

2010 Merrimac Baseball, Inc Playing Rules

Triple A Minor Division

OBJECTIVE

The purpose of the Minor League program is to provide training and instruction for those candidates who by reason of age and other factors do not qualify for selection in the regular Little League.

OFFICIATING/REGULATING GAMES

Each umpire is the representative of the league and of Little League Baseball, and is authorized and required to enforce all Official Little League Rules. Each umpire has authority to order a player, coach, manager, or league officer to do or refrain from doing anything which affects the administering of these rules and to enforce the prescribed penalties. Rule 9.01 (b)

GAME PRELIMINARIES

Pre-game Warm-ups (infield Practice)

- The visiting team must start their pre-game warm-ups (infield practice) 30 minutes before game time and finish no less than 15 minutes before game time. The home team will then do their pre-game fielding warm-ups during the 15 minutes prior to the game time. It is important to follow this schedule to allow both teams sufficient time for preparation and warm-up for the game. It is also important to start the game promptly at the scheduled time. For late games during the week or weekend games teams must utilize the time available wisely and expediently in an effort to start the game on time. It may be necessary to shorten the warm-up times to 10 minutes each if the previous game went exceedingly long and the completion of the second game is threatened because of curfew.
- **Note:** Teams with night games (under the lights) and Saturday/Sunday games should have their player's do their warm up throws while the previous game is still in session. When the previous teams have cleared the benches and the field, the teams should continue as above. Batting practice is allowed for both teams from 1 hour before game time to ½ hour before game time (Batting Cage). Both teams must alternate players and be allowed to practice (if they so desire)

Line-up Cards

- Prior to the start of each game, managers must exchange their line-up cards with the opposing team and should be submit to umpire as well. The information must include batting order, defensive positions and uniform numbers.
- Managers will supply umpire with a list (cheat sheet/Index card) of Local Ground Rules.

GAME

Regardless of the score, all games will last six innings or 2 hours and 00 minutes, whichever comes first. Coaches must monitor time and declare last inning if time is a concern (can only be done at the top of an inning). With the exception of adding late arriving players, the batting order cannot change once the game begins. When time has expired, the game is over.

2010 Regular Season and Playoff Game schedule will be finalized by the VP of Operations. The total number of games will depend on the number of teams and the number of games scheduled with Amesbury and Haverhill Little League. A typical regular season schedule shall consist of 12 to 14 games.

Minimum Playing Time (Manager Requirement)

MBI has adopted a more strict playing time requirement than those printed under Regulation IV (i) of the Playing Rules.

A substitute may not be removed from the game prior to completion of his/her mandatory play requirements. Rule 3.03 note (1)

- a. Rosters with 13 or more players: Minimum playing time is set to 2 consecutive Innings.
- b. Rosters with 12 or less players: Defensive subs must play a minimum of 3 innings in the field, with 2 being consecutive (6 outs). If the visiting team does not play the bottom of the 6th inning, the third inning of play is waived.
- c. Defensive subs must play a minimum of 3 innings in the field, with 2 being consecutive (6 outs). If the visiting team does not play the bottom of the 6th inning, the third inning of play is waived.
- d. If a player arrives after the 2nd inning has started, minimum playing time is reduced to 2 consecutive innings.
- e. If a player that arrives after the 3rd inning has started, minimum playing time is reduced to 1 inning.
- f. If a player arrives after the 4th inning has started, the manager will not be responsible for the minimum playing time.
- g. If a player is not given his/her minimum playing time under the situations listed above, the matter will be referred to the board for resolution, and the player will play offensively and defensively the entire next game.

FIELD OF PLAY

Bases must be 60 feet apart. Pitching distance is set at 46 feet. The batter's box must be three feet by six feet.

ROSTER SIZE

Set per the Merrimac Baseball, Inc. By-Laws Section Maximum of 12 players per team.

If a game cannot be played because of the inability of either team to place eight (*8) players, this shall be grounds for **automatic forfeiture**. At that time, the umpire shall wait the designated fifteen (15) minutes. If at the end of said fifteen (15) minutes, the team in question has a minimum of eight players, this team will play. If the number of players drops to less than eight (*8) players, the game will be played for purposes of enjoyment but a forfeit will be recorded. When playing with eight (*8) players, the 9th batting spot is an automatic out. If additional players show up they will be placed at the end of the batting line-up. **Note:** An official game may not be started with less than eight (*8) players on each team.

A player ejected from the game is not eligible for re-entry. If no players are available for re-entry, or if a team refuses to place eight (*8) players on the field, this shall be grounds for **automatic forfeiture**. **Note:** An official game may not be continued with less than eight (*8) players on each team.

EQUIPMENT

- Equipment must be Little League approved.
- Metal cleats are not permitted.
- Players are required to wear baseball pants.
- All players on a team shall wear uniforms and caps supplied by MBI.

- Uniforms should be clean and shirts are to be tucked in at all times.
- All Coaches shall wear MBI supplied caps & shirts during all League functions.
- The ball used must meet Little League specifications.
- All Batting helmets will require safety cages.
- The bat used must meet Little League specifications: two and a quarter (2 ¼) inches in diameter, no more than thirty three (33) inches in length and non wood bats shall be printed with a BPF (bat performance factor) of 1.15 or less. An illegal bat must be removed from the game. If, in the Coaches judgment, a bat is unsafe due to wear or any similar reason, it must be removed from the game.
 - Note:** Non-wood bats may develop dents from time to time. Bats that cannot pass through the approved Little League bat ring for the appropriate division must be removed from play. The 2¼ inch bat ring must be used for bats in the Tee Ball, Minor League and Little League Baseball divisions.
- The traditional batting donut is not permissible. (Rule 1.10 **Note 2**)
- The home team is responsible for the bases, scoreboard numbers and game balls. Game balls to be used during play will be issued from the snack shack to the home team.

BASE COACHES

- Base coaches are there to manage the base runners only. They may not question the umpire on a call. A base coach cannot physically touch a runner as to hold him/her back from proceeding on or push a runner on. This will result in the runner being called out for interference by the base coach. The dugout must always be manned by a manager or coach listed on the team roster.
- Both assistant coaches are to be utilized as base coaches. **In no way can an adult from the spectators be allowed onto the field as base coach.**

PITCHING

- Managers need to be familiar with **Regulation VI of the Playing rules that defines the pitching rules** for the Triple A Division.
- In Triple A, Pitching is performed by players from the Offensive team.
- A player may not pitch in more than one game in a day.
- Balks are not called in the Triple A Division.
- Intentional walks are not allowed.
- Pitchers are not allowed to throw a breaking ball during regular season games or playoffs.
 - Note 1:** A pitcher who delivers 41 or more pitches in a game cannot play the position of catcher for the remainder of that day.

Regulation VI - PITCHERS

- (a) Any player on a regular season team may pitch. (**Note:** There is no limit to the number of pitchers a team may use in a game.) Exception: Any player, who has played the position of catcher in four (4) or more innings in a game, is not eligible to pitch on that calendar day.
- (b) The age of each Pitcher must be recorded in score book and the manager must adhere to the maximum pitches per day accordingly. (**Note:** Little League Age chart)
- (c) A pitcher once removed from the mound cannot return as a pitcher.

(d) If a pitcher hits 3 batters in one inning or a total of 5 batters per game that pitcher **must** be removed from pitching duties.

(e) The manager must remove the pitcher when said pitcher reaches the limit for his/her age group as noted below, but the pitcher may remain in the game at another position:

League Age:

11-12 = 85 pitches per day

9-10 = 75 pitches per day

7 - 8 = 50 pitches per day

Exception: If a pitcher reaches the limit imposed in Regulation VI (c) for his/her league age while facing a batter, the pitcher may continue to pitch until any one of the following conditions occurs: 1. That batter reaches base; 2. That batter is put out; 3. The third out is made to complete the half-inning.

PITCH COUNTS

Pitchers league age 14 and under must adhere to the following rest requirements:

- If a player pitches 66 or more pitches in a day, four (4) calendar days of rest must be observed.
- If a player pitches 51 - 65 pitches in a day, three (3) calendar days of rest must be observed.
- If a player pitches 36 - 50 pitches in a day, two (2) calendar days of rest must be observed.
- If a player pitches 21 - 35 pitches in a day, one (1) calendar days of rest must be observed.
- If a player pitches 1-20 pitches in a day, no (0) calendar day of rest is required.

Note: The use of this regulation negates the concept of the “calendar week” with regard to pitching eligibility.

PITCH COUNTERS

- Pitch counters will be handed out at the snack shack to both teams.
- Each team manager is responsible for turning in the counter at the conclusion of the game.
- The count will be tracked every ½ inning and will be recorded in the scorebook, after an agreed upon count. Discrepancies in the count between two teams will be corrected as follows; a difference of one count – use the home teams count; a difference of more than one is split in half and rounded down if necessary.
- Each team must identify to the umpire who will track the pitch count for that team (practice coach) in that game. However, it is the manager who is responsible for the accuracy of the count and it is the manager who will announce the count to the opposing team or umpire when requested to do so.
- The official pitch count recorder should inform the **manager** when a pitcher has delivered his/her maximum limit of pitches for the game, as noted in Regulation VI (c). The **manager** will inform the **umpire in chief** that the pitcher must be removed in accordance with Regulation VI (c). However, failure by the pitch count recorder to notify the **manager**, and/or the failure of the **manager** to notify the **umpire in chief**, does not relieve the **manager** of his/her responsibility to remove a pitcher when that pitcher is no longer eligible. (BOD vote required to rewrite Regulation VI (h))

- A player who has attained the league age twelve (12) is not eligible to pitch in the Minor League. (See Regulation V – Selection of Players) **Regulation VI (j)**

PITCHING LOGS

- Managers must turn in filled-out pitching log sheets that have been confirmed by the opposing Manager immediately following their game, when the pitch counter is turned in.
- Pitch counts are to be immediately recorded into the Pitching Log Book and **both** Managers **must sign off** on official numbers for the game prior to leaving.
- Failure to comply with the completion of the logs will result in the Board taking disciplinary action against the manager. Disciplinary action may include maximum pitch count awarded to that team's pitchers. Offending Manager's will be issued a warning for the first offense and a possible suspension for the following offenses.

BATTING

- The Triple A division will use a continuous batting order (continuous batting order is mandatory). This means that all players must bat in a continuous rotating order and that order may not be changed for that game. With the implementation of a continuous batting order, a child may enter and/or reenter defensively at any time (must meet the MLL minimum consecutive outs). A player that arrives late must be placed at the end of the batting order; the opposing team must be notified of the addition. (Rules 4.04)
- All batters must wear a batting helmet with a safety cage.
- The batter may not take first base on a third strike passed ball. Base runners may however advance at their own peril. **Exception:** base runners are only allowed 2 attempted steals of home per inning. Any advancement from third i.e. wild pitch, passed ball or overthrow on an attempted steal will be considered as an attempted steal of home. (See MLL Base Running)
- Play must stop and instructions given to batters that accidentally throw a bat while batting.
Note: If a player accidentally throws a bat while swinging the following will apply:
 - First offense: the player and both teams will receive a warning.
 - Second offense: the same player will be called **"Out!"**
 - Third offense: the same player from that team throws a bat during that game, **that player will be removed from the batting order**, and the team will take an out in the batting order, at his position.
- With the exception of the batter, all players for the batting team must remain within the bench area. On-deck batters and the handling of bats are not permitted.
- Loose bats and other equipment must be removed from the field of play.
- Changing the batting order is suggested for each new game.

BASE RUNNING

- All Base runners must wear a helmet with a safety cage.
- A base runner is out if the runner slides head first while advancing. (Rule 7.08 a)
- The base runners must stay in contact with the base until the pitched ball reaches the batter.
- Stealing bases is permitted.
- Triple A division only, base runner is not allowed to steal on the catchers return throw to the pitcher. The player may start to steal once the pitch passes home plate.
- Triple A division only, A base runner cannot advance on an overthrow from an attempted steal. This would be a throw from the catcher to a position player.

- Triple A division only, 2 attempted steals of home per inning. Any advancement from third i.e. wild pitch, passed ball or overthrow on an attempted steal will be considered as an attempted steal of home.
- Triple A division only, Once 2 attempted steals of home have been exhausted, a runner may only score from third base on a (1) hit ball, (2) if forced home by the batter-runner reaching first base with the bases loaded, and/or (3) the continuation of a play until the pitcher has the ball and is on the pitching plate and the catcher is in the catcher's box ready to receive the pitch. (Rule 7.13)
- All Players must slide at home plate, 2nd or 3rd if a play is being made at that location.
Note: If a player should have slid into home, 2ND or 3RD and did not, the umpire will warn both teams. After warning is issued to both teams, the umpire will call players out.
- "Tagging up" is allowed. (Rule 7.08 d-**note**)
- Infield Fly is in effect in the Triple A Division.
- Advancement without liability to be out: Interference, Overthrows, etc. Rule(s) 7.04, 7.05 & 7.06

SCORING

- Triple A Division, a five-run limit is to be imposed, which would complete the half inning. (Rule 2.00 – "Inning")
- The team with the most runs after six innings or 2 hour and 00 minutes wins the game. If the score is tied after six innings or 2 hour and 00 minutes, each team is awarded a tie.
- A twelve (12) run spread at the end of an inning will automatically end regular season games once the game is official (**Rule 4.10 e - note 2**). Three and a half (3 1/2) innings if the home team is winning; four (4) innings if the home team is losing.

PLAY-OFFS

1. Play-offs do not follow the twelve (12) run rule.
2. Tournament style round robin is in effect for 2010 playoffs. All teams will play each other once to determine seeding for semi-final games.
3. 3.Semi- Final and Final games will be single elimination format. .
4. There are no rainouts on post-season play. All games will be played to their conclusion, meaning 6 (six) innings must be completed. If games are suspended for any reason they will be rescheduled as soon as possible.
5. If teams end the post season round robin tournament with identical records the following tie breakers will prevail for playoffs and draft order:
 - a. Head-to-head competition between the teams.
 - b. The least amount of runs allowed for the entire post season.