



## **HOPEDALE YOUTH BASEBALL ASSOCIATION LEAGUE RULES**

### **JUNIOR LEAGUE COACHES GUIDE**

#### **OBJECTIVES:**

- To have fun
- For everyone to participate
- To learn fundamentals and improve skills in baseball
- To provide a safe learning environment for all players.
- HYBA endeavors to create a positive atmosphere by emphasizing good sportsmanship, team environment and showing support and patience for all athletes and volunteers.

#### **CONDUCT:**

All adults, both coaches and parents, are expected to show good sportsmanship. Be as supportive as possible, praise players for making a good effort as well as when they do well.

Opponents should be treated respectfully. Do not allow your players to use abusive or discriminating language. Correct children who laugh, make fun, or make negative comments toward other children. At the end of the game both teams line up and shake hands. **“Good game”** or like praise should be used. Instruct players not to use negative comments.

#### **SCHEDULE:**

Weekday Junior League games start promptly at **5:30 pm**. Weekend dates will be reserved for makeup games and practices. Please refer to league schedule for specific dates and times.

Whenever field conditions are questionable, the League Coordinator will determine if the game is to be played. Coaches in turn, are responsible to notify parents if the games are cancelled. Games can be made up on weekdays/weekends but must be scheduled through the League Coordinator.

#### **ROSTERS:**

Team rosters are determined by a draft of all eligible players. All players will be evaluated prior to draft. All coaches will participate in the draft with the League Coordinator as facilitator and at least one member of the board who has no affiliation with particular league. The coordinator and member(s) of the board will vote to resolve any conflict that coaches cannot agree upon.



### **PARTICIPATION:**

- All players must play the field during all innings. Use only 4 infielders but utilize 4 or 5 outfielders if needed to ensure no kid sits on the bench. Ensure that you rotate the kids evenly between the infield and outfield.
- A player can play the same position for a max of 2 innings each game. A continuous batting order will be utilized.
- 6 runs are the maximum that can be scored each ½ inning. No score should be kept, only keep track of runs scored in each inning. Players at the position of catcher are required to wear a protective cup.
- Coaches are encouraged to pinch-run for the catcher if there are 2 outs in the inning to facilitate the catcher being ready during the switchover.

### **COACHING:**

Coaches in Junior League must keep the objectives of the league in mind. First and foremost, kids should be having fun. Please be as positive as possible and refrain from negative reinforcement. No yelling or berating players for mistakes, rather instruct players on what they can do to improve. During the game, coaches are encouraged to teach/instruct and not manage. Defensive coaches are encourage to be in short left and right field during the game providing player with positional instruction (e.g. where to go when the ball is hit) as well as physical instruction (e.g. stay down on a ground ball).

### **GENERAL RULES:**

- Coach pitch and Player pitch will switch every other inning.
- The coach or assistant coach shall pitch to their own team. The other coaches on offense should coach the bases and/or support the bench/on-deck area.
- During coach-pitched innings, the player/pitcher will be positioned behind the mound with a clear line of sight to the batter. Coaches are encouraged not to assign their most skilled fielders to the pitcher position. If there are an inadequate number of fielders, the pitcher position will be left vacant.
- Coach that is pitching will also perform the role of umpire at all the bases.
- Players shall be catching both Coach and Player pitching and wearing protective gear.
- Batter is given 5 swinging strikes during coach-pitched innings. No walks, leading, stealing or bunting.
- No head first sliding. Players must slide on a play at the plate or they will automatically be called out.
- Home team coach will supply 2 new balls for the game.
- No metal spikes.



### **BASERUNNING:**

Players should avoid contact into 2nd, 3rd and home whenever there is a play at the base. Failure to avoid contact will be an umpire decision to call the base runner out. The umpire's call is not subject to protest. Head first slides are not allowed. The player will be called out. A player may not slide head first when returning to a base.

Runners are not allowed to steal or advance if the ball passes away from the catcher. There is no base stealing in Junior League.

### **EQUIPMENT:**

It is the responsibility of each coach to maintain equipment for the entire season. Please do not lend out equipment for any purpose. Equipment is to be used for your team's games and practices only. Please regard equipment as if it were your own. It is the largest expense of running the league and we count on the coaches to help keep it in good condition. If you have equipment which is showing wear and tear please notify the League Coordinator. If necessary the League Coordinator will repair or replace.

Baseballs should not be passed out after games. Please retain the game balls to use for practice. Please turn in all baseballs you have left at the end of season. These will be used to begin the next season's practices.

### **SAFETY:**

Helmets with cages will be provided by HYBA and available for all players. Players and parents who provide their own baseball helmet will have the option to play with or without the cage. The player on deck must be wearing a batting helmet and remain in the on-deck area. Keep all equipment and players except on-deck batter behind the dugout fence. Bench coaches should ensure that everyone but the on-deck batter remain sitting on the bench. Bench coaches should also be aware of other personnel (younger children) coming near the on-deck area.

The League maintains complete first aid essentials, including ice packs, at the concession stand.