

WESTON CT CAL RIPKEN BASEBALL

House League Rules

(Updated March 2021)

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I. Guidelines for Manager and Coach Conduct

Do not put winning above the development of the players on your team or your opponent's. Your success as a manager is not judged by your won-loss record. A better measure of success is the enthusiasm that every player on your roster has towards continued participation in WBL.

Your volunteer time is appreciated more than anyone will fully be able to convey to you. It is best that you do so for the reward of helping all kids equally, rather than self-interests or the interest of a particular player. Managers and coaches are sometimes better served by deferring to others on assessing talents of their own kids, reducing the chance of special treatment to the point of detriment to the team or other players.

If there is any discipline problem with any player that you cannot address in a reasonable and appropriate fashion, notify the Player Agent, plus a member of the Executive Committee, and the child's parents. It should go without saying that abusive treatment of any players is not permissible.

All judgment calls by the umpire are final (whether balls/strikes, out/safe at a base, or other judgment calls). A manager or coach arguing or otherwise overtly demonstrating displeasure or objection to judgment calls is expressly prohibited. Moreover, such is a poor example to the players present and is contrary to what the players should be taught. Managers of course can, however, politely inquire to an umpire as to a rule at issue, and can respectfully point out where they are certain of a rule at issue. Keep disruptions to the game at a minimum. In most cases, communication with the umpire and opposing manager can be done discretely between innings. In all cases, communications with the umpire and opposing manager should be handled respectfully with maximal effort to avoid or eliminate any conflict.

II. Safety Highlights

- All Managers will be subject to a Babe Ruth background check and pass an Abuse Prevention Training course.
- ONLY BATS THAT BEAR THE USA BAT LICENSING MARK WILL BE PERMISSABLE FOR PLAY AND PRACTICE.
- Managers must have parent contact info with you at all games/practices.
- At first sign of either thunder OR lightning, all must leave the field and get indoors or at least into cars. After either is observed, there needs to be an absence of both for 30 minutes before returning to fields for resumption of play.
- If there is a possible concussion, remove the player from the game or practice immediately. Evaluation and written clearance from a medical provider plus written acknowledgement from parent or guardian is required before future participation.
- No on-deck practice swinging of bats.
- Managers and coaches must read all other rules, guidelines and safety docs from WBL and from Cal Ripken / Babe Ruth.
- All batters and baserunners must wear an approved helmet at all times while in the field of play.
- Managers must bring a first aid kit to all games and practices.
- No jewelry of any kind or of any material may be worn by any player.
- Use of non-prescription drugs, any tobacco or alcoholic products is strictly prohibited while performing any WBL related activity. This includes transporting players to and from practices and games.
- More than one adult must be present at all practices and team or league events.
- Curfew: In April and May, no inning may begin after 7:30 pm; and in June, no inning may begin after 7:45 pm. The time a new inning begins is considered to be the moment of the third out being made in the preceding inning.
- Managers and coaches, before departing the field, must ensure every child is accounted for after games/practices with a ride home from parents/guardians.

III. Game Play Guidelines and Highlights

- Spring baseball in Weston is considered instructional. Managers are urged to allow all players to try different positions in the field, as well as affording them opportunities to hit in the various positions in the batting order. Managers will also be asked to balance the instructional nature of Spring baseball with overall game flow/timing as well as overall safety of each player when positioning players.
- Call-up players or fill-ins must be obtained thru or at the direction of the Player Agent and emphasis on being of similar skill. Replacement players may not pitch and must bat at the end of the order.
- Pitch count guidelines must be followed, and managers must track and record pitch counts for his/her team.
- Use of a continuous batting order is required for games (all players bat the full game).
- All players must play a minimum of three defensive innings, but a minimum of four innings is recommended for all players, every game.
- No headfirst slides except returning to prior base; runner is out for infraction.
- No protests.
- No extra innings (except Majors Division, a 7th only).
- No arguing, complaining or showing displeasure with judgment calls.
- Don't start an inning at risk to overlap the start of the next scheduled game at the field.
- There is no "must slide" rule. The rule requires that if a defensive player has the ball waiting to make the tag, then the runner must either slide or attempt to get around the defensive player. Contact may occur as the attempt to avoid may not be successful, but the rule clearly means the runner cannot purposely try to knock over a player or try to knock the ball out of his/her hands. Requiring slides on every "play" could result in increased injuries and such is certainly not the rule.
- Runners over-running first base do not expose themselves to being tagged out merely by turning to their left instead of right. You can turn either way as long as you return immediately to first base without attempting to go to second base. This is an umpire's judgment call.
- Runners are not out for any contact by or with a base coach, only if the contact assists the runner.

- Being hit by a pitch doesn't always get you the award of first base. If it hit you in the strike zone it is a strike. If you purposely made zero attempt to avoid contact by the ball, and it hit you outside the strike zone, it is a ball and no base should be awarded.
- Home plate (like every base) is entirely within fair territory.
- Hands are hands; they are not part of the bat. Unless the pitch is a strike because of a swing or being in the strike zone, a batter hit in the hands gets awarded first base.
- A runner can be called out for interference even if not contacting a hit ball. When passing in front of an infielder, running in the base path is not an absolute free pass...i.e. intentionally stalling to block the view of the fielder should be called as interference.

IV. Game Administration

- Home team occupies first base dugout, visitors occupy third base dugout.
- Home team manager provides two game balls to umpire.
- Visiting team bats first, home team bats last.
- Only players, coaches and manager are permitted on bench or in dugout; no siblings, friends, bat-boys, etc. A maximum of three (3) Manager/coaches shall be permitted on the field or in the dugout at any time during a game.
- Two adult base coaches.
- In the Majors and Minors Divisions, teams must maintain an accurate scorebook of both teams, which must include proper accounting of pitchers used for both teams and umpires' names.
- After games, coaches, managers, and parents from both teams should work together so field cleanup and maintenance is completed quickly (including raking, watering and placing tarps).
- Winning team manager must enter the score into SI Play.

V. T-Ball Division One-Pager

- Games shall be a maximum of four innings or 1.5 hours (90 minutes), whichever is shorter. Managers can agree to a maximum time of a shorter duration; as short as a 1-hour maximum game time.
- When a player is put out at any base, the player must return to the bench even though outs are not recorded for the purpose of counting outs per inning. Managers have the option of agreeing to not enforce this rule and instead allow players to always become (and remain) baserunners, the defensive players making plays just receive huge compliments.
- Teams shall each bat once through their respective lineups each inning, regardless of the number of outs recorded. If roster sizes are especially limited to the extent that few if any runs are being scored, then for the purpose of allowing more kids to have the experience of scoring a run, managers can agree at any point before a full inning to have the teams bat twice through their respective lineups for their half innings. Changing the batting order during the game, at this age, is also fine.
- Fielders should be positioned as follows: 5 infielders with remaining players in the outfield, no catchers.
- Fielders must be rotated to different positions each inning.
- Baserunners cannot leave their respective bases until the ball is hit by the batter.
- The batting team's manager may (his/her discretion) declare a "foul ball" on any slightly hit or tipped ball that will only travel the length of a bunt (approx. 15 feet) or less, regardless of it being actually fair. Hitting the tee is also a foul ball.
- Runners and the batter will only advance one base on hit balls, and no bases on any overthrows (regardless of where the overthrow goes). Exception: on a legitimate shot hit into the outfield, the base coaches may allow the batter to try for a double and the base runners to advance two bases if appropriate.
- The batting team should have two base coaches plus a coach with the batter at the tee.
- The defensive team should have a coach in the infield plus two coaches in the outfield for instructional purposes. For safety purposes, these coaches can be positioned wherever needed to remind players to remain attentive or to physically protect any player that appears potentially unable to protect him/herself from a struck ball.

For safety reasons, all players are to remain on the bench except for the batter and the batter is the only player allowed to hold a bat. All other bats must remain on the ground.

VI. Rookie-Prep Division

- Place bases 60 feet apart.
- Adult or machine-pitch only. Coaches pitch to their own teams. Official mound distance is 38 feet but coaches may stand where needed to throw more accurate pitches.
- Kids can play catcher although an adult should stand behind home plate to speed the process up of getting the ball back to the pitcher.
- No umpires needed. The coach in the field (pitcher) should handle out/safe calls on the bases.
- No strike outs or walks. The guideline is a maximum of 5 - 7 good pitches per player per at-bat. If player fails to hit a fair ball after the 5 - 7 pitches, the batter will then hit the ball off a tee.
- Players' positions MUST be rotated keeping in mind safety concerns (i.e. ensure a player playing pitcher or first base can protect themselves on a hard-hit ball / throw).
- Inning ends after sooner of 3 outs, 5 runs scored or a team bats around in an inning.
- No extra base is permitted on any overthrow to any base regardless of whether the ball goes out of the field of play or not. Once the ball is under control in the infield the play should be over. Coaches may allow batters and runners to advance additional bases on batted balls which are legitimate shots into the outfield.
- Target game time should be approximately 75 – 90 minutes. Maximum of 6 innings.

VII. Rookies Division

- Place bases 60 feet apart.
- Pitching: Modified coach/kid pitch format. Coach pitch in innings 1-3-5, with kid pitch in even innings. Kid pitches up to a strike out or four balls or ball put in play. After four balls, the coach steps in to pitch to the batter (the batter's coach should pitch). If the coach takes over pitching to a batter, the count resets and then ends when the batter either hits the ball or strikes out. There are no walks, but there are "called strikes" (this applies to both kid pitch and coach pitch – called strikes must be obvious, with benefit of the doubt given to the batter on borderline pitches). ALL PITCH COUNTS MUST BE ENFORCED.
- Kid pitchers must pitch from the pitching mound and rubber (46'). Coach pitchers can pitch from any safe distance to ensure they can pitch strikes at a proper height and angle (no arc).
- Kids can play catcher although an adult should stand behind home plate to speed the process up of getting the ball back to the pitcher.
- Fielding: Teams are permitted to utilize ten players in the field while on defense. The tenth fielder must play in the outfield (left, left center, right center, and right). Every effort should be made to ensure that the outfielders play in their assigned positions and do not encroach on the infield positions (i.e., assigning a short centerfielder who covers second base is not permitted).
- Bunting is not allowed.
- There is no base stealing in this division. There is no tagging up on fly outs and there is no infield fly rule.
- No umpires needed. The coach in the field (pitcher) should handle all out/safe calls.
- Players' positions MUST be rotated keeping in mind safety concerns (i.e. ensure a player playing pitcher or first base can protect themselves on a hard-hit ball / throw).
- Inning ends after sooner of 3 outs, 5 runs scored or a team bats around in an inning. On an out, the base runner must leave the field.
- No extra base is permitted on any overthrow to any base regardless of whether the ball goes out of the field of play or not. Once the ball is under control in the infield the play should be over. Coaches may allow batters and runners to advance additional bases on batted balls which are legitimate shots into the outfield.
- Target game time should be approximately 75 – 90 minutes. Maximum of 6 innings.

VIII. Minors Division

- A team can start play with eight players. Late arrivals can be freely substituted to any defensive position upon arrival but on offense must be inserted at the end of the batting order. Managers can agree to loan a fielder and/or swap home-away designation to assist the team having late arrivals.
- There is a five-run maximum in innings one through five. There is no limit on the amount of runs that can be scored in the sixth inning.
- Steals Per Inning Limitation: In each inning, after the batting team has already scored three runs in the inning, they may not steal any bases or advance on any errant throws to the pitcher from the catcher. This includes stealing on a wild pitch or passed ball. Minors Managers may all agree to limit stealing more than noted here.
- Stealing of home is permitted (except where such a steal would violate one of the other rules/limitations herein).
- Double steals of any type are permitted (except where such a steal would violate one of the other rules/limitations herein).
- Delayed steals are not permitted.
- Advancing on a ball in play is only permitted when play is “live”. Play is no longer “live” when the pitcher has toed the rubber with the ball and the catcher is behind home plate.
- The penalty for any steal not permitted by, or beyond the limitations of, the above rules is to send the runner(s) back to the extent of removing the violation(s).
- The runner cannot leave a base until the ball has reached the batter.
- Bunting is allowed. Slash bunting (fake bunt then swing) is not permitted.
- A player who has been removed from the pitcher’s position may return to that position later in the game.
- “Call-up players” (obtained through, or at the direction of, the Player Agent) may not be used as a pitcher and must bat last in the order.
- The Infield Fly Rule is not in effect.
- Uncaught 3rd strike is an out for all batters.

IX. Majors Division One-Pager

(Same as Minors except where noted below)

- Leading is permitted. Managers, at their discretion, may agree to limit the length of leads early in the season to allow catchers the opportunity to get acclimated to the throw.
- A baserunner can attempt a steal at any time.
- There is no limitation on steals per inning.
- The Infield Fly Rule is in effect (the umpire factors in ability to his/her judgment of catchable ball with ordinary effort).
- Uncaught 3rd strike makes the batter a runner if either two outs or if 1st base is unoccupied.
- In the regular season, in the event the score of the game is tied after completion of the sixth inning, a seventh inning may be played (time permitting). There is no limit on the amount of runs that can be scored in the seventh inning. If such game remains tied after seven full innings, the game is over and is declared a tie; no eighth or ninth innings under any circumstances.
- No Balks enforced - instead the umpire / coach gives a "warning" to the pitcher - and hopefully instructs him as to what he did wrong
- There is a five-run maximum in innings one through five. There is no limit on the amount of runs that can be scored in the sixth inning.

X. Pitch Count Guidelines

MAXIMUM NUMBER OF PITCHES ALLOWED IN A DAY BY LEAGUE AGE	
League Age	Max Pitches in a Day
11–12	85
9–10	75
7–8	50

DAYS OF REST MINIMUMS	
# of Pitches	# of Calendar Days of Rest
66 or more	4
51–65	3
36–50	2
21–35	1
1–20	0

- Examples: Ex. 1: Pitcher on Mon. then rests Tues. and pitches Wed. was given one day of rest; Ex. 2: A pitcher that threw 65 on Wednesday can next pitch again on Sunday (his/her minimum three days of rest are Thurs, Fri and Sat).
- When a pitcher reaches a day of rest threshold in the middle of a batter, he may not complete the at-bat without additional pitches being added, resulting in another day of rest being added to his/her requirement.
- Warm-up pitches between innings are a maximum of eight, or one minute, whichever is less. The umpire decides how many for pitchers brought in due to an emergency.
- Note these guidelines are more restrictive than the Cal Ripken requirements and apply to the spring and fall seasons only. Please refer to the Cal Ripken regulations for summer guidelines.
- Be cognizant of the possibility that a pitcher threw elsewhere (ask them and parents); don't allow excessive warm-up pitches; it is recommended you be more restrictive than the maximum number of allowed pitches; substantial throwing at other positions (i.e. catching) may warrant rest even if not prescribed by the guidelines; recommend several minutes of ice to elbows and shoulders after pitching.