

Londonderry Athletic & Field Association (LAFA)

Rules & Regulations for Majors

Revision 2019.04.07

I. Baseball Rules

First and foremost, the rules governing Cal Ripken League Baseball shall govern the operation of the organization except those local rules stated below.

II. Local Rules

A. League organization

1. **Divisions:** The league shall consist of one division of players who are 11-12 years old:
 - a. The Majors division will consist of 12 drafted players on a team.
2. **Cal Ripken All-Stars:**
 - a. A player must attend at least 60% of their LAFA games to be eligible to participate in the summer Cal Ripken All-Star team for their respective age group. Not meeting minimum due to injury or other extenuating circumstances will be handled on a case-by-case basis.

B. Game Control

1. **Start Time & Game Length:**
 - a. All regular season games Monday- Thursday shall start at 6:00 PM with a game length of 2 hours. No new inning may start after 1 hour and 45 minutes from schedule game start which is 6:00 PM. However, if an inning is started prior to 8:00 PM, the inning should be completed regardless of game length.
 - b. All regular season weekend games shall start at their scheduled time. No new inning may start after 1 hour 45 minutes from scheduled start time. However, if an inning is started prior to the time limit, the inning should be played until the 2 hour limit. If the inning isn't completed, the score reverts back to last completed inning.
 - c. All regular season Friday and Saturday night games shall start at 7:30 PM when possible. All 6 innings should be played. If game is tied after 6 innings, then it will be recorded as a tie.
2. **Scoring**
 - a. The "10 run mercy rule" will apply after four innings of play, if the losing team has batted in the fourth inning.
 - b. "7 run rule" - No team will be allowed more than 7 runs in an inning during the regular season games. If the 7th run is scored during a play with multiple runners on, finish the play, but all runs over 7 do not count and are not recorded.
 - c. The 6th/Last inning run rule is that either team can score an unlimited amount of runs that gives them a chance to win the game or increase their lead. Coaches must decide together which inning is the Last inning if time becomes an issue.
3. **Game cancellation:** The coaches are responsible for calling a game due to inclement weather conditions prior to the start of the game. The Home team coach shall notify the umpire in chief by 4:30 PM game day. It is important to try and play all games as scheduled due to the difficulties with rescheduling. All games must be confirmed through the Majors coordinator. If games are cancelled by LAFA it will be posted at www.lafa.info and this cancellation pertains to all games that day.
4. **Control of the Game:** The control of the game transfers to the plate umpire at the scheduled game time. The umpire shall alert benches of the following before each game:
 - a. There will be no stepping out of the batter's box between pitches.
 - b. Each team will have one minute to change positions from offense to defense. Pitchers will be allowed five pitches (if same pitcher) or 8 pitches (if new pitcher) between innings. These rules are enforced to speed up the game.

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- c. Play is considered over (runners cannot advance further) when ball is thrown back to pitcher's mound "area" (within the circle) and pitcher has control of ball.
- d. Coaches are required to send at least one coach/volunteer well versed in baseball rules of the game to help as an infield umpire during the regular season week night games (Monday-Thursday). A schedule will be supplied.

5. **Standings:**

- a. Standings will be kept in both divisions. Pairings for playoffs will be determined by each team's record during the regular season. (W- 2Pts, T- 1Pt, L- 0Pts).
- b. Tiebreakers as follows: 1)Winning % 2)Total Pts 3) Head to Head (only if 2 teams) 4)Runs Allowed 5)Run Differential 6)Runs For 7)Coin Flip
- c. The home team is responsible for loading the game score onto the website within two days of the game.
- d. All games count during the regular season in standings.

C. Team Responsibilities

1. **Score Book:** The team manager is required to maintain a score book for each game. The book shall contain the last name and number for both teams. (This is very important since at the end of the season, books will be turned in and used by the tourney teams to validate each player's entry into district tournaments.) The "home team" shall maintain the official book. Sometime between innings, the coaches should verify the game score. In event of a discrepancy, the home team book shall be the official score.
2. **"Home" Team** - The home team will occupy the dugout towards third base. The Home team is also responsible for a "Quick Drag" after each game.
3. **"Visiting" Team** - The visiting team will occupy the dugout towards first base. They will be responsible for prepping (rake & line) the infield prior to the game.
4. Each manager should walk the field prior to starting a game to insure that it is safe to play.
5. **Each team shall clean their respective dugout at the conclusion of their game. Full trash cans should be rolled to the parking lot and a replaced with a new one from the concession stand.**
6. The team "at bat" shall retrieve all foul balls.
7. **Player/parent Participation:** No one is allowed on the playing field except the rostered players, manager, coaches and the umpires. In addition, no one is allowed on the bench except rostered players, manager, coaches, scorekeeper and batboy.
8. **Coaches Participation:** All coaches on the defensive team should be behind the fence in the dugouts. The only ones that should be on the field are the 2 base coaches, 2 umpires and the defensive players and the batter. Only the team coaches or a coach adult designee will be the base coaches.
9. **Team size:** Both teams must have a minimum of 8 players from their roster present for an official game to begin unless the head coaches agree to the following:
 - Game is to be considered a scrimmage/practice-no scoring will be kept (pitch count does NOT need to be kept). However, pitches should be limited as if it were a bull pen session.
 - Game can begin by lending players to the opponent's teams. Players borrowed must start from who is last in the current batting line up and rotated out accordingly if a fielder must go to the plate for his turn at bat.
 - If both teams have not reached a minimum of 8 players per team by the beginning of the top of the 3rd the game will become a scrimmage. (pitch count must be recorded and reported)
 - If one team reaches the minimum of 8 players by the beginning of the top of the 3rd and the other team has not then they lose by means of forfeit. (pitch count must be recorded and reported)

D. Rosters and Positioning

1. **Batting order.** Major leagues shall use a continuous batting order.
2. **Defensive Positioning:** All players must play at least four defensive innings, two of which must be in the infield unless safety concerns warrant otherwise (weather and time permitting). Head Coaches must discuss such safety concerns with the League VP. Prior to the game, both head coaches must discuss any player safety issue that will be observed with the home plate umpire.
3. **Free substitution:** Coaches may freely substitute defensive players, providing the Defensive Positioning rule is

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observed. If a pitcher comes out of game, they may not re-enter as pitcher.

E. Equipment

1. **Cleats** - Rubber cleats are permitted in Majors league.
2. **Bats** - Bats must be USA Baseball approved, 2-1/4 or 2-5/8 inch barrel diameter. No BBCOR.
3. **Uniforms** - Gray pants and team-issued hat and shirt must be worn during the game. No jewelry around neck.

G. Protests and Ejections

1. **Ejection Circumstances:** The plate umpire shall issue team warnings to each bench at the start of each game concerning profanity and unsportsmanlike conduct. A player, coach or manager shall be ejected from the game (and **suspended** for the next one) on the first offense for the following:
 - a. use of profanity
 - b. throwing equipment (batting helmet or bat)
 - c. obscene gestures
 - d. Use of abusive language toward a coach, manager, spectator or umpire.
 - e. Intentionally running into another player with the intent to injure or break up a play.
2. **Ejection from Field:** Any manager, coach or spectator can, at the discretion of the plate umpire, be asked to leave the ballpark for use of profanity, obscene gestures or use of abusive language toward a coach, manager, umpire or another spectator, If the offender ignores the request, the umpire shall notify the offender and the both benches that unless the request is honored within five minutes, the game shall become a forfeit in favor of the opposing team. This forfeit shall be subject to review by the League President. The plate umpire shall report any such action to the league president immediately after the game.
3. **Disputed Calls:** The umpires shall not argue with any coach, manager, player or spectator. Only the team head coach may confer with the umpire concerning a call or decision. Anyone else may be ejected from the game at the discretion of the umpire, after being warned once of such actions. The objective of this rule is to prevent "ganging up" on the umpire during contested calls.
4. **Protested Games:** The plate umpire shall notify the league President of any protested game and shall provide the exact game situation that existed at the time the protest was made. The league President shall rule on the protest and notify the plate umpire and two team managers of his decision within three calendar days.
5. **Lafa Mafia Rule:** The League president (or his/her designee) can stop any game by notifying the plate umpire and both managers of his/her decision.

G. Pitching Rules

1. During the regular season, pitchers may throw up to 85 pitches. Up to 40 pitches and there is no rest required. Between 41 and 65 pitches there must be 1 day of rest. More than 66 pitches and there must be 2 days of rest. Note: Using the upper-limits and/or minimum rest should be the exception, not a pitchers normal routine.
2. Pitch Counts should be verified by the coaches between innings. Total pitch counts for players shall be emailed to the VP of Majors for tracking purposes along with game score.
3. The number of pitches thrown for the School and AAU teams count towards Lafa numbers. A player may NOT pitch for Lafa on the same day he/she pitches for School or AAU.
4. The pitcher is not allowed to re-enter the game as a pitcher once removed.
5. Balks will be called but not enforced during the preseason games.
6. The amount of balks that are allowed during the season before being enforced will be determined on a week by week basis for this season.
7. If a pitcher has three (3) hit batsmen (hit-by-pitch) during an inning, the player must be removed as pitcher.

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H. Base Running Rules

1. Batters are not allowed to advance to first base on a dropped third strike. Runners can advance.
2. Base runners must slide into 2nd, 3rd and home plate if a play is being made on them. Failure to do so will result in the runner being called OUT. No head first slides are allowed going into any base, and if so the runner will be out.
3. There is leading and stealing. All runners must be stationary with their right foot no further than the white line marked on the grass at 1st, 2nd and 3rd in the set position. Umpires hold the discretion to move runner(s) back if deemed beyond the white line mark. No taunting or dancing to distract the pitcher will be tolerated. If taunting occurs, there will be one warning given to each player and if it occurs again then the runner will be removed from the base and called out. Base runners are responsible to avoid contact with the fielding player if a play is being made at the base they are attempting to reach or the defensive player is in possession of the ball. The runner has the right to the base until the defensive player has the ball; the defensive player without possession of the ball has no right to block the pathway of the runner. If the runner attempting to reach a base intentionally or maliciously runs into the defensive player they will be called out.

4. **Non-Collision Rule**

The runner has the right to the base until the defensive player has the ball;

The defensive player without possession of the ball SHALL NOT block the pathway of the runner.

Base runners MUST avoid contact with the fielding player if a play is being made at the base they are attempting to reach or the defensive player is in possession of the ball.

If the runner attempting to reach a base intentionally or maliciously runs into the defensive player they will be called out. If determined to be maliciously the runner will be thrown out of the game.

Examples

- Runner crosses the plate and the ball is caught after the run crosses the plate, the base runner is safe
- A Defensive player is blocking a base without the ball, the base runner is safe and a warning given to defensive player
- A Defensive player blocking a base in possession of the ball and the runner does not attempt to avoid contact, the runner is out warning given to offensive player

Flagrant violation will result in ejection from the game.

I. Lightning Policy

1. The first sign of the lightning, the game is suspended for 30 minutes.
 - a) The 30 minute clock is reset once another strike of lightning is seen.
 - b) All players and coaches are to go into the dugout and stay away from the fences until game is resumed.
 - c) All families and spectators need to stay away from fences and bleachers.

J. Playoff Rules

1. Regular Season Rules shall apply unless specified below.
2. Pitch count for playoffs follow the same rules as the regular season.
3. The game is considered a complete game after all 6 innings are played or the 10 run mercy rule has taken effect after 4 innings when the losing team has batted in the 4 inning.
4. If game is not completed because of darkness or other circumstances, the game will resume at the same point that it has been stopped at a time that is agreed upon by the coaches with a LAFA official overseeing and have a final say if there is no agreement between the coaches.
5. The home team will keep the official book and coaches should verify the score between innings.