**2019 FRB DIVISIONAL GUIDELINES FOR BAMBINOS AND ROOKIES**

These guidelines are provided to give parents, coaches, and players the framework for participation at this level. The Bambino and Rookie leagues of Flemington Raritan Baseball (FRB) serve 5, 6, 7, and 8 year old children in the community. Minors and majors are governed by the rules of baseball. See ***FRB Ground Rules*** for the Division Specific exceptions.

**Safety & Conduct**

***This applies to all Divisions***

1. All catchers must wear a helmet, mask, shin guards, chest protector, and cup. Note: Catching is not introduced until the Mantle level.
2. Bambino use “soft” safety balls only.
3. All batters, base runners, and “on-deck” batter(s) practicing, in the field of play, or warming up, must wear helmets. If the child has a bat in their hands, they must have a helmet on. During games, only one on deck batter should have a bat in their hands.
4. Metal cleats are not permitted. Rubber cleats are optional.
5. No sunglasses are allowed unless prescription and properly secured. Sport goggles are recommended.
6. Jewelry is not permitted.
7. All players must remain on the bench, except “on-deck” batter(s) or as otherwise directed by a coach.
8. It is recommended that coaches and/or assistant coaches attend any league sponsored coaching clinics.
9. Any coach or player using profanity will be ejected from the game and face possible suspension.
10. Yelling and raising your voice is not an effective teaching technique. Coaches who yell at children will be warned and potentially removed from the game and face possible suspension.
11. Try to live by the 5:1 rule of positive comments to constructive points.
12. It is the responsibility of each coach to have the team clean up the field and bench area after each practice or game.
13. Player pitchers should stand no more than 6 feet in front of the mound for their safety.
14. A parent or designated guardian must be present at all sessions for Bambino, & Rookies levels.

**Bambino**

***Teaching Objectives for players at this level should include:***

1. Proper fielding position stressing tripod position
2. Proper throwing techniques stressing arm position and footwork
3. Proper hitting stance stressing feet, hands and bat position using tee, soft toss and coach pitch.
4. Introduction to infield positions
5. Introduction to game scenarios stressing infield throws to first base
6. Knowledge of first base foot work
7. Base running: Running through 1st base on ground balls.

***Season Format***

 ***Sessions 1 to May 15th***

1. Practice Drill Sessions ½ of time and game 2nd 1/2
2. Development of fundamental skills should be stressed.
3. Conduct drills for a minimum of the first 40 minutes of practice followed by a 2-3 inning simulated game (see age specific rules).

***May 15th till end of season***

1. Practice Drill Sessions ½ of time and game 2nd 1/2
2. Coach Pitch up to 10 pitches then hitting T is brought out
3. Any play resulting in an out an the player will go to the bench. No strikeouts
4. Development of fundamental skills should continue to be stressed.
5. Conduct drills for a minimum of the first 40 minutes of practice followed by a 2-3 inning simulated game (see age specific rules).
6. Note: Practice only sessions should last approximately 90 minutes, at the coach’s discretion

***Game Playing***

1. Infielders will be limited to 5 players (no Catcher). All infield positions will be covered. The remaining players will participate in drills and / or play the outfield. No players should sit out. Depending on how many players/coaches are present, drills are strongly encouraged for the non-infield players.
2. There will be no “building walls” in the infield. All non-infield players must be on the grass and cannot record a putout at a base, only an assist.
3. Two fielding coaches will be allowed on the field during the game. Coaches in the field will be considered part of the playing field and if hit by a batted ball, the ball remains in play.
4. Players may hit off a tee at any time. When using the tee, the player may have as many swings as necessary to hit the ball. When a coach is pitching, the player may have up to five (5) swings to hit the ball. After five (5) misses, the tee must be used. Foul balls do not count as a miss.
5. All pitching will be done by the coach of the team batting. Until May 15th is TBALL only
6. A single player pitcher should be used when a coach is pitching. The player pitcher must be in the mound area even when not pitching. Maintain a clear line of site for this player with the batter for safety purposes.
7. If an out is made on a batter the batter will go back to the bench. If there are runners on base with two outs and the third out is made, the base runners will return to the bench and a new set of outs will be given to the batting team provided there are more players left to bat.
8. If each team has more than 8 players, it is recommended that the teams alternate hitting after every 4/5 batters to help keep the players interest.
9. There are no strikeouts or walks.
10. There is no: bunting, stealing, infield fly rule or tagging up.
11. Sliding is permitted. Proper techniques should be stressed and practiced.
12. Runners and batter may advance one base only. No advance on an overthrow. The ball is dead when a reasonable attempt is made to throw the ball back to the pitcher. Having a child run at this level without understanding why is confusing for the runner and the fielders.

**Rookie**

***Teaching Objectives for players at this level should include:***

1. Understanding of the rules of the game
2. Introduction to fly balls
3. Base running ( Making turns on balls hit pass the infield)
4. Introduction to Catching
5. Introduction to Pitching
6. Sliding technique
7. Understanding of balls and strike
8. Introduction to umpiring
9. Introduce “regulation” baseballs

***Season Format***

***Sessions 1-2***

1. Practice sessions only.
2. No simulated games against an opponent should occur. Development of fundamental skills should be stressed.
3. The designated home team will have the infield for the first 45 minutes of field time.

***Sessions 3 to May 15***

1. 15 Minute Warmup
2. Games are NOT Umpired
3. Coaches should not be on the field
4. Simulated game with 9 players in proper position (extras players can round out the outfield or perform extra drills.)
5. Called balls and strikes – no walks or strikeouts
6. Half innings consist of 3 outs or after everyone has batted once
7. No advancing on an overthrow
8. Players pitch – limited to 1 inning. After 4 balls or hit batsman, coach pitches to that batter up to 5 balls. After the hitting T will be used. Player resumes pitching to next batter at coach’s discretion.
9. All other rules of the game apply

***May 15 till end of season***

1. Games are umpired
2. 9 players in proper position (extras players on bench.) Each player must take a turn sitting out on defense until all players have sat.
3. Called balls and strikes with Strikeouts & walks.
Runners may advance one base on an overthrow.
4. Players pitch – limited to 1 inning (Monitor to keep the player around 25 pitches).
5. Half innings consist of 3 outs or until 4 runs are scored
6. No stealing of bases is allowed.
7. All other rules of the game apply
8. Note: Be aware of pitch counts – switch pitchers after approximately 25 pitches, even if between innings.