

# WOODCLIFF LAKE BASEBALL ASSOCIATION

## RULES AND GUIDELINES

Woodcliff Lake Baseball Divisions will be governed by the Little League rulebook with the following modifications.

<http://www.littleleague.org/learn/rules.htm> All games and rule decisions are in the hands of the umpires at all times!

**PURPOSE:** *Teach the fundamentals of the game while maintaining a fun motivating environment; make the players love the game! In addition it is imperative the playing of the game is taught correctly.*

### Lineup

- All players must be in the hitting line up during the regular season and playoffs
- Coaches are responsible for making best efforts during the regular season to balance the number of at-bats players receive throughout the regular season. It is up to the coaches to determine how to make this happen. *(WCLBA suggests that coaches continue the lineup each game from where it left off on the last out of the previous game. E.g. - #2 hitter makes the last out of one game, then #3 hitter leads off the next game.)*
- Free substitution in the field for position players. Players keep their batting order regardless of their position changing in the field
- A player skipped in the lineup due to injury or discipline is not an automatic out – you must notify the opposing coach or umpire prior to the next at bat.
- A player arriving late (i.e., after lineup cards have been exchanged) must be placed at the bottom of the lineup. (i.e., as the last numbered batter regardless of where the team is in the order at the time of the player's arrival)
- **Majors & Minors:** Pitcher may return to the pitcher's position once after being removed in that game. *Potential Game-Day Strategy – since this is to develop new/young pitchers, one idea is: when the bottom of the lineup comes up, you want your new pitcher to pitch to a few batters. Pull him in from the field to pitch to the bottom 4-5 players, perhaps record an out or two, then put the original pitcher back in to face the top of the lineup. This gives good match-ups and gets your young pitcher a chance to develop and succeed*
- During the pre-season Majors and Minors drafts, top tier pitchers will be identified. It should be noted that top-end travel pitchers should not be regular pitchers in Rec league. Other travel players, as well as, Rec-only players are suggested to pitch in Minors divisions. A list of travel pitchers will be provided at the draft. In no case should these pitchers throw more than 1 inning in a game. Saturday games the travel pitchers should not pitch.
- **Calling up players:**
  - **Majors & Minors (player pitch):** During the regular season and playoffs, teams must have at least 8 players or must forfeit. During the regular season only, teams may "Call-Up" no more than two players to fill-in. Players "Called Up" must come from the next lower rec league of the same name (e.g., Majors may only call up from the Minors; Minor (player pitch) may only call up from the Pee Wees (coach pitch)). Called-Up players may only play outfield. Called-Up players shall play the field and bat last in the lineup.
  - You may not play with more than 9 players if you have called-up players on your game roster (i.e. don't call up more players than you need to make a full team). If the called up player is the 9<sup>th</sup> on the roster and a regular player arrives late, it is the coach's discretion whether to remove the called up player from the game or bat 10 players. If removed, the late arrival will bat in the batting order place of the called up player.
  - If a coach is "surprised" by a last-minute / game-time shortage, he must attempt to get a player from his lower- level league affiliate, but if he fails, he may take any grade-eligible or younger player from any WCL Rec team, excluding travel players from the division in which the game is being played.
  - **Pee Wees (coach pitch):** The defensive team can scrimmage with any number of players, or call a practice, or share players

### Playing Time (Majors & Minors)

- A player may not sit out more than 3 outs consecutively (one inning). This is to keep kids' heads in the game. Two consecutive innings on the bench will disengage a young player.
- Coaches must allocate playing time in the field in the following manner:
  - When 13 players are present, 2 players are on the bench for one inning and 11 players are on the bench for two innings
  - When 12 players are present, 6 players are on the bench for one inning and 6 players are on the bench for two innings
  - When 11 players are present, 10 players are on the bench for one inning and 1 player is on the bench for two innings
  - When 10 players are present, 6 players are on the bench for one inning

A player may not be on the bench for consecutive innings **within one game** (*WCLBA Guideline: A player who sat two innings last game should not be the player to sit two innings in the current game. Coaches should be aware of who is sitting more innings from game to game, and should make best efforts to see that the same players are not maxing out their time on the bench game after game. Also, coaches should allow all players to have the experience of "starting", as this has no effect on the number of innings that player will play or sit. This is a guideline and not a rule, but one which we expect coaches to respect and observe. This guideline does not apply to playoffs*)

### Time Limit /Game Length (Majors & Minors)

- 6 innings/ 4 innings complete game; All weather decisions are the umpires once the game starts
- **Minors (player pitch)/Majors:** No new inning may start after 2.0 hours (counting from the exact start time of the game)
- There is no time limit for a playoff game; if a game needs to be continued due to late hour, by agreement of the coaches, the game shall be picked up from where it left off on a day agreed by both coaches.
- Ties are allowed (no extra innings) in regular season games
- Ties are not allowed in a playoff game
- Weather delays do not count against time limit

### Mercy Rule

- A game is officially over if one team is leading by 15 runs after 4 innings or 10 runs after 5 innings are played (Coaches may agree to play the full 6 innings, but the score is "final" after a mercy)
- **Majors and Minors (player pitch):** An inning is over if after the completion of a play six or more runs have crossed the plate, except in the last inning. All runs scored during any final play which caused the offensive team to score 6 or more runs shall count.
- **Minors (coach pitch):** An inning is over after the offensive team has batted through the lineup.

### Pee Wee (coach pitch) Game Play Modifications

- A standard strike-rule will be enforced in minor (coach pitch) game play. After a player has 5 strikes in one at-bat, a tee must be brought in to finish an at-bat.
- If the defensive team gets an out, the batter/runner cannot stay on the bases. He must return to the dugout.
- A team will bat through the entire lineup each half-inning. If three outs are reached before the full lineup has hit, the bases will be cleared but the same team continues batting until everyone has hit.
- There are no standings nor playoffs.
- Time Limit: 1.5 hours are allotted. The first thirty (30) minutes are for practice (throwing/playing catch, ground balls, hitting off tee, etc.). Gameplay is one (1) hour. No new inning may start after one (1) hour.
- Regarding Time Limit: Game scrimmages will not begin in the season until after Opening Day; any scheduled Pee Wee events prior to Opening Day will be PRACTICES for their entire 1.5 hour duration
- No bunting

- All defensive players will play in the field, however only 4 infielders are allowed plus one player in the pitcher position standing safely behind the coach pitcher. No kids will play catcher. All other players must be positioned in the outfield.
- Coaches of the defensive team will pitch and catch. The coach pitcher must deliver all pitches from his/her knee. Other coaches may be placed in the field to help instruct players but not interfere with game play no make a defensive play except for the safety of themselves or a player.
- The coaches are allowed to stop the game for instructional purposes.

### **T-Ball Game Play Modifications**

- A standard strike-rule will be enforced in minor (coach pitch) game play. After a player has 5 strikes in one at-bat, a tee must be brought in to finish an at-bat.
- If the defensive team gets an out, the batter/runner cannot stay on the bases. He/she must return to the dugout.
- A team will bat through the entire lineup each half-inning. If three outs are reached before the full lineup has hit, the bases will be cleared but the same team continues batting until everyone has hit.
- There are not standings or playoffs.
- Time Limit: 1.5 hours are allotted. The first forty-five (45) minutes are for practice (throwing/playing catch, ground balls, hitting off tee, etc..). Gameplay is forty-five (45) minutes. No new inning may start after forty-five (45) minutes.
- No bunting
- All defensive players will play in the field, however only 4 infielders are allowed plus one player in the pitcher position. No kids will play catcher.
- Coaches of the defensive team will be placed in the field to help instruct players but not interfere with game play no make a defensive play except for the safety of themselves or a player.
- The coaches are allowed to stop the game for instructional purposes.

### **Other Rules**

- **No dropped 3<sup>rd</sup> strike**
- **Infield Fly is in effect for Majors division only.**
- **Home team to supply 2 game balls to umpire (Major Division, Minor (player pitch) Division)**
- **Bunting is permitted**

### **Base-running**

- **A runner will be called out if they do not slide or avoid a collision with a defensive player.**
- **Head first slide are not allowed at any level.**
- **Leading is not permitted; player may take a secondary lead after the pitch crosses home plate.**
- **Stealing**
  - **Majors division – unlimited stealing**
  - **Minors (player pitch) division – 3 steals per inning. No steals of home base**
  - **Minors (coach pitch) division – no stealing**
- **A runner may not advance on overthrows to the pitcher**

MUST use a courtesy runner for the catcher with 2 outs using the player who was previous batted out

### **Game Results**

- Coaches for Majors and Minor (player pitch) division will be given a code and the winning team must enter the score within three (3) hours after game is over. If there is a tie, then the home team will be responsible to enter the score. If the game is WCL v Montvale then the WCL coach will enter the score regardless if they won or lost.

### **Coaches & Players Conduct**

- Head coach and 2 assistant coaches are permitted in the dugout with one additional assistant keeping the scorebook on the bench
- **Pee Wee (coach pitch):** Coaches of fielding team may position themselves on the defensive field of play for the purpose of coaching (no participation in gameplay) during the game.
- **Pee Wee (coach pitch):** The coach assigned to pitch must do so from one knee. No standing pitching is allowed. One player will be placed safely behind the Coach Pitcher to field the pitcher position. If a ball is batted directly at the coach pitcher, he is expected to defend himself/the pitcher position player for safety; all other balls must be fielded by a uniform player.
- Managers and coaches are not permitted to use cell phones or Bluetooth earpieces on the field or in the dugout.
- **NO PARENTS, SIBLINGS, VISITORS, ETC. ARE ALLOWED IN THE DUGOUT.** No parents may communicate instructions to players while game is in play (this includes the dugout, the on deck circle and the field of play)
- Umpires will issue **one** warning for dugout violations – after the second instance, an out will be assessed to the offending team in their next offensive half-inning. In addition, the offender will be asked to leave the facility.
- Players must be respectful on the bench – no jeering or verbal abuse of the opposing team or umpire. Umpires will issue **one** warning – after the first warning an out will be assessed to the offending team.
- Coaches – If you wish to discuss any call with an umpire, follow this procedure:
  - Call time out
  - Call the umpire over respectfully
  - Speak to him quietly and ask your question
  - There is no such thing as “arguing a judgment call” – you can ask about the call – that’s it.
  - If you have a rule question, you may present your interpretation. If there is any question about a rule, refer to the 2018 Little League rulebook + our addendum to those rules (which you should have at all games)
- Examples of things you **MAY NOT** do:
  - Argue a judgment call aloud
  - Groan or comment aloud about ball and strike calls
  - Make remarks to the umpire
- Umpires will issue just one warning. A Second incident in the same game will result in ejection. Ejected coaches must exit the complex completely.
- Any coach with two ejections in a season will resign as head coach (or be removed as head coach), and the Woodcliff Lake Baseball Board will designate a new head coach. All current assistant coaches shall remain, and if needed, a new assistant will be selected by the new head coach. The removed coach may attend games as a spectator, but will not be allowed on the field or in the dugout during a game for the remainder of the season.

### Safety Rules

- **THE ONLY PLAYERS ALLOWED WITH A BAT IN THEIR HAND IS THE PLAYER HITTING AND THE PLAYER ON DECK**
- **Little league rules do not provide for an “on deck” area. HOWEVER A SAFE AREA AT EACH FIELD WILL BE IDENTIFIED AS “ON DECK” AND ONLY THE NEXT BATTER MAY ENTER THE AREA. No other player is allowed in the on deck area.**
- **All players must wear a baseball hat, baseball uniform shirt, baseball pants, baseball cleats. All boys should wear a protective cup and all players are recommended to wear a heart guard.**
- **All base runners must wear baseball helmet when on the base paths.**
- No food of any kind is allowed in the dugout or on the playing field; players may have a sports bottle with beverage to hydrate. Food is a major distraction to youth baseball, it is a safety concern and is a dangerous liability due to allergies. No food will be tolerated.
- Sunflower seeds are allowed in the dugouts (unless there is a relevant allergy on the team) but must be disposed of before coming onto the field for batting and defense. Players shall not play with seeds. It. **THIS IS A SAFETY ISSUE!**
- Players are not allowed to wear jewelry during the game. The only exception will be made for jewelry worn for medical reasons.

### Bat Regulations

- **Wooden Bats only for Major and Minor League (player pitch) divisions.**

- **USA STANDARD approved bats are allowed for Pee Wee League (coach pitch) division.**
- **T-Ball Division bats must have a USA Standard Sticker on all game bats**

## PITCHING RULES

### **Pitching Rules Summary:**

- All pitchers will be put on a maximum daily pitch count.
- Any pitcher throwing more than 20 pitches in a game must observe the required rest period.
- Rec, Travel, and competitive club play (game situation) counts toward the pitch count.
- The Rec League rule limiting any single pitcher to a maximum of 6-outs per game remains in effect
- Coaches will receive pitch counters and will be responsible for recording pitches thrown per pitcher per game on the league website immediately following each game (within 3 hours of game completion).
- Any pitcher hitting two (2) batters in one inning or three (3) in one game must be immediately replaced on the mound.
- Mound Visits: Pitcher must be removed on the second visit in the same inning or the 3rd overall visit for the same pitcher

### **Pitch Counts**

- The pitcher must be removed from the pitcher position once he has reached his daily max pitch count
- If a pitch count limit is reached within an at bat, the pitcher may complete the at bat.
- The pitcher must be removed from the position once he has completed 2 full innings (6-outs)

#### Pitch Maximums per day:

Minors - 65 max per game

Majors - 75 max per game

### **Innings Per Game**

- A player who has completed 2 full innings of pitching must be removed from the pitching position (regardless of pitch count).
- There is no weekly limit to number of innings a player can throw

### **Required Rest periods for all ages (LL Rule)**

- 66+ pitch count = 4 days rest                      51-65 pitch count = 3 days rest
  - 36-50 pitch count = 2 days rest                      21-35 pitch count = 1 day rest
  - 1-20 pitch count = no rest required
- e.g. – if a player throws 55 pitches on Sunday, he must rest Mon-Wed, and can pitch again on Thursday.*

### **Pitcher to Catcher ban (LL Rule)**

Any pitcher who delivers 41 or more pitches may not play the catcher position for the remainder of that day.

### **Catcher to pitcher limitation (this is a local WCL BB rule)**

Any Catcher who catches one or more innings is limited to 41 pitches if he moves from catcher to pitcher that day

### **These recreational pitching rules take into account all leagues in which a pitcher participates**

- Recreational and travel/club coaches must communicate so that pitchers arms are not being put at risk
- Coaches are responsible for checking the website to see how many pitches a player has thrown, how many a player can throw on game day, and what the required rest is
- Coaches allowing a player to pitch when he is not eligible to pitch may forfeit the game

### **Player Eligibility**

- **A player must participate in at least 50% of the regular season games to be eligible to play in the playoffs and participate in Rockland Boulders (or other similar event) Day.**

## Playoffs

### **Regular Season Standings – Tie Break Rules**

- Position is determined by points (W/L/T) (3 points for a win; 2 points for tie; 1 point for a loss)
- In the case of a tie (two or more teams with the same points at season end), we go to the tie break rules. In the case of a three-way tie after applying rule #1, the procedure will go to step two first.
  1. head-to-head results (W-L only, not run differential)
  2. total runs allowed
  3. lowest single game runs allowed
  4. each subsequent lowest single game runs allowed (2nd lowest for each team, 3rd lowest, etc.)
  5. coin flip
- A forfeit by one team is considered a 6-0 loss for the forfeiting team
  - Coaches should make every effort to reschedule postponed games due to weather etc..
- A double forfeit is considered a 6-6 tie.
- A canceled game is erased from the schedule and not considered in the standings.
- A tie is half a win for winning percentage.