



# MUDSOCK YOUTH BASEBALL RULES

## 3<sup>rd</sup>/4<sup>th</sup> Grade League

Board Approved: April 5, 2021

Last Modified: March 31, 2021

1. **LEAGUE OVERVIEW** – The 3<sup>rd</sup>/4<sup>th</sup> Grade League is a competitive league. The league consists of three (3) divisions ranging in order based on evaluation scores and player drafts. Division order is as follows: Red (f/k/a National League Blue or NLB), White (f/k/a National League White or NLW), and Blue (f/k/a American League or AL). Players who do not go through player evaluations will automatically be placed within the Blue Division.
  - 1.1. **Calendar Week:** Calendar week is Monday through Sunday.
  - 1.2. **Schedule:** Teams will play one game during the week, and one game on Saturday. Additional games may be scheduled due to rainouts. Pre-season practices will be set by the league scheduler. Additional practices will not be scheduled by the league once the season begins due to field space.
  - 1.3. **Uniforms:** Each player must wear the complete uniform at all times. The complete uniform will consist of team shirt, team cap, baseball socks, and baseball pants. Shirts must be tucked in. If cold weather, additional clothing can be worn except that pitchers are not allowed to wear white long sleeves or a glove on their catching or pitching hand. Players not in compliance with the uniform rule for a particular game will be able to play unless denied by the Commissioner of that league.
  - 1.4. **Equipment**
    - 1.4.1. **Ball:** A regular-style baseball will be used in this league, and will be supplied by the league at equipment distribution. Game ball(s) will be supplied by the home team.
    - 1.4.2. **Bat:** Only USA Certified Bats are to be used, there is no restriction on barrel diameter size. A wood bat may also be used. Please refer to the USA Bat Guide for allowable bats: <https://usabat.com/>
    - 1.4.3. **Glove:** All players must wear a glove when playing the field. Players will provide their own gloves to use during practices and games.
    - 1.4.4. **Helmet:** League will provide team helmets. A player is not required to purchase their own individual helmet.
    - 1.4.5. **Spikes:** Metal spikes are not allowed in this league.
2. **CODE OF CONDUCT**
  - 2.1. **Coach's and Parent's Code:** Children have more need of example than criticism. Make athletic participation a positive experience. Attempt to relieve the pressure of competition. Be kind to your child's coaches and to officials. The opponents are necessary friends. Applaud good plays by your team and by the opponents. Enter the field of play at request of official or coach only.



The use of alcohol, tobacco, and/or profanity is not allowed on or around the field of play.

- 2.2. **Player's Code:** Play the game for the game's sake. Be generous when you win. Be graceful when you lose. Be fair no matter what the cost. Obey the laws of the game. Work for the good of your team. Accept the decisions of the officials with good grace. Conduct yourself with honor and dignity.

### 3. PLAYING FIELD

- 3.1. **Field Dimensions and Locations:** This league will play at sixty (60) foot base paths. Fields that accommodate these dimensions are: Billericay Park (Fields 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8), Harrison Thompson Park (Fields 1 and 2), and Holland Park (Fields 1 and 2).

- 3.1.1. **Movable bases/plates:** Bases and home plate are movable at each of the fields identified in §3.1.

- **Billericay Park Field #3:** Bases adjustable to 60', 65', and 70'; Home Plate/Mount Distance adjustable to 46' and 50'.
- **Billericay Park Field #4:** Bases adjustable to 60', 65', and 70'; Home Plate/Mount Distance adjustable to 46' and 50'.
- **Billericay Park Field #5:** Bases adjustable to 60' and 65'; Home Plate/Mount Distance are not adjustable.
- **Billericay Park Field #6:** Bases adjustable to 60' and 65'; Home Plate/Mount Distance are not adjustable.
- **Billericay Park Field #7:** Bases adjustable to 60' and 65'; Home Plate/Mount Distance are not adjustable.
- **Billericay Park Field #8:** Bases adjustable to 60' and 65'; Home Plate/Mount Distance are not adjustable.
- **Harrison Thompson Park Field #1:** Bases adjustable to 60' and 65'; Home Plate/Mount Distance are not adjustable.
- **Harrison Thompson Park Field #2:** Bases adjustable to 60' and 65'; Home Plate/Mount Distance are not adjustable.
- **Holland Park Field #1:** Bases adjustable to 60' and 65'; Home Plate/Mount Distance are not adjustable.
- **Holland Park Field #2:** Bases adjustable to 60' and 65'; Home Plate/Mount Distance are not adjustable.

- 3.1.2. **Mound/Home Plate:** Mound will measure 46' from the back point of home plate to the front edge of the pitching mound rubber.

- 3.1.3. **Bases:** Base paths measure at sixty (60) feet.

- 3.2. **Dugout Assignments:** home team will occupy 3<sup>rd</sup> Base dugout, visiting team will occupy 1<sup>st</sup> Base dugout. League schedule will identify home and visiting teams.



### 3.3. **Field Maintenance**

3.3.1. **Pre-Game:** Home team is responsible for preparing the field for play. Pull tarps from field. If water is present, use pillow-bags and/or sponges to dry up water before the application of any field dry.

3.3.2. **Post-Game:** Visiting team is responsible for closing the field down. Pull tarps onto both the pitching mound, and home plate areas. All field maintenance equipment surrounding field should be returned to the equipment shed.

3.4. **Scoreboard Operation:** Scoreboards are not present at Harrison Thompson and Holland Parks. Scoreboards at Billerica Park are controlled by a remote. Remotes can be obtained in the board room above the concession stand building between Fields 1-4. Controllers are designated for each field and need to be returned to the board room upon use.

## 4. **ROSTER**

4.1. **Official Team Roster:** Team roster will consist of no more than twelve (12) players unless otherwise approved by the commissioner. Rosters will be set by a player draft. Commissioner may add or move players to and from rosters as needed.

4.2. **Forfeited Game:** A game will be forfeited if a team cannot field, at the start of the game including a 10-minute grace period, a minimum of eight (8) players. The Farm System (§4.3 Farm System) can be used for a game to avoid a forfeit and/or increase your game time roster to nine (9) players. Farm System players can only be used to bring the game time roster to a maximum of nine (9) players. If a tenth player shows up after the start of the game, the Farm System player must be allowed to play the minimum number of innings. Players from the Farm System are only allowed to play in the outfield, and must be placed at the bottom of the batting lineup.

### 4.3. **Farm System**

4.3.1. **Red Division:** Any current registered Mudsock Youth Baseball Player that plays in the 3<sup>rd</sup>/4<sup>th</sup> Grade White Division and/or 1<sup>st</sup>/2<sup>nd</sup> Grade League

4.3.2. **White Division:** Any current registered Mudsock Youth Baseball Player that plays in the 3<sup>rd</sup>/4<sup>th</sup> Grade Blue Division and/or 1<sup>st</sup>/2<sup>nd</sup> Grade League

4.3.3. **Blue Division:** Any current registered Mudsock Youth Baseball Player that plays in the 1<sup>st</sup>/2<sup>nd</sup> Grade League.

## 5. **GAME OVERVIEW**

5.1. **Pre-Game Warm-up:** Teams should be at field thirty (30) minutes prior to scheduled start time. Visiting team will have the field for the first fifteen (15) minutes; home team will have the field for the last fifteen (15) minutes before the start of the game.



- 5.2. **Length:** The game will be six (6) innings or one and a half (1 ½) hours. Any inning starting within fifteen (15) minutes of the game-ending time limit will be declared the final inning. No additional innings are to begin after the final inning is declared.
- 5.3. **Last Declared Inning:** Any inning starting within fifteen (15) minutes of the game-ending time limit will be considered the final inning. The start time of an inning is identified as the time in which the final out was made of the prior inning. Final inning will be declared by the umpire. The umpire will notify both coaches of (1) the start time, and (2) when the final inning is declared.
- 5.3.1. **Example #1:** Game starts at 12:00 PM Home Team is batting when 3<sup>rd</sup> out of the bottom of the 3<sup>rd</sup> inning occurs at 1:10 PM (20 minutes left before time limit). Visiting Team and Home Team will bat in the 4<sup>th</sup> inning. Home Team 3<sup>rd</sup> out occurs in the bottom of the 4<sup>th</sup> inning at 1:20 PM (10 minutes left before time limit). Umpires and/or coaches will declare the 5<sup>th</sup> inning as the last inning. The 6<sup>th</sup> inning will not be played even if the 5<sup>th</sup> inning ends before the 1 ½ hour time limit since the last inning has already been declared.
- 5.3.2. **Example #2:** Game starts at 12:00 PM Home Team is batting when 3<sup>rd</sup> out of the bottom of the 4<sup>th</sup> inning occurs at 1:10 PM (20 minutes left before time limit). Visiting Team and Home Team will bat in the 5<sup>th</sup> inning. Home Team 3<sup>rd</sup> out occurs in the bottom of the 5<sup>th</sup> inning at 1:35 PM (5 minutes over the time limit). Umpires and/or coaches will then declare the game over since the game is over its 1 ½ hour time limit, even if the "last inning" has not been declared.
- 5.3.3. **Home Team Batting at Time Limit:** If the home team is batting and leading in the bottom of an inning when the 1 ½ hour time limit is reached, there is no need to continue the game. You must end the game at the 1 ½ hour time limit in order to start the next game as scheduled.
- 5.4. **Maximum Run Rule:** A team may score a maximum of six (6) runs per inning, including inning number six (6) or subsequent innings thereafter.
- 5.5. **Run Rule:** A run rule is in effect if a team is leading by ten (10) runs or more after four (4) innings and eight (8) runs or more after five (5) innings.
- 5.6. **Playing Short:** A team must field at least eight (8) players or would be in violation of Rule 4.2 Forfeited Game. If a team does field the eight (8) player minimum, an out will be recorded for the ninth batter when that spot is due up in the batting order.
- 5.7. **Fair Play/Guaranteed Playing Time:** All players, except in the case of injury/illness or disciplinary action, must play in the infield a minimum of three (3) innings in a 6-inning game (two (2) innings if their team is only in the field for five (5) innings or less). The safety of a player should be considered at all times. Do not put a player in a position that would put them at risk of injury. If a player is not getting an opportunity to play a position due to safety concerns, it is imperative that the coach discuss this decision with the player's parents.



Every player must be allowed to play an equal amount of innings during the season as all of the other players.

5.8. **Drop Third Strike:** This rule is not applicable to this league.

5.9. **Infield Fly Rule**

5.9.1. **Red Division:** The Infield Fly Rule will be in effect and the batter will be out if the following criteria are met:

- (1) fly ball is deemed catchable per an umpire's judgment,
- (2) fly ball is in fair territory
- (3) at the time of the pitch, runners are on first and second base; or bases are loaded
- (4) there are less than two outs

If all four conditions are met, batter is called out and runners may advance at their own risk. If the ball is caught, runners must tag up to advance. If Infield Fly Rule is called, and ball drifts into foul territory, the foul ball is called and battery continues their at bat.

5.9.2. **White Division:** The Infield Fly Rule will be in effect and the batter will be out if the following criteria are met:

- (1) fly ball is deemed catchable per an umpire's judgment,
- (2) fly ball is in fair territory
- (3) at the time of the pitch, runners are on first and second base; or bases are loaded
- (4) there are less than two outs

If all four conditions are met, batter is called out and runners may advance at their own risk. If the ball is caught, runners must tag up to advance. If Infield Fly Rule is called, and ball drifts into foul territory, the foul ball is called and battery continues their at bat.

5.9.3. **Blue Division:** Infield Fly Rule is not applicable to this division.

5.10. **Time Outs:** The coach is allowed to stop play to only one (1) batter per inning while their team is at bat.

5.11. **Umpire:** Umpires will be provided by the league. If an umpire does not show, it is the responsibility of the home team to secure a volunteer umpire for the game. Umpire should call balls and strikes from behind the pitching mound.

5.12. **Official Scorekeeper:** The home team is the official scorekeeper. The scorekeeper of both teams shall consult each other at the conclusion of each half inning. Any discrepancies at the end of the half inning must be resolved at that time. Any disputes will be handled by the league commissioner.

5.13. **Game Reporting:** Coaches must report to commissioner if game is cancelled due to weather/darkness. Final score of game including team names and numbers, farm players used, pitchers used and number of pitches thrown; as well as any other game notes must be reported to the commissioner within twenty-four (24) hours of the conclusion of the game.

5.14. **Protests:** Protests are not allowed in this league.

5.15. **Weather**



- 5.15.1. **Lightning and Thunder:** If lightning is seen, or thunder is heard, fields must be vacated. Players and fans need to leave the field completely and return to their cars. Players are not allowed to stay in the dugout. Game will be suspended for thirty (30) minutes from time of last seen lightning or last heard thunder. If the thirty (30) minute suspended play time extends beyond the time limit of the game, game will be postponed.
- 5.15.2. **Rain:** As long as the field is deemed to be “playable”, game play is allowed to continue. It is up to the discretion of both coaches to determine how “playable” is defined.
- 5.15.3. **Suspended Game:** If a game is suspended due to weather and/or darkness, the game will resume at the point it was suspended, and will be allowed its full remaining time limit.
- 5.16. **Ties:** If a game is tied at the end of the time limit, the game shall end in a tie. No extra time can be taken to break the tie. No rescheduling to determine a winner.

## 6. BATTING

- 6.1. **Batting Order:** The batting order will remain consistent from inning to inning. Once a team’s offensive inning has concluded, the next batter due up will lead off in their team’s next offensive inning.
- 6.2. **Balls and Strikes:** Umpire will call all balls and strikes.
- 6.3. **On Deck:** All players are to be in the dugout except for the batter and the on-deck hitter. The on-deck hitter must be wearing a helmet.
- 6.4. **Throwing-the-Bat:** Batter will be taught not to throw bat.
- 6.5. **Bunting:** Bunting is not allowed in this league.
- 6.6. **Coaches on Field:** While batting, the hitting team will be allowed no more than three (3) coaches on the field of play: 1B Coach, 3B Coach, and Coach Pitcher for the AL.
- 6.7. **Final Batter:** This rule does not apply to this league.

## 7. FIELDING

- 7.1. **Fielding Positions:** Each team will use nine (9) defensive players consisting of one (1) pitcher, four (4) infielders (1B, 2B, SS, and 3B), and three (3) outfielders (LF, CF, and RF)
- 7.2. **Shifts:** No fielding shifts are allowed in this league.
- 7.3. **Stopping the Runner:** If the defensive team forces the base runner towards the base for which they last occupied, the runner is not allowed to advance to the next base until the next pitch. If an attempt is made to throw the base runner out as they retreat to the originally occupied base, the base runners may advance at will.
- 7.4. **Coaches on Field:** No coach is allowed on the field of play to provide instruction. For the AL Division only, a coach may be substituted to complete pitching duties for an inning. See Rule 9. Pitching for more details.





## 8. BASE RUNNING

### 8.1. Stealing:

8.1.1. **Red and White Divisions:** Base runners may steal any base once a pitched ball has crossed home plate.

8.1.2. **Blue Division:** Base runners may steal second or third base only after a pitched ball has crossed home plate. The pitched ball cannot be a passed ball or wild pitch. There is no stealing of home plate or running home on a passed ball or wild pitch. However, base runners may run home if the catcher or pitcher makes a play on a base runner (this does not include muffed throws to the pitcher). Coaches are not to instruct their catchers to intentionally drop pitches to prevent stolen base attempts. An umpire may allow base runners to advance if they perceive a catcher is intentionally dropping pitches.

8.2. **Head First Slides:** Head first slides are not allowed at any based and will result in an out unless the base runner is diving back (retreating) to the previous base.

8.3. **Lead-offs/Leaving Base Early:** There are no lead-offs in this league. Players are to keep at least one foot on the base until the ball has crossed home plate.

8.4. **Over Throws:** Runners can run an unlimited amount of bases in the event of an overthrown ball. Play is not stopped until Rule 7.3 Stopping the Runner has been achieved.

8.5. **Speed-up Rule:** If your catcher (if they are catching in your next defensive half of the inning) reaches base with two (2) outs, they may be replaced on base by the previous batter in your lineup that is not still on base.

8.6. **Interference:** If a fielder interferes with a baserunner, the interfered baserunner will be deemed safe and the play is ruled dead. No further advancement of baserunners will be allowed.

## 9. PITCHING

9.1. **Pitch Count:** A pitcher may not throw more than sixty (60) pitches or three (3) innings, whichever is reached first, in a single game. One pitch in an inning counts as an inning pitched. If the sixty (60) pitch count is reached in the middle of an at bat, the pitcher may continue to pitch until any of the following conditions occur:

- batter reaches base
- batter is put out
- third out is made to complete half-inning

Coaches must count the number of pitches and report to the league commissioner. Information communicated to commissioner should include

- pitcher's name



- innings pitched
- number of pitches

9.2. **Required Rest (Calendar Days Midnight to Midnight)**

Required Rest (Days)*:	0	1	2	3	4
# of Pitches:	1-20	21-35	36-50	51-65	66+

*\*Required rest (Days) is defined as a Calendar Day (midnight to midnight)*

9.3. **Breaking Pitches:** Breaking pitches are not allowed in this league.

9.4. **Warm-ups (between innings):** Warm-ups between innings are a maximum of five (5) pitches. There is no minimum. If a pitcher throws the maximum five (5) pitches to a coach, they do not get additional warm-up pitches to their catcher.

9.5. **Hit Batter**

9.5.1. **Red and White Division:** A pitcher that hits three batters in an inning must be replaced with a new pitcher to finish the inning and is done pitching for the game and cannot re-enter as a pitcher. The new pitcher or another pitcher must pitch the next inning.

9.5.2. **Blue Division:** A pitcher that hits four (4) batters in a game or three (3) batters in an inning must be removed as the pitcher and cannot re-enter the game in the pitcher position. If the pitching team (one or more pitchers) hits three batters during any one inning, a coach pitcher finishes that inning. The player must remain in the game as the fielder for the pitcher's position for the remainder of the inning. They have not been removed as the pitcher of record; they just have a coach pitching the ball for them. Furthermore, if a team's pitchers record any combination of four (4) hit batters and/or walks, a coach pitcher (from the hitting team) will finish that half inning. The player must remain in the game as the fielder for the pitcher's position for the remainder of the inning. They have not been removed as the pitcher of record, they; they just have a coach pitching the ball for them. After the inning is completed by the coach pitcher, the pitcher of record may return the next inning if they have not exhausted their innings pitched allowance the innings pitched are consecutive in nature.

9.6. **Balks:** There are no balks in this league.

9.7. **Intentional Walks:** There are no intentional walks in this league.

9.8. **Coach Trips to Mound and Coach Pitching**

9.8.1. **Red and White Divisions:** A coach is allowed two trips to the mound to consult with their pitcher in one game. On the third trip, the pitcher must be replaced with a new pitcher. If the second trip is in the game same inning as the first trip, the pitcher must be removed for a new pitcher.

9.8.2. **Blue Division:** A coach is allowed one trip per pitcher per inning, three (3) trips total per game to the same pitcher, to the mound for consultation. If the coach makes a second trip in the same inning as the first trip, the pitcher must be removed for a new pitcher.





### 9.9. Coach Pitching

9.9.1. **Red and White Division:** This rule is not applicable to these divisions.

9.9.2. **Blue Division:** If Rule 9.5.2 Hit Batter (Blue Division) is invoked during an inning, the coach pitcher must adhere to the following:

- The coach pitcher must pitch overhand and must have at least one foot in the dirt area of the mound when they start their pitch.
- The coach pitcher has a maximum of six (6) pitches to either strike out the batter or allow the batter to put the ball in play.
- There are no called strikes during coach pitch.
- After six (6) pitches, the batter is out unless there is a fouled ball on the sixth and subsequent pitches.
- There will be no walks or hit batter by the coach pitcher.

As soon as the ball is hit, the coach pitcher must position themselves to avoid any possibility of interfering with the play. If the coach pitcher is hit by a batted or thrown ball, the ball will be considered dead. All runners will return to the based last occupied, and the batter will continue their at bat. If in the umpire's judgment the coach pitcher interfered with the play (either intentionally or unintentionally) the ball will be considered dead and an out may be called if the interference in the judgment of the umpire prevented a play on a runner/batter where the runner/batter would have been out if the play could have been made. The player pitcher must have one foot in the dirt area of the mound without interfering or being interfered with by the coach pitcher when the coach pitcher pitches the ball. They cannot be any closer to the batter than the coach pitcher. Once the pitch is thrown; the player pitcher is free to become a fielder and move wherever necessary.

## 10. TOURNAMENT

### 10.1. Seeding

**Red and White Divisions:** If the number of teams in the league are either eight (8) or sixteen (16) teams, the regular season first place team will play the last place team. The second place team will play the second to last place team. If the number of teams in the league are other than eight (8) or sixteen (16), the regular season top place team(s) will get a bye until the amount of teams remaining can be bracketed for a championship game.

**Blue:** Tournament seeding will be determined by a blind draw unless otherwise ordered by the commissioner.

10.2. **Tie Breaker Scenarios:** If there is a tie for a regular season place standing, tie breakers scenarios will be applied in the following order:

- (1) head-to-head game winner.
- (2) fewest total number of runs allowed.
- (3) highest total number of runs scored.
- (4) coin toss



10.3. **Adhere to Season Rules:** Regular season rules will apply for the tournament. This includes Rule 5.7 Fair Play/Guaranteed Playing Time. Upon discretion of the league commissioner, Rule 5.4 Maximum Run Rule may be altered during tournament play, so as long as the alteration is communicated to each coach in the league.

**11. ALL STAR GAME:** The All-Star team will include a set number of teams/players identified by the league commissioner. The game will adhere to the same set of season rules.

**12. FALL BALL RULES:** Fall Ball will adhere to rules that are set forth by the Fall Ball Commissioner (or designee) at the time player draft and/or roster creation.