - (1) the batter is called out for an illegally batted ball;
  - (2) the batter is called out for bunting foul for the third strike (note exception in 10.17(a)(2));
  - (3) the batter is called out for being touched by that batter’s own batted ball;
  - (4) the batter is called out for interfering with the catcher;
  - (5) the batter is called out for failing to bat in the proper turn (see 10.03 (d));
  - (6) the batter is called out for refusing to touch first base after receiving a base on balls;
  - (7) a runner is called out for refusing to advance from third base to home with the winning run.
- (b) Other automatic putouts shall be credited as follows (credit no other assists on these plays except as specified) when -
  - (1) a batter is called out on an Infield Fly which is not caught, credit the putout to the fielder who the scorer believes could have made the catch;
  - (2) a runner is called out for being touched by a fair ball (including an Infield Fly), credit the putout to the fielder nearest the ball;
  - (3) a runner is called out for running out of line to avoid being tagged, credit the putout to the fielder whom the runner avoided;
  - (4) a runner is called out for passing another runner, credit the putout to the fielder nearest the point of passing;
  - (5) a runner is called out for running the bases in reverse order, credit the putout to the fielder covering the base the runner left in starting the reverse run;
  - (6) a runner is called out for having interfered with a fielder, credit the putout to the fielder with whom the

runner interfered, unless the fielder was in the act of throwing the ball when the interference occurred, in which case credit the putout to the fielder for whom the throw was intended, and credit an assist to the fielder whose throw was interfered with;

- (7) the batter-runner is called out because of interference by a preceding runner, as provided in Playing Rule 6.05 (m-baseball; l-softball), credit the putout to the first baseman. If the fielder interfered with, was in the act of throwing the ball, credit that fielder with an assist, but credit only one assist on any one play under the provisions of 10.10 (b) (6) and (7).
- (8) a runner is called out for having left a base early (softball only), credit the putout to the fielder nearest the base from which the runner was leaving at the time the call is made.
- (9) a runner is called out for sliding head-first while moving forward (Little League age levels and below), credit the putout to the fielder closest to the runner.

## **ASSISTS**

**10.11** - An assist shall be credited to each fielder who throws or deflects a batted or thrown ball in such a way that a putout results, or would have resulted except for a subsequent error by a fielder. Only one assist and no more shall be credited to each fielder who throws or deflects the ball in a rundown play which results in a putout, or would have resulted in a putout, except for a subsequent error. NOTE: Mere ineffective contact with the ball shall not be considered an assist. "Deflect" shall mean to slow down or change the direction of the ball and thereby effectively assist in putting out a batter or runner.

- (a) Credit an assist to each fielder who throws or deflects the ball during a play which results in a runner being called out for interference, or for running out of line.
- (b) Do not credit an assist to the pitcher for a strikeout.  
EXCEPTION: Credit an assist if the pitcher fields an uncaught third strike and makes a throw which results in a putout (baseball and softball levels above Little League only).
- (c) Do not credit an assist to the pitcher when, as the result of a legal pitch received by the catcher a runner is put out, as when the catcher picks a runner off base, throws out a runner trying to steal, or tags a runner trying to score.
- (d) Do not credit an assist to a fielder whose wild throw permits a runner to advance, even though the runner subsequently is put out as a result of continuous play. A play which follows a misplay (whether or not it is an error) is a new play, and the fielder making any misplay shall not be credited with an assist unless that fielder takes part in a new play

## **DOUBLE PLAYS - TRIPLE PLAYS**

**10.12** - Credit participation in the double play or triple play to each fielder who earns a putout or an assist when two or three players are put out between the time a pitch is delivered and the time the ball next becomes dead or is next in possession of the pitcher in pitching position, unless an error or misplay intervenes between putouts. NOTE: Credit the double play or triple play also if an appeal play after the ball is in possession of the pitcher results in an additional putout.

## **ERRORS**

**10.13** - An error shall be charged for each misplay (fumble, muff or wild throw) which prolongs the time at bat of a batter or which prolongs the life of a runner, or which permits a runner to advance one or more bases.

NOTE: (1) Slow handling of the ball which does not involve mechanical misplay shall not be construed as an error.

NOTE: (2) It is not necessary that the fielder touch the ball to be charged with an error. If a ground ball goes through a fielder's legs or a pop fly falls untouched and in the scorer's judgment the fielder could have handled the ball with ordinary effort, an error shall be charged.

NOTE: (3) Mental mistakes or misjudgments are not to be scored as errors unless specifically covered in the rules.

- (a) An error shall be charged against any fielder when that fielder muffs a foul fly to prolong the time at bat of a batter, whether the batter subsequently reaches first base or is put out.

- (b) An error shall be charged against any fielder when that fielder catches a thrown ball or ground ball in time to put out the batter-runner and fails to tag first base or the batter-runner.
- (c) An error shall be charged against any fielder when that fielder catches a thrown ball or a ground ball in time to put out any runner on a force play and fails to tag the base or the runner.
- (d) (1) An error shall be charged against any fielder whose wild throw permits a runner to reach a base safely, when in the scorer's judgment a good throw would have put out the runner.  
EXCEPTION: No error shall be charged under this section if the wild throw is made attempting to prevent a stolen base.
- (2) An error shall be charged against any fielder whose wild throw in attempting to prevent a runner's advance permits that runner or any other runner to advance one or more bases beyond the base that would have been reached had the throw not been wild.
- (3) An error shall be charged against any fielder whose throw takes an unnatural bounce or touches a base or the pitcher's plate, or touches a runner, a fielder or an umpire, thereby permitting any runner to advance.  
NOTE: Apply this rule even when it appears to be an injustice to a fielder whose throw was accurate. Every base advanced by a runner must be accounted for.
- (4) Charge only one error on any wild throw, regardless of the number of bases advanced by one or more runners.
- (e) An error shall be charged against any fielder whose failure to stop, or try to stop, an accurately thrown ball permits a runner to advance, providing there was occasion for the throw. If such throw be made to second base, the scorer shall determine whether it was the duty of the second baseman or the shortstop to stop the ball, and an error shall be charged to the negligent player. NOTE: If in the scorer's judgment there was no occasion for the throw, an error shall be charged to the fielder who threw the ball.
- (f) When an umpire awards the batter or any runner or runners one or more bases because of interference or obstruction, charge the fielder who committed the interference or obstruction with one error, no matter how many bases the batter, or runner or runners, may be advanced. NOTE: Do not charge an error if obstruction does not change the play in the opinion of the scorer.

**10.14 - No error shall be charged:**

- (a) when, after receiving the pitch, that catcher makes a wild throw attempting to prevent a stolen base, unless the wild throw permits the stealing runner to advance one or more bases.
- (b) against any fielder who makes a wild throw if in the scorer's judgment the runner would not have been put out with ordinary effort by a good throw, unless such wild throw permits any runner to advance beyond the base that runner would have reached had the throw not been wild.
- (c) against any fielder when that fielder makes a wild throw in attempting to complete a double play or triple play, unless such wild throw enables any runner to advance beyond the base that runner would have reached had the throw not been wild. NOTE: When a fielder muffs a thrown ball which, if held, would have completed a double or triple play, charge an error to the fielder who drops the ball and credit an assist to the fielder who made the throw.
- (d) against any fielder when, after fumbling a ground ball or dropping a fly ball, a line drive or a thrown ball, the fielder recovers the ball in time to force out a runner at any base.
- (e) against any fielder who permits a foul fly to fall safe with a runner on third base before two are out, if in the scorer's judgment the fielder deliberately refuses the catch in order that the runner on third shall not score after the catch.
- (f) when a wild pitch or passed ball is scored. Because the pitcher and catcher handle the ball much more than other fielders, certain misplays on pitched balls are defined in Rule 10.15 as wild pitches and passed balls.
  - (1) No error shall be charged when the batter is awarded first base on four called balls or because that batter was touched by a pitched ball, or when the batter reaches first base as the result of a wild pitch or passed ball.
  - (i) When the third strike is a wild pitch, score a strikeout and a wild pitch;
    - (ii) When the third strike is a passed ball, score a strikeout and a passed ball.
  - (2) No error shall be charged when a runner or runners advance as the result of a balk (baseball only), passed ball or wild pitch.

- (i) when the fourth called ball is a wild pitch or a passed ball, and as a result (a) the batter-runner advances to a base beyond first base; (b) any runner forced to advance by the base on balls advances more than one base, or (c) any runner, not forced to advance, advances one or more bases, score the base on balls, and also the wild pitch or passed ball, as the case may be;
- (ii) when the catcher recovers the ball after a wild pitch or passed ball on the third strike the batter is out, but another runner or runners advance, score the strikeout, the putouts and assists, if any and credit the advance of the other runner or runners as having been made on the play.

## **WILD PITCHES - PASSED BALLS**

### **10.15 -**

- (a) A wild pitch shall be charged when a legally delivered ball is so high, or so wide, or so low that the catcher does not stop and control the ball by ordinary effort, thereby permitting a runner or runners to advance.
  - (1) A wild pitch shall be charged when a legally delivered ball touches the ground before reaching home plate and is not handled by the catcher, permitting a runner or runners to advance.
- (b) A catcher shall be charged with a passed ball when failing to hold or to control a legally pitched ball which should have been held or controlled with ordinary effort, thereby permitting a runner or runners to advance.

## **BASES ON BALLS**

**10.16** - A base on balls shall be scored whenever a batter is awarded first base because of four balls having been pitched outside the strike zone, but when the fourth such ball touches the batter it shall be scored as a "Hit Batter." (See 10.18 (h) for procedure when more than one pitcher is involved in giving a base on balls.)

- (a) If a batter awarded a base on balls is called out for refusing the advance to first base, do not credit the base on balls. Charge a time at bat.

## **STRIKEOUTS**

### **10.17 -**

- (a) A strikeout shall be scored whenever:
  - (1) a batter is put out by a third strike;
  - (2) a batter bunts foul on the third strike;
  - (3) a batter becomes a runner because a third strike is not caught (baseball and softball levels above Little League only). **EXCEPTION:** If such bunt on third strike results in a foul fly, caught by a fielder, do not score a strikeout. Credit the fielder who catches such foul fly with a putout.
- (b) when the batter leaves the game with two strikes and the substitute batter completes a strikeout, charge the strikeout and the time at bat to the first batter. If the substitute batter completes the turn at bat in any other manner, score the action as having been that of the substitute batter.

## **EARNED RUNS**

**10.18** - An earned run is a run for which the pitcher is held accountable. In determining earned runs the inning should be reconstructed without the errors and passed balls, and the benefit of the doubt should always be given to the pitcher in determining which bases would have been reached by errorless play.

- (a) An earned run shall be charged every time a runner reaches home base by the aid of safe hits, sacrifice bunts, a sacrifice fly, stolen bases, putouts, fielder's choices, bases on balls, hit batters, balks (baseball only) or wild pitches before fielding chances have been offered to put out the offensive team. For the purpose of this rule, a defensive interference penalty shall be construed as a fielding chance.
  - (1) A wild pitch is solely the pitcher's fault, and contributes to an earned run just as a balk (baseball only) or a base on balls.
- (b) No run shall be earned when scored by a runner who reaches first base (1) on a hit or otherwise after that batter's time at bat is prolonged by a muffed foul fly; (2) because of interference or obstruction; or (3) because of any fielding error.
- (c) No run shall be earned when scored by a runner whose life is prolonged by an error, if such runner would have been put out by errorless play.

- (d) No run shall be earned when the runner's advance is aided by an error, a passed ball, or defensive interference or obstruction, if the scorer judges that the run would not have scored without the aid of such misplay.
- (e) Any error by a pitcher is treated exactly the same as an error by any other fielder in computing earned runs.
- (f) Whenever a fielding error occurs, the pitcher shall be given the benefit of the doubt in determining to which bases any runners would have advanced had the fielding of the defensive team been errorless.
- (g) When pitchers are changed during an inning, the relief pitcher shall not be charged with any run (earned or unearned) scored by a runner who was on base at the time the relief pitcher entered the game, nor for runs scored by any runner left on base by the preceding pitcher. NOTE: It is the intent of this rule to charge each pitcher with their number of runners put on base, rather than with the individual runners. When a pitcher puts runners on base and is relieved, that pitcher shall be charged with all runs subsequently scored up to and including the number of runners left on base when said pitcher left the game, unless such runners are put out without action by the batter, i.e. caught stealing, picked off base, or called out for interference when a batter-runner does not reach first base on the play.

EXAMPLES:

1. P1 walks A and is relieved by P2. B grounds out, sending A to second, C flies out D singles, scoring A. Charge run to P1.
  2. P1 walks A and is relieved by P2. B forces A at second. C grounds out sending B to second. D singles, scoring B. Charge run to P1.
  3. P1 walks A and is relieved by P2. B singles, sending A to third. C grounds to short and A is out at home. B going to second. D flies out. E singles, scoring B. Charge run to P1.
  4. P1 walks A and is relieved by P2. B walks. C flies out. A is picked off second, D doubles, scoring B from first. Charge run to P2.
  5. P1 walks A and is relieved by P2. P2 walks B and is relieved by P3. C forces A at third. D forces B at third. E hits home run, scoring three runs. Charge one run to P1, one run to P2 and one run to P3.
  6. P1 walks A and is relieved by P2. P2 walks B. C singles, filling the bases. D forces A at home. E singles scoring B and C. Charge one run to P1 and one run to P2.
- (h) A relief pitcher shall not be held accountable when the first batter to whom that relief pitcher pitches reaches first base on four called balls if such batter has a decided advantage in the ball and strike count when pitchers are changed.
- (1) If, when pitchers are changed, the count is
    - 2 balls, no strikes,
    - 2 balls, 1 strike,
    - 3 balls, no strikes,
    - 3 balls, 1 strike,
    - 3 balls, 2 strikes,
 and the batter gets a base on balls, charge that batter and the base on balls to the preceding pitcher, not to the relief pitcher.
  - (2) Any other action by such batter, such as reaching base on a hit, an error, a fielder's choice, a force-out, or being touched by a pitched ball, shall cause such a batter to be charged to the relief pitcher.
- NOTE: The provisions of 10.18 (h) (2) shall not be construed as affecting or conflicting with the provisions of 10.18 (g).
- (3) If, when pitchers are changed, the count is
    - 2 balls, 2 strikes,
    - 1 ball, 2 strikes,
    - 1 ball, 1 strike,
    - 1 ball, no strikes,
    - no ball, 2 strikes,
    - no ball, 1 strike,
 charge that batter and that batter's action to the relief pitcher.
  - (i) When pitchers are changed during an inning, the relief pitcher shall not have the benefit of previous chances for outs, not accepted in determining earned runs. NOTE: It is the intent of this rule to prevent relief pitchers from not being charged with earned runs for which they are solely responsible.

## EXAMPLES:

1. With two putouts, P1 walks A. B reaches base on an error. P2 relieves P1. C hits home run, scoring three runs. Charge two unearned runs to P1, one earned run to P2.
2. With two out, P1 walks A and B and is relieved by P2. C reaches base on an error. D hits home run, scoring four runs. Charge two unearned runs to P1, two unearned runs to P2.
3. With none out, P1 walks A. B reaches base on an error. P2 relieves P1. C hits home run, scoring three runs. D and E strike out. F reaches base on an error. G hits home run, scoring two runs. Charge two runs, one earned, to P1. Charge three runs, two earned, to P2.

## WINNING AND LOSING PITCHER

### 10.19 -

- (a) Credit the starting pitcher with a game won only if that pitcher has pitched at least three complete innings and that pitcher's team not only is in the lead when said pitcher is replaced, but remains in the lead the remainder of the game.
- (b) The "must pitch three complete innings" rule in respect to the starting pitcher shall be in effect for all games of five or more innings. In a four-inning game, credit the victory to the relief pitcher judged by the scorer to have been the most effective.
- (c) When the starting pitcher cannot be credited with the victory because of the provisions of 10.19 (a) or (b) and more than one relief pitcher is used, the victory shall be awarded on the following basis:
  - (1) When, during the tenure of the starting pitcher, the winning team assumes the lead and maintains it to the finish of the game, credit the victory to the relief pitcher judged by the scorer to have been the most effective.
  - (2) Whenever the score is tied, the game becomes a new contest insofar as the winning and losing pitcher is concerned.
  - (3) Once the opposing team assumes the lead, all pitchers who have pitched up to that point are excluded from being credited with the victory except that if the pitcher against whose pitching the opposing team gained the lead continues to pitch until that pitcher's team regains the lead, which it holds to the finish of the game, that pitcher shall be the winning pitcher.
  - (4) Normally, the winning relief pitcher shall be the one who is the pitcher of record when the team assumes the lead and maintains it to the finish of the game. **EXCEPTION:** Do not credit a victory to relief pitcher who pitches briefly or ineffectively if a succeeding relief pitcher pitches effectively in helping to maintain the team in the lead. In such case, credit the succeeding relief pitcher with the victory.
- (d) When a pitcher is removed for a substitute batter or substitute runner, all runs scored by the pitcher's team during the inning in which the pitcher is removed shall be credited to the pitcher's benefit in determining the pitcher of record when that pitcher's team assumes the lead.
- (e) Regardless of how many innings the first pitcher has pitched, that pitcher shall be charged with the loss of the game if replaced when the team is behind in the score, or falls behind because of runs charged to that pitcher after said pitcher is replaced, and that pitcher's team thereafter fails either to tie the score or gain the lead.
- (f) No pitcher shall be credited with pitching a shutout unless that pitcher pitches the complete game, or unless said pitcher enters the game with none out before the opposing team has scored in the first inning, puts out the side without a run scoring, and pitches all the rest of the game. When two or more pitchers combine to pitch a shutout, a notation to that effect should be included in the league's official pitching records.

## SAVES FOR RELIEF PITCHERS

### 10.20 -

- (a) Credit a save to a relief pitcher who enters a game with that relief pitcher's team in the lead if the relief pitcher holds the lead the remainder of the game, provided that relief pitcher is not credited with the victory.
- (b) A relief pitcher cannot be credited with a save, if that relief pitcher does not finish the game unless the relief pitcher is removed for a pinch-hitter or pinch-runner.
- (c) When more than one relief pitcher qualifies for a save under the provisions of this rule, credit the save to the relief pitcher judged by the scorer to have been the most effective. Only one save can be credited in any game.

## **DETERMINING PERCENTAGE RECORDS**

**10.21** - To compute:

- (a) percentage of games won and lost, divide the number of games won by the total games won and lost;
- (b) batting average, divide the total number of safe hits (not the total bases on hits) by the total times at bat, as defined in 10.02 (a);
- (c) slugging percentage, divide the total bases of all safe hits by the total times at bat, as defined in 10.02 (a);
- (d) fielding average, divide the total putouts and assists by the total putouts, assists and errors;
- (e) pitcher's earned-run average, multiply the total earned runs charged against said pitcher by six, and divide the result by the total number of innings the pitcher pitched.

## **PITCH COUNT (BASEBALL ONLY)**

**10.22 – Each pitch delivered to a batter shall be counted. (Exception: A pitch declared “no pitch” will not be charged to that pitcher.)**

- (a) The official scorekeeper's record of the pitch count shall be the official record. In the absence of an official scorekeeper, the record of the person designated by the local league (or tournament director) to count pitches will be the official record.
- (b) The pitches may be counted by a person other than the scorekeeper, but the total pitches for each pitcher must be entered in the scorebook, or in a locally-produced register for this purpose. The scorebook or register will be used to determine the pitching eligibility in a subsequent game or games.
- (c) When requested by the manager, the scorekeeper and any other official(s) involved in tallying the pitch count must provide current information on the pitch count for a pitcher currently in the game.
- (d) The scorekeeper and any other official(s) involved in tallying the pitch count must inform the umpire-in-chief and manager when the maximum number of pitches has been delivered by a particular pitcher, pursuant to the pitcher's league age. (See Regulation VI.) However, the failure by such officials to notify the umpire-in-chief and manager does not relieve the manager of the responsibility to remove a pitcher when the limit is reached as required in Regulation VI.

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