

## **Instructional League Fall Baseball Rules**

Games are scheduled between Cal Ripken Instructional League Teams (comprised of 6-7 yr olds). The rules which shall govern game play are the Official Baseball Rules (OBR) as used by Major League Baseball, the Cal Ripken OBR Exceptions (found in the Babe Ruth Handbook), and the Local League Rules listed below. Local League rules will supersede rules as found in the OBR.

**I. GAMES** – Each Sunday, teams will play one, 2 hour game of 5 innings

**II. MANAGERS/COACHES** –

**a.** Only players, 1 manager, and up to 3 assistant coaches are permitted in the dugout during game play. Coaches should instruct players who are not in the game, and coaches to remain in the dugout during game play. Exceptions to the rule: on deck batter, coaches in the coach's box while on offense. There may also be one defensive coach helping their catcher with passed balls to help speed the game up.

**III. UMPIRES** – Defensive team's coach that is on the mound with machine. That coach may ask for assistance in a call from the 1<sup>st</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> base coaches if the pitching coach is unsure or could not see.

**IV. PRE-GAME** –

**a.** Infield Practice: The home team shall take the field 35 minutes prior to game time and has the field for 15 minutes. The visiting team shall take the field 20 minutes prior to game time for 15 minutes. Grounds crews and division directors may dictate that no infield practice is permitted based on field conditions or scheduling.

**b.** Home/away team: Flip coin to determine Home team game 1. That team will be visitor for game 2.

**V. EQUIPMENT** –

**a.** Baseballs: Each team is responsible for providing 1 new and 1 used, but in good condition baseball prior to the start of the game. The visiting team is responsible for providing 1 used, but in good condition baseball. Both teams are required to help keep the game supplied with baseballs as the game proceeds. During/after inclement weather both teams may be asked to provide more baseballs to keep the game moving.

**b.** Bats: Any bats may be used during the fall season, however it is highly recommended to use USA stamped baseball bats so they learn to use a bat they are allowed to swing in the spring.

**VI. GAME PLAY** –

**a.** Continuous Batting: Instructional League teams will use a continuous batting lineup during game play. If a player is ejected from a game, their time at bat will be recorded as an out. The batting lineup and defensive positioning is decided by the coaching staff. If a player is sick/injured during the game, their time at bat will be skipped with no penalty. Any player arriving after first pitch of game shall be added at the end of the batting order.

**b. Mandatory Play:** It is mandatory that each player must play 3 innings on defense in every 6 inning game. The only exception will be games shortened due to run rule, or time limits, or at manager discretion for disciplinary reasons (this must be communicated to the opposing team during ground rules). Each player must play the infield for 2 innings.

**c.** There will be 10 fielders used (4 outfielders)

**d.** Infielders may call time out once in the infield. Runners more than halfway will be advanced to the next base. Outfielders must throw the ball in from the outfield to the infield and cannot call time out to stop runners.

**e.** Overthrows at 1st and 3rd base allow only ONE additional base.

**f.** Game Length:

**f.i.** Games will be played for 5 innings.

**f.ii.** A game is considered to be official after 4 innings (3 ½ if home team ahead).

**f.iii.** No new inning will start after 1 hour and 15 minutes, regardless of the score of the game. Drop dead rule is in effect at 1 hour 30 minutes (Game is over at 1 hr 30 min)

**f.iv.** Extra innings to break a tie are only permitted if there is time remaining.

**f.v.** Games suspended due to inclement weather may be made up during the following week on an agreed upon evening or will not be made up.

**f.vi.** After 4 innings (3 ½ if home team ahead) if a team is leading by 10 or more runs they will be declared the winner and the game will be over. If a team is leading by 12 runs after 2 1/2 or (3 if home team ahead) the game will be considered official and the leading team will be declared the winner.

**f.vii.** Max runs scored per inning is 7 in the first 4 innings. From the 5th inning on there will be no limit on runs per inning. 3 Outs must be made or max runs per inning.

**f.viii.** Two or more outs may be made during a defensive inning.

**g.** Forfeits: There are no forfeits in Fall ball as there are no standings. If one team is short players, they may borrow outfielders from the other team to keep the game fun/playable.

**h.** Game Delays: Any time a game is delayed due to adverse weather you shall wait a minimum of 30 minutes prior to calling the game. During this time you shall check with both managers to determine if playing conditions are safe and estimated time to resume play. Once you determine that a game cannot be continued due to weather,

field conditions, etc both teams will be informed with the rationale for calling the game and then do so.

**i. Base Runners:**

**i.i.** There will be no stealing or leading off. Runners leaving base early will be first granted a warning, then will be called out for subsequent violations.

**i.ii.** There is no infield fly rule.

**i.iii.** Runners cannot advance on a passed ball.

**i.iv.** Runners cannot advance if the catcher overthrows the pitcher when returning the ball to him following a pitch.

**i.v.** A runner is out if he does not attempt to get around – “avoid contact with” – a fielder who has the ball and is waiting to make a tag, or if he intentionally (maliciously) runs into a fielder.

**i.vi.** With 2 outs; if the catcher is on base, he must be replaced by a courtesy runner (no exceptions). The courtesy runner will be the last *batted* out. The same courtesy runner can only be used once in an inning. *Note – while optional, it is permitted and recommended that a courtesy runner or the pitcher be used with 2 outs as well.*

**i.vii.** Fielders may be substituted in and out, **but not during an inning.**

**j. Batting:**

**j.i.** Offensive team's coach will load the pitching machine.

**j.ii.** Pitching machine settings: Spring 3, Sling Arm 3, Release Lever 3

**j.iii.** Home team is responsible to make sure the settings on the pitching machine is correct.

**k.** Teams will have two minutes to switch sides between innings. It is the responsibility of the managers to ensure their players, especially their catchers are ready for the next inning.

**VII. UNSPORTSMANLIKE CONDUCT** – Any unsportsmanlike conduct of any nature by managers, coaches, players, fans, parents, relatives, or anyone else in attendance at a game may result in suspension from all Butler County Cal Ripken parks and from the Butler County Cal Ripken Association for an indeterminate amount of time. Relative to the ejection of a player, manager, or coach for unsportsmanlike conduct or any other reason for ejection the following policies will apply:

**a.i.** 1st ejection – the offender shall be suspended for the next one (1) full game following that in which the ejection occurred.

**a.ii.** 2nd ejection – the offender shall be suspended for the next two (2) full games following that in which the ejection occurred. Offender required to come before FYBA Board before return

**a.iii.** 3rd ejection – the offender shall be suspended for the remainder of the season.

**VIII. TOBACCO PRODUCTS** – The use of all tobacco products, including smokeless tobacco and e-cigarettes is prohibited by all participating personnel (coaches, players, etc.) Tobacco products such as cigarettes, cigars, pipes, etc are prohibited from use within Fairfield’s Waterworks Park by participating personnel and spectators.

**IX. BLOOD RULE** – A player or coach who is bleeding or who has an open wound shall be prohibited from participating further in the game until appropriate treatment has been administered. If medical care or treatment can be administered in a timely manner per the umpire’s judgement, the individual would not have to leave the game. If there is an excessive amount of blood on the uniform it must be changed before that individual can participate in the game.

**X. PITCHES/SCORE KEEPING –**

**a.** Each batter will receive 6 pitches. If the batter fouls the 6th pitch they shall receive a 7th. If a batter swings and misses 3 times that will be considered a strikeout.

**b.** In the event that the pitching machine breaks or is unusable due to a malfunction and unable to be replaced in a timely fashion, coaches will complete the game pitching to their players.

**c.** Each team should keep track of their own scorebook if desired. In fall the fall season there are no standings. While winning and losing is important the KEY factor in Instructional baseball is teaching fundamentals of play and sportsmanship.

**XI. COVID related info-**

**a.** Use good judgement in general, and follow state mandates. League will provide any updates/changes as needed.