

2011 CLERMONT COUNTY KNOTHOLE RULES

FORMATION AND ORGANIZATION RULES

CLERMONT COUNTY KNOTHOLE - is designated as District #45N of Greater Cincinnati Knothole. The District is subdivided by franchises.

- Amelia
- Batavia
- Bethel
- Clermont Northeastern
- Felicity
- Goshen
- Milford
- New Richmond
- Tealtown
- Williamsburg
- Withamsville

The leagues in Clermont County are formulated by teams entered from the above franchises.

1. Players may be signed from anywhere in the local school district, within the Clermont County Knothole District. When there are two or more Franchises within a school district an agreement on boundary lines will be determined by the Franchises involved. Such agreement must be agreed to and signed by all Franchises involved and approved by the County and District Supervisors.
 - a. Players attending a school in Clermont County outside of the Franchise for their residence may play for the Franchise in which the school is located. Players must sign-up for that Franchise during their first year of attendance at that school or their first registration.
2. **RELEASES:** Players who wish a release from their proper franchise will be required to apply for one of the following:
 - a. **General** – There are two types of General releases and must be requested by March 1st of the current year.
 - i. Type 1: When two franchises involved agree on a release, the release will be granted by the county.
 - ii. Type 2: If no agreement on a release can be reached by the two franchises involved, the following will occur...
 - a. The names of three franchises will be placed in a pool.
 - b. Release will be handled at the next scheduled County Franchise Rep. Meeting. Where the player's franchise will be drawn from said pool.
 - c. The new franchise will then place the player on a team.
 - iii. These releases are permanent and the new franchise will be the proper franchise for all future registrations.
 - b. **Placement** –
 - i. May be requested at any time but player must sign up with their proper franchise during regular registration.
 - ii. This type of release is for players who do not have a team to play on in their proper franchise.
 - iii. Players may find a team to play for on their own or County will try to find a team for them.
 - iv. This release is only valid for one year.

- v. The following year, the player will have the option of returning to their franchise of residence or staying with the new franchise. If the player chooses to stay with the new franchise, this release will become permanent.

3. The Age limit for each class is as follows...

CLASS	DATE
A – Sr. / 15U	Youth born on or after May 1, 1995
A – Jr. / 14U	Youth born on or after May 1, 1996
B – Sr. / 13U	Youth born on or after May 1, 1997
B – Jr. / 12U	Youth born on or after May 1, 1998
C – Sr. / 11U	Youth born on or after May 1, 1999
C – Jr. / 10U	Youth born on or after May 1, 2000
D – Sr. / 9U	Youth born on or after May 1, 2001
D – Jr. / 8U	Youth born on or after May 1, 2002
D – Jr. Inst. / 7U	Youth born on or after May 1, 2003

Players must reach the age of 6 on or before April 30, 2011 to play Knothole Baseball. No overage players. No exceptions. Penalty – Forfeiture of all games in which overage player participated.

- 4. Each player in each class must be under contract before they play in a regular season game. Managers of each team must deliver all three copies of each contract to the District Supervisor. The release copy shall not be signed until such time as the manager wishes to release the player. Eleven contracts must be on file with the Supervisor before the first scheduled game. Any contract thereafter that does not reach the Supervisor by game time must be OK'd by the opposing manager and then sent to the Supervisor. No player contract may be OK'd more than once and all such contracts must be on file with the Supervisor within one week. All player contracts must be complete with proper signatures in order for be eligible for play. Managers are responsible for player eligibility and proper execution of contract. Any manager/coach who plays an ineligible player in a league game will forfeit all games in which the player has participated and said manager/coach may be suspended for five years. The Supervisor shall have access to any team scorebook for the purpose of inspection at any time without notice of such inspection. Teams that will carry more than 14 players (Maximum of 17 players) must have permission from the District Supervisor. Player contracts will end when their team is eliminated from the Clermont County Knothole Tournament. Players, who are not competing in the Greater Cincinnati Knothole Tournament and have completed their regular season, may play in other tournaments while competing in the Clermont County Tournament. Teams cannot add any players after the last day for make-up games for the second half of the season.
- 5. A player while under contract in Clermont County may not play on any other team or league. **Exceptions:** (1) A school team (a school team is a team participating in a program sanctioned by the applicable governing body for the school's athletic program such as OHSAA or CYO in play against other sanctioned school programs) **Penalties:** (1) Forfeiture of game in which player participates (2) Disqualification for both Clermont County & Greater Cincinnati Tournaments.
- 6. A player who is a member of a High School Baseball team may participate in only intra-squad practices of his Knothole team and must secure prior permission from the High School coach. A player may not play a game or so-called practice game for his Knothole team while a member of the High School team. When the High School team has been eliminated from the State sponsored tournament and has completed its regular schedule, the player may participate with their Knothole team. Please read and adhere to Ohio State High School eligibility requirements.

7. Each manager or team representative must attend a meeting or class where the County rules are reviewed. One meeting is held annually, prior to start of each season. Upon completion, everyone in attendance will receive a "Team Rep Card". This card must be shown at ground rules prior to each game. It is this card that appoints a team's voice in matters of disputing rules. Only one card valid per game. In the event that original card holder must leave game (non ejection), a replacement holder may assume role as Team Rep pursuant to possessing their own Team Rep Card. If Team Rep is ejected, no alternate Team Reps may take their place and offending team forfeits their ability to dispute calls or make protests.
8. All managers of Knothole teams must be 18 years of age or older. Exceptions may be made by the County Supervisor when an older person accepts responsibility. Managers will be held responsible for their coaches.
9. Winning team must report the score of the game in the manner determined by the County Supervisor.
10. If a player moves or changes residence from one Franchise to another after the season starts they may continue to play with the team in the Franchise from which the player moved for the remainder of season.
11. Any manager or coach found guilty of using intoxicating beverages or under the influence of alcohol while coaching a Knothole team may be barred from coaching Knothole for life.
12. All games which affect a championship must be played by the date which is determined by the Clermont County Supervisor.
13. All rained out, suspended or postponed games must be re-scheduled within 48 hours and played within 10 days of original scheduled date. Re-scheduling of games that cannot be played within 10 days of original scheduled date must be approved by the District Supervisor. When two managers cannot agree on re-scheduling a game, the Supervisor may be notified by either manager. The Supervisor will schedule the game on any field, at any time available to him as he sees fit.
14. For league standings - HEAD to HEAD competition will determine 1st and 2nd place.
15. **NO TEAM IN CLEMONT COUNTY IS PERMITTED TO ENTER ANY TOURNAMENT OTHER THAN THOSE LISTED BELOW WITHOUT THE PERMISSION OF THE COUNTY SUPERVISOR.**
 - a) Clermont County Tournament
 - b) Greater Cincinnati City Tournament

This policy is made to protect the eligibility of the Knothole players. Teams that have completed their regular season, and are not eligible for the City Tournament, may play in the Clermont County Tournament and any other tournament.
16. Every team in Clermont County Knothole must have an approved franchised designation on either their hat or uniform for all County games.
17. A person can manage only one team (unless approved by the District Supervisor). A person may coach as many teams as desired.
18. Team drinks consumed on park property must be purchased at park concession stand. Team drinks: all players and three coaches. Penalty: \$25.00 fine charged to offending Franchise.

19. Teams that finish first, second or third in Class A Sr, B Sr, B Jr, C Sr, C Jr or D Sr in Division 1 in the second half of the season must play in the Greater Cincinnati Knothole Regional to be eligible to play in the Clermont County Knothole Tournament.
20. It is recommended that Franchises require background checks for all managers and coaches.
21. Any game, scheduled or made up, on Sundays may not start prior to 1:00pm. This includes County Tournament games.

PLAYING RULES

1. Umpires

- a. It is the responsibility of each franchise to supply two certified umpires for each home game. Class D Inst. games need only one umpire. Scorebooks for both teams must be presented at ground rules and umpire's names must be printed in them at that time. Umpires must check "Team Rep" cards during ground rules.
 - i. If the home team does not supply two umpires that are certified, but does supply one, the visiting team has the right to put any umpire of their choosing on the field as the field umpire. This umpire does not have to be certified and the game is still considered legal. This umpire must meet the age requirement for this game. Field umpire will be paid \$5.00 by the home team prior to start of the game.
 - ii. If the home team does not supply any certified umpires, the visiting team has the right to decline to play the game and ask to have the game re-scheduled at their field.
 - iii. Any game played without a certified umpire, will not be considered legal. This only means that the game will count as far as a win or loss, but will not be able to be protested.
 - iv. No father, mother, son, daughter, brother, or sister may umpire a home game in which their father, mother, son, daughter, brother, or sister is managing, coaching or playing.
 - v. No manager or coach may umpire a game in their age group unless both managers agree before the game starts for them to do so.
- b. Each Franchise will be able to put on its own school with County Supervisor's approval.
 - i. The certification test should be held on the date, time and place or places that the County wishes.
 - ii. A final test grade of 70% or greater is required prior first game
- c. District Supervisors will be able to administer the test for umpire certification after the season begins.
- d. A list of each Franchise's certified umpires should be available to each Franchise Representative.
- e. Umpire Age Requirements:

Class A	16 years of age
Class B	14 years of age
Class C	13 years of age
Class D	13 years of age
Class D Inst.	12 years of age

The umpire's age is to be reached by April 30th of the current year
- f. Umpires who are not 16 by April 30 of the current year must attend a class and pass test each year to be certified. Umpires 16 and older must attend class and pass the test or be approved by Franchise to be certified.

2. **PROTESTS:** Protest may be of two kinds.

- a. Ineligible players and breaking of Standing Rules or By-laws.
 - i. A team may protest these at any time. In cases involving ineligible players and breaking of Standard Rules or By-Laws, a Supervisor may take action without a formal protest.
 - ii. Protests of an overage or ineligible player will cost \$25.00 cash per player.
 - b. Misinterpretation of playing rules.
 - i. Umpire judgment decisions cannot be protested, but all protests must be accepted.
 - ii. All disputes should be settled on field if possible before resuming play.
 - iii. When a protest is made on the field of play, the manager must quote which general rule was misinterpreted and have the umpire announce that the game is being played under protest before the next play is made. Umpires must sign both scorebooks at time of protest noting point of protest.
 - iv. A protest form must be completed by the protesting team and in the District or County Supervisor's hands within 48 hours after the completion of game. Protests must be accompanied with a fee of \$25.00 cash. If the protest is not allowed, the \$25.00 will go into the Clermont County Knothole Association Treasury.
 - v. Protest of a game in the County Tournament must be filed with the District or County Supervisor within 3 hours of completion of game.
 - vi. The County Protest Board is to consist of three members, chosen by County Supervisor.
3. Profane or abusive language by managers, coaches, players and spectators will be grounds for ejection from the game and or viewing area. The name of those involved along with a detail description of the incident must be turned into the District Supervisor for further action. This is the Franchise Rep's responsibility. Any manager or coach displaying disrespect or abuse to umpires, league or tournament officials will be barred from managing or coaching a Knothole team or being associated with a Knothole Franchised in any manner for any length of time determined by the County Supervisor. If actions of this nature occur, Franchise Reps concerned will be notified.
 4. INTIMIDATION: An opposing manager, coach, player or spectator shall not in any manner harass or intimidate any member of the opposing team or umpire before, during or after the game. Penalty for this action shall be one warning from the umpire and then automatic ejection for the next offense. Each manager is responsible for the conduct of their team's fans.
 5. No use of tobacco of any kind on playing field or players bench
 6. No jewelry to be worn by players on playing field. Exceptions: breakaway cloth necklaces and medical ID tags. Failure to comply after warning will result in ejection of player.
 7. Visiting team has the use of the field for 15 minutes prior to the scheduled game time.
 8. A Knothole team in Clermont County must start the game with nine players, but may finish with eight or less. With eight or less, the vacant batting positions shall be declared out. When it becomes apparent that it is not a competitive game but a farce; the umpire will forfeit the game.
 9. A team is allowed 30 minutes from the scheduled starting game time in case of trouble without the danger of forfeit.
 10. Names and numbers (if available) of all players must be recorded in scorebook. It is not compulsory for a player to have a uniform, cap etc. to play Knothole Baseball. However, if

such equipment is worn; it will be worn in the proper manner. Violations are subject to the umpire's judgment.

11. The home team will furnish a new game ball. The visiting team will supply a good second ball. Thereafter, home team shall furnish all additional balls. Each ball is to be returned to the team from which it came.

12. Pitching distances shall be:

CLASS - A	60' 6"
CLASS - B-Sr.	54'
CLASS - B-Jr.	51'
CLASS - C	48'
CLASS - D Sr.	45'
CLASS - D Jr.	42'
CLASS - D Inst.	39' (Approximate)

Youth or full size pitching rubbers will be used in all Classes except Class D Inst.

13. Base Distances shall be:

CLASS - A	90'
CLASS - B-Sr.	80'
CLASS - B-Jr.	75'
CLASS - C	70'
CLASS - D	60'
CLASS - D Inst.	55'

14. REGULATION GAME: Classes A and B – 7 innings. Class C – 6 innings. Class D – 5 innings. In case of a tie, as many innings as necessary will be played to complete the game. Games will become officially completed when it is mathematically impossible for the losing team to tie or win the game (see seven run rule). In the event of extra innings, a winner will be declared once the home team is ahead by at least one run. Games that are officially completed (one team has been mathematically defeated) may continue if both teams agree but no new inning may start after two hours from the start of game. All games will be complete games, unless run rule applies. Games stopped because of rain, lightning or darkness will become suspended and resume at point of suspension.

15. In all Classes from D–Inst. Through A-Sr., a manager must use the all player batting order. EXCEPTIONS: Disciplinary action being imposed on player by Franchise. NOTE: A team must have at least ten players in the batting order to be considered using the all player batting order.

a. ALL PLAYER BATTING ORDER: Manager must place all players at the beginning of the game in the batting order. If a player is injured, becomes ill, has to leave or is ejected, his spot in the batting order is skipped and no out is taken. If he later is able to resume play, he must bat in the same spot he occupied in the batting order at the beginning of the game. There will be no pinch hitters or pinch runners except in case of injury or ejection. A batter or runner who is injured or ejected while at bat or on the bases and cannot continue play will be replaced by the most recent batter not occupying a base. NOTE: Batter will assume the count. A runner may be replaced only one time during a game; a second time will result in the runner being declared out and removed from the game. Players who arrive after the game has started will be placed at the bottom of the batting order. Free substitution will be allowed for defensive positions.

16. All players must play at least two innings in the field unless game is shortened by the run rule.

17. SEVEN RUN RULE: Play stops when the third out is made or the 7th run scores in any one half inning. This rule MUST be used in all Clermont County Knothole games.

18. INTENTIONAL THROWING OF BATS AND HELMETS: One warning per team, second offense by team will result in the ejection of player or coach involved. Note: If player has put ball in play, a delayed dead ball is called, player is ejected but not out. Refer to ALL PLAYER BATTING ORDER
19. BALK RULE: If no agreement can be reached by both teams at ground rules, the following rules will be used. Classes D and C: one warning per pitcher per game. If during a pitcher's first balk any runner advances safely, runner will be allowed to remain at that base, if runner is tagged out, runner will return to base occupied at time of balk. Classes B and A: Major League rule.
20. SLIDING BASE RULE: This rule was written to protect the runner, not put them in jeopardy and to provide safety. Rule will apply when:
- The runner slides in, he is considered to be with the base. Remaining on the ground if tagged, runner is SAFE. After sliding in, the runner stands up and makes NO attempt to advance, if tagged, runner is SAFE. If runner moves towards the next base and the fielder makes the tag before the runner can get back to where the base was ORIGINALLY, the runner is OUT. This is umpires judgment.
 - The runner goes in standing and the base moves off the spot more than the length of the base and no part of the runner is touching the original spot of the base, when tagged, the runner is OUT.
 - A preceding runner moves the base off the spot more than the length of the base; following runners need only to touch the original spot of the base. It is recommended that all base locations are clearly marked so that runners have a visual point for them to touch and the umpires have a reference point.
21. PLOWING OVER THE CATCHER OR OTHER FIELDER: Any runner who does not slide or attempt to get around a fielder "WHO HAS THE BALL AND IS MAKING A TAG" will be called out. Any runner that hurdles a fielder who has the ball will also be called out. When a runner is called out in either of these situations, the ball is dead immediately and all other runners must return to the last base reached when the ball became dead. In addition; any runner who WILLFULLY plows into or through a fielder that has the ball will be ejected from the game. ****THIS IS STRICTLY UMPIRE'S JUDGMENT****
22. PITCH COUNT: Must be used in all County Knothole games. Pitch count will apply per pitcher per day. A 90% & 110% scale will apply. If a pitcher has reached 90% of their pitch count in a preceding inning, they may not pitch in another inning that day. Once a pitcher pitches in an inning, they may pitch up to 110% of their pitch count in that inning. The pitch count for both teams must be kept by both teams. Teams must notify the plate umpire when a pitcher is within two pitches of their maximum (110%) pitch count. The plate umpire must check with each team at the end of each half inning. If there is any dispute of the pitch count, the plate umpire will have the final decision. Penalty for violation of this rule is forfeiture of the game and manager/coach will be suspended for the next 2 home games (1st offense) and one calendar year (2nd offense). Pitch count is per day and does not carryover in the completion of a suspended game.

Notes: Warm-up pitches do not count toward pitch count (pitcher warming up on mound must throw an official pitch to batter unless injured during warm up – MLB rule 3.05(b).

For a pitcher in Class D-Jr. the maximum of three innings per game and the pitch count will apply.

Class	Pitch Count	90%	110% (Maximum pitches)
A	90	81	99
B	80	72	88
C	70	63	77
D	60	54	66

23. INTENTIONAL WALK: If a manager elects to intentionally walk a batter, the ball will become dead, no pitches will be thrown and the batter will be awarded first base. Note: No pitches will be added to the pitch count.
24. BATTING PRACTICE: NO swinging of bats or batting practice of any type including warm-up swings, soft toss, batting sticks etc. is permitted before, during or after a game except on the field of play, another field (if available) or in a designated batting cage.
25. EJECTION RULE: In a game where a manager or coach is ejected it must be reported to the score line by both managers involved in the game no later than noon of the following day. Penalty for ejection will be as follows... 1st Offense – one game suspension (next home game). 2nd Offense – three game suspensions (next three home games). 3rd Offense – One calendar year suspension. Suspensions must be administered and enforced by the Franchise Rep(s) of the manager/coach suspended. The suspended manager/coach will not be allowed to attend the game(s) for which they are suspended. For any ejection that is not reported within the time limit by the manager of the ejected person, the penalty will be doubled. Suspensions may be appealed to the Disciplinary Board (3 members) which will be appointed by the County Supervisor. Appeal must be filed to the ejection phone line by noon of the following day of the ejection. The cost for an appeal is \$35.00 cash. If an appeal is upheld, there will be no suspension and the \$35.00 will be returned. If the appeal is denied, the \$35.00 will go into the County Knothole treasury. All suspensions and games affected will be posted on the County Knothole website. Franchises reserve the right to impose a more severe penalty on their managers/coaches who have been ejected if it is deemed appropriate.

“SPECIAL RULES”

CLASS D-JR.

1. The 7 run rule will be used in all games.
2. A pitcher may only pitch in 3 innings. One pitch in any inning is to be considered as one inning pitched. Note: In the case of a suspended game, a pitcher is still only allowed to pitch 3 innings in that game regardless of how many days it takes to complete the game.
3. The batter is out after the third strike even though the catcher drops the ball, ball is still alive.
4. **NO STEALING:** The only way a runner may advance from any base is by a batted ball, forced to advance by a walk, hit batsman or catcher's interference. A runner may lead off at risk of being "put out". Runners at any base **must return to the base previously occupied**. If after a batted ball, the batted or thrown ball goes out of play, the award of bases will be made according to the Major League Rules. A runner could advance in this situation.
5. If a pitcher cannot control the ball and hits 3 batters in one inning or 4 overall players in a game, the pitcher must be removed from the mound for the duration of the game.

CLASS D-INSTRUCTIONAL

1. The 7 run rule will be used in all games.
2. Coaches will pitch the entire game. Note: Spring-loaded pitching machines may be used. If a spring-loaded machine is available each team will have the choice of whether to use it or not.
3. Pitching distance will be approximately 39'.
4. One defensive player must stay within 6' of the pitcher at time of pitch.
5. Batters will be limited to 3 swinging strikes or a maximum of seven pitches, whichever occurs first. A foul ball on the seventh pitch will end a turn at bat. No balls will be counted by the umpire.
6. The batter is out after the third strike even though the catcher drops the ball.
7. Bunting is not allowed.
8. NO STEALING: A 6' lead-off is permitted. Runners cannot be picked-off by catcher or other fielders.
9. Two defensive coaches will be allowed in the field.
10. INFIELD POSSESSION: When a player has possession of the ball in the infield and he is not making a play on any runner, time will be called by the umpire. Runners that are more than halfway to the next base will be allowed to continue to that base, runners that are less than halfway to the next base must return to the last base reached.
THIS IS STRICTLY UMPIRE'S JUDGMENT
11. When a thrown ball goes into foul territory, play stops and the INFIELD POSSESSION rule will be in effect.
12. A fourth outfielder may be used. Extra player must play in the outfield. Extra player cannot play as an infielder or a short center fielder.
13. No official score is to be kept or called in by either team.
14. **THIS LEAGUE IS TO BE INSTRUCTIONAL**