

ROOKIES LEAGUE PLAYING RULES

(revised 02-12-2020)

Any problem with the interpretation of a rule shall be governed by the original intent of the Board of Directors. Rookies League is for 7-8-year-old as of April 30th, of that calendar year.

Goals

- Ensure that all of the kids are having fun.
- Develop the basic skills of throwing, fielding and hitting.
- Introduce rules (e.g. runs, outs and innings) and concept of positions.
- Do above in a non-competitive environment. No standings are kept.
- Try to keep all players engaged regardless of position.

Expectations of Managers and Coaches

- Ensure that all of the kids have fun and rotate evenly through all of the positions.
- Continue to develop basic skills and knowledge of the game.
- Communicate with your parents, be on-time and come prepared.
- Respond to the player agent on a timely basis.
- Coaches should prepare lineups and player rotation prior to the commencement of the game.
- In between innings, Coaches should assign players to their fielding positions as quickly as possible to avoid any delays in the game (note that it is helpful to have a team parent run the scorebook).

General

- There will be a two-hour time limit for games.
- Five-run limit per inning.
- There is NO infield fly rule in the Rookies League.
- The fielding team's coaches may be in the field coaching the kids.
- The hitting team shall have one coach pitching to his players and one coach maintaining order on the bench. A third coach may help line the kids up at home plate and retrieve wild pitches.
- **The players from the hitting team must be sitting on the bench – no climbing the fences. There is no on-deck batter.**
- Coaches act as umpires. Ties go to the fielder. Encourage the kids to make plays.
- Cups are required for all boys playing catcher (reinforce at the beginning of the season).

Pitching

- Coaches pitch in the rookie league, however, any player may pitch during the game
- Players are encouraged to pitch
- All pitching will be done from the mound (on the dirt).

Player Pitching

- After four called balls to a batter, the hitting coach will come out to pitch to the batter to put the ball in play.
- This is to allow for more batted balls to be put in play in an attempt to allow more defensive plays to occur and improve the defensive skills of the players.
- This is also to encourage batters to swing at pitches from opposing players and not wait for the coach to come out, a player pitcher can strike out a batter.
- A player may pitch a maximum of **two** consecutive innings per game.. *Rest rule and maximum innings pitched per week apply.* Although not mandatory, it is encouraged that a pitch count is kept.

Coach pitching

- A Coach from the hitting team shall pitch up to 7 pitches.
- The Coach's pitches should be reasonably flat to get the kids used to hitting typical pitching.
- Do not lob the ball.
- **There is a 7-pitch count in effect.**
- If a player has not hit the ball by the seventh pitch, the player will be out. Subject to the following exceptions:
 - If the 7th pitch is a foul tip, the player shall receive another pitch.
 - Coaches should use their discretion, if the seventh pitch is not hittable, the player shall receive another pitch.
- **Pitching until the player hits the ball is not allowed.**

Fielding

- Pitcher should stand on the first base side of the Coach.
- Catcher and four infielders should assume normal positions.
- Remaining players should be spread evenly across the outfield. Outfielders must be standing on the grass and not the stone-dust.
- Outfielders cannot make a force-out or tag. They can catch fly balls and assist on outs by throwing the ball to an infielder.

Batting/Running

- In general, the batter and runners may advance one base only on any hit ball, subject to being put out, regardless of any errors or overthrows.
- There are no walks or stolen bases.

- The only exception to the rule above is a hit ball that lands in the outfield grass on the fly. In this case, the batters and runners may advance up to two bases, subject to being put out.
- If the ball is retrieved and returned to the infield, even on a wild throw, prior to the batter or runner reaching his first base, then the runners shall not be permitted a second base.
- If a batted ball hits the Coach, the ball is dead and the batter and all runners shall advance one base.

Equity of Playing Time

- Players shall be treated equally throughout the season in terms of playing opportunities. **There is no discretion allowed with regard to this rule.**

Batting Order

- The batting order will consist of the entire roster of players regardless of whether they are playing defensively.
- There will be no penalty for batting out of order.
- The batter will take the proper place in the batting order the next time up.
- If all players on a team have not batted an equal number of times when the game is completed, players with the fewer at bats will lead off the next game.