



## **K or 1st Grade: ROOKIE LEAGUE BASEBALL RULES**

### **A. Field Dimensions**

- The diamond will have fifty (50) foot base lines. Second base will be located 70 feet 9 inches from home plate to the back of 2nd base.
- The pitcher's plate, located within a six foot circle, will be thirty-five (35) feet from home plate.
- Left field and right field foul lines will be marked.
- The batter's box will be rectangular, six feet (6) by three feet (3). The inside line will be parallel to and four inches away from the side of home plate. It must extend forward from the center of home plate 3 feet and to the rear.
- A six (6) foot diameter on deck circle will be provided for each team.
- Dugouts on grass fields will consist of a 5 x 20 foot rectangular area on the sideline for each team. All players must remain seated in the "dugout" when they are not playing.

### **B. Equipment**

- Team shirts and hats must be worn by players while on the field. Players are encouraged to wear white baseball pants, which are to be provided by the player.
- Each player must furnish their own glove.
- All male players must wear an athletic supporter.
- Catchers must wear a chest protector, shin guards, and a catcher's helmet with both a mask and throat protector. Male catchers must wear a metal fiber or plastic cup.
- NOCSA approved batting helmets must be worn by the batter, on deck batter, all base runners and youth coaches.
- Shoes with metals spikes or cleats are not permitted. Shoes with molded cleats are permissible.
- All levels will be allowed to use 2018 USA stamped bats up to 2 5/8" in diameter.
- All levels are permitted to use 2017 and prior bats as long as the following dimensions are honored and managed by parents and coaches alike.
- All bats must meet Pony League specifications & standards, with a maximum barrel size of 2 1/4".
- A regulation size "Soft" T-Ball will be used during games. 8 games balls will be supplied by the home team and shall be placed in a bucket behind the adult pitcher.
- All bases and pitching rubber will be provided by the home team.
- All WAA issued equipment must be returned to the WAA office after the last game of the season.

### **C. Games**

- Weekday games will start at 6:15 P.M. No inning will begin after 8:00 P.M. Saturday games will be played per schedule.
- A regulation game consists of six (6) innings unless extended because of a tie score or the umpire calls the game.
- Each half inning will consist of three (3) outs or five (5) runs whichever occurs first.
- The score will be kept, but standings will not be maintained.

- If a game is called for any reason, it shall be a complete game if four innings have been completed, or if the home team is ahead after the completion of the visiting teams at bat in the fourth inning. If a game is called for any reason before it is a complete game it shall be considered a suspended game and shall be resumed from the point of curtailment at the time scheduled by the WAA office.
- If a game is called for any reason in an uncompleted inning, after having reached complete game length and the visiting ties the score or takes the lead in the uncompleted inning, and the home team does not tie the score or retake the lead in its portion of the uncompleted inning, the game shall be considered a suspended game and shall be continued from the point of curtailment at the time scheduled by the WAA office.
- All games that are tied once it is a complete game, and time, weather or other circumstances do not allow another inning(s) to be played, the game will be recorded as a tie in the standings and will not be completed.
- No inning of a game may start, for any reason, within 10 minutes of the scheduled starting time of the next game on that field. If only one game is scheduled the games will be played to completion subject to the coach's decision relative to darkness or safety. The home team will keep the official score. At the completion of each inning the home team will review the score with the visiting team head coach.
- Rescheduling of suspended games must be arranged through the WAA office. The league will determine the time and place.
- Suspended games will be resumed from the point of suspension. The only exception is if a game is called with less than one complete inning played. In this case it will be declared no game and all records will be disregarded. The home team will always occupy the 3rd base side of the field.

#### **D. Positions**

- A team on the field will consist of ten (10) players, first baseman, second baseman, shortstop, third baseman, pitcher, catcher and four (4) outfielders (left, left center, right, right center).
- Each player must play at least three (3) innings in the field. Each player must bat as scheduled within the line-up prepared before the game. Note: Each player is given a batting position regardless if he/she plays in the field or sits out an inning.
- Except for the catcher, no player may play more than two (2) innings at the same position.
- Fielders must play in their designated position until the ball is hit, over-loading fielders to one side of the field is not allowed.

#### **E. Batting**

- A batter is out if he/she throws the bat a second time. The first thrown bat will be accompanied by a warning. The batting team coach will be responsible for making the call.
- A strikeout will consist of three (3) strikes. There will be no walks. A player will receive a maximum of 8 pitches during an at bat. If they do not put the ball in play on the 8th pitch they will be declared out.
- There will be no bunting.
- A batter will not be awarded 1st base when hit by a pitched ball.
- A dropped 3rd strike rule is not in effect.

#### **F. Base Running**

- All bases must be held until the ball is batted. There will be no lead offs or base stealing. If a runner leaves a base when a ball is hit foul, he/she will be required to completely return to the base and touch the base.
- Base runners must tag up on caught fly balls or they will be called out. On any over throw, the base runner is allowed to advance only one base.

- The infield fly rule will NOT be in effect.
- Players must be encouraged to slide into a base where a play is being made. If a runner should collide with a fielder who is attempting to catch a thrown ball, and the runner did not slide or try to avoid contact with the fielder (umpires judgment), the runner will be called out. In addition, a player may be ejected if he/she has deliberately attempted to cause injury to an opposing player.
- **Courtesy Runners:** A courtesy runner may be used to run in place of the catcher if there are two outs and the catcher is a base runner. The courtesy runner chosen shall be a player currently not in the game at a defensive position. If there are no players available then the runner shall be the player who made the last (second) out of the current inning. Other than an injury, this is the only circumstance in which a courtesy runner may be used during a game.

### G. Pitching

- Coaches will pitch the entire game to their own team and must wear a glove at all times while pitching. Rotation of pitching coaches is permitted during the game. The coach will start with 8 baseballs for each batter. The catcher will place the pitched balls behind him/her until the 8th pitch has been thrown. The catcher will then throw the last pitch back to his/her teammate playing the pitcher's position. The adult catcher's coach will throw the other balls back to the adult pitcher to help speed the game along.
- Coaches should avoid pitching down to the players. Coaches are encouraged to pitch from one knee so that the ball comes across the plate on a more level plane, making it easier for the player to hit. The coach must pitch overhand and at an appropriate speed for the skill level of the individual player.
- The coach will pitch a maximum of 8 pitches to a batter. The batter must put the ball in play by the conclusion of the 8th pitch or they will be declared out. There are strikeouts but no walks. Under no circumstances is a batter to receive more than 8 pitches during an at bat. This is not a negotiable point for two opposing coaches to agree to an increase in the number of pitches.
- The ball is considered dead if touched by the adult pitcher in any fielding situation. Adult pitchers are only allowed to pitch. The team member playing the pitching position is required to field the ball. If the adult pitcher touches the ball, the play must be repeated (note: this is the only time a player may receive a 9<sup>th</sup> pitch).
- The player at the pitching position when the coach is pitching will stand within three (3) steps to the side of the coach. Right-handed players will stand to the right and the left-handed player will stand to the left.

### H. Coaching

- The batting team is allowed the following coaches; on deck coach, hitting coach, first base coach, and third base coach. All other coaches must remain within the dugout area and supervise the remaining players.
- The fielding team is allowed two (2) coaches on the field and one (1) catcher's coach (positioned behind the catcher). All of the other coaches for the fielding team must remain within the dugout area and supervise the remaining players.
- The head coach is responsible for maintaining order on the sideline and keeping equipment and players seated behind the bench lines in the dugout. A coach or parent must be assigned to the dugout to maintain order. Batting helmets and bats should be kept by the on deck circle away from the dugout.
- All coaching must be positive and instructional, not vulgar, critical or demeaning. Coaches who are abusive to players must be reported to the Baseball Director and the WAA Office. Continued abusive behavior will not be tolerated.
- Coaches must stay cool. Don't embarrass yourself or WAA by creating a scene on the field. Set a good example of sportsmanship in all game situations.
- Any coaches who will not adhere to the WAA rules, policies and philosophy should plan on being a spectator.

- Coaches are not permitted to smoke or chew tobacco products during games or practices.
- ALL Coaches also agree to abide by the W.A.A. Coaches Code of Conduct. This is very important to the organization and violations will be dealt with accordingly, including possible dismissal from your position as a coach. We appreciate your taking the time to volunteer as a coach and we want to make sure that all the children have a safe and supportive environment in which to participate in our programs.

#### **I. Umpires**

- No umpires will be provided by the league.
- The coach who is pitching will call out balls and strikes. Please make sure to call strikes so that the players learn to recognize strikes and what pitches they should be swinging at. They need to learn that striking out is a part of playing baseball and that it is ok. It is important for them to start to develop a sense of what the strike zone is.
- The base coaches will serve as the umpires for making safe/out calls on the bases and determining fair/foul balls.
- The catchers coach will make all safe/out calls at home plate.