

## 2019 Rookie League Baseball Rules

Designed for boys & girls aged 6-8, this league uses coaches to pitch allowing for more hittable balls at the plate and more action in the field. Emphasis is on starting to learn the game and rules of baseball. All positions will begin to be developed at this level including pitching and catching. The focus of Rookie League is to prepare each player to move on to the Minor Leagues, and most importantly to have fun!!

### League Information:

- Participating towns include Townsend/Ashby and Shirley. TAYBS will oversee the league operations.
- The season will start on the third week of April and go thru the third week of June.
- Practices should be held one to two days per week, and Games will be held twice per week.
- Games are typically on Tuesdays at 6pm, Thursdays at 6pm or Saturdays at either 11am or 1pm.
- There are no makeup games, and there are no playoffs.

### General Rules:

- As adopted by the Babe Ruth/Cal Ripken Jr. Baseball.
- Pitching/Catching will be done by the coaches early in the season to help maintain speed of the game and safety of the players. Pitching will be overhand.
- Pitching/Catching by players will be allowed later in the year when players have demonstrated the ability to consistently throw "strikes" and "catch" to introduce both the batters and pitchers to live pitching/catching. All teams should have kids pitching/catching portions of the game after the midway point of the season.
- **PLEASE KEEP THE GAMES MOVING!!**

### Field Preparation & Cleanup:

- Coaches should plan to line the field and batter's box at least 15 minutes prior to the game.
- At the end of a game, each team is responsible for cleaning out all trash out of their dugouts.
- The base paths, home plate area and pitchers' mound must be raked, and the complete infield must be dragged by the home team. It is expected that home team parents will assist with these field cleanup activities.

### Bad Weather & Make Up Games:

- There are no make up games at this level. We schedule enough games, so that it is anticipated to play fewer in total.
- At this level of the game, coaches should be a little freer about cancelling a game due to bad weather. We want our kids to have a good time and want to continue playing the sport.
- If you do decide to cancel a game, please work with the other coach at least 1 hour prior to the game start.
- As we do not keep standings, games can be made up, but it is not required.
- If lightning occurs, the game should be immediately stopped, and all players are to seek covered shelter. No game should resume until at least 15 minutes after the last visible showing of lightning.

### Rule 1: Playing Time

- A. All players must play have equal playing time or as close as possible.
- B. All players present will bat as part of a continuous batting order (whether in the field that inning or not)

### Rule 2: Equipment

- A. RCAL1, ROLB2 or equivalent. Leather balls preferred. NO T-Balls / Safety Balls.
- B. A certified USABat is required. T-Ball bats are not allowed.

### Rule 3: Umpires

- A. There are no umpires assigned to Rookie Baseball games.
- B. Calling balls and strikes is a means to begin teaching the strike zone.
- C. Balls and strikes will be called for coach pitch after the midway point of the season.

- D. When the kids are pitching, a coach will call balls and strikes
- E. There are no walks.

#### **Rule 4: Timing of Games**

- A. Games must be completed one hour and thirty-minutes from the scheduled start of the game.
- B. Games shall be no longer than 6 innings in length. There are no extra innings.

#### **Rule 5: Scoring**

- A. The score shall be kept by both teams' coaches, and a winner announced.
- B. A half inning is over once the defensive team has recorded three outs, the offensive team bats through the line-up, or 4 runs are scored. Whatever happens first.

#### **Rule 6: Batting**

- A. All rostered players present for the game shall bat in order, whether playing defensively at the time or not.
- B. Batting helmets must be worn while at bat and while running the bases.
- C. Each batter receives 5 pitched strikes or 5 swings and misses. If the ball has not been hit into fair territory, the batter is out. Foul balls count towards total.
- D. No stealing is permitted. Leading off the base after the pitch crosses the plate is permitted.
- E. Sliding is permitted, and proper instruction is encouraged. NO HEAD-FIRST SLIDING.
- F. Runners will only advance 1 base on a hit ball. After the halfway point of the season when a ball is hit to the outfield the runners can advance until the ball is released by the outfielder. If the runner is more than halfway to the next base, then they continue if not they return to the previous base.
- G. "On Deck" batters are NOT allowed. The batter up next should be wearing a helmet and ready to go but should not be swinging a bat.
- H. A liberal strike zone of the armpit to just below the knee is encouraged to get the batters swinging at pitched pitches, and to improve the confidence of the pitcher (when ready).

#### **Rule 7: Defense**

- A. 10 players will play in the field (4 outfielders) unless a team does not have 10 players. A team may "borrow" a player from the other team to field 10 players.
- B. A fifth infielder is placed on either side of the pitcher assuming the defensive position of the pitcher no closer to home plate than the pitcher. No more than 5 players are allowed in the infield.
- C. The catcher takes his normal position, in full protective equipment
- D. Outfielders shall be positioned in the outfield grass and not as part of the infield. Outfielders cannot make a play on the bases in the infield (i.e. CF fields ground ball and touches second)
- E. Coaches are permitted in the field to instruct defensive players

#### **Rule 8: Pitching**

- A. Any player may only pitch one inning per game, throwing no more than 25-30 pitches.
- B. A pitcher may not continue pitching if unable to throw strikes consistently. Coaches of both teams responsible to make this decision.
- C. Kids will pitch from about 42 feet. Minor League pitchers pitch from 46 feet so this is a good transition distance.
- D. After 4 balls, replace kid pitcher with coach pitcher for that batter. The kid pitcher can return for the next hitter
- E. Batter still gets 5 strikes (not swings, strikes). Strikes are cumulative between kid and coach pitcher. 5 total.
- F. Coaches will "umpire" and call balls and strikes for coaches and kid pitching. We want the kids to start learning the strike zone, so we need to call some strikes.
- G. No walks
- H. If a kid pitcher hits a batter, the batter stays at bat and the coach takes over pitching. The kid pitcher returns for the next batter.

#### **Rule 9: HAVE FUN!!!**