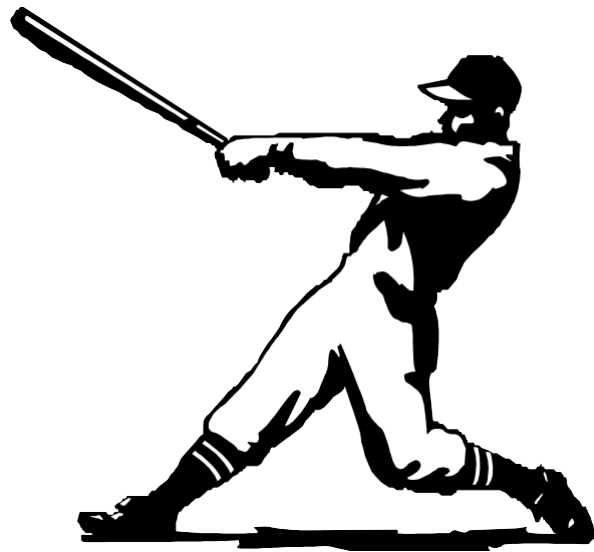




Hudson Youth Baseball Major Division Rules & Information



Revision 8: April 23, 2023

VISION STATEMENT

Cal Ripken, Jr. and Babe Ruth League have always shared a common vision: To provide every youngster the opportunity to play baseball and have fun. Teaching them to play "The Ripken Way" will assure the accomplishment of that goal.

GOALS

"It's our goal that each youngster who plays in the Cal Ripken Baseball Division will not only learn the basics of the game but will also experience the same level of excitement Cal Ripken felt every day he put on his uniform to get ready to play. There's nothing else like it!"

OBJECTIVES

The Babe Ruth Baseball and Cal Ripken programs, above all, are for youth. It especially tries to make better citizens through proper supervision of regulation competitive baseball in addition to promoting mental and physical development. In adopting rules, in establishing standards and in all planning, the primary consideration is the welfare of the participants.

Code of Ethics for Players & Coaches:

1. It is the duty of the manager and coach to be in control of his/her players at all times in order to prevent any unsportsmanlike act toward opponents, officials and/or spectators.
2. Managers and coaches are expected to comply wholeheartedly with the intent and spirit of the rules. The deliberate teaching of players to violate the rules is indefensible, and could lead to coaches being suspended or expelled from the league.
3. Managers and coaches should teach their players to act in a dignified manner, to show respect for the game, the officials, their opponents, their coaches and their teammates.
4. Managers and coaches should limit their discussions with umpires to the interpretations of the rules and not challenge umpire decisions involving judgment, such as ball/strike and safe/out.
5. Cursing, obscene language, and malicious or personal remarks should not be tolerated at any time. Rather, the players should spend their energies encouraging their teammates. It is highly recommended that coaches not address players on the other team during a game even in a friendly way, due to the possibility of distracting them from the game and instructions from their own coaches.
6. Managers and coaches must recognize that they serve as role models. They set the standard with regard to their team's behavior. Therefore, managers and coaches must refrain from any personal action that might incite players or spectators to unsportsmanlike behavior, such as arguing with umpires, taunting opponents, or venting frustrations by throwing equipment.

Pre-Game & Post-Game Maintenance Duties for Managers & Coaches:

1. Pre-Game: Line the fields, i.e. create the foul line from home to first and home to third; and create the batters' boxes and coaches' restriction line.
2. Post-Game: Clean the bench area. Ensure all trash ends up in a trash can.
3. Post-Game: Clean out the base boxes and put the plugs back in.
4. Post-Game: Rake/Drag the infield after every practice/game.
5. Post-Game: Ensure bases are returned to their proper storage container.
6. Post-Game: Report games scores on the HYBS web site. (Home team's job)

Game Rules for the Major League Level:

Section 1 -- Game Preliminaries

1. One coach from each team should always meet with the plate umpire before the game starts to discuss the following:
 - Ground rules for the field
 - Key exceptions to OBR (Official Baseball Rules). They key things to tell the umpire include:
 - Infield Fly: **YES**
 - Catcher's Interference: **YES**
 - "Slide or Avoid": **YES**
 - Headfirst Slides: **NO**, only back to bags.
 - Balks: **NO**
 - Dropped 3rd Strikes: **YES**

Note: MBUA umpires are trained to officiate "live ball" under full baseball rules with little to no modification. Basically, they're used to high school rules. It's incumbent upon coaches to clarify with the umps that we have significant differences at the Major league level from high school. Some of these rules, like those cited above, can be clarified prior to the game. Others might need to be self-enforced because they don't lend themselves well to a pre-game discussion.

2. A coaching staff for any given game shall consist of no more than four (4) adults (i.e. 18 years old or more). No adult is to participate as a coach in any game (or practice) unless s/he has been CORI'd and approved by the league for participation. The 4 adults present during a game consist of a head coach/manager, two base coaches and a scorekeeper.

3. Other than the players and coaches, no one else should be on the bench, in the dugout or in the bench area interacting with game participants. This includes parents and other adult relatives of players, siblings of players, friends of players, and players from other teams.
4. The coaches from the home team are responsible to ensure that umpires have three brand new baseballs – the MacGregor 74 CAL baseballs and not the safe-soft balls that are used at the lower levels.
5. A minimum of eight (8) players will constitute a full team. When a coach knows that s/he will be missing players, which may result in a forfeit, that coach must contact the Majors Director. The game can be re-scheduled if the Majors Director, the HYBS VP of Baseball and both coaches can agree on the details and an umpire can be arranged. At game time, however, if a team is unable to field a sufficient number of players at the game's scheduled start time, that team will forfeit the game. Use of players other than those on the official team roster or those loaned from the opposing team is not allowed. When a game is forfeited, a "sportsmanship game" should be played for the purpose of getting players "reps". In such cases, it is ok for a team to lend fielders to the other team. The results of the sportsmanship game are irrelevant. The game goes as a forfeit. In no case should a non-HYBS player be allowed to participate in a sportsmanship game for liability reasons.
6. In cases of bad weather, the league president (or another league official designated by the president) will decide whether a game can start. Once it starts, only the umpire(s) can delay it or postpone it. See "Suspended Games" in Section 2, Paragraph 2.

7. ***Equipment & Uniform:***

- **Bats:**
 - USA Baseball Marking
 - 2 5/8" Barrel Maximum
 - No BBCOR Bats
 - Coaches will be responsible for monitoring bat compliance.
- Athletic protective cup **MUST BE WORN** by all catchers.
- **NO** metal spikes are allowed.
- Players must be in full uniform and wear their uniforms (always including hats) correctly. Shirts must be tucked in and hats must face forward (not backwards, sideways, or inside-out).

Section 2 -- Game Limitations:

1. **Official Game:** Three and one-half (3 ½) innings completed with the home team ahead, or four (4) full innings with the home team behind will be considered a complete game if a game is “called” due to darkness, weather, etc. Any inning played beyond this and not completed; the score will revert back to the previous full inning. Example: Score is tied after 4 complete innings. Visitors take the lead in the Top of the 5th. While home team is at bat in the bottom of the 5th, ump calls the game due to rain. Result: The 5th inning never happened. The score was tied after 4 full innings. 4 full innings is considered a complete game, so the game ends in a tie.
2. **Suspended Games:** If a game needs to be stopped due to weather or darkness before it becomes an official game, the game will restart at a later date. When the restarted game is played, it will start exactly where the game was stopped, including the player at-bat, baserunners, balls, strikes and outs. Example: Ump calls the game in the 2nd inning. This does not meet the official game standard, so the game is suspended and picked up from this exact point when the makeup is scheduled. Both coaches should note their scorebooks accordingly. It is the responsibility of the two managers to contact the Majors Director and the HYBS VP of Baseball with the rescheduled date/time.
3. **Time Limit:** The top of a new inning **shall not commence two hours or more since the game start time has passed.** If there are differences among the coaches as to what time it is exactly, the umpire will be the arbiter of the time.
4. **Mercy Rule:** 6 runs per inning. No exception in the final inning. This rule will be altered for playoff purposes when coaches are called together to discuss playoff rules. Teams do not need to play the 6th inning if there is no hope of a comeback due to the mercy rule. However, the losing team will bat in the 5th no matter what. For example, after 4 full innings, the home team is ahead 13-0. The visitor could score, at most, 6 in the 5th and 6 in the 6th and therefore, has no chance of a comeback win. The game is NOT over at this point. The visitor will nevertheless bat in the 5th and score, at most, 6 runs, after which time the game shall be considered over. Coaches are under no circumstances to negotiate a different arrangement about how long a game will last. This level is about player repetitions and not about giving up because a win is unattainable.
5. **Protests:** There are no protests on umpires’ interpretations of rules at this level. There will be a mechanism for protests at playoffs. However, because all Major league teams make the playoffs anyway and makeups/reschedules are difficult to arrange, protests of Major league games are not in the league’s best interest. Whatever the umpire says, stands. However, coaches should always work together to help umpires on calls that involve our modified rules.

Section 3 -- Player Limitations & Substitutions:

1. **Late-Arriving Players:** Notwithstanding the forfeit rule (Section 1 – Paragraph 6), any players arriving late should adhere to the following with respect to the batting order:

- Arrives **before** his/her spot in the lineup has been reached. Example: The player is shown in the lineup to be batting 7th. Player arrives while the 6 hitter is at-bat for the first time. That late-arriving player is immediately on deck and will take that 7 spot.
- Arrives **after** his/her spot in the lineup has been reached. Assume the team consists of 11 players + the late arrival. Example: The player is scheduled in the lineup to be batting 7th. The player arrives while the 9 hitter is batting. This means the coach batted the 6 hitter, skipped the 7 hitter because s/he wasn't there, and followed with the 8 hitter and now 9 hitter. The 10 and 11 hitter will then bat and this late arrival will be slotted into the 12 spot and will remain in the 12 spot for the game's duration. **Under no circumstance will an out be declared for a scheduled hitter arriving late or not showing up at all.**

2. **Players Leaving the Game Early:** When a player needs to leave early, his/her coach will inform the other team and when that player's at-bat comes up again, it will be skipped. No out will be declared for that spot being skipped.

3. **Substitutions:** Free substitution -- players may be taken out or re-entered into a game at any time, except for pitcher, which has specific governing rules in Paragraph 6 of this Section. See also exception regarding injured players in Paragraph 4 of this Section.

No player will sit twice until every player has sat once. By the end of the fourth inning, all players must have played a minimum of two (2) innings in the field. By the end of the sixth inning, all players must have played at least four (4) innings in the field. Each player must play a minimum of two (2) innings in the infield (pitcher and catcher count as infield). These requirements apply weather permitting. Coaches will exchange a player position plan & batting order sheet (template on HYBS website) prior to the start of each game. Knowing some games will not go the full 6 innings, the purpose of the player position plan & batting order sheet is to document that it was the intent of the coach to adhere to these playing time rules.

4. **Injured Players:** Injured, for the purposes of this rule, includes players who are feeling ill. If a player is injured while on offense and cannot continue, a courtesy runner shall be used. The choice of the courtesy runner is not up to the coaches but should instead be the last runner to have made an out, even if that means looking back to the previous inning. Because of the free substitution rule for fielders, players injured on defense can be substituted for by any player on the bench. Injured players need not play in the field and teams who have players who decline to play in the field due to injury are "absolved" from the playing time requirements. However, if an injured player cannot take his/her at bat when it comes up again in the order, that player cannot bat or play a field position for the rest of the game. Again, no outs are ever recorded for skipped batters.

5. **Catcher Courtesy Runner:** When the offense has two outs and one of the runners on base is its catcher for next inning, that catcher/runner should be removed for a courtesy runner, i.e. the last player to have made an out.

6. *Pitchers:*

- Any player may pitch up to **THREE** continuous innings or **50 pitches*** in one game, but no more than **SIX** innings or **100 pitches*** in a week.
 - A pitcher can exceed the maximum pitch limit **IF** they are in the middle of an at-bat. Once the at-bat is over, the pitcher must be removed from the mound.
- For the purposes of this rule, a week is defined as Monday through Sunday.
- An inning is defined as one pitch thrown from the pitcher's mound even as a warm-up
- Any player once removed from the pitcher's position cannot return as a pitcher.
- A pitcher **MUST** have 1 day's rest in between appearances. A pitcher **cannot** pitch in back-to-back games in consecutive days.

7. *Catchers:*

- No player may play the position of Catcher for more than **FOUR innings** in one game.

Section 4 -- Modifications to Playing Rules:

1. *Steals & Leading:*

- a. Leading is allowed.
- b. Runners can steal 2B, 3B and home.
- c. Delayed steals are allowed.

2. *Wild Throws:* Base advancement on balls that are thrown out of bounds become "dead" and the umpire will award bases according to OBR.

- If the wild throw was "first play by an infielder", all runners including the batter-runner get two bases from where they were before the play happened.
 - **Example:** The batter would get 2B. A runner on 2B would get home. It doesn't matter whether they were attempting or had the intention to advance.
- If the wild throw is not "first play by an infielder", it is still a two-base award, but that award is governed by where the runners were when the fielder released the throw.

Note: If a Pitcher steps off the mound, attempts a pick-off and throws it out of bounds, that's "first play by an infielder" and results in a two-base award. For example, a runner on 1B would get 3B. If he picks off from the pitching rubber and throws it out of play, it's a one base award.

3. *Slide or Avoid:* Runners need to "slide or avoid" if a play is being made on them. Coaches should encourage them to slide while teaching them how to do it properly. For the purposes of the rules, any runner who does not slide or attempt to avoid a tag and, in the umpire's opinion, that lack of slide-or-avoid caused the runner to be safe, the umpire shall call 'dead ball', declare that runner out and place other runners where the umpire sees fit. Typical examples would be if the lack of slide-or-avoid caused a fielder to shy away from the tag, shy away from the throw, or cause the ball to be jarred out of a glove. Enforcement of this rule is entirely at the umpire's discretion. If the runner doesn't slide or avoid but beats the throw to the bag, that runner should not be called out. "Avoid" means attempting to allude a tag (without committing a baseline violation).

4. *Headfirst Slides:* Headfirst slides are allowed only going back to a bag, not into a bag. If a runner

slides heads first into a bag, umpires should let that play and any other plays conclude and then declare that runner out.

5. **Balks:** Balks will **NOT** be called. If a balk occurs, it is a dead ball and the umpire will warn the pitcher of the infraction. If the infraction is violated repeatedly, the umpire has the authority to remove the pitcher from the game, as a pitcher only.

Note: Balks are *delayed* dead balls. If a pitcher balks but continues to deliver a pitch, and as a result of that pitch, every runner, including the batter-runner gets one base, the balk never happened.

Example: If the pitch is delivered and the a pitch that the batter hits over the fence. Result? No balk. Grand slam.

Section 5 – Postgame

1. **Field & Bench Maintenance:** Coaches are responsible for cleaning up the bench areas, putting the bases away and taking care of the field as detailed in the section of these rules called, “Pre-Game & Post-Game Maintenance Duties for Managers & Coaches”.
2. **Report Scores:** Home team is responsible for posting scores on the web site.
3. **Report Pitch Counts:** Both teams are responsible for submitting their game day pitch count tracking sheets to the Majors Pitch Count Tracker.
4. **Standings:** League standings will be based on 2 points for a win, 1 point for a tie, 0 points for loss. If there is a tie for a place in the standings, the tie breaker will be head-to-head between the teams; if still a tie, then runs against for the season; if still a tie, then run differential between the games played between the tied teams. A combination of the above items may need to apply if there are 3-way ties or more.
5. **Playoffs:** All teams make the playoffs. The playoff rules and format will be determined at a coaches meeting run by the Majors Director and the HYBS VP of Baseball.

04-23-23

Modified: Section 3, Rule 6, OLD “Any player may pitch up to **TWO** continuous innings or **50 pitches*** in one game, but no more than **FOUR** innings or **100 pitches*** in a week.” NEW “Any player may pitch up to **THREE** continuous innings or **50 pitches*** in one game, but no more than **SIX** innings or **100 pitches*** in a week.”

Added: Section 3, Rule 7

Addendum: Commonly Misunderstood Rules:

The purpose of this section is to provide coaches some guidance on items that are often seen at the Cal Ripken league level but maybe not nearly as often at higher levels. Even the most experienced players and coaches often aren't aware that certain things they thought were true in the rules are actually just myths. These are actual rule book rules, not necessarily directly related to the HYBS exceptions.

- “The hands are part of the bat.” If a batter gets hit with a pitch on the hands that are gripping the bat, does it still count as a Hit-By-Pitch (HBP) with the award of first base, or is it just a foul ball? First, there is no such thing as “the hands are part of the bat.” The rules are far simpler than that. Only two questions need to be asked. Did the batter get hit with the pitch? And was the pitch otherwise a ball? If both are yes, the ball is dead and the batter gets first base. So, if the batter checked a swing and got hit off the fists, it's still an HBP. If the batter gets hit with a pitched ball but the pitch was a strike (either swinging or called) the ball is dead, runners cannot advance, and the pitch is called a strike with no HBP awarded.
- The pitcher delivers one in the dirt. The batter swings, makes contact, and hits the ball fair. What's the right call? Answer: Fair ball. No one doubts if the batter swings and misses, it's a strike. So, if the batter hits it fair off a bounce, it's fair. If the batter hits it foul off a bounce, it's foul. If the pitch hits the ground and then hits the batter, and the batter did not swing, then it's an HBP. In short, the pitch hitting the ground is meaningless. It's just like any pitch.
- Fair vs. Foul. A fly ball is hit down the right field line. The right-fielder's feet are in fair territory, the ball is coming down in foul territory. The ball hits off his glove and falls to the ground. Fair or Foul? Answer: Foul. Fair or foul is all about the position of the ball, not the position of the fielder. It's basically the opposite of the football rule for wide receivers where sideline catches are determined in bounds based on the feet and not the ball. In baseball, it's about the position of the ball.
- Two runners occupying the same base. This happens often during rundowns or some other odd play. Coaches often believe that when two runners occupy the same base, one of them is automatically out, yet they're usually not sure which one. The answer is neither one of them are *automatically* out. The trail runner is out, but only if tagged. For example, R3 is caught in a rundown between 3B and home. The runner on 2B, R2, advances to 3B during this rundown. R3 makes it safely back to 3B, so both R3 and R2 are standing on 3B at the same time. R2 is out if tagged, but not automatically.
- Base line violations, a.k.a. “out of the baseline”. Runners establish their own baseline. The baseline is not the direct line between each bag. It's the line between where they're running from and where they're running to. They're only “out of the baseline” if they deviate from that established line more than 3 feet in order to avoid a tag. If they're not avoiding a tag, they can run in a zig zag if they want to.
- Foul Ball vs. Foul Tip. The key things to remember are that foul balls are dead balls and runners cannot advance. Foul tips are the opposite. If a batter barely makes contact with a pitch that then goes back and directly into the catcher's glove, it's a foul tip and it's also a pitch that runners can steal on because it's “live”. If the catcher drops that same pitch, it's not a foul tip but rather a foul ball, i.e. dead, with no runner advancement allowed.