

5TH & 6TH GRADE LEAGUE (REFERRED TO AS “BRONCO LEAGUE” BY BOTH WRA & NTRA)

With the exception of the following age-specific rules, Bronco League play will be outlined in the IHSA Baseball Rule Book.

Any questions or disputes should be directed to the individual league representative for clarification or resolution.

1. **ELIGIBILITY**: Players must have just completed 5th or 6th grade in 2019.
1. **PLAYING FIELD**: Base distance will be 70 feet; pitching rubber distance from home plate will be 48 feet.
2. **NUMBER OF PLAYERS**: Each team must have a minimum of eight players to begin a game; if a team cannot field the minimum number of players, **a forfeit will occur 10 minutes after the scheduled start time**. Teams can still play, but umpires will not be required to stay.
3. **LENGTH OF GAMES**: A new inning cannot begin 90 **minutes after the start of the game and 6 innings are the maximum innings to be played during the 75 minute time limit. Game times will per published WRA schedule**. Time between innings should always be kept to a minimum to keep the game moving. Post-season tournament time limits may be different and will be provided to coaches prior to the tournament. **Official time will be kept by the umpires**. A timer will be placed on the fence behind home plate, providing as the official time remaining. The timer will start upon the conclusion of the pre-game meeting. No new inning will start after the time has expired. A new inning will be constituted as a defensive team ready on the field, a batter in the box, and the ball put in play by the umpire. The umpires will reserve the right to declare a new inning, if pace of play is not being followed during the half inning.
4. **PRE-GAME WARM-UP**: The visiting team on the schedule has the field from 30 minutes prior to the start time to 15 minutes prior to the start time. The home team follows until the start time. When necessary warm-ups should be performed in an adjacent (but safe) area to stay schedule if the first game of the evening runs slightly past 75 minutes. Coaches and umpires should work together to ensure “ready play” is adhered to in order to maximize available daylight. If a team is the second game of the night on a field, warm up time may be limited due to daylight. Teams should be ready at their scheduled start time to avoid loss of game time due to daylight.
5. **TEAM ON DEFENSE**: All players must play defense for at least half the game (*it is recommended that all players play defense at least every other inning*). Only nine defensive players are allowed.
6. **TEAM ON OFFENSE**: All players in the game must be in the batting order; players who arrive after the game begins are added to the bottom of the order. **If that player is still not present when his turn to bat comes up, the team will take an out**. All innings consist of three outs. Bunting is allowed. **Players who will be catching the following inning must have a pinch runner if they reach base with 2 outs in order to get their catching gear on. The pinch runner will be the batter who made the last out**.
7. **MERCY RULE**: The 12-run “mercy rule” will occur if 1) the visiting team leads by at least 12 runs at the end of four innings or 2) the home team leads by at least 12 runs after 3.5 innings. Coaches may continue to play if they choose but the game will be officially over and the umpires will not be required to stay.
8. **PITCHING**: The WRA follows a pitch count policy in accordance with Little League rules. This policy is being implemented to serve as protection for young pitcher’s arms. A pitcher cannot pitch in more than one game in a single day and once a pitcher is

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removed from pitching in a game, he may not pitch again in that game.

The coach, assistant coach, or team representative (such as a parent) must track pitch counts each game on the provided form and turn in form to the home plate umpire at the end of the game.

Rules

League Age	Pitches allowed per day
17-18	105
13-16	95
11-12	85
10 and under	75

Pitchers league ages 7 through 16 must adhere to the following rest requirements:

- If a player pitches 61 or more pitches in a day, three (3) calendar days of rest must be observed.
- If a player pitches 41 - 60 pitches in a day, two (2) calendar days of rest must be observed.
- If a player pitches 21 - 40 pitches in a day, one (1) calendar day of rest must be observed.
- If a player pitches 1-20 pitches in a day, no calendar day of rest is required before pitching again.

There will be a maximum of 5 warm-up pitches between innings unless a new pitcher is beginning the inning, then the maximum will be 10. Warm-up pitches are not counted towards the maximum number of pitches allowed.

If a pitcher reaches their limit while pitching to a batter, they may finish pitching to the batter until the batter is out or reaches base. The limit is in reference to the maximum. For example, if a 12-year-old is at 83 pitches with a new batter, they may throw more than the 85 limit until that at bat is over. **The pitch count is how many pitches the pitcher has thrown at the time of being removed from the game.**

The calendar days rest is full days. For example, if a kid throws 46 pitches on Tuesday, they will not be eligible to pitch again until Friday.

If the inning ends in the process of pitching to the batter (while the max pitch count is reached), and the batter will lead off the next inning, the pitcher will not be able to start the next inning.

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Any abuse of this policy will be:

1. First offense - one game suspension
 2. Second offense - suspension of remainder of season, plus one year suspension from coaching.
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9. PITCHING FROM THE STRETCH: Coaches should properly instruct pitchers to pitch from the stretch. Umpires will be instructed to call a balk after a warning is given following each specific violation.
 10. LEADING OFF & STEALING BASES: Runners may lead off any base and steal any base, including home.
 11. Pace of Play: Pace of Play will be important to make sure everyone is getting the maximum playing time. With a time limit it will be important that the coaches, and umpires urge players to hustle in and out.
 12. BAT LIMITATIONS: No bats greater than 2 5/8” diameter is allowed.
 13. CALL-UPS: Only 12-year-old players are allowed to be called up to the Pony TAP level; players cannot play in a Pony TAP game if it conflicts with his regularly-scheduled Bronco game; Bronco coaches must give permission to the Pony TAP coach especially if there’s a chance the player may pitch.
 14. Official Game Scorecard: Both coaches are responsible for signing the Official Game Scorecard. The Official Game Scorecard will be filled out by the home plate umpire, signed by both umpires and both head coaches, and turned into the concession stand immediately following the game. The Official Game Scorecard will be used to track league standings, track player pitch counts, and used for documentation for umpire payment. Once the Official Game Scorecard is signed changes to the documented information will not be permitted. In case of ties, the following tie-breakers will determine the final standings: 1) head-to-head competition , 2) fewest runs allowed in head-to-head competition, 3) most runs scored in head-to-head games, 4) fewest runs allowed in all games.
 15. MISCELLANEOUS: Rain-outs or cancelled games will be rescheduled by the WRA scheduler; coaches will be notified as soon as possible. A game will be considered complete and will not be rescheduled, if 4 innings are completed or 3.5 inning complete when the home team is winning. A loss of a player should be reported to the league representative as soon as possible. At this level, players are highly encouraged to wear a protective cup.
 16. DROPPED THIRD STRIKE: On a dropped third strike where the player has the possibility to advance to first but, in the **umpire’s judgement**, has committed to going to the dugout, that player shall be called **out**.