

Wrigley Baseball Rookie Rules

Rookie Division: The Rookie Division is comprised of players 8 & under. Players cannot turn 9 before May 1 of the current year. (Fall season would fall under the next coming year). This division is designed to prepare kids for the Minors Division. The pitching machine provides a consistent location of a 43-44 mph pitch. In local league play, the home team shall provide the pitching machine for a game. In tournament play, the host league provides the machines.

Dugouts: Manager, coaches, rostered players and a team mom only may be in the dugout.

Coaches: Babe Ruth League, Inc. rostered managers and coaches in all divisions are required to complete coaching education and certification, and a league nationwide background check.

Weather: The pitching machine cannot be used in the rain. This goes for practice or game. Recovery requires no rain for an extended period that permits the ground to dry. The extended period should be at least 15 minutes.

Field dimensions: Standard Cal Ripken Division base length of 60 ft. The pitching machine is placed at 46 ft. with a speed of 43-44 mph (established when ball crosses home plate). The front two legs of the machine must be placed in front of the pitching rubber (best if up against the front edge of the rubber or at least the front edge of any underground base for the pitching rubber).

Bats: The bat may not exceed 33" in length, and the bat barrel may not exceed 2 5/8" in diameter. Only non-wood bats marked with USA will be allowed. Wood bats are allowed. If any bat in Cal Ripken Baseball or Babe Ruth Baseball cannot be clearly identified for its make and model, then the bat should be removed from the game.

Pitching Machine Operation: Only coaches should operate the pitching machine. Each coach operating the machine should have league-approved certification. A parent or player should never operate the pitching machine. A pitching machine that is defective should not be used.

Equipment: Proper equipment for the player includes a protective cup. Only (NOCSAE) approved helmets may be used. Any offensive player not in the dugout must wear a batting helmet. On defense, the catcher must wear the full gear. No metal cleats are allowed.

Playing Rules:

Roster: 10- to 15-player roster with option of all players batting in order (or 11 with EP).

Extra Player: (EP) can be used as the 11th batter. If a team elects this option, it must start with the EP and end with the EP or forfeit the game. [Both teams in a game are not required to use this option.]

Outfield: There will be four outfielders. ALL outfielders must remain in the grass area of the outfield and cannot be positioned in the infield at any time.

Pitcher: The player that assumes the pitcher's position must remain within the "mound" or 8-ft.- diameter circle, behind the machine, and on one side or the other until the ball is hit. If the pitcher violates any of these requirements, then (1) The play will stand, even if the pitcher is involved in the play, and (2) The umpire(s) will warn the violating pitcher's manager that if that same pitcher violates one or both requirements again, he/she will have to be removed from the pitcher's position. The player can assume another position but cannot re-enter as a pitcher in that game. The player may not be ejected from the game for this infraction. [NOTE: The Pitcher position is only a reference to a "Fielder's" Position (does not throw a pitch). Therefore, there is NO "Number of Innings Pitched" rule for the player in the position. A "Courtesy Runner" is not allowed for the pitcher.]

Catcher: The catcher takes the catcher's normal position in full gear.

Number of players: The minimum number of players is eight. Forfeit time is fifteen minutes after scheduled start time. A pitcher and catcher are MANDATORY.

Protest: A Judgment call cannot be protested. All protests must be filed with the chief umpire (if applicable) immediately. Play will be stopped until a ruling is given by the protest committee. Only the manager may make a protest. The decision of the protest committee is final.

Batting (league play): Each batter has five attempts to put the ball into play. If the batter fouls the fifth pitch, the batter will receive more pitches as necessary if each is fouled. Bunting is permitted off the pitching machine. There are no walks. A player hit by pitch shall be awarded first base.

Live ball hits pitching machine: In the case a live ball hits the pitching machine, the pitching machine should be treated as an umpire. According to Official Baseball Rules 5.09(f) and 6.08(d.) if a fair ball touches an umpire working in the infield after it has bounded past, or over, the pitcher, it is a dead ball. If a batted ball is deflected by a fielder in fair territory and hits a runner or an umpire while still in flight and then caught by an infielder it shall not be a catch, but the ball shall remain in play.

Pitching machine adjustment: The pitching machine should only be adjusted between half innings. Fine adjustments up or down, i.e. in the vertical direction only can be made between pitches, provided that "check pitches" are not required. (A "check pitch" is one where the batter is taken out of the batter's box.) The speed at which the pitching machine delivers the ball shall be constant and unchanged throughout the game. If both coaches agree, then the machine speed can be adjusted however (especially for a

player that is having trouble hitting the ball). Coaches need to work together on this to make it a better experience for everyone (hitters making contact, fielders getting chances to make plays, etc.).

Game Length: 6 innings (5 and one-half if the home team is ahead) or 90 minutes, whichever comes first. The official time is taken when the previous inning ends, not when the next inning starts. So, for example, if the fifth inning ends at 89 minutes, the sixth is played and completed. At the first call to "Play", the umpire shall note and announce the start time of the game according to his watch, in accordance with Official Baseball Rule 9.04(a)(7). This shall be recorded by the official scorekeeper. If teams are tied through six innings, then no game will result in a tie.

Batting: If the batter fouls the 5th pitch, batter will receive pitches as long as batter continues to foul pitches. [Note: Any fouled bunt after two strikes is an out.] The batter is out if the batter swings on a third strike and misses the ball.

Scoring: When the Sixth run of a half inning occurs, the half inning shall be considered over, even if the batting team has no outs. The game shall be considered over if one team is ahead by ten runs after four innings (3-1/2 for home team) or eight after five innings. Ties stand in league play.

Stealing: Each runner must stay in contact with his base until the ball is hit. Stealing is not permitted.

Infield fly rule: There is no infield fly rule.

Timeout request: In accordance with the rules of baseball, a timeout request by a coach or a player is granted only by the umpire at the umpire's discretion. Before a timeout shall be granted to the defensive team in a live ball situation, the defensive team must cause the offense to cease play. This means the defense must force the base runner(s) into a non-advancing position. This is considered to be an important component of baseball, particularly in postseason tournament play, that defensive players learn the importance of stopping advancement of base runners. The umpire should always call timeout in a definitive manner to end play when he is satisfied that play has ended. At such time, the ball should be returned to the pitcher. In this case, runners are not permitted to advance if there is an overthrow back to the pitcher.

Defensive Coaches: Two defensive coaches are permitted in foul territory, 15 feet beyond 1st and 3rd base.

Scoring/Gamechanger: Please keep an accurate score using the last name of the players, as these are required to be turned in as proof of eligibility for all-stars.

Runner: A courtesy runner may be used for the catcher (keeping game pace up); runner must be whoever made the last out if coach chooses to use a runner.

Contact rule: If a runner attempting to reach home plate intentionally and maliciously runs into a defensive player in the area of home plate, he will be called out on the play and ejected from the game. The objective of this rule is to penalize the offensive team

for crashing the defensive player, rather than trying to reach home plate. Obviously, this is an umpire's judgment call.

Dead ball:

A. The ball will be declared dead when the defensive team stops the lead runner, or the runner abandons the effort to advance. Once play has been stopped, no other runners may advance beyond the last base tagged.

B. The ball will be declared dead when a player is injured and in the umpire's judgment is unable to continue the play.

C. If a batted fair ball hits any part of the pitching machine without touching any defensive player first, the ball is immediately dead. The batter will be awarded first base. All other runners return to the base they occupied before the ball was hit unless forced to advance as a result of the batter being awarded first base (Rule 5.09f and 7.04a). If a batted fair ball is first touched by a defensive player and then hits any part of the pitching machine, it is a live ball.

D. If a batted fair ball touches an umpire on fair territory before it touches an infielder including the pitcher or touches an umpire before it has passed an infielder other than the pitcher, the ball is dead, and the batter is awarded first base. All other runners return to the base that they occupied before the ball was hit unless forced to advance as a result of the batter being awarded first base (Rule 5.09f and 7.04a).

E. If a thrown ball hits any part of the pitching machine, it is a live ball.

Bunting: Bunting is allowed. However, NO FAKE BUNTING IS ALLOWED. If the batter offers to bunt, then the batter must bunt the ball or pull the bat back to take the pitch. If the batter offers to bunt, pulls the bat back, and then swings at the pitch, the batter will automatically be declared out by the umpire.

Courtesy Runner: The catcher may have a courtesy runner run for them every time that they are up to bat. It is required that with two outs, a courtesy runner is used for catcher. Each courtesy runner used must be a player who is not in the game at the time. Each courtesy runner may only pinch run once per inning.

Base stealing: Base stealing is not permitted. Runner(s) leaving their base(s) before the batter hits the ball or before the ball reaches home plate shall be regulated by the Special Base Running Rule found in the current edition of Babe Ruth League Baseball rule book. The runner(s) will not be called out.

Baseballs: Must use approved Diamond Babe Ruth baseballs.

Ten-run rule: The ten-run rule (4 complete innings, or 3-1/2 innings if home team is ahead) will be in effect (tournaments only).

Umpire: The umpire(s) can declare “no pitch” if the umpire judges that it is not reasonably hittable. This is a judgment call and thus not subject to protest.