

ROYAL YORK BASEBALL LEAGUE - 2011

Boys Rookie House League Rules

Revised April 4, 2011

Though the general rules as set out by the OBA apply to house league baseball, there are some exceptions designed and adapted for the Royal York Baseball League which need to be noted by all the coaches and umpires.

General Principles

Our goal at Royal York is to provide children with an opportunity to enjoy the game of baseball and at the same time to develop their social and interpersonal skills.

For us as parents who volunteer to coach, it should be our goal to be fair to all children and to promote respect for all players, other coaches, umpires and other parents. We should forever be good role models by promoting sportsmanship and fair play at all times.

1 NUMBER OF PLAYERS, FIELD POSITIONS and BATTING ORDER

1.01 A team must have at least 7 players to start a game. The game may be continued by a team having fewer than 7 players but no less than 6 players, due to illness or injury sustained by a player(s) during the course of the game.

1.02 If a team has less than 7 players at the regular time for starting the game, there shall be a 15 minute delay. If the team is still short of the required 7 players after the expiry of the 15 minutes, that team shall forfeit the game. (Optionally, the coach of the other team can elect to place any extra players he or she may have on the other team and play the game as a regular season game.)

1.03 The fielding team can play all players on the field during the inning, however the infield will be made up of 6 players. If a team has 9 or more players, they must play a catcher. A coach with fewer than 9 players has an option of not playing a catcher until the last batter *at which point the pitcher shall be appointed to cover home plate as the catcher. (Where a pitcher is appointed to cover home plate as the catcher, the pitcher may position himself as a pitcher until ball is struck; on striking of the ball, pitcher may participate in any aspects of fielding (catch ball, block ball, deflect ball), but the defending team must ensure that Rule 5.05 is observed in order to record the last out of the inning.*

1.04 The **buffer zone** is that area which shall be approximately a semi circle having a radius of 7 to 8 metres (approx. 25 feet) within the foul lines and with the home plate being the centre from where the measurement shall be taken. No player in the field can be placed in the **buffer zone** while a player is batting. The **buffer zone** shall be set down by

the home team coach and confirmed by the umpire prior to the commencement of the game.

1.05 Players are assigned their fielding positions for the entire inning and cannot be moved from one fielding position to another during the course of an inning. This does not prohibit the shifting of players in the field for purposes of defensive strategy.

1.06 All team players shall be listed on the score card for purposes of establishing a batting order.

1.07 All players on the list must bat in sequential order. **No pinch hitting is permitted.**

1.08 The line-up cannot be altered during the course of the game, with the exception of late arriving players. Any player who arrives late for the game but before completion of the second inning can be added to the line-up by placing his name to the end of that team's list. No player shall be added to the list after two innings have been completed.

1.9 A batter who puts the ball into play while batting out of order is automatically out and all runners must return to the base that they occupied before the batter went to the plate, provided the opposing coach protests the matter to the umpire before the first pitch is thrown to the next batter.

If it is discovered, while the batter is still at the plate, that the batter is batting out of order, the correct batter will be allowed to hit, but he must assume the number of pitches already thrown to the incorrect batter as part of his 5 pitch count.

1.10 When the final batter for the team comes to bat in the inning, the coach of the hitting team shall announce to the umpire and the coach of the opposing team that the last batter is now hitting.

2 PITCHING

2.01 The ball shall be pitched by a pitching machine which will be set up by the home team coach. A coach from the team batting will put the ball into the pitching machine as soon as the umpire confirms "play ball".

2.02 Batters receive 5 hittable pitches from a pitching machine. A pitch that is over the batter's head or bounces in the dirt may not be considered by the umpire to be a hittable pitch unless the batter swings. **A foul ball on fifth pitch entitles the batter to one more pitch. A foul ball on the sixth pitch, however, the batter is out.**

2.03 In the unusual occurrence where the pitched ball hits the batter, the batter is entitled to a repeat pitch. If the batter cannot continue with his "at bat" after being hit by the pitched ball, he shall be considered as having been put out and the next batter in the line up shall hit.

Note: The offensive team does not get to substitute another batter for the batter who was removed from the plate due to being hit. The plate appearance of the batter who was unable to continue with his “at bat” counts as one of that team’s *at bats for the inning*.

3 HITTING

3.01 Players on the team shall bat in the order as recorded on the score card.

3.02 Fair Play Rule: *For a game starting with teams that have an even number of players, play in the first inning is governed by Rule 3.01. In each successive inning, however, the batting order starts with the second player whose name follows the last batter from the preceding inning.*

For a game starting with one team that has fewer players than the other team:

(1) The team with the fewer players bats the same number of players as the team with the greater number of players, in the order required by Rule 3.01. This will result in one or more players at the top of the order, batting twice in the particular inning. In the next inning, the first batter for the team with the fewer players shall be the first player whose name follows the last batter from the preceding inning, whomever that may be.

(2) The team with the greater number of players follows the same format as if the teams were even.

(3) No player shall be entitled to bat twice in one inning, more than one time in one game.

3.03 If the ball hits the batter’s hands when the batter is swinging at a pitch and goes into fair territory it is a fair ball and the batter must run towards first base.

3.04 If the ball is hit and lands within the **buffer zone** any infielder can play the ball. **However, no bunting is allowed.** Any attempt at bunting shall count as a foul ball.

3.05 If the ball is hit and strikes the pitching machine, pitching coach or stops near the pitching machine (8 foot circle), it is an automatic single and each base runner advances one base, with the exception of the last batter in which case the ball is dead and the batter takes the pitch over again (this pitch does not count as part of the 5 pitch count).

3.06 If the ball is hit in the air and it appears that it will land very close to or on the pitching machine, the umpire shall call “dead ball, no play” out loud. There shall be no play on the ball. The base runners return to their base and the batter will take the pitch over again (NOTE: Different for Girls Rookie)

3.07 If the ball is hit and it strikes the umpire who is in fair territory, and remains in fair territory, it is a fair ball and must be played by the fielding team.

3.08 If the ball is hit and it strikes the umpire who is in fair territory, but the ball continues and goes into foul territory and out of play, the umpire shall award the batter first base and each base runner shall advance one base, with the exception of the 11th or last batter, in which case the ball is dead, base runners return to the bases previously occupied, and the batter gets to take the pitch over again.

3.9 If the ball is hit and it strikes a base runner who is on the base when struck by the ball and the ball remains in fair territory, the ball is in play and must be fielded by the opposing team. All runners can advance until the play is brought to a stop by the fielding team.

3.10 If the ball is hit and strikes a base runner who is on base when struck by the ball, and the ball goes into foul territory and out of play, the ball is dead and the batter gets first base while the other base runners advance one base.

3.11 If the ball is hit and strikes a base runner who is not on base, the base runner is out and the batter gets first base. The base runner, however, is not out, if the hit ball passes by or touches a fielding player before striking the base runner. In this case the ball remains in play and all runners advance on the bases until the fielding team brings the play to a stop.

3.12 If the ball is hit and the base runner runs into the fielding player who in the opinion of the umpire had a chance to make a play on the ball, the base runner is out and the ball is dead. The batter gets first base and the other base runners either go back to the same base or move up one base to allow the batter to take first base. No base runner is allowed to score.

3.13 If the ball is hit and the base runner stops in front of the fielding player and in the opinion of the umpire is intentionally screening the fielder, the umpire shall call the base runner out and the play dead. The batter gets first base and the other base runners go back to the same base or advance one base to allow the batter to take first base. No base runner is allowed to score.

4 BASE RUNNING

4.01 The bases must be touched in their correct order, namely, first to second to third to home. Any base runner who runs the bases out of order is out.

4.02 A base runner can overrun first base and home plate. A base runner who overruns second or third base can be tagged out.

4.03 If the base runner misses one base but touches the next base, the base runner can only return to the missed base while the ball is in play by touching any base in between in

the reverse order, otherwise the base runner is out, provided the opposing coach protests the matter to the umpire before the next pitch to the batter.

4.04 No base runner can return to touch a missed base if the following base runner has scored. The base runner who missed the base is out and his run does not count.

4.05 If a base runner passes another base runner while running the bases, he is automatically out for illegally passing in front of the other base runner.

4.06 No base runner shall leave the base before the ball is hit. There are no leadoffs. A base runner who leaves the base before the ball is hit is out and the ball becomes dead. All base runners return to their base and the batter gets to take the pitch over again.

4.07 A base runner must tag up on a caught fly ball before advancing to the next base. In other words, the base runner must retouch the base after a fly ball is caught if he left the base initially when the ball was hit.

4.08 On the last at bat of the inning, a base runner may continue to run all the way home before the catcher steps on the plate while in possession of the ball. If the last batter hits a fly ball that is caught by a fielder in the air, the batter is out and the base runner must properly tag up before running home, otherwise his run will not count. This rule applies even if the ball thrown from the field gets by the catcher and goes out of play. Only those base runners who properly tag up before the ball became dead can legally score a run.

4.9 All base runners can continue to run if the ball, after being hit into fair territory, is overthrown by the fielding team and is in play.

4.10 Base runners only stop running when an infielder holds up the ball in the infield and calls “Stop” or any other word that the coaches have agreed to use as the expression to signal a stoppage of play. The base runner must return to the base which he just passed unless the base runner is more than half way to the next base when the stoppage of play occurs, in which case the base runner gets the next base.

4.11 A base runner is out if he runs more than 3 feet (one metre) off the baseline in order to avoid a tag. However, the base runner is not out if the base runner runs 3 feet (one metre) off the baseline only in order to avoid interfering with a fielder’s attempt at catching a ball.

4.12 On a “force out”, the base runner is out if the fielder while in possession of the ball touches the bag before that base runner arrives at the base to which the base runner is forced to run. There is no need to touch the base runner on a “force out” and even if the fielder drops the ball after touching the base, an out is still recorded.

4.13 On the last out in the inning, all base runners are allowed to score if the ball as thrown to the catcher goes out of play. The base runners must however touch all the bases

in the proper sequence and no base runner can physically pass another preceding base runner while running the bases. Any base runner who does not run the bases properly and in the required order is out and his run does not count.

5 FIELDING

5.01 All infield players must remain outside the **buffer zone** until the ball is hit, after which time any infielder can play the ball. *All outfielders must remain in the outfield until the ball is struck, after which time any outfielder can play the ball at any place in the field. "Outfield" shall mean either on the outfield grass, or a minimum of 5 yards from the nearest infielder, or the first-to-second and second-to-third baselines, whichever is further.*

5.02 The pitcher shall be placed to either side of the pitching machine and behind the release point.

5.03 No fielder shall obstruct a base runner. If obstruction is called by the umpire, the umpire shall estimate how far the base runners would have been able to run but for the obstruction and place the runners at that base.

5.04 If intentional fielder obstruction is called by the umpire after the last batter puts the ball into play, all base runners automatically score.

5.05 In order to record the last out in the inning, the ball must be thrown to the catcher who must then step on home plate while holding the ball. The player throwing the baseball to the catcher must be at least 6 feet or 2 meters away on the throw.

5.06 A ball thrown out of the playing area shall be deemed to be thrown out of play by the umpire. On diamonds where a fence is behind first and third base, it will be deemed an overthrow if the thrown ball hits the fence. **On this overthrow, the runner does not get an extra base.** This rule is in place to encourage fielders to attempt to throw the ball to get a runner out at first or third base, without penalty.

5.07 If the ball is thrown out of play by a fielder **on the last hit**, all base runners are allowed to score. Also refer to 4.08.

5.08 No player can play at the same infield position more than once in the game. The only exception is when it is necessary to substitute for an injured catcher, in which case the coach can put in a player to catch the rest of the inning although he has already completed an inning at catcher during the course of the game.

5.09 During the course of the game, best efforts should be used to rotate all players through all the positions and especially to ensure equal time for all players in the infield. *Accordingly, coaches should attempt to ensure that no player plays infield in two consecutive innings. Where a Team has 10 or more players, all players playing infield in*

a particular inning must play either Catcher, or in the outfield in the next succeeding inning.

6 THE GAME

6.01 All games will be maximum 5 innings in duration, unless called due to darkness or foul weather in which case the game will be considered completed if a minimum of three innings have been played (i.e., if the home team is winning after 2 ½ innings and the game is called, it is a complete game). If the game is called in the middle of an inning, the score will be recorded as of the last completed inning. All games that are postponed may be rescheduled and played as a new game, at the discretion of the Convener.

6.02 All Games shall be fixed at 3 full innings in length, with the exception of the Consolation and Championship Finals, which shall be fixed at 4 innings in length. During the playoffs, if a game results in a tie after the fixed number of innings, extra innings will be played until the tie is broken.

6.03 If the home team is winning going into the bottom half of the last inning it will waive its right to bat.

6.04 If foul weather or field conditions appear to threaten the scheduled game with cancellation well prior to the game starting time, it is the responsibility of the Home team coach to decide if the game should be postponed. The decision, whenever possible, should be made at least one hour before game time and in consultation with the visiting team coach. Once the decision has been made to postpone the game, the home team coach is required to contact the visiting team coach and contact the umpires.

6.05 It is the responsibility of the home team coach to contact the Convener for rescheduling of any postponed game(s). The Convener will provide a new date and location. It will thereafter be the responsibility of the home team coach to advise the visiting team's coach. The Convener shall arrange for umpires.

6.06 If only one umpire presides at the start of the game he or she only receives the regular one umpire fee and a responsible parent from one of the teams can act as the second umpire. Parents are not to be remunerated for umpiring. If no umpire attends to conduct the game, the coaches have the option of using two parents as umpires for the game or postponing the game and arranging for rescheduling of the game.

6.07 Official scorer for the game shall be agreed upon by the coaches, and in the event they cannot agree, it shall be the choice of the home team coach that prevails. The line up on the official score sheet must be completed by both coaches.

6.08 All players must wear long pants or baseball pants during all games and practices. No shorts are allowed. Metal spikes are not allowed. Plastic cleats or rubber cleats are permissible. All players should wear a protective cup.

6.09 All players who bat or who are runners on the bases must wear a helmet with a retaining chin strap.

6.10 Field Dimensions: Bases – 65 feet (from the back of home plate), Pitching Machine release point – 44 feet