

# 2026 Tri-Town A DIVISION

(BAA, DBSL, RYSBA)

## COACH'S HANDBOOK



VERSION: 2026v1 (DRAFT)  
Last Updated: January 8, 2026

## **A Ball / Rookie (Coach Pitch)**

### **UNIFORMS AND EQUIPMENT**

1. All players must wear batting helmets while at bat and running the bases. Rehoboth players must wear chin straps and cages. Helmets must be used during practice as well.
2. Molded baseball cleats. No metal cleats.
3. Baseball pants.
4. Team Shirts, Hats.
5. Age-appropriate fielders' glove.
6. Weight appropriate bat.

### **RULES**

Section 1- The basic rules for the A division will be the rules established by Cal Ripken Baseball. The following are exceptions and additions:

Section 2- Each game will consist of 6 innings unless weather or time will not allow. Each team can score a maximum of 4 runs per inning.

Section 3- Weekday games will start at 5:45. No full inning will start 1 hour 45 hours from the 1<sup>st</sup> pitch.

Section 4- No leading, base stealing

Section 5- No infield fly rule.

Section 6- If a team has 11 players or less all players must play a minimum of 5 innings in the field and bat in their normal batting order. If a team has 12 or more each player must play a minimum of 3 innings. Any player who does not play the required innings in the field must play the required innings to begin the next game. Any player may be removed prior to completing their innings by the coach for disciplinary reasons or for safety concerns.

Section 7- No player may play in any one position more than 2 innings in one game. Rotate players, so that each player is in as many positions as possible, with the exception of players not being put in a position because they might get injured.

Section 8- Single A teams will play with up to 10 players (or 9 if a catcher is not used, see Section 9), which may include a 4th outfielder. Infield positions must remain clearly defined with one player at each position, and only as close as the grass edge. All outfielders shall have both feet positioned in the outfield grass before and during the pitch. A kid playing the “pitcher” position with a coach pitching should stand beside or behind the coach who is pitching, but no closer than 30’ (in cases where coach needs to go in closer to pitch).

Section 9 - The coach has the option to use a catcher, but it is not required. If not used, a coach must be placed behind home plate to return pitches. A coach is not allowed to field a batted ball or throw once ball is put in play. It is also recommended to have a coach back up a kid catcher to help speed up game.

Section 10a- In the first part of the season (games played before May 10), the batting team’s coach will pitch up to 5 balls to each batter. Coaches will pitch from 35’. There will be no called balls and strikes. If the batter does not hit the ball into play within these 5 pitches, a tee will be used. This is put in place at the beginning of the season to help transition players moving up from the tee ball division.

Section 10b – For the second portion of the season (games played on or after May 10 but before May 31), each batter will have up to 7 pitches from their coach. Coaches will pitch from 35’. There will be no called balls and strikes. If the batter does not hit the ball into play within these 7 pitches, the batter will be considered out by strikeout. A foul on the 7<sup>th</sup> pitch will allow an additional pitch. There will be no base on balls or hit by pitch when coaches pitch.

Section 10c – For the remainder of the season (games played after May 31), kid-pitching begins. Kid pitchers would be allowed to pitch in the game only after all opposing batters have had at least one at-bat against a coach. Upon commencing kid-pitch, balls and strikes will be called (a coach from the batting team will stand in as umpire, using generous strike zone to encourage hitting). If a kid pitcher throws 4 balls, the batting team’s Coach will complete the at bat. The strike zone is from chin to shin and over the plate. If the batter is hit by the pitch thrown by a player, he is awarded 1st base. When kids pitch, they too will pitch from 35’. No pitcher can pitch more than 2 innings per game. No player can pitch more than 6 innings per week.

\*\*\*Suggestion\*\*\*

Coaches should be spending time with the kids pitching during practice in preparation for games. Ideally, kids should be able to approach a 60% success rate prior to pitching in a game. Our recommendation would be to have each player who is interested in pitching throw 10 balls during or after practice the week leading up to a game. Any players who are unable to approach that 60% success rate would not be eligible to pitch in a game until they approach that success rate.

Section 10d - During both kid and coach pitch, there is no walking, the batter will strike out, get a hit or record an out (with exception of HBP from a kid pitcher).

Section 11- If the batted ball reaches the outfield (in the air or on the ground) the runner may advance to second base at their own risk, otherwise all batters should run hard through 1<sup>st</sup> base. Players are allowed to move up one base on an error including home. If multiple errors are made on the play the players still only move up one base. No Player will advance on a ball thrown back to the pitcher.

Section 12- No bunting but swinging bunts shall be allowed.

Section 13- The Home Team is located in the 1<sup>st</sup> base dugout. The Visiting team is located in the 3<sup>rd</sup> base dugout. The home team is responsible for field prep before games (bases, lines and batters boxes, temporary mounds at 35', necessary field repair/raking, etc.). The away team is responsible for field prep after the games (generally raking out the field). The exception will be any situation when a team is playing as "home" at the other town's facility. IE: Dighton team "Home" vs a Rehoboth team at Rehoboth. Or Rehoboth team "home" at Berkley complex. In that case the team from the home complex will be responsible for the fields. Game balls will be provided by the home team.

Section 14- Rainouts will be made up if possible. The VPs will reschedule with both coaches.

Section 15- All equipment will be issued by the league director or their designee. Any equipment other than gloves not issued by the league must be approved by the league director. All bats for A must be marked "USA Baseball". All other bats shall be considered illegal. The only exception to this rule will be younger players allowed to use a tee ball bat if they are unable to move to a heavier/longer bat.

#### **ADDITIONAL A RULES**

1. Score shall not be kept or reported.
2. There will be no playoffs in this division.
3. When your team is batting, only one player is allowed in the on-deck area. The rest of the team must remain seated on the bench.
  - a. Note if there is no enclosed on-deck area, coaches are encouraged to use best judgement on where or if an on-deck player can take warmup swings.
4. No food is allowed in the dugout or on the field.
5. Each Coach is responsible to clean out their dug out after each game.

## COACHING RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Teach, Teach, & Teach. You are here to help the kids develop the skills they will need to play baseball.
2. Have fun. Try to find opportunities to teach within the game but keep the pace of play moving.
3. Field Clean Up Day. Each coach must attend at least one day. Try to have parents and players from your team meet you at the field to help.
4. While in the field you may have up to three coaches in the field to instruct the correct way to field the ball. Also explain how to make an out and which base the ball should be thrown to etc... However, to speed up the game please keep teaching or trying out a new pitcher or catcher to practices.
5. While at bat you should have a coach at 1<sup>st</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> and on deck area to assist batters. A fourth coach should stay in the dugout to assist the batters.
6. Drills for Conditioning, Coordination and Confidence building should be done
7. No infield warm up between innings. Please have your players take the field and start the inning.
8. League will advise field closures / rainouts for major rain events. For inclement weather immediately preceding a game (IE: Thunderstorm) the head coaches should be in contact (though Division VPs if intertown or otherwise necessary), make a mutual decision and share any cancellation with their teams and the VP directly. Every game is on until explicitly called off.
9. Coaches should communicate background check requirements to parents and ensure they are cleared by league admin for any on-field participation. Policy, form, and instructions to submit are all available on the website.

Each coach should ensure that by the end of the season each of their players have been exposed to the following skills. Players should stay at the A level until they have acquired all of the skills below.

1. Pitching – Try to develop as many pitchers as possible, instruction should include proper mechanics, balance and how to throw 2 and 4 seam fastballs (No Breaking Pitches)
2. The correct way to field the ball
3. Which base to throw the ball to in different situations
4. Base-running - Home to 1<sup>st</sup>, doubles, picking up base coaches
5. How to catch a fly ball correctly

## DISCIPLINE

RYBSA, DBSL and BAA are recreational leagues and while we are all here to enjoy baseball and have fun, parents and players must understand that we are also here to learn how to play the game.

Players that don't pay attention during games can become a major distraction to the rest of the team. Injuries may also occur when players are not aware of what is going on around them.

Coaches may discipline a player for the following reasons:

1. Not paying attention to the game
2. Horsing around on the field or in the dugout
3. Digging in the field or throwing dirt

4. Squirting or dumping out water bottles
5. Repeatedly missing practice or games
6. Swinging or throwing a bat around other players
7. Swearing
8. Arguing an umpire's call

Types of discipline will vary based on the infraction and the frequency in which it happens.

Players may have to sit on the bench, run laps etc. However, it is imperative to make sure that expectations are age-appropriate for a younger division like this.