

Rockville Baseball League

2022 Local Rules for – Minors Division

February 2022

General Statement of Policy: The purpose of this policy is to outline the local rules for the Minor Division of the Rockville Baseball League. These local rules are modifications and/or expansions upon existing “Babe Ruth Baseball, Inc./ Cal Ripken Division” rules. Babe Ruth/ Cal Ripken Division Baseball rules will govern play unless directly addressed in this policy.

Division Commissioner – Jamie Billingsley

Game and Inning Length:

- Games are no longer than 1 hour and 45 minutes in time. A new inning cannot start after 1 hour and 45 minutes into the game. At start of game, both Managers and home plate umpire agree upon start and ending time.
- If the game is tied after 6 innings, with time remaining, you may play one additional inning.
- Games start on time with a five-minute grace period, even if there is only one umpire.
- An inning ends with 3 outs or when the team at bat has scored seven (7) runs, regardless of the number of batters that have batted in the inning.
- Regulation games shall be 3 ½ innings if the home team is ahead.
 - If a game is called before 1 full inning is completed, the game is declared “no game” and will be replayed as a new game. No pitches will be counted for the pitchers.
 - If a game is called after completing 1 full inning, but before completing 3 ½ or 4 innings as required for a regulation game, then the game shall be resumed from the point at which it was stopped with the time remaining. Pitches will be counted for the pitchers for purposes of pitch count.
 - If game is called after completing 4 innings, and is stopped while an inning is in progress, the final score shall revert to the score at the end of the last complete inning of play. If the score is tied, then the game shall be declared a tie.
- Managers and all coaches must sit inside the dugout or immediately outside the dugout entrance, unless coaching a base.
- The Home team shall occupy the 3rd base dugout and the Visiting team shall occupy the 1st base dugout.
- Teams cannot play with less than 8 players.

- All scheduled games count in the regular season standings for determining the post-season playoff seedings.

Game Rules:

Defense/Player Participation and Rotation:

- Mandatory player rotation for each game:
 - Each player must play one defensive inning (3 outs) in infield and one defensive inning (3 outs) in the outfield before completion of 4th inning
 - Players may not play more than 2 innings at one position during a game except pitcher or catcher. If a pitcher pitches three innings, that player must sit out the next inning and should the game continue, they would then play outfield the next inning after their “sit-out” inning. Should the game only go four innings, the player will not be penalized for not having played the outfield.
 - No player can sit a second defensive inning in a game until all other players have sat at least one defensive inning.

NOTE: It is the Manager's responsibility to ensure that these mandatory player rotation rules are met each game for his team. The Manager should make all substitutions within the first 3 innings to make certain that these rules are adhered to. Games lasting longer than 3 innings but less than 6 innings that are shortened due to time, must meet these rules, otherwise the game will be declared a forfeit.

Pitching

- No league age 11 or 12-year-old pitchers may pitch in the Minors Division.
- No balks are called in the Minors Division.
- There shall be no intentional walks.
- If batter is hit by pitch thrown by player/pitcher, then batter is awarded first base.
- Three (3) hit batters in a game by one pitcher results in an automatic removal from that game as a pitcher. Pitcher can be substituted in any other position on the field but may not return to pitch.
- Rules through the first 4 regular season games (if teams have played a different number of games – e.g. Team A is playing their 5th game and Team B is playing their 4th – the head coaches of both teams should discuss and agree on whether to allow walks or coach pitch before the game starts with preference given to the team that has played less games):

- Three strikes and four balls per batter. After four balls, a coach enters the game to pitch with the strike count on the batter remaining the same. The coach will pitch, until the batter puts the ball in play or strikes out. The umpire will call strikes and balls when the coach pitches. There is no limit to the number of pitches that the coach may throw to the batter. For example:
 - If the count is 4 balls and two strikes, the coach comes in to pitch and the batter has one strike remaining. If the first pitch is a called strike the batter is out.
 - If the count is four balls and 0 strikes, the coach comes in to pitch and the batter has three strikes remaining.
- COACH MUST MATCH CURRENT PITCHER'S SPEED AND PITCH FROM NO CLOSER TO HOME THAN THE BASE OF THE MOUND
- While a coach is pitching, the current pitcher's feet must be on the pitcher's circle.
- If a batted ball strikes the coach/pitcher, it will be considered a dead ball. The batter will be awarded first base, and any runners on base will advance one base.
- No stealing or bunting when coach/pitcher is on the mound.
- If the batter is hit by pitch thrown by the coach/pitcher, the batter is not awarded first base.
- Pitching rules for remainder of regular season after "Coach Pitch" games and for playoffs:
 - Coaches will no longer enter game to pitch to batters. Batter will be awarded a walk on ball 4 thrown by the player pitcher.
- Pitch Count Regulations (Regular Season and Playoffs):
 - Any player on a regular season team may pitch (as long as they are age eligible).
 - The manager must remove the pitcher when said pitcher reaches the limit for his/her age group as noted below, but the pitcher may remain in the game at another position (there is a strong suggestion that no player should move to play Catcher after pitching):
 - 11-12 years of age – 85 pitches per day
 - *N/A for Minors as kids age 11-12 are NOT allowed to pitch*
 - 10 and younger – 75 pitches per day
 - Exception: If a pitcher reaches the limit imposed for his/her league age while facing a batter, the pitcher may continue to pitch until that batter reaches base or is put out.
 - Rest requirements:
 - If a player pitches 66-75 pitches in a day, two (2) calendar days of rest must be observed.

- If a player pitches 41-65 pitches in a day, one (1) calendar days of rest must be observed.
 - If a player pitches 1-40 pitches in a day, one (0) calendar day of rest must be observed.
 - A player may not pitch in more than one game in a day.
- The official pitch count will be kept by the Home Team. It is strongly suggested that each team keep the pitch count for each pitcher and each scorekeeper/pitch count recorder should “check” pitch counts every half inning to make sure they are accurate.
- The official pitch count recorder must provide the current pitch count for any pitcher when requested by either manager or any umpire. However, the manager is responsible for knowing when his/her pitcher must be removed.
- The official pitch count recorder should inform the umpire when a pitcher has delivered his/her maximum limit of pitches for the game. The umpire will inform the pitcher’s manager that the pitcher must be removed from the game. However, the failure by the pitch count recorder to notify the umpire and/or the failure of the umpire to notify the manager, does not relieve the manager of his/her responsibility to remove a pitcher when that pitcher is no longer eligible.
- Violation of this regulation can result in a protest of the game in which it occurs.
- The withdrawal of an ineligible pitcher after that pitcher is announced, or after a warm-up pitch is delivered, but before that player has pitched a ball to a batter, shall not be considered a violation.
- Pitches delivered in games declared “Regulation Tie Games” or “Suspended Games” shall be charged against a pitcher’s eligibility.
- In suspended games resumed on another day, the pitchers of record at the time the game was halted may continue to pitch to the extent of their eligibility for that day, provided said pitcher has observed the required days of rest.

Hitting

- All players present are in the batting order.
- If a player throws the bat, a first warning is given to the batter. Any batters that throw the bat after the first warning shall be automatically out (umpire’s judgment call). Each team shall receive one warning.
- Slap bunting (slashing) is not allowed (squaring around to bunt, but then swinging away when the pitch is delivered). If a batter slash bunts, the batter is out, and no runners advance.
- There is no Infield Fly Rule.
- The batting order for each team is established at the beginning of the season and stays the same for the entire season, not including the season ending playoffs.

During the regular season, the batting order for each new game picks up from the last batter at the end of the previously played game.

Base-running

- Runners must maintain contact with the base until the pitched ball crosses home plate. Once the ball crosses home plate the runner may leave the base. Runners may “steal” 1st, 2nd and 3rd bases – but may not leave the base until the ball crosses home plate.
- What if a runner leaves early? Here are several scenarios that should answer most questions:
 - Any time a runner leaves early – it is a delayed dead ball – meaning the play continues until the ball becomes dead and then the umpire makes the ruling.
 - If a runner leaves early and is safe on his attempt to steal – the umpire will send the runner back to the base from which he left early.
 - If a runner leaves early and is thrown out on his attempt to steal – the results of the play stand and the runner is out.
 - If the runner leaves early and the ball is hit and put into play – and the runner that left early is put out on the play – the results of the play stand and the runner is out.
 - If the runner leaves early and the ball is hit and put into play – and the hitter is put out on the play – the hitter is out AND the runner that left early is returned to the base from which he left early.
 - In this scenario – there is a runner on 1st or runners on 1st and 2nd – the lead runner leaves early and the ball is hit and put into play – the fielder fields the ball and attempts to make a play on the runner that left early – however that runner avoids the play and is safe – if the judgement of the umpire is that the runner would have been out on the play if he had not left early – then the umpire will call that runner out and the other results of the play stand. Remember – this is a JUDGEMENT call and judgement calls can NOT be argued by the coaches.
 - Last scenario – runner on 1st base – runner on 1st base leaves early – ball is hit into the “gap” – lead runner rounds second and ends up on 3rd or ends up going home – and the batter ends up on 2nd. If the lead runner (that left early) scored on the play – the umpire will return that runner to 3rd (the base immediately in front of where the batter ended up). If on the same play the outfielder fielded the ball and threw to 3rd or home and the lead runner (who left early) is tagged out – he is considered out and the play stands.

- Players cannot steal home (including on wild pitches/passed balls) except in specific scenarios noted below.
- If a play is made in attempt to pick-off the runner at third base, or if throw is made to catch another runner trying to steal, then the runner at third base may attempt to advance to home at his own risk. Runner on third base may also attempt to advance home on an errant throw from catcher to pitcher that goes past the pitchers circle.
- If the ball is out of play, (thrown over the fence, or stuck in the fence) runners can only advance one base.
- Headfirst slides are not allowed except when diving back to a base. The runner shall be declared out if the runner slides headfirst when advancing to a base.
- Runners are not required to slide on plays at home plate; however, the runner must do his best to avoid contact. If a runner attempting to reach any base intentionally and maliciously runs into a defensive player, the runner will be called out and may be ejected from the game. This is an umpire's judgment call.

Manager/Coaches/Parents Conduct

- The Manager shall always be responsible for his team's conduct, including the conduct of his coaches, players and players' parents.
- The Manager shall always be responsible for observance of the official rules, these local rules, and deference to the umpire.
- Per rule 9.02 of the Babe Ruth League, Inc. Official Playing Rules, any umpire's decision which involves judgment, such as, but not limited to, whether a batted ball is foul or fair, whether a pitch is a strike or ball, or whether a runner is safe or out, is final.

Note: Managers or coaches may not argue judgment calls made by the umpire. If a manager or coach argues a judgment call the umpire will issue a warning; and if it continues, they will be ejected from the game. The Rockville Baseball Board will review all ejections and/or reports of improper behavior by managers/coaches for disciplinary action.

Rules for Calling Up Players from Machine Pitch

- ***Call-up players cannot be used to supplement your game roster.*** For example, if you have 9 of your rostered players present, you cannot use the call-up player in that game, unless an injury occurs to a rostered player and the rostered player can no longer play. You can call up a player to have just in case a rostered player gets injured. If this is the case, you should make it clear to the call-up player's parents that he might not play. This may seem unfair to the player being

called up but it is more unfair to the rostered players to not play in a game in their own division while a call-up player plays outside his Division.

- ***Player rotation rules still must be followed for the rostered players.*** The call-up player can only play in the outfield and he must bat last in your batting order. In Minors Division, the call-up player does not have to play 3 defensive outs in the infield and 3 in the outfield, they can only play in the outfield. This allows your regular rostered players more infield playing opportunity.
- ***You must notify the Division Commissioner that you will be calling up a player or players prior to the game.*** You can send an e-mail. This is not to seek approval, but merely a courtesy to make the Division Commissioner aware when players are being called up to play in the Minors.