

Camrose Community Rookie Division Rules and Guiding Principles

Purpose

The following objectives, principles and playing rules are provided to ensure a successful season and for the development and enjoyment of the Camrose Community Rookie Division (Rookie Baseball) participants, as coordinated by Camrose Minor Ball Association (CMBA). Please share these with your coaches and parents as part of the season kickoff and ask them to be prepared to support them with the players.

Overview

Generally speaking, the Rookie Baseball is an instructional league, not a competitive league, and therefore some standard baseball rules have been modified to support the goal of teaching the basic skills and fundamentals of baseball. This league does introduce the concept of competition to the sport for our athletes. Remember, the primary focus of the league will be on teaching, learning and enjoying the game of baseball.

League Goals & Objectives

Rookie League Goals

It is the Camrose Minor Ball Associations' (CMBA) desire for each player in the Rookie league to achieve the following goals:

- ❖ Understand the basic rules and fundamentals of baseball.
- ❖ Feel a sense of achievement through an improvement in their fundamental baseball skills.
- ❖ Understand good sportsmanship. Demonstrated via respect for Baseball facilities, the coaches & assistants, their teammates, their opponents, their equipment and themselves.
- ❖ Prepare for the Mosquito Baseball.
- ❖ Have a desire to play again next year!

Coaching Principles

Principles specific to coaches and assistants to make the league more successful.

- ❖ **Safety:** Safety rules come first. Enforce the league safety rules strictly.
- ❖ **Fun:** Baseball is a game. Make sure it stays fun!
- ❖ **Sportsmanship:** Encourage players to put their best effort into improving their game regardless of the situation or score. Encourage players to recognize and respect the fact that this is a learning environment - everyone is working to improve some aspect of their skills.
- ❖ **Development:** Review the basic skills and fundamentals of baseball. Encourage children to practice them on their own. Congratulate good performance to promote a

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sense of accomplishment. Objectively correct mistakes by referencing back to and reinforcing fundamental skills. Keep it simple.

- ❖ **Preparation:** Keep the games interesting and moving at a good pace by being prepared. Examples: Have a defensive plan ready for each game, make sure your players are ready to bat on offense, keep track of who your catcher will be and make sure they are dressed and ready for the following inning.
- ❖ **Motivation:** Motivate players through positive reinforcement. Keep practices and games moving and active in order to maintain player's attention. Ask players what they are going to do in certain potential situations to keep their minds in the game.
- ❖ **Unique Talents:** Baseball is a unique sport. It draws on a wide variety of physical and mental skills of the players. Every player has unique talents that can be improved through instruction and individual attention.
- ❖ **Role Model:** Portray the behaviors you're trying to develop at all times.

Playing Rules

1. **Games.** Games consist of five (5) innings with a 1 hour 30 minute time limit. No new inning is to start after 8:00PM. All games are to commence at 6:30PM.
2. **Home Team Responsibilities.** The home team is to supply three game balls. The home team is to prepare the diamond and put field equipment away at the end of the game. For CMBA Teams, this includes locking up bases etc. in designated blue boxes.
3. **Innings.** An inning consists of each team batting until there are 3 outs recorded or a maximum of 5 runs, whichever comes first.
4. **Field.** 60 foot base paths will be used in the Rookie League. The coach will pitch from 25'.
5. **Offense.**
 - 5.1. All players will bat regardless of whether they played in the field in the previous inning.
 - 5.2. Players are to wear a batting helmet when they are batting, on deck and base running. Helmets must fit properly. Anyone violating this rule will not be able to play in future games.
 - 5.3. **At-Bats.** There are no walks in Rookie Baseball. Coaches pitch to their own teams. All pitches should be overhand. Coaches should pitch from one knee. An at bat will consist of; a safe hit, a fly out, ground out, three swinging strikes, or five pitches, whichever come first. There is no bunting allowed in the Rookie League.
 - 5.3. **Coach hit by batted ball.** The ball is dead, it is not counted as a pitch, players return to previously occupied base.
 - 5.4. **Base running.** Runners can advance at their own peril on a ball hit to the infield. On a clean hit into the outfield, runners can and should be encouraged to advance additional bases, but must stop advancing once the ball is brought back into the infield. Runners more than half way to a base may take the base; otherwise must go back to previous base. Umpire has final ruling in this instance.
A ball that enters the outfield as the result of a fielding or throwing error should not be considered an outfield hit, and the runners should be held to one base. NOTE: We want

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kids to learn to run the bases aggressively (i.e. not base-to-base), but at the same time we don't want them to be crazy. We should be teaching them to pick up the ball in the outfield and making decisions and/or listening to the base coaches.

Base runners should be coached to recognize different base running situations. For example: double play possibilities, how to react differently to ground balls vs. fly balls with less than 2 outs to avoid getting "doubled-up".

- 5.5 Bunting is not allowed. The infield fly rule will NOT be used. Pinch runners are not allowed except in the case of an injury

6. Defense

6.1. **Recording outs.** When a runner is out he will be removed from the bases. Multiple outs on a single play are allowed. Players should be coached on recognizing double play opportunities, what base to throw to, and when there are force-outs vs. tag outs. Coaches should talk to infielders prior to pitches about "where the play is" if it's hit to them. Once the ball is hit, we want the kids to make the decisions; although coaches can help by giving verbal assistance (please don't yell across the field).

6.2. **Infield Positions.** The infield will consist of the 6 basic positions: Pitcher, Catcher, 1B, 2B, 3B, SS. There will be only 1 pitcher and he will stand beside the Opposing Coach (Pitcher) on either side.

The catcher must wear the protective gear including helmet, face-mask, chest protectors and shin pads. All players catching must wear a cup.

Players should be coached to play the correct fielding positions (no standing on or right next to the bases) and move to the bag to get outs once the ball is in play.

Free substitution of players is allowed.

6.3. **Outfield Positions.** The outfielders must stay beyond the edge of the infield.

Outfielders should be coached to primarily back up the infield and chase well hit balls. Agreement must be made between coaches on number of outfielders in play during league play.

6.4 **Over throws.** In the event of an overthrow which goes out of the field of play, the base runners are entitled to one additional base. The umpire and coaches should agree prior to the start of the game as to the out of play lines. During the game, the umpire is the only one who can determine if the ball is out of play and additional bases should be awarded. On an overthrow which remains in the field of play, the runners may advance at their own risk

7. Managing the Game

7.1. **Team.** A minimum of seven players is necessary for an official game. If a team cannot field at least 7 players then they must forfeit the game

7.2 **Coaches.** Head coaches and Umpires should discuss ground rules prior to any games

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and mutually agree on how any special situations will be handled (e.g. standing water in the field, players arriving late, reminder of infielder and outfielder placement, etc.)

The offensive team may have 2 adult base coaches a 1st base coach, a 3rd base coach. The defensive team may have 2 coaches in the field to assist with positioning and reinforcing fundamentals. Both team coaches are responsible for making sure that players are paying attention to the game to avoid injury. An additional coach needs to oversee the dugout/bench area (batter safety as well as catcher).

7.2. **Equipment & Safety.** Equipment must be stored in an area out of play during the game.

During games, bench players must stay in the designated bench area while waiting for their turn to bat. No one should be climbing the fence or leaving the field area. Adult supervision is required in the bench area.

An area for the on-deck batter should be designated away from the bench, with only the on-deck batter allowed.

Throwing equipment is not allowed. A player throwing any piece of equipment should be informed that it is against Rookie Baseball rules. If the action is repeated by the same player, he can be removed from the game. At this age it's common for batters to inadvertently throw a bat after swinging at a ball. Regardless of intent, this rule needs to be reinforced for safety.

7.3 **Dress.** Players should wear team issued shirt, caps, baseball pants and socks. Caps must be worn forward and shirts must be tucked in during games.

Molded rubber cleats, sneakers or all-purpose shoes are required. No metal cleats.

Officiating and Rule Interpretation

1. The Host Association or Host team must co-ordinate the scheduling of Umpires.
2. The home plate umpire has the final determination in the event of a disputed call or a difference of opinion. There is to be no arguing over rules or umpires' calls.
2. Any disputes over rules will be resolved by the umpire, applying the rules as they exist. If any coach, umpire or parent has a differing opinion on the rules as written, they are encouraged to bring this to the attention of CMBA. Any such requests will be discussed prior to the next season, and all involved should attend.
3. NO ONE, other than the CMBA Executive Committee in consultation with other Associations participating in the Camrose Community Rookie Baseball Division, may alter the rules at any time. Any requests for rule change should be made to the Executive Committee. The umpires are not authorized to change the rules, and should not be put in the position to do so.