



THE RULES OF SCORING

2020

OFFICIAL BASEBALL RULES WITH CHANGES FROM LITTLE LEAGUE BASEBALL'S "WHAT'S THE SCORE" PUBLICATION

INTRODUCTION

These "Rules of Scoring" are for the use of those managers and coaches who want to score a Juvenile or Minor League game or wish to know how to correctly score a play or a time at bat during a Juvenile or Minor League game. These "Rules of Scoring" address the recording of individual and team actions, runs batted in, base hits and determining their value, stolen bases and caught stealing, sacrifices, put outs and assists, when to charge or not charge a fielder with an error, wild pitches and passed balls, bases on balls and strikeouts, earned runs, and the winning and losing pitcher.

Unlike the Official Baseball Rules used by professional baseball and many amateur leagues, the Little League Playing Rules do not address The Rules of Scoring. However, the Little League Rules of Scoring are similar to the scoring rules used in professional baseball found in Rule 10 of the Official Baseball Rules. Consequently, Rule 10 of the Official Baseball Rules is used as the basis for these Rules of Scoring. However, there are differences (e.g., when to charge or not charge a fielder with an error, runs batted in, winning and losing pitcher). **These differences are based on Little League Baseball's "What's the Score" booklet.** Those additional rules and those modified rules from the "What's the Score" booklet are in *italics*.

The "What's the Score" booklet assigns the Official Scorer certain duties under Little League Regulation VI concerning pitching limits which have not implemented by the IAB (see Juvenile League Rule 12.08.08). Consequently, this document does not discuss those duties. Upon request, these rules will be provided by the Youth League Playing Rules Committee.

In using this document, readers need to be aware that there are differences in the playing rules used by Little League Baseball and professional baseball. These differences are:

- (a) Under Little League Playing Rule 6.05(b), the batter is out on a dropped third strike.
- (b) Under Little League Playing Rule 7.08(a)(3), a runner is out when the runner does not slide or attempt to get around fielder who has the ball and is waiting to make the tag.
- (c) Under Little League Playing Rule 7.08(a)(4), a runner is called out for sliding head-first.
- (d) Under Little League Playing Rule 7.13 runners may not take a lead until the pitched ball has reached the batter. When the bases are full, a runner may be removed from the bases.
- (e) Under Little League Playing Rule 8.05, there are no balks in Juvenile League play. Instead, the pitcher is charged with an "illegal pitch." For an illegal pitch, the umpire calls a "ball." Runners do not advance.

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10.00 -- The Official Scorer.

10.01 OFFICIAL SCORER (GENERAL RULES)

- (a) The League President shall appoint an official scorer for each league. The official scorer shall have sole authority to make all decisions concerning application of Rule 10 that involve judgment, such as whether a batter's advance to first base is the result of a hit or an error. The official scorer shall communicate such decisions to the press box and broadcasting booths by hand signals or over the press box loudspeaker system and shall advise the public address announcer of such decisions, if requested.

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.

- (b) (1) In all cases, the official scorer shall not make a scoring decision that is in conflict with Rule 10 or any other *Little League Playing Rule*. The official scorer shall conform strictly to the rules of scoring set forth in this Rule 10. The official scorer shall not make any decision that conflicts with an umpire's decision. The official scorer shall have authority to rule on any point not specifically covered in these rules.
- (2) If the teams change sides before three men are put out, the official scorer shall immediately inform the umpire-in-chief of the mistake.
- (3) If the game is protested or suspended, the official scorer shall make a 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, the ball-and-strike count on the batter, the lineups of both teams and the players who have been removed from the game for each team.

Rule 10.01 (b) (3) Comment: It is important that a suspended game resume with exactly the same situation as existed at the time of suspension. If a protested game is ordered replayed from the point of

protest, the game must be resumed with exactly the situation that existed just before the protested play.

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

10.02 OFFICIAL SCORE REPORT

The official score report prepared by the official scorer shall include:

- (a) The following records for each batter and runner:
- (1) Number of times batted, except that no time at bat shall be charged when a player
 - (i) hits a sacrifice bunt or sacrifice fly;
 - (ii) is awarded first base on four called balls;
 - (iii) is hit by a pitched ball; or
 - (iv) 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; and
 - (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; and
 - (5) Number of triple plays participated in.
- (c) The following records for each **Juvenile League** pitcher:

- (1) Number of innings pitched;

Rule 10.02 (c) (1) Comment: In computing innings pitched, the official scorer shall count each putout as $\frac{1}{3}$ of an inning. For example, if a starting pitcher is replaced with one out in the sixth inning, the official scorer shall credit that pitcher with $5\frac{1}{3}$ innings. If a relief pitcher retires two batters and is replaced, the official scorer shall credit that pitcher with $\frac{2}{3}$ of an inning pitched.

- (2) Total number of batters faced;
- (3) Number of batters officially at bat against pitcher, computed according to Rule 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; and
- (14) Number of wild pitches.

(d) The following additional data **for the Juvenile League**:

- (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) Name of players participating in double plays and triple plays.

Rule 10.02(f) Comment: For example, an official scorer would note: “Double Plays -- Jones, Roberts and Smith (2). Triple Play -- Jones 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. The official scorer shall 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 the 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 the game was won in the last half-inning.

(l) The score by innings for each team.

(m) Names of umpires, listed in this order: plate umpire, first-base umpire, second-base umpire, third-base umpire, left-field umpire (if any) and right-field umpire (if any).

(n) Time required to play the game, with delays deducted for weather, light failure.

10.03 OFFICIAL SCORE REPORT (ADDITIONAL RULES)

(a) In compiling the official score report, 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 ended before the player came to bat.

Rule 10.03(a) Comment: When a player does not exchange positions with another fielder but is merely placed in a different spot for a particular batter (for example, if a second baseman goes to the outfield to form a four-man outfield, or if a third baseman moves to a position between the shortstop and second baseman), the official scorer should not list this as a new position.

- (b) The official scorer shall identify in the official score report any player who enters the game as a substitute batter or substitute runner, whether or not such player continues in the game thereafter, in the batting order by a special symbol that shall refer to a separate record of substitute batters and runners. The record of substitute batters shall describe what the substitute batter did.

Rule 10.03 (b) Comment: Lower case letters are recommended as symbols for substitute batters and numerals are recommended as symbols for substitute runners. For example, an official score report may note as follows: “a-Singled for Abel in third inning; b-Flied out for Baker in sixth inning; c-Hit into force for Charles in seventh inning; d-Grounded out for Daniel in ninth inning; 1-Ran for Edward in ninth inning.” If a substitute’s name is announced but the substitute is removed for another substitute before he actually gets into the game, the official scorer report shall record the substitute, for example, as follows: “e-Announced as substitute for Frank in seventh inning.”

- (c) **HOW TO PROVE A BOX SCORE.** A box score shall balance (or is proven) when the total of the team’s times 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 *and strikeouts*.

- (d) **WHEN PLAYER BATS OUT OF TURN.** 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, the official scorer shall 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 his turn at bat, the official scorer shall charge the proper batter with a time at bat, credit the putout 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, the official scorer shall 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.

- (e) **CALLED AND FORFEITED GAMES.**

- (1) If a regulation game is called, the official scorer shall 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 the game is a tie game, the official scorer shall not enter a winning or losing pitcher.
- (2) If a regulation game is forfeited, the official scorer shall 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, the official scorer shall enter as winning and losing pitchers the players who would have qualified as the winning and losing pitchers 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, the official scorer shall not enter a winning or losing pitcher. If a game is forfeited before it becomes a regulation game, the official scorer shall include no records and shall report only the fact of the forfeit.

10.04 RUNS BATTED IN

- (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) The official scorer shall not credit a run batted in
- (1) when the batter grounds into a force double play or a reverse-force double play; or
 - (2) when a fielder is charged with an error because the fielder muffs a throw at first base that would have completed a force double play.
- (c) The official scorer's judgment must determine whether a run batted in shall be credited for a run that scores when a fielder holds the ball or throws to a wrong base. Ordinarily, if the runner keeps going, the official scorer should credit a run batted in; if the runner stops and takes off again when the runner notices the misplay, the official scorer should credit the run as scored on a fielder's choice.

10.05 BASE HITS

A base hit is a statistic credited to a batter when such batter reaches base safely, as set forth in this Rule 10.05.

- (a) The official scorer shall credit a batter with a base hit when:
- (1) the batter reaches first base (or any succeeding base) safely on a fair ball that settles on the ground, that touches a fence before being touched by a fielder or that clears a fence;
 - (2) the 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 the ball has no opportunity to do so;

Rule 10.05 (a) (2) Comment: The official scorer shall credit a hit 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.

- (3) the batter reaches first base safely on a fair ball that takes an unnatural bounce so that a fielder cannot handle it with ordinary effort, or that 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 the ball with ordinary effort;
- (4) the batter reaches first base safely on a fair ball that has not been touched by a fielder and that is in fair territory when the ball reaches the outfield, unless in the scorer's judgment the ball could have been handled with ordinary effort;
- (5) a fair ball that has not been touched by a fielder touches a runner or an umpire, unless a runner is called out for having been touched by an Infield Fly, in which case the official scorer shall not score a hit; or
- (6) a fielder unsuccessfully attempts to put out a preceding runner and, in the official scorer's judgment, the batter-runner would not have been put out at first base by ordinary effort.

Rule 10.05 (a) Comment: In applying Rule 10.05 (a), the official scorer shall always give the batter the benefit of the doubt. A safe course for the official scorer to follow is to score a hit when exceptionally good fielding of a ball fails to result in a putout.

- (b) The official scorer shall not credit a base hit when a:
- (1) runner is forced out by a batted ball, or would have been forced out except for a fielding error;

- (2) 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 such runner is advancing and is called out on appeal. The official scorer shall charge the batter with a time at bat but no hit;
- (3) pitcher, the catcher or any infielder handles a batted ball and puts out a preceding runner who is attempting to advance one base or to return to his original base, or would have put out such runner with ordinary effort except for a fielding error. The official scorer shall charge the batter with a time at bat but no hit;
- (4) 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; or

Rule 10.05 (b) Comment: Rule 10.05 (b) shall not apply if the fielder merely looks toward or feints toward another base before attempting to make the putout at first base.

- (5) 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.

10.06 DETERMINING VALUE OF BASE HITS

The official scorer shall score a base hit as a one-base hit, two-base hit, three-base hit or home run when no error or putout results, as follows:

- (a) Subject to the provisions of Rules 10.06 (b) and 10.06 (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; and 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-runner advanced beyond first base on the fielder's choice.

Rule 10.06 Comment: The official scorer shall not credit the batter with a three-base hit when a preceding runner is put out at home plate, or would have been out but for an error. The official scorer shall 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 out but for an error. The official scorer shall not, however, with the exception of the above, determine the value of base-hits by the number of bases advanced by a preceding runner. A batter may deserve a two-base hit even though a preceding runner advances one or no bases; a batter may deserve only a one-base hit even though he reaches second base and a preceding runner advances two bases. For example:

- (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. The official scorer shall 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 then advances only to third base, while batter takes second base. The official scorer shall credit batter with two-base hit.
 - (3) Runner on third. Batter hits high, fair fly. Runner takes a lead, then runs back to tag up, thinking the ball will be caught. The ball falls safe, but runner cannot score, although batter has reached second. The official scorer shall credit batter with a two-base hit.
- (c) When the batter attempts to make a two-base hit or a three-base hit by sliding, he must hold the last base to which he advances. If a batter-runner overslides and is tagged out before getting back to the base safely, he shall be credited with only as many bases as he attained safely. If a batter-

runner overslides second base and is tagged out, the official scorer shall credit him with a one-base hit; if the batter-runner overslides third base and is tagged out, the official scorer shall credit him with a two-base hit.

Rule 10.06 (c) Comment: If the batter-runner overruns second or third base and is tagged out trying to return, the official scorer shall credit the batter-runner with the last base he touched. If a batter-runner runs past second base after reaching that base on his feet, attempts to return and is tagged out, the official scorer shall credit the batter with a two-base hit. If a batter-runner runs past third base after reaching that base on his feet, attempts to return and is tagged out, the official scorer shall credit the batter 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 the batter reached safely shall determine if the official scorer shall credit him with a one-base hit, a two-base hit or a three-base hit. If a batter-runner is called out after missing home plate, the official scorer shall credit him with a three-base hit. If a batter-runner is called out for missing third base, the official scorer shall credit him with a two-base hit. If a batter-runner is called out for missing second base, the official scorer shall credit him with a one-base hit. If a batter-runner is called out for missing first base, the official scorer shall charge him with a time at bat, but no hit.
- (e) When a batter-runner is awarded two bases, three bases or a home run under the provisions of Playing Rules 7.05 or 7.06 (a), the official scorer shall credit the batter-runner with a two-base hit, a three-base hit or a home run, as the case may be.
- (f) Subject to the provisions of Rule 10.06 (g), when a batter ends a game with a safe hit that drives in as many runs as are necessary to put his team in the lead, the official scorer shall credit such batter with only as many bases on his hit as are advanced by the runner who scores the winning run, and then only if the batter runs out his hit for as many bases as are advanced by the runner who scores the winning run.

Rule 10.06 (f) Comment: The official scorer shall 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, the batter and any runners on base are entitled to score.

10.07 STOLEN BASES AND CAUGHT STEALING

The official scorer shall credit a stolen base to a runner whenever the runner advances one base unaided by a hit, 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 *after the ball reaches the batter* and the pitch results in what ordinarily is scored a wild pitch or passed ball, the official scorer shall credit the runner with a stolen base and shall not charge the misplay, unless, as a result of the misplay, the stealing runner advances an extra base, or another runner also advances, in which case the official scorer shall 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, the official scorer shall credit the runner with a stolen base. The official scorer shall 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 the official scorer shall credit the runner with the stolen base and charge one error to the catcher.

- (c) When a runner, attempting to steal, 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, the official scorer shall credit the runner with a stolen base. If another runner also advances on the play, the official scorer shall 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 he originally occupied, the official scorer shall 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 such runner is attempting to steal, no other runner shall be credited with a 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, the official scorer shall not credit such runner with a stolen base.
- (f) When in the scorer's judgment a runner attempting to steal is safe because of a muffed throw, the official scorer shall not credit a stolen base. The official scorer shall 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) The official scorer shall not score a stolen base when a runner advances solely because of the defensive team's indifference to the runner's advance. The official scorer shall score such a play as a fielder's choice.
- (h) The official scorer shall charge a runner as "caught stealing" if such runner is put out, or would have been put out by errorless play, when such runner
 - (1) tries to steal;
 - (2) is picked off a base and tries to advance; or
 - (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.

10.08 SACRIFICES

The official scorer shall:

- (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, unless, an attempt to turn a bunt into a putout of a preceding runner fails, and in the judgment of the official scorer ordinary effort would not have put out the batter at first base, in which case the batter shall be credited with a one-base hit and not a sacrifice;
- (c) Not score a sacrifice bunt when any runner is put out attempting to advance one base on a bunt, in which case the official scorer shall charge the batter with a time at bat; and

NOTE: In applying the above rule, always give the batter the benefit of the doubt.
- (d) Score a sacrifice fly when, before two are out, the batter hits a ball in flight handled by an outfielder or an infielder running in the outfield in fair or foul territory that

- (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.

Rule 10.08 (d) Comment: The official scorer shall score a sacrifice fly in accordance with Rule 10.08(d)(2) even though another runner is forced out by reason of the batter becoming a runner.

10.09 PUTOUTS

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;
 - (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, 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 10.09 (b) (6) and (7).
 - (9) a runner is called out for sliding head-first while moving forward, credit the putout to the fielder closest to the runner.

10.10 ASSISTS

An assist is a statistic credited to a fielder whose action contributes to a batter-runner or runner being put out, as set forth in this Rule 10.10.

- (a) The official scorer shall credit an assist to each fielder who

- (1) 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 any fielder. Only one assist and no more shall be credited to each fielder who throws or deflects the ball in a run-down play that results in a putout, or would have resulted in a putout, except for a subsequent error; or

Rule 10.10 (a) (1) Comment: 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.

- (2) throws or deflects the ball during a play that results in a runner being called out for interference or for running out of line.
- (b) The official scorer shall not credit an assist to
- (1) the pitcher on a strikeout;
 - (2) 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; or
 - (3) 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 that follows a misplay (whether or not the misplay is an error) is a new play, and the fielder making any misplay shall not be credited with an assist unless such fielder takes part in the new play.

10.11 DOUBLE AND TRIPLE PLAYS

The official scorer shall credit participation in a 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 a pitching position, unless an error or misplay intervenes between putouts.

Rule 10.11 Comment: The official scorer shall credit a double play or triple play also if an appeal play after the ball is in possession of the pitcher results in an additional putout.

10.12 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. Also do not charge an error when a fielder lacks the athletic ability to complete a play, even when another player might have fielded it cleanly.

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. For instance, a shortstop who fails to adequately "charge" a ground ball and is not able to throw the runner out

cannot be charged with an error. 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.

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.

(a) The official scorer shall charge an error against any fielder:

Rule 10.12 (a) Comment: Slow handling of the ball that does not involve mechanical misplay shall not be construed as an error.

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 fly ball falls untouched and, in the scorer's judgment, the fielder could have handled the ball with ordinary effort, the official scorer shall charge such fielder with an error.

The official scorer shall not score mental mistakes or misjudgments as errors unless a specific rule prescribes otherwise.

- (1) when such 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;
- (2) when such fielder catches a thrown ball or a ground ball in time to put out the batter-runner and fails to tag first base or the batter-runner;
- (3) when such 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;
- (4) 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, unless such wild throw is made attempting to prevent a stolen base;
- (5) 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 such runner would have reached had the throw not been wild;
- (6) whose throw takes an unnatural bounce, touches a base or the pitcher's plate, or touches a runner, a fielder or an umpire, thereby permitting any runner to advance; or

Rule 10.12 (a) (6) Comment: The official scorer shall 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.

- (7) whose failure to stop, or try to stop, an accurately thrown ball permits a runner to advance, so long as there was occasion for the throw. If such throw was made to second base, the official scorer shall determine whether it was the duty of the second baseman or the shortstop to stop the ball and shall charge an error to the negligent fielder.

Rule 10.12 (a) (7) Comment: If, in the official scorer's judgment, there was no occasion for the throw, the official scorer shall charge an error to the fielder who threw the ball.

- (b) The official scorer shall charge only one error on any wild throw, regardless of the number of bases advanced by one or more runners.
- (c) When an umpire awards the batter or any runner or runners one or more bases because of interference or obstruction, the official scorer shall charge the fielder who committed the

interference or obstruction with one error, no matter how many bases the batter, or runner or runners, may advance.

Rule 10.12 (c) Comment: The official scorer shall not charge an error if obstruction does not change the play, in the opinion of the scorer.

(d) The official scorer shall not charge an error against:

- (1) the catcher when the catcher, after receiving the pitch, makes a wild throw attempting to prevent a stolen base, unless the wild throw permits the stealing runner to advance one or more extra bases or permits any other runner to advance one or more bases;
- (2) 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 he would have reached had the throw not been wild;
- (3) any fielder who 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 such runner would have reached had the throw not been wild;

Rule 10.12 (d) Comment: When a fielder muffs a thrown ball that, if held, would have completed a double play or triple play, the official scorer shall charge an error to the fielder who drops the ball and credit an assist to the fielder who made the throw.

- (4) any fielder when, after fumbling a ground ball or dropping a batted ball that is in flight or a thrown ball, the fielder recovers the ball in time to force out a runner at any base;
 - (5) *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; or*
 - (6) *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 as wild pitches and passed balls.*
- (e) The official scorer shall not charge an error when the batter is awarded first base on four called balls, when the batter is awarded first base when touched by a pitched ball, or when the batter reaches first base as the result of a wild pitch or passed ball.
- (1) *When the third strike is a wild pitch, score a strikeout and a wild pitch;*
 - (2) *When the third strike is a passed ball, score a strikeout and a passed ball.*

Rule 10.12 (e) Comment: See Rule 10.13 for additional scoring rules relating to wild pitches and passed balls.

- (f) The official scorer shall not charge an error when a runner or runners advance as the result of a passed ball or a wild pitch.
- (1) When the fourth called ball is a wild pitch or a passed ball and as a result
 - (i) the batter-runner advances to a base beyond first base;
 - (ii) any runner forced to advance by the base on balls advances more than one base; or
 - (iii) any runner, not forced to advance, advances one or more bases, the official scorer shall score the base on balls and also the wild pitch or passed ball, as the case may be.
 - (2) *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.

Rule 10.12 (f) Comment: See Rule 10.13 for additional scoring rules relating to wild pitches and passed balls.

10.13 WILD PITCHES AND PASSED BALLS

A wild pitch is defined in Rule 2.00 (Wild Pitch). A passed ball is a statistic charged against a catcher whose action has caused a runner or runners to advance, as set forth in this Rule 10.13.

- (a) The official scorer shall charge a pitcher with a wild pitch when a legally delivered ball is so high, 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. The official scorer shall charge a pitcher with a wild pitch when a legally delivered ball touches the ground or home plate before reaching the catcher and is not handled by the catcher, thereby permitting a runner or runners to advance.
- (b) The official scorer shall charge a catcher with a passed ball when the catcher fails to hold or to control a legally pitched ball that should have been held or controlled with ordinary effort, thereby permitting a runner or runners to advance.

10.14 BASES ON BALLS

A base on balls is defined in Rule 2.00 (Base on Balls).

- (a) The official scorer shall score a base on balls whenever a **Juvenile League** 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.”

Rule 10.14 (a) Comment: See Rule 10.16(h) for the procedure when more than one pitcher is involved in giving a base on balls.

- (b) The official scorer shall score an intentional base on balls when the pitcher makes no attempt to throw the last pitch to the batter into the strike zone, but purposely throws the ball wide to the catcher outside the catcher’s box.
- (c) If a batter awarded a base on balls is called out for refusing to advance to first base, the official scorer shall not credit the base on balls and shall charge a time at bat.

10.15 STRIKEOUTS

- (a) *A strikeout shall be scored whenever:*
 - (1) *A batter is put out by a third strike;*
 - (2) *A batter bunts foul on third strike;*
 - (3) *Except for the Minor and Juvenile League, a batter becomes a runner because a third strike is not caught.*

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.

10.16 EARNED RUNS AND RUNS ALLOWED

An earned run is a run for which a **Juvenile League** pitcher is held accountable. In determining earned runs, the official scorer shall reconstruct the inning without the errors (which exclude catcher's interference) and passed balls, giving the benefit of the doubt always to the pitcher in determining which bases would have been reached by runners had there been errorless play.

- (a) The official scorer shall charge an earned run against a pitcher 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, or wild pitches (including a wild pitch on third strike that permits a batter to reach first base) 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. A wild pitch is solely the pitcher's fault and shall contribute to an earned run just as 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 his 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 presence on the bases is prolonged by an error, if such runner would have been put out by errorless play.
- (d) No run shall be earned when the scoring runner's advance has been aided by an error, a passed ball or defensive interference or obstruction, if in the official scorer's judgment the run would not have scored without the aid of such misplay.
- (e) An 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 official scorer shall not charge the relief pitcher with any run (earned or unearned) scored by a runner who was on base at the time such relief pitcher entered the game, nor for runs scored by any runner who reaches base on a fielder's choice that puts out a runner left on base by any preceding pitcher.

Rule 10.16 (g) Comment: It is the intent of Rule 10.16(g) to charge each pitcher with the number of runners he put on base, rather than with the individual runners. When a pitcher puts runners on base and is relieved, such pitcher shall be charged with all runs subsequently scored up to and including the number of runners such pitcher left on base when such 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). For example:

- (1) Peter is pitching. Abel reaches first base on a base on balls. Roger relieves Peter. Baker grounds out, advancing Abel to second base. Charlie flies out. Daniel singles, scoring Abel. Abel's run is charged to Peter.
- (2) Peter is pitching. Abel reaches first base on a base on balls. Roger relieves Peter. Baker forces Abel at second bases. Charlie grounds out, advancing Baker to second base. Daniel singles, scoring Baker. Baker's run is charged to Peter.
- (3) Peter is pitching. Abel reaches first base on a base on balls. Roger relieves Peter. Baker singles, advancing Abel to third base. Charlie grounds to short, with Abel out at home plate

and Baker advancing to second base. Daniel flies out. Edward singles, scoring Baker. Baker's run is charged to Peter.

- (4) Peter is pitching. Abel reaches first base on a base on balls. Roger relieves Peter. Baker reaches on a base on balls. Charlie flies out. Abel is picked off second base. Daniel doubles, scoring Baker from first base. Baker's run is charged to Roger.
 - (5) Peter is pitching. Abel reaches first base on a base on balls. Roger relieves Peter. Baker reaches first base on a base on balls. Sierra relieves Roger. Charlie forces Abel at third base. Daniel forces Baker at third base. Edward hits a home run, scoring three runs. The official scorer shall charge one run to Peter, one run to Roger and one run to Sierra.
 - (6) Peter is pitching. Abel reaches first base on a base on balls. Roger relieves Peter. Baker reaches first base on a base on balls. Charlie singles, filling the bases. Daniel forces Abel at home plate. Edward singles, scoring Baker and Charlie. The official scorer shall charge one run to Peter and one run to Roger.
 - (7) Peter is pitching. Abel reaches first base on a base on balls. Roger relieves Peter. Baker singles, but Abel is out trying to reach third base and Baker advances to second base on the throw. Charlie singles, scoring Baker. Baker's run is charged to Roger.
- (h) A relief pitcher shall not be held accountable when the first batter to whom he 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 strike,
2 balls, 1 strike,
3 balls, no strike,
3 balls, 1 strike,
3 balls, 2 strikes,
and the batter gets a base on balls, the official scorer shall 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.

Rule 10.16 (h) Comment: The provisions of Rule 10.16(h)(2) shall not be construed as affecting or conflicting with the provisions of Rule 10.16(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 strike,
no ball, 2 strikes,
no ball, 1 strike,
the official scorer shall charge that batter and the actions of that batter 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.

Rule 10.16 (i) Comment: It is the intent of Rule 10.16 (i) to charge a relief pitcher with earned runs for which such relief pitcher is solely responsible. For example:

- (1) With two out and Peter pitching, Abel reaches first base on a base on balls. Baker reaches first base on an error. Roger relieves Peter. Charlie hits a home run, scoring three runs. The official scorer shall charge two unearned runs to Peter, one earned run to Roger.

- (2) With two out, and Peter pitching, Abel and Baker each reach first base on a base on balls. Roger relieves Peter. Charlie reaches first base on an error. Daniel hits a home run, scoring four runs. The official scorer shall charge two unearned runs to Peter and two unearned runs to Roger.
- (3) With none out and Peter pitching, Abel reaches first base on a base on balls. Baker reaches first base on an error. Roger relieves Peter. Charlie hits a home run, scoring three runs. Daniel and Edward strike out. Frank reaches base on an error. George hits a home run, scoring two runs. The official scorer shall charge two runs, one of them earned, to Peter, and three runs, two of them earned, to Roger.

10.17 WINNING AND LOSING PITCHER

- (a) *Credit the starting **Juvenile League** 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 Rule 10.17 (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 **Juvenile League** 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.*

10.18 SHUTOUTS

A shutout is a statistic credited to a **Juvenile League** pitcher who allows no runs in a game. No pitcher shall be credited with pitching a shutout unless he pitches the complete game, or unless he

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.

10.19 SAVES FOR RELIEF PITCHERS

- (a) *Credit a save to a **Juvenile League** 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.*

10.21 DETERMINING PERCENTAGE RECORDS

To compute:

- (a) Percentage of games won and lost, divide the number of games won by the sum of games won and games 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 Rule 10.02 (a);
- (c) Slugging percentage, divide the total bases of all safe hits by the total times at bat, as defined in Rule 10.02(a);
- (d) Fielding average, divide the sum of putouts and assists by the sum of putouts, assists and errors; and
- (e) **Juvenile League** pitcher's earned-run average, multiply the total earned runs charged against such pitcher by 6, and divide the result by the total number of innings he pitched.