

# Merrimack Cal Ripken Baseball League Rules



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## **Article I: League Rules**

- The Board of Directors will govern all league rules. Rules not specified within this document are specified within the Cal Ripken Division Rules and Regulations. Rules not specified within the Cal Ripken Division Rules and Regulations are specified within the Official Baseball Rules.
- The rules contained herein are the official league rules. In addition to league rules, the Cal Ripken Division of Babe Ruth Baseball Rules and Regulations shall apply as well as the Official Baseball Rules. The order of precedence shall be League Rules, Cal Ripken Division of Babe Ruth Baseball Rules and Regulations, and Official Baseball Rules.

## **Article II: Registration**

- All registration fees must be paid prior to being rostered, and/or the league draft (if applicable).
- Refunds of league fees will be issued to a player (or parent/guardian of the player) in accordance with league policy found on the league website. A player who quits, or is subsequently banned from playing due to violation of one, or more, code of conduct(s), will not be eligible for a refund of league registration fee.

## **Article III: Player evaluation / Draft Process**

- Each year the league will conduct a draft for the major's and AAA levels.
  - AA, Rookie & T-Ball players will be assigned by the league VP.
- Players registered or requesting to play at the AAA and Majors levels may be evaluated before the league draft process.
- To be eligible for selection, a prospective player must have registered prior to the draft date.

- Parents may petition the league for an exemption from any minimum age requirements before the season begins. Any player who wishes to be considered for a league above, or below, their designated league e.g. request to “play up”, must be submitted using the league-approved form found on the league website. Approval of petition is at the discretion of the League Board.
- The Major’s league will draft first, followed by minor league. All 12-year old players must be drafted to a major’s roster. A minor’s (AAA) team will draft any player not selected to a major’s team roster during the draft.
- The draft will utilize a random drawing to determine draft order and will use a serpentine draft order process whereby the person with the last draft pick in the first round will have the first draft pick in the second round. The teams would be in normal order in odd rounds and reversed in even rounds.
- Siblings\* of players already on a roster when the draft begins can be protected for the first two rounds but must be selected as the third-round pick in order to be protected. The same holds true for manager’s children. If there is more than one sibling, or manager’s child trying out, those children must be selected in the draft rounds immediately following the 3rd round, that is, the fourth round for a second child, fifth round for a third child, etc, if it is desired to protect those children.
- No trades are permitted for either players or draft choices.

**\* Natural, adopted, or documented legal guardianship.**

## **Article IV: Rosters**

- All major league rosters must have a minimum of ten (10) players, provided there are sufficient registrants.
- If a roster opening is created when a player is unable or unwilling to complete the regular season due to injury this must be reported to the League President/VP.
- If during the course of the season a major league roster opening occurs due to player injury/illness that will remain open for at least 50% of the season, any minor’s team player is eligible to be “brought up” onto said major team’s roster.
- A player who quits or is removed from a team due to violation of conduct code, may not return for the remainder of the season.

# Article V: Local League Rules

## Section 1: Local League Options

The Babe Ruth League, Inc. Baseball Rules and Regulations and Official Playing Rules” – Cal Ripken Division allows a number of local league options to be adopted by each league. The following are the options chosen by the League:

- Dual participation by a player on a team or in a league of another baseball program is only allowed for travel/AAU private baseball teams. Playing in another town league is not permitted.
- Regular season games at the major’s and AAA level will be officially called after a full six innings, or 2 hours in duration, whichever is first, unless the game is called by the umpire (darkness, weather).
  - No new inning may begin after 1 hour and 45 minutes.
  - Time limits are not enforced during playoffs.
  - All players will be placed in the batting order and must bat (roster bat).
    - If a player arrives after the first pitch of the game, that player will assume the last spot in the lineup, no out needs to be recorded for a missed “at-bat”.
    - If a manager wishes to have a player who arrives late in a batting order position other than the last spot, they will need to take an out for each missed at-bat.
- Games at the AA/Rookie level will be officially called after a full six innings or 1.5 hours in duration, whichever is first, unless the game is called by the managers before then (darkness, weather).
  - All players will be placed in the batting order and must bat (roster bat).
- Games at the T-ball level will be officially called after 1 hour in duration, provided both teams have a final “at bat”.
  - All players will be placed in the batting order and must bat (roster bat).
- The League will use Cal Ripken tournament pitching rules during all regular season and playoff games. If a pitcher exceeds either the daily maximum, or the required rest period, the game will be forfeited regardless of the score.
  - Pitch counts must be kept by each and manager and recorded in the score book and on the league website

Age	Daily Maximum	Minimum Rest Period		
	(Pitches in a Game and/or Day)	0 Days	1 Day	2 days
7-8	50	1-20	21-35	36-50
9-10	75	1-40	41-65	66-75
11-12	85	1-40	41-65	66-85
13-15	95	1-45	46-75	76-95
16-18	105	1-45	46-75	76-105

- A home run is defined as a ball being hit over the outfield fence in fair territory. When netting is present, the ball must clear the lower fence in the air to be considered a home run.
- “Slash bunting” is prohibited. A slash bunt infraction will result in the batter being called out and the ball is dead.
- Headfirst sliding is not permitted, unless returning to the base in the case of a pick-off, or other similar action. If a runner attempting to reach a base intentionally slides headfirst, he/she will be called out on the play and if deemed appropriate by the umpire, ejected from the game.
- Players must attempt to avoid contact with the opposing teams player(s) in “tag-out” situations. If, in the umpires judgment there is intentional contact, the runner may be called out. If the contact is deemed to be malicious, the runner may be called out and ejected.
- Jewelry: Is permitted, provided it is not a distraction or dangerous to the player or opposing team. Any item deemed unsafe/dangerous or a distraction by the umpire must be removed.
- Coaches and the manager of the home team prepare (bases, rake, and line) the fields before each game, coaches and managers of the visiting team prepare the field after the game.
- Penalty for violation of any rule contained in this section will result in automatic forfeiture of the game in which the violation occurred.

## **Section 2:**

### **Special League Rules - Major’s division**

- Maximum runs per inning:
  - Innings 1 through 5 run limit: 5
    - Note: If runners are on base and excess runs cross the plate before the third out, the play should finish but only score the 5th run before ending the inning.
  - Inning 6 or the “final” inning, if the game will not extend to 6 innings: No run limit.
- Maximum runs per game:
  - If, after 4 innings (3.5 innings if the home team is ahead) the winning team is ahead by 10 or more runs, the game is considered official, and will be called.
- Home team must provide 2 brand new “wrapped” game balls.
- Batters may wear a helmet with a partial face shield or no face shield, and are not required to wear a full-face mask.
- All available offensive players will bat in concurrent order.
- On-deck hitter must warm up beyond first or third base but not in line with throws to first or third.
- All players must play in the field a minimum of three innings, including two consecutive innings, in a full six inning game. All players must have entered the game by the third inning.
  - Failure to adhere to this will result in the game being forfeited.
- In the event a team will not have enough players to achieve a minimum roster size of 8

- players, they may request permission from the league VP and/or president to “bring up” a player from the minor league division to avoid forfeiture.
- It is recommended that this player supplement the team needs, and not replace regular rostered players.
  - Free substitutions of positional players is allowed.
    - Re-entry of a pitcher must conform to Cal Ripken rules.
    - If a pitcher is removed for an injury but can remain in the game, they may be re-entered provided they have not exceeded their pitch-count
  - The infield fly rule will be in effect.
  - Leading is allowed and stealing bases is allowed (including home plate), regardless of pitch count.
  - Runners may advance at their own risk in any situation once a ball is in-play.
  - Sliding (feet first) is required to avoid a tag at any base other than first. Failure to slide, or avoid a tag, will result in an out being called out.
  - Balks will be called, and the umpire may, but is not required, to provide one warning per game.
  - Manager/coach must ask for (and receive) a time out from the home plate umpire before visiting a pitcher on the mound.
    - Only one coach may visit the mound.
  - Scorebooks, electronic or hardcopy, must be kept for every game by each team. In the event of a disagreement, the home team book will be official.
  - Home team managers are responsible for entering game results on the league website. Both teams shall enter pitching stats on the website as soon as possible but no later than prior to the next game. Pitching stats include innings pitched and pitch count.
  - Both managers are required to meet the umpire at home plate together prior to the start of the game to determine the official start time and review rules (e.g. ball under fence calls).
  - Any time a manager requires clarification about rules, they should request time out from the umpire, and request to speak with the umpire who made the ruling. Only the manager may seek a rules clarification.
  - Umpires are “off duty” once a game is official.

### **Section 3:**

#### **Special League Rules - AAA**

- Maximum runs per inning:
  - Innings 1 through 5 run limit: 5
    - Note: If runners are on base and excess runs cross the plate before the third out, the play should finish but only score the 5th run before ending the inning.
  - Inning 6 or the “final” inning, if the game will not extend to 6 innings: No run limit.
- Maximum runs per game:
  - If, after 4 innings (3.5 innings if the home team is ahead) the winning team is ahead by 10 or more runs, the game is considered official, and will be called.
- Home team must provide 2 brand new “wrapped” game balls.
- Batters may wear a helmet with a partial face shield or no face shield, and are not

- required to wear a full-face mask.
- All available offensive players will bat in concurrent order.
  - On-deck hitter must warm up beyond first or third base but not in line with throws to first or third.
  - All players must play in the field a minimum of three innings, with two consecutive innings, in a full six inning game. All players must have entered the game by the third inning.
    - Failure to adhere to this will result in the game being forfeited.
  - In the event a team will not have enough players to achieve a minimum roster size of 8 players, they may request permission from the league VP and/or president to “bring up” a player from the minor (AA if available) league to avoid forfeiture.
    - It is recommended that this player supplement the team needs, and not replace regular rostered players.
  - Free substitutions of positional players is allowed.
    - Re-entry of a pitcher must conform to Cal Ripken rules.
    - If a pitcher is removed for an injury but is able to remain in the game, they may be re-entered provided they have not exceeded their pitch-count
  - The infield fly rule will not be in effect.
  - Leading off is not allowed.
  - Stealing bases is allowed (including home plate), regardless of pitch count, after the pitch crosses the plate.
    - Runners may advance at their own risk in any situation once a ball is thrown, or in-play but may NOT advance on an overthrow.
    - If the runner steals 2nd or 3rd base and the ball is overthrown to either: 1) the base they are attempting to steal, or 2) the pitcher on a return throw from the catcher or a fielder, the runner(s), as long as the runner is “safe” at the base they were attempting to steal, the runner may not advance on the overthrow to an additional base. For example, a runner who attempts to steal second and is safe, may not advance to third base on an overthrow.
  - Sliding (feet first) is required to avoid a tag at any base other than first. Failure to slide, or avoid a tag, will result in an out being called.
  - Balks will not be called against any pitcher.
  - Manager/coach must ask for (and receive) a time out from the home plate umpire before visiting a pitcher on the mound.
    - Only one coach may visit the mound.
  - Scorebooks must be kept for every game by both teams. In the event of a disagreement, the home teams book will be official.
  - Home team managers are responsible for entering game results on the league website. Both teams shall enter pitching stats on the website as soon as possible but no later than prior to the next game. Pitching stats include innings pitched and pitch count.
  - Both managers are required to meet the umpire at home plate together prior to the start of the game to determine the official start time and review rules (e.g. ball under fence calls).
  - Any time a manager requires clarification about rules, they should request time out from

- the umpire, and request to speak with the umpire who made the ruling. Only the manager may seek a rules clarification.
- Umpires are “off duty” once a game is official.

## **Section 4:**

### **Special League Rules - Minor’s and/or AA**

- Home team must provide 2 brand new “wrapped” game balls.
- All available offensive players will bat in concurrent order.
- Batters may wear a helmet with a partial face shield or a full-face mask.
- On-deck hitter must warm up beyond first or third base but not in line with throws to first or third.
- All players must play in the field a minimum of three innings in a full six inning game. All players must have entered the game by the third inning.
- Teams with 10 or more players can add additional players in the outfield with a maximum of 6 players in the infield.
- Free substitutions will be allowed.
- The infield fly rule is not in effect.
- Base Running:
  - If stealing is allowed until the month of June; the month of May is used to prepare players for this level of skill.
    - Leading off is not allowed and the base runner must remain in contact with the base until the ball crosses home plate.
    - If the runner leaves the base before the ball crosses home plate, as determined by a coach:
      - And the runner successfully reaches the next base, he/she will be sent back to the original base with no penalty
    - If the play is made and the runner is out, the out call will stand
- Sliding (feet first) should be attempted to avoid a tag but a player will not be called out for failure to slide.
- Balks will not be called against a pitcher.
- Players, if able, should be encouraged to pitch to the opposing team. If no pitchers are available/able to pitch, then a coach should pitch at/near the pitchers mound.
  - Player pitchers should throw no more than 5 pitches per batter.
  - If the batter puts the ball in play or strikes out, regular rules will apply.
  - If after 5 player pitches, the ball has not been put in play or the batter has not struck out i.e. the batter would “walk”, a coach will provide the batter with no more than 3 additional pitches before the ball should either be put into play or the batter will be deemed “out”.

## **Section 5: Special League Rules (Rookie and T-Ball Level)**

- No official score will be kept.
- Batters must wear a helmet with a full-face shield, as well as any player placed in the field as a “pitcher”.
- On-deck hitter must warm up beyond first or third base but not in line with throws to first or third. Use judgement and be careful and stress to the kids that only 1 player can be in that area at a time.
- Leading off is not allowed and the base runner must remain in contact until the ball is put into play.

### **Rookie:**

- All available players will:
  - Be placed in the field, with 6 infielders, including a pitcher and catcher, with the remainder placed in the outfield.
  - Bat in concurrent order and the full roster may bat in an inning, unless three outs occur first.
- If three outs occur before the full roster bats, the inning is over and the sides switch.
  - If three outs do not occur before the full roster bats, the inning is over and the sides switch, regardless of the number of outs recorded.
  - Batters may advance beyond first base, at their own risk, and may be thrown/tagged “out” at any base, which will count toward the three outs per inning.
- There are no player pitchers. Coaches will either pitch from near the pitcher’s mound or use the pitching machine, whichever they deem to be appropriate.

### **T-ball:**

- All available players will:
  - Be placed in the field, with 6 infielders, including a pitcher, with the remainder placed in the outfield.
  - Bat in concurrent order and the full roster may bat in an inning, unless three outs occur first.
- Each runner will advance 1, or more bases.
  - Outs will not be recorded, and all players should bat in each inning
  - Should a player be thrown/tagged “out” they can remain on the base.
  - The final hitter and the remaining runners on the bases will finish the inning by running around the bases and touching home plate.
- There are no player pitchers. Coaches will use the batting tee for all players.

## **Section 6: Regular Season Playoffs**

- For seeding purposes, teams will be ranked based on winning percentage (highest to lowest).
  - If teams play an uneven number of games during the regular season, winning percentage will be the first tie breaker used to determine the final seeds.
- When 2 teams are tied, follow the list below until the tie is broken
  - Head-to-head results (if applicable)
  - Least runs allowed (average per games played)
  - Lowest single game runs allowed
  - Coin flip as called by the League President or VP
- When 3 or more teams are tied, follow the list below until the tie is broken
  - If one team beat all of the other tied teams, they will be the highest seed of the tied teams, even if all tied teams have not played each other
  - Continue to use head to head results to seed the rest of the teams in the tie
  - If one team has been beaten by all of the other tied teams, they will be the lowest seed of the tied teams, even if all tied teams have not played each other
  - If all tied teams have the same record against each other, then they are tied at head-to-head and you move to the next item on the list (least runs allowed)
  - Continue down the 2-Team Tie Breaker list as stated above
- Playoff format:
  - All teams will be seeded in a single elimination tournament
  - Higher seed is home throughout the tournament, with exception for the Championship game, which will be determined by coin flip.

## **Section 7: All Star selection**

- Each league manager will submit the name of player(s) to be selected as an “all star” to the league VP/President. The exact number of players to be submitted will be determined by the executive board each year and communicated to the league managers during the regular season.
- Players must have played in 50% of the regular season games except for injury to be eligible for the All-Star team.
- All-star games will follow regular league rules.
- The first and second place team managers will be named as a head coach of each All-Star team. Up to 3 additional assistant coaches will be solicited from the remainder of the coaches/managers for each league.

## **Section 8: Travel team selections**

- The tournament coaches are responsible to provide all necessary documentation and paperwork to the district commissioner for qualification to participate in the All-Star tournaments. This includes a copy of the leagues insurance policy, age and birth certificates or certified Babe Ruth cards, team roster details and any other obligation summarized in the managers responsibility document provided in advance of the tournament by the state commissioner of NH. Each eligible travel team coach is obligated to make their decision / commitment to coach each respective travel team to the League President prior to the draft of each applicable year. Failure to commit by

- the deadline may result in removing the privilege to coach the associated All Star team.
- No coach or player can participate in two travel teams in any capacity.
  - The head coach of each travel team selects assistant coaches but must be a coach named on a league team roster.
  - Travel teams must have a minimum of 12 players on the roster with a maximum of 15 players allowed.
  - Travel players may only play for their respective league age team, with the following exception:
    - All players league age 8 are allowed to try out for the 9-year-old all-star team in that year. The All-Star Manager is not required to pick any 8 year old to play on the team. If the All-Star Manager does pick 1 or more 8-year olds to play on the team they are not required to have a specific number of 9 year old players or guarantee any player playing time regardless of age.
- Players must have played in 50% of the regular season games, except for injury, to be eligible to play on a travel team.

## **Article VI: Conduct and Field Decorum**

- Any Manager, Coach, player, or family member who is ejected from a game is automatically suspended from the following game.
- Any Manager or Coach who physically abuses or threatens physical abuse upon any umpire is automatically suspended from the league for the remainder of the season.
- Reinstatement will be determined after a written application for reinstatement is reviewed by the league president / board of directors as outlined in the Coaches code of conduct.
- Only the manager or, in the manager's absence, the manager's designated representative, may confer with the umpire regarding any game related discussion, e.g. rules interpretation, during the game.
- During pregame warm-ups, if your team does not have authorized use of the field you must keep your players either in the assigned dugout, batting cage or outside the fence, removed from the perimeter of the field, and under adult supervision. The only exceptions to this rule will be persons warming up the pitcher or pitchers and players protecting the pitchers warming up. One team will have use of the playing field while the other team has use of the batting cage and then switch appropriately before game time.
- Any abusive language by any player or coach directed at or to any opposing player or coach, done with the intent to intimidate said player or coach shall not be tolerated at any time before, during, or after any game. Any player or coach who refuses to comply with this rule, after receiving a warning by any umpire, shall be ejected from the game. If the incident occurs after the game has been completed, the offending player or coach shall be suspended from the following game.
- Cause for ejection and suspension. If in the judgment of the umpires on the field, any player who makes contact with another player with the intent to injure, will be immediately ejected from the game. This applies to all players on offense or defense.

- There is no appeal. At the time of the infraction the ball is dead. The umpire may issue an out or award additional bases in addition to ejecting the player, at their discretion
- Any league player who is responsible for any damage or vandalism to the facilities and/or property used by the Merrimack MYA will immediately be suspended from further league play, pending a review of his/her actions by the League President and the Board of Directors.
  - No alcoholic beverages or use of tobacco are allowed on the field or in the immediate areas at any time. Any person who does not cooperate with this rule will be ejected from the premises and will be suspended from league participation in the future.
  - Any disruption of a game by a player, parent, relative or any other adult will cause immediate ejection and removal of the person or persons from the premises identified by the umpire and or league officials.
  - Any player deliberately throwing a bat, helmet or any other piece of equipment or that is displaying inappropriate conduct (including profanity, obscene language or gestures) will be subject to removal from the game by any umpire and subject to suspension from the league.

## **Article VII: Coaches**

- Each person interested in a volunteer position must apply for the position in order to be considered.
- There may be 1 Manager, 2 Assistant Coaches, and 1 scorekeeper per team.
- No more than 4 adults are allowed within the confines of the playing area per team. The Manager is responsible for field decorum of all team-related adults within the respective team's playing area.
- In the event that a Manager is unavailable, one of the coaches named on the roster shall assume the duties of Manager.
- In the event that none of the coaches named on the roster are physically present for a game, an exception may be made subject to the approval of the League President/VP.
- The names of the Manager and coaches shall be those on official league rosters, submitted to the league president, and duly certified after having completed the background check and abuse training as required by the Babe Ruth/Cal Ripken organization.
- Any manager, coach, scorekeeper, or other "volunteer" who assists with any aspect of the season (games or practice) must have previously completed, and have on file with the League, up-to-date documentation of their background check and abuse training. Failure to provide this documentation will result in removal from said position until documentation has been provided.

## **Article VIII: Protest**

- It is the responsibility of the manager of the team to stop the game at the time of the play and ask for clarification of the ruling/call if they feel it is incorrect.
  - A game should not be stopped for umpire judgment calls e.g. balls, strikes,

as these cannot be protested.

- All formal protests must be delivered in writing and/or email to the League President / VP within 24 hours of the incident. Upon receipt of the protest, the League President, League VP, and Board of Directors shall meet, discuss and agree upon appropriate action. Their decision is considered final and may not be appealed.

## **Article IX: Official Scorebook**

- The home team scorebook is the official scorebook, which may be electronic. However, both scorebooks (visitor and home) must be verified at each half-inning relative to: score, substitutions, batting order integrity, and any changes or performances, which would affect the pitching rules.

## **Article X: League Rule Changes**

- No rule modifications are permitted without a majority vote of the Board of Directors.