



## Stewards of the Game Baseball Rules Transitional Coach Pitch Division (5/6/7)

### GAMES / GENERAL RULES

- 6 innings or 1 ½ hour time limit – once an inning begins, it must be finished even if the 1 ½ hour time limit has expired.
- 4 run max OR 3 outs per ½ inning.
- Regulation game in case of weather or darkness is 3 innings.
- If a team fields less than 7 players (6 or less) the game will be played but the team with less than 7 players will forfeit the right to win the game. In the event of an injury, a game may be completed with less than 7 players.
  - Games may not be postponed due to lack of players and must be played according to schedule.
- A player may not stay on the bench more than 1 consecutive inning.
  - A player cannot sit on the bench for a second inning until every player has sat at least once.
- Every player on the team does not have to sit out an inning.
- Free substitution is allowed in the field throughout the game.
- Every game should begin with both teams lining up on their respective foul lines with a brief prayer offered by a player or coach from the home team. Teams should then pass by one another and shake hands...exchanging “have a good game” types of comments to their opponents to set the tone of the game for the players, coaches, parents and fans.
- Live batting practice is not allowed on the game field before the game.
- After the game, players should line up on their respective foul lines in single file to congratulate their opponents. Of course, all comments should be encouraging in nature (ie. “good game”), with no remarks about who won or lost.
- Any conduct of a player or parent that is causing a problem should be corrected by his/her coach only.
- If a player is ejected from a game, he will not be allowed to play in the next game. If a coach is ejected from a game, he must leave the park immediately and will not be allowed to attend the next two games. If a coach is ejected twice in one season, he will be removed as coach of that team for the remainder of the season.

### SCORE KEEPERS

- Each team will have to provide a scorekeeper for each game during the postseason tournament.
  - The scorekeeper will track outs, runs and ensure proper batting order.
- It is suggested that you have a designated scorekeeper during the regular season, but it should be kept discreet. Who “won” and who “lost” should not be the primary focus of the game. The focus instead should be on demonstrating good fundamental baseball skills, extra effort and continuous improvement. Remember, the coach sets the tone for the degree of focus on “winning & losing”. Kids are smarter and more attentive than we sometimes realize. Kids notice when a coach asks about the score or urges his team to “catch up”. If the coach puts too much emphasis on the score, then so will the kids. We should all be able to make this fun and instructional, while at the same time allowing for healthy competition. Please have your designated scorekeeper keep the score outside of the dugout.

### BATTING

- Conventional baseball rules apply except for the following:
  - Infield fly is rule not in effect.
  - Bunting is not allowed.
  - There will be no walks.
  - Each batter gets a maximum of 6 pitches, regardless of number of strikes or balls (a batter could have 5 strikes and still get a base hit on pitch 6).
  - If a ball is hit into foul territory on the 6<sup>th</sup> pitch, the hitter will get another pitch. Otherwise the batter is out if the batter fails to put the ball into fair play.

- The batted ball must travel more than 10 feet or it is deemed a foul ball. This will count as one of the hitter's 6 pitches unless the foul occurs on the 6<sup>th</sup> pitch, in which case the hitter will get another pitch.

### **PITCHING COACH / DEFENSIVE COACH**

- Coaches are responsible for all pitching; no player will be permitted to pitch.
- The coach may pitch overhand or underhand and the minimum distance for pitching should be 25'.
- The coach will only intentionally interfere with batted balls when they deem it necessary as a safety precaution for a player.
  - In the event of coach "safety interference", the batter will be awarded first base and all runners on base will advance one base.
- Any batted ball that inadvertently hits a pitching coach or defensive coach will be played live.
- If a thrown ball hits a pitching coach or defensive coach, the play is dead. Base runners that are more than half way to the next base will be awarded the next base. Runners less than half way must return to the previous base.

### **BASE RUNNING**

- No stealing or lead-offs are permitted.
- Runners can advance one base on an infield overthrow at a base. They will not be permitted to advance any further, even if another overthrow occurs at the subsequent base. For example, if the shortstop attempts to make a play at 2nd base and inadvertently throws the ball deep into right field, the runner approaching 2nd can advance to 3<sup>rd</sup> at his own risk. The team in the field will be able to try and throw the runner out at third. If another overthrow happens due to an errant throw to third, the runner will remain on third base and will not be allowed to score.
- Sliding is allowed with an emphasis on safety; no head-first slides are permitted into any base. Runners are allowed to dive back to a base that they have already reached safely. If a runner attempts a head-first slide into a base he has not yet reached safely, he will be called out.
- Runners are awarded one base on any "dead ball". A dead ball is a ball that goes under the fence, in a dugout, or is inadvertently picked up by a coach or spectator, etc.
- Pinch runners are not permitted unless they are due to injury.
- Once an infielder has control of the ball inside the base paths, at a base or within 5 feet of the base paths, runners will not be allowed to advance to the next base unless the runner is already halfway to that base. For example, if a runner has just rounded 3rd when the 2nd baseman gets the ball in from the outfielder at 2nd base, the runner should be held at 3rd...regardless of whether or not he can make it safely home. If the runner continues home, he/she will be asked to return to 3rd base...unless the runner was already halfway home when the ball was brought under control. Runners will only be able to move up a maximum of 1 base once the ball is in the infield but not under control. The intent of this rule is to prevent the game from turning into a "track meet" and thus encouraging errant throws around the field. The pitching coach/umpire is the judge as to whether the runner was beyond the halfway mark when the ball came under control in the infield.

### **FIELDING**

- Each team should play 9 players in the field. The six players in the infield should be positioned in conventional infield positions. The pitcher should stand slightly behind, and to the side, of the opposing pitching coach. The remaining four fielders should be spread out in the outfield (left field, left center, right center and right field). The intent of having 9 position players in the field is to allow more playing time...not to "create new positions". Outfielders must play "outfield" and not be positioned as "short-fielders" (i.e. You may not position an outfielder right behind 2nd to cover the bag).
- Each player should play at least 2 innings in the infield each game.
- Each player should play at least 2 innings in the outfield each game.
- Players are not allowed to play more than 3 innings at the same position during the game.
- If a team has less than 9 players, the coach can position them as they deem necessary but still will not be permitted to create new or additional infield positions.
- Infield players are not permitted to interfere with base runners by lining up defensively in the base path(s). Additionally, defensive players shall not stand on bases while the ball is in play. Base runner interference will be corrected by coaches and the base will be awarded to the runner.

*First, and foremost, all coaches should remember that the game is for the kids, not the adults. Our primary goal at this level is to build strong character, have fun and ensure that the players have such a good experience that they come back again next year for another fun-filled season of baseball. It is also incumbent on us as coaches that we concentrate on teaching these kids good, sound fundamental baseball skills that will help them reach their full God-given potential as a ballplayer. Please remember, as the coach, you set the tone for your players and their parents. Please take time along the way to teach your players, both in words and in actions, not only about the game of baseball, but also important "faith-based" life lessons (i.e. sportsmanship, teamwork, perseverance, sacrifice, hard work, etc.) that will serve them well in all facets of their life. Team devotionals are both a privilege and an integral component of Stewards of the Game baseball, so please seize the precious opportunities you have as a coach to share your heart for Christ with your players. So, work hard, play fair, and HAVE FUN!! And remember, the kids are watching!*