



# MUDSOCK YOUTH BASEBALL RULES

## 8U League

Board Approved: March 9, 2023

Last Modified: February 1, 2023

1. **LEAGUE OVERVIEW** – The 8U 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, White, and Blue. Players who do not go through player evaluations will automatically be placed within the Blue Division.
  - 1.1. These rules are in place to ensure fair play for all and should not be exploited by adult coaches. When in doubt on rule interpretations, confer with your league commissioner. Remember this is a youth baseball recreational league. No contracts are awarded, no player is going pro after this season. Be the example, young eyes are watching you!
  - 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/>. If it is determined an illegal bat was used to put a ball in play, the hitter shall be deemed “out” and any baserunners shall return to their previous bases. A coach suspecting use of an illegal bat must raise a request to investigate with the umpire prior to the next batter receiving a pitch.
    - 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:** Coaches will pitch to batters at a distance no closer than twenty (20) feet from home plate.



- 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 the DAK Score App. This app is a Bluetooth enabled app that allows you to score the game from your smart phone and/or tablet. To operate the scoreboard, download the "DAK Score" app to your device and connect to the desired field.

#### 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 8U White Division and/or 6U/5U League
  - 4.3.2. **White Division:** Any current registered Mudsock Youth Baseball Player that plays in the 8U Blue Division and/or 6U/5U League
  - 4.3.3. **Blue Division:** Any current registered Mudsock Youth Baseball Player that plays in the 6U/5U League.

#### 5. GAME OVERVIEW

- 5.1. **Pre-Game Warm-up:** Teams should be at field thirty (30) minutes prior to scheduled start time. If time allows, the 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. If less than fifteen (15) minutes before game time, no infield warmup is allowed.

- 5.2. **Length:** The game will be six (6) innings or one and a half (1 ½) hours. No additional innings are to begin once the time limit is reached. If the home team is ahead and batting once the time limit is reached, the game shall end.
- 5.3. **Maximum Run Rule:** A team may score a maximum of six (6) runs per inning, including inning number six (6) or subsequent innings thereafter.
- 5.4. **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. Per Rule 5.3, if a team is down by more than six (6) runs at the end of an inning during the last fifteen (15) minutes of the game time, the game will be over.
- 5.5. **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, no out will be recorded for the ninth batter when that spot is due up in the batting order.
- 5.6. **Fair Play/Guaranteed Playing Time:** Every player must play one inning in the outfield within the first three innings of a game. 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.
- 5.7. **Drop Third Strike:** This rule is not applicable to this league.
- 5.8. **Infield Fly Rule:** This rule is not applicable to this league.
- 5.9. **Time Outs:** The coach is allowed to stop play to only one (1) batter per inning while their team is at bat.
- 5.10. **Umpire:** There are no umpires for this league. It is suggested that calls be managed in the following manner: 1<sup>st</sup> Base Coach is responsible for all calls at 1<sup>st</sup> Base. Coach Pitcher is responsible for all calls at 2<sup>nd</sup> Base. 3<sup>rd</sup> Base Coach is responsible for all calls at 3<sup>rd</sup> Base. Either the Coach Pitcher or the coach backing up the catcher is responsible for all calls at Home Plate. In the event that a play at a base results in a "tie", the fielding team will win the play, i.e. "tie goes to the fielder".
- 5.11. **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.
- 5.12. **Game Reporting:** Coaches should report to commissioner if game is cancelled due to weather/darkness. Final score of game including team names and numbers, farm players used, as well as any other game notes should be



reported to the commissioner within twenty-four (24) hours of the conclusion of the game.

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

5.14. **Weather**

5.14.1. **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.

5.14.2. **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.

5.14.3. **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.

5.15. **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.

5.16. **Complete Game:** A complete game is defined as the completion of 4 innings, 3 ½ innings if home team is leading at that point. If the 4-inning mark is not reached, coaches shall notify league commissioner so game can be rescheduled. Game will pick-up at the point in which the game was suspended, with the remaining game time.

## 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:** Batter will face three (3) swings and misses, or a maximum of seven (7) pitches, whichever comes first. If a batter fouls off the seventh pitch and/or any subsequent pitch beyond the seventh pitch, an additional pitch is allowed.

6.2.1. **Strike Out:** A strike out will be recorded if a batter swings three (3) times and misses, or a batter faces the maximum of seven (7) pitches and does not put the ball in play.

6.2.2. **Walks:** No walks are allowed in this league.

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. A full swing must be attempted or the play will be considered a dead-ball.



- 6.6. **Coaches on Field:** While batting, the hitting team will be allowed four (4) coaches on the field of play: 1B Coach, 3B Coach, Coach Pitcher, and a Coach Catching.
- 6.7. **Final Batter:** This rule does not apply to this league.
- 6.8. **Injuries and Early Departures:** If a player becomes injured (as ruled by the umpire) and is unable to continue playing, his spot in the batting order shall be skipped with no automatic out recorded. Once the injured player leaves the batting order, he is done for the remainder of that game.

## 7. FIELDING

- 7.1. **Fielding Positions:** All players will play the field during their defensive half of the inning. Each team will use their entire roster as defensive players consisting of one (1) pitcher's helper, one (1) catcher, four (4) infielders (1B, 2B, SS, and 3B), and the rest of the team as outfielders. The pitcher's helper must wear a protective face mask, and cannot position themselves any closer to the batter than the coach that is pitching. The pitcher's helper must have at least one foot in the dirt of the pitching mound when the pitch from the coach is thrown. All outfielders must be positioned in the outfield grass, ten (10) feet beyond the infield dirt.
- 7.2. **Shifts:** No fielding shifts are allowed in this league.
- 7.3. **Stopping the Runner:** A ball in play will be stopped by an umpire/coach when all of the following are achieved:
  - (1) ball is in the control of an infield player,
  - (2) player has at least one foot in the infield dirt/grass
  - (3) the progress of the lead runner has been stopped.
- 7.4. **Coaches on Field:** Two (2) coaches will be allowed on the field to help instruct during the defensive half of the inning. Coaches will position themselves in the outfield grass, and not impede the view of any player.

## 8. BASE RUNNING

- 8.1. **Stealing:** Stealing is not allowed in this league.
- 8.2. **Head First Slides:** Head first slides are not allowed in this league. Coaches shall instruct kids on the proper technique of "feet-first" sliding.
- 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 is put into play.
- 8.4. **Over Throws**
  - 8.4.1. **Red Division:** 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.
  - 8.4.2. **White Division:** Runners are allowed to advance one base on an overthrow. If a play is made on the advancing runner, play will be deemed dead at the conclusion of the advancement of that runner. Additional bases cannot be taken by the advancing runner.





- 8.4.3. **Blue Division:** Running on an overthrow is not allowed in this division.
- 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. The baserunner must avoid contact at any base while staying in the base path. If in the umpire's judgment the runner did not try to avoid contact, that runner shall be called out. There is NOT an automatic slide rule at each base. Runners are to avoid any intentional and/or malicious contact with the defensive player, and are strongly encouraged to slide in the event of a play.
9. **PITCHING:** This is a coach pitch league, therefore all rules applied to pitching are not applicable to this league. Any rules relating to maximum number of pitches, strike outs and walks are contained within Rule 6. Batting unless noted below.
- 9.1. **Pitch Count**
- 9.2. **Required Rest (Calendar Days Midnight to Midnight)**
- 9.3. **Breaking Pitches**
- 9.4. **Warm-ups (between innings)**
- 9.5. **Hit Batter**
- 9.6. **Balks**
- 9.7. **Intentional Walks**
- 9.8. **Coach Trips to Mound**
- 9.9. **Coach Pitching:** The coach pitcher will be provided by the hitting team and must adhere to the following rules:
- The coach pitcher must pitch using a natural overhand motion from a distance of at least twenty (20) feet from the front edge of home plate.
  - There are no called strikes during coach pitch
  - There will be no walks or hit batters during coach pitch
  - Coach pitcher will pitch seven (7) pitches to the batter but may pitch more if a foul ball occurs on pitch number seven or any subsequent pitch, see Rule 6.2. Balls and Strikes.

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. The pitcher's helper 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**

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.

### **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) run differential.
- (3) fewest total number of runs allowed.
- (4) highest total number of runs scored.
- (5) 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.

## **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 commissioner (or designee) at the time player draft and/or roster creation.