

## ***Southeast Arlington Little League*** **Coach Pitch Rules**

### **THIS IS AN INSTRUCTIONAL DIVISION**

**THERE WILL BE NO STANDINGS KEPT OR SCOREBOARD OPERATED AT THIS LEVEL**

**The Little League Coach Pitch Baseball** program is for players who want to learn the fundamentals of hitting and fielding a baseball. Some of the rules of Coach Pitch baseball have been modified to focus on the need for teaching the game. The primary goals of Coach Pitch are to have fun, to instruct children in the fundamentals of baseball (batting, throwing, fielding, and base-running) and to allow them to experience the value of teamwork.

In summary, the managers and coaches in this division are in charge of teaching good sportsmanship and the basic skills of baseball to the Little League All-Stars of the future. At this age, knowing baseball strategy is NOT as important as being able to catch, throw, hit, and run the base paths in their proper sequence. Every adult involved in the Coach Pitch program, whether they sit in the bleachers or are directly involved on the baseball field, should never lose sight of our basic goal of providing a baseball learning experience that is enjoyable and non-threatening.

### **PLAYING RULES**

#### **1. UNIFORMS AND EQUIPMENT**

- A. The Local League provides a jersey, cap, socks, and belt.
- B. Parents should provide running shoes or non-metal cleats, a baseball glove, baseball pants and approved Little League bat for their child. Male players are encouraged to wear a hard cup, but an athletic supporter is required.
- C. Approved safety equipment to include batting helmets and catcher's gear is provided by the local league along with baseballs. They are to be USED, not ABUSED.
- D. A player must wear a batting helmet every time he/she is on the field as a batter or base runner. NO EXCEPTIONS!
- E. Catchers must wear **ALL** catchers' equipment.
- F. The Coach Pitch division will use a regular baseball for the entire season.

#### **2. UMPIRES**

- A. No umpires will be provided for these games. The managers and coaches will be responsible for fulfilling the duties of the umpires in conjunction with their coaching responsibilities.
- B. Coaches should uphold and enforce the rules in an effort to maintain consistency from game to game and to properly teach players the game of baseball.
- C. When making calls, please remember that the goal at this age is not winning. The goal is to provide a baseball learning experience that is enjoyable and non-threatening. Be professional and provide a positive example for the players.

#### **3. SCOREKEEPERS**

- A. The main purpose of the scorekeeper is to maintain the permanent continuous batting order.
- B. The home team's scorekeeper is considered the official scorekeeper and must sit directly behind the umpire-in-chief.

- C. When requested, the official scorekeeper should advise the umpire-in-chief of the batting order and number of outs.
- D. Managers must have the scorebook including participation and rotation log sheets available for inspection by the Coach Pitch Commissioner if requested.

#### 4. MANAGERS AND COACHES

- A. The manager and coaches of the offensive team will not be permitted on the playing field EXCEPT in the coaching boxes at first and third base when the ball is live. Only one Defensive coach will be allowed on the playing field when the ball is live; the defensive coach must be positioned behind the “deepest” outfielder, or must be positioned in foul territory as to not interfere with a “live” ball.
- B. The manager or coaches must request “time” and “time” must be granted by an umpire before going onto the playing field to instruct the players in the field or batting.
- C. The manager or coaches may go onto the field between half-innings to position players on defense prior to the first pitch of the half-inning.
- D. The managers or coaches under no circumstances are allowed to touch a player when the ball is in play. If intentional contact is made it is considered INTERFERENCE. The runner will be called out.
- E. Managers must exchange line-ups prior to the start of the game. This includes batting lineup and defensive rotation lineup.

#### 5. REGULATION GAME

- A. Five (5) innings or one hour and fifteen minutes (**1:15**) are allowed to complete a game, whichever comes first. Any inning started before the time limit shall be completed. The only exception is if not every player has batted. In this case, the game will continue until every player has batted.
- B. If a player shows up late and the late arrival(s) is/are the only one(s) who have not batted, then, in this instance only, will they be moved up in the batting order so they are the next and final batters of the game. After they have batted, the game is over regardless of whether the inning is over or not. The late player batting out of order will bat their regular turns in the permanent continuous batting order in all subsequent games.
- C. The visiting team will bat first and continue until three (3) outs are made OR until five (5) runs score, whichever comes first.

#### 6. PITCHERS

- A. The manager or a coach will pitch to the players on their team.
- B. Pitchers may be changed at any time during the inning, provided it does not delay the game.
- C. The pitching rubber should be 35 feet from the rear point on the home plate, at a minimum.
- D. The pitch must be delivered overhand from a kneeling or standing position.
- E. The player assuming the pitching position for the purpose of defense must be on a line four feet either side of the pitching rubber prior to the pitch being delivered.
- F. The coach may only “field” a ball (batted or thrown) in an act of self-defense.
- G. If the ball touches the pitching coach, the ball is dead, will be treated as the pitch never happened.

#### 7. BATTING ORDER

- A. A permanent continuous batting order of all players shall be made prior to the first game of the season.
- B. The next game’s lineup will begin after the last batter of the previous game. For example, if the last batter in the first game is #7 in the batting order, then the first batter in the next game is the player that is #8 in the permanent continuous batting order; and so on, through the final game of the season. In this way, all players should have had approximately the same number of at-bats during the season.

- C. If a player is absent, simply draw a line through his/her name for that game only, and follow the permanent continuous batting order.
- D. If a player shows up late, the player assumes his/her regular position in the batting order and bats his/her next regularly scheduled turn. For example, if the late player is #7 in the batting order and #8 is at bat when #7 arrives, #9 through the top of the batting order down to #6, all bat before #7 (with the exception of the situation described in 7.B).
- E. If a player is added to the team after the first game and the permanent continuous batting order has been established he/she will be added to the end of the batting order.

## 8. BATTING

- A. The batter is allowed six (6) pitches or three (3) swings before being called out. If the sixth pitch is hit foul, the batter will continue until the ball is hit fair or missed.
- B. The manager/coach may request "time" to instruct the batter after each swing, but may NOT assist the batter in swinging the bat.
- C. BUNTING is not allowed.
- D. THROWING THE BAT is seen as a major SAFETY problem. The plate umpire will issue a warning to each individual player for this offense. On the second offense, the offending player will be called out, base runners will return to their original bases, and the ball will be dead.
- E. The batter-runner can ONLY advance to first base on a BATTED FAIR BALL. A base-on-balls or a batter being hit by a pitch CANNOT advance the batter-runner to first base. NO WALKS are allowed.

## 9. BASE RUNNING

- A. All runners may continue to advance on a ball hit into the outfield, until the ball has been thrown in from the outfielder. If the runner is between bases when the ball is thrown from the outfielder he/she may advance to the base to which they are heading, at their own risk. EXAMPLE 1: Batter hits ball down left field line and runner is completely off 2<sup>nd</sup> base at the moment the outfielder releases the ball on his/her throw to the infield, runner can advance to 3<sup>rd</sup> base at his/her own peril. EXAMPLE 2: same as above, except that runner on 2<sup>nd</sup> base has one foot touching base when ball is released from the outfielder, therefore the runner is not permitted to advance to 3<sup>rd</sup> base.
- B. Runners may advance ONE BASE ONLY on an overthrow on a ball hit to the infield.
- C. NO STEALING or LEAD-OFFS are allowed. The runner will be returned to the original base (unless forced to advance by the batter reaching the base safely) if he/she leaves the base prior to the ball being hit. THE BASE-RUNNER MUST STAY IN CONTACT WITH THE BASE UNTIL THE PITCHED BASEBALL REACHES THE BATTER.
- D. If the throw carries the first baseman into the path of the runner and they collide, this **IS NOT** an automatic out, it is not interference by the runner and it is not obstruction by the first baseman. The runner will only be out if he/she or first base is tagged by the first baseman in possession of the ball before the runner touches first base.
- E. THERE IS NOT A MUST SLIDE RULE. Runners can slide, attempt to get around, retreat, or give up to a defensive player in possession of the ball. Except at first base, see 11D.
- F. HEAD FIRST SLIDES **into** a base when a base-runner is advancing are NOT allowed. Runners will be called OUT, no warnings. A base-runner returning to a base can slide head first.
- G. Runners may not advance past the base they are headed, once a forced out is made by the defense.

## 10. DEFENSIVE PLAYERS

- A. Players will be stationed at the regular nine (9) baseball positions, plus be allowed to place one additional player in the outfield, thereby allowing 4 defensive players in the outfield.
- B. Infielders must start each play at least ten (10) feet from the fair lines at their respective position.

- C. Infielders should not be positioned in the base line to “obstruct” the runner.
- D. **Outfielders must start each play in the grass portion of the outfield.**
- E. The player in the pitcher position for the purpose of defense must be on a line four feet either side of the pitching rubber prior to the pitch being delivered.
- F. Umpires may move a player if he/she is starting out of position.
- G. Defensive players MUST be encouraged to throw a fielded ball, but it is NOT mandatory to complete an out. Remember, the goal is to teach proper baseball fundamentals.
- H. 1) The pitcher may not make a forced out unless the ball is thrown to him/her.  
2) Outfielders CANNOT make an infield out.  
If 1) or 2) take place, the ball is dead, no out is recorded and all runners will remain at the base legally occupied when the ball was made dead. A forced play is in effect anytime a runner is forced to leave his/her base because a batter becomes a runner.

## 11. PARTICIPATION AND ROTATION RULES

- A. **No player may play the same position for more than two innings per game.**
- B. **Players may NOT play outfield in consecutive innings.**
- C. Managers MUST retain a log for each game showing the positions each player played and the number of times at bat.
- D. VIOLATION OF THE PARTICIPATION AND ROTATION RULES COULD RESULT (AT THE BOARD’S DISCRETION) IN A ONE GAME SUSPENSION OF THE MANAGER.

## 12. MISCELLANEOUS

- A. Bases will be set at 60 feet.
- B. Home team occupies 1<sup>st</sup> base dugout, visiting team occupies 3<sup>rd</sup> base dugout.
- C. The “infield fly rule” does NOT apply to Coach Pitch.
- D. CLEAN UP: After the game, both teams are responsible for picking up trash in the dugouts, on the field and in the spectator area. We want the fields clean for the next teams.
- E. **Games will be played with NINE (9) OR TEN (10) defensive players.** Players may be borrowed from the opposing team for DEFENSIVE purposes if the team on defense cannot supply enough defensive position players.
- F. RAINED OUT GAMES: Rescheduling of rained out games will be the responsibility of the LEAGUE SCHEDULER and the Coach Pitch Commissioner. These games will be made up at the earliest possible date.
- G. Only players, one (1) manager and two (2) coaches are allowed in the dugout. Additional coaches or parents (if approved by the Board of Directors and only after a volunteer application and Background check have been completed) are authorized only to the extent necessary to maintain order in the dugout. There MUST be at least one (1) adult in the dugout at all times. NO BAT BOYS/GIRLS, LITTLE BROTHERS/SISTERS. NO EXCEPTIONS!
- H. Players MUST NOT wear watches, rings, pins, jewelry or other metallic items. (EXCEPTION: Jewelry that alerts medical personnel to a specific condition is permissible.)

**THE MANAGER OF THE TEAM IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE CONDUCT OF THEIR PLAYERS AND COACHES.**

**IN ORDER TO MAINTAIN A POSITIVE, FAMILY FRIENDLY ENVIRONMENT THE MANAGER ON DUTY WILL ALSO SUPERVISE THE CONDUCT OF FANS ATTENDING THE GAME. UNRULY FANS OR THOSE DEMONSTRATING UNSPORTSMAN-LIKE CONDUCT WILL BE ASKED TO LEAVE.**