

**MAJORS FALL 2021 Playing Rules**  
**Lehigh Valley Cal Ripken League**  
**(08/15/21)**

*This league will seek to implant in the youth of the community the ideals of good sportsmanship, honesty, loyalty, courage and reverence so they may be finer, stronger and happier youths who will grow to be good, clean, healthy adults.*

**These rules do not take the place of any official Babe Ruth or Cal Ripken rules as published in the official baseball rulebook. These rules pertain to local league play only.**

**1. GENERAL RULES**

- 1.1. The majors level shall generally be comprised of 11 & 12-year-old players. No Player at this level shall be older than 12 on May 1<sup>st</sup> of the current year. *(5/1/22 for Fall 2021)*
- 1.2. Game time is 5:45 PM, PROMPT, on weeknights, unless lights area available and then the game can be scheduled to start at 6:00PM. Night games will start no later than 8:30 PM on nights on which they are allowed. Saturday games' starting times are determined by mutual agreement between coaches, but no later than 6:00 PM without lights. Sunday games will start no earlier than 1:00PM (unless both teams agree). No inning will begin after 8:15 PM on school nights.
- 1.3. In the event of inclement weather, the home team shall be responsible for determining whether the game needs to be cancelled. If a game needs to be cancelled, the home team manager shall notify the necessary parties at least 1 hour prior to game time. A game needing to be rescheduled, must be rescheduled (not played) within 2 days. All regular season games must be played before the stated end of the regular season. Any games not played by the end of the season will be a forfeit for both teams.
- 1.4. Immediately following the meeting with the umpire(s) at the plate, each team will take a position on their respective baselines, remove their hats and face the flag for the Pledge of Allegiance to be led by the home team manager. All fields are to have some American Flag visible from the field.
- 1.5. Visiting team has the field 25 min. prior to game time, for 20 minutes.
- 1.6. Each team will provide at least 2 new RCAL-1 baseballs for each game. Game balls must have the official Cal Ripken logo.
- 1.7. A game is forfeited when a team fails to field 8 players at the start of the contest. When starting a game with only 8 players, the 9<sup>th</sup> spot in the batting order will be an automatic out each time that spot comes to the plate. If, with the game in progress, a player is injured and is forced to leave the game for good reason, or if a player leaves the game for any other reason, the game may be resumed with no less than 8 players, with the line-up spot(s) of the absent player(s) being considered an out the next time that spot comes to the plate, and simply skipped each time after that without counting as an out. If at any time, a team has 7 or fewer players, the team must forfeit, and the game must end.
- 1.8. Each team is required to have appropriate First-Aid supplies at all practices and games.
- 1.9. NO jewelry, except religious medals and Medical Alert bracelets & necklaces, will be allowed to be worn while playing. *Please note that a cross on a rope necklace (or something similar to that) will not be considered a religious medal.* NO throwing sleeves may be worn. Pitchers may wear long sleeve shirts under their jerseys if the sleeve on their pitching arm is not white.

- 1.10. Players, managers, coaches, and assistants must wear a catcher's mask when warming up a pitcher, both on the sidelines and on the field between innings. Protective cups must be worn by ALL catchers, including warm-up catchers. It is highly recommended that all players, regardless of position, wear a protective cup.
- 1.11. There will be NO tobacco products, alcohol, or profanity allowed within the playing field, as described by field ground rules, including bench and dugout areas. Any violation will bring immediate expulsion, subject to rules set forth in the by-laws.

## 2. FIELD LAYOUT

### Majors

Baselines: 70 feet

Pitching distance: 50 feet

Pitcher's plate: 6 inches above home plate level

## 3. GAME RULES

- 3.1. **Length of Game** - Games will be six innings. A game called because of darkness, rain, etc., must be completely replayed, unless it is an official game (4 complete innings, or 3 1/2 innings with the home team ahead). Games can end in a tie if shortened by darkness, rain, time, or field restrictions.
- 3.2. **Inning Limits** – A half inning is over when 3 outs are recorded.
- 3.3. **Playing Requirements** - Players must play a minimum of 3 innings, with an inning being constituted by 3 consecutive outs. (Teams with 14 or more players will have a 2-inning minimum for their players.) If a player comes late, he will become the last batter in the batting order and will NOT be subject to this rule. Player arriving late but before the 3<sup>rd</sup> inning must play. Player arriving late after the 3<sup>rd</sup> inning must be discussed by both coach's and agreed upon by both coaches with an Umpire present as to his playing eligibility. For games that end early (because of mercy rule) players must play a minimum of 2 innings (or 1 inning for teams with 14 or more players). *If a coach believes the opposing team is not complying with this rule, and wishes to protest the game, he must present supporting documentation to the umpire and have the umpire sign the documentation and the scorebook.*
- 3.4. **Free Substitution** and running batting order shall be mandatory.
- 3.5. **Throwing Equipment** - Throwing equipment as a result of anger shall result in automatic expulsion by the umpire. A bat thrown as a result of poor grip shall result in a warning by the umpire. A second offense by the same player will result in an automatic out and the player sitting for the rest of the game. An automatic out will be recorded each time that players spot comes up in the batting order. This is not considered an ejection from the game.
- 3.6. **Scores** – Scorebooks shall be kept. ~~The Home team shall report the final game score and pitching stats to the league statistician within 24 hours of the completion of the game.~~

## 4. PITCHING RULES

- 4.1. This level is entirely player pitch.
- 4.2. **Pitch Types** - Pitchers may only throw fastballs, change ups or knuckleballs.

- 4.3. **Pitching Limits** - A pitcher may pitch in a maximum of six (6) innings per calendar week (Monday through Sunday), but may not pitch in more than three (3) innings in any game. Delivery of a single pitch constitutes pitching one inning. A pitcher must have two (2) calendar days rest between pitching assignments if he pitches in more than two (2) innings in any one game. For example, if he pitches three (3) innings in a game on Saturday morning, he is not eligible to pitch again until Tuesday.
- 4.4. **Pitch Counts** – In addition to the innings limitation, pitch counts will also be assessed to determine a pitcher’s eligibility to continue. A pitcher will be allowed to throw a maximum of seventy-five (75) pitches, with a forty (40) pitch limit in any single inning. If the pitcher reaches 40 pitches while in the middle of a batter, they will be allowed to finish the batter. If the batter ends up being the last batter of the inning, then the pitcher remains eligible to return for their next inning. If the pitcher reaches 75 pitches while in the middle of a batter, they will be allowed to finish the batter. All pitches count toward the total pitch count (except warm up pitches). **A pitcher must have one (1) full calendar day of rest between pitching assignments if he throws more than 40 pitches in a day. For example, if the pitcher throws 41 pitches on a Saturday morning, then they are not eligible to pitch until Monday. There is no “finish the batter” language.**
- 4.5. Once a player is removed as a pitcher, he may not pitch again in the same game.
- 4.6. Innings pitched in a game declared "no contest" shall be charged against the pitchers’ eligibility for that week.
- 4.7. **Warm-Up** - In order to speed up the game, a pitch warm-up rule is in effect. Eight (8) pitches will be allowed for each starting pitcher in the first inning and 5 pitches in each subsequent inning. When a team changes pitcher, the new pitcher will get 8 warm-up pitches, then 5 for each subsequent inning he pitches. If the catcher is late, allow him to receive 1 pitch to throw down. Warm-up pitches are not part of the pitch count.
- 4.8. **Balks** – Balks will be enforced, after one warning for each pitcher.
- 4.9. There is a time limit of 3 minutes between innings.
- 4.10. **Pitching changes** - MUST be reported to the umpire AT THE TIME OF THE CHANGE. The pitcher will not be allowed to warm up on the mound until he has reported to the umpire.
- 4.11. **2nd trip** to mound in same inning requires automatic removal of pitcher.
- 4.12. **HBP** - A pitcher must be removed after hitting 3 batters in one inning or 5 in a game.
- 4.13. **Violation** of any section of this regulation can result in protest/forfeit of the game
- 4.14. Coaches need to agree on the # of pitches at the end of each inning. The # needs to be confirmed by umpire before the start of the next inning.

## 5. GENERAL PLAYING RULES

- 5.1. **Advancement** - Advancement on a batted ball shall follow normal baseball rules at this level, except as clarified elsewhere in these rules. *Coaches are reminded that we should be teaching sound baseball and trying to prepare kids for the next level of play. Overly aggressive base running should be discouraged.*
- 5.2. **Avoiding Contact** - In the interest of safety, fielders & runners shall avoid unnecessary contact.

- a. Catchers CANNOT block the plate if they do not have the ball, nor can they go up the line to wait for a throw, thus blocking the runner.
  - b. **All runners must slide to any base attempted, if being played on to avoid a collision with a fielder.** The first offense will result in the umpire issuing a **team** warning to the offending team. Subsequent violations by that team will result in an automatic out.
  - c. *HEAD FIRST SLIDES ARE STRICTLY PROHIBITED EXCEPT WHEN RETURNING TO A BASE!*
  - d. Any unnecessary or inappropriate contact with the fielder, in the opinion of the umpire, will result in the runner being called out. In addition, any willful and malicious contact with the fielder, in the opinion of the umpire, will result in the runner being called out and the runner being ejected from the game, subject to suspension according to the by-laws.
- 5.3. **Stealing** - The following restrictions will be in effect:
- a. Open stealing of all bases is allowed.
  - b. Leading – Leads MUST be established prior to the pitcher reaching the set position.
  - c. Leaving Early – ANY runner advancing his lead while the pitcher is set will be considered to have left the base early. The runner will be sent back to the original base and the team will be given a warning. Subsequent violations of this rule will result in the runner being called out.
  - d. Pitchers are NOT allowed to quick set to prevent the runner from leading. Umpires will call time and stop play if the pitcher is quick setting
  - e. Base runners may leave on the pitcher’s first movement.
  - f. base runners are not allowed to steal 2B while running to 1B immediately following a BB
  - g. *NOTE: Coaches are reminded that we should be teaching sound baseball and trying to prepare kids for the next level of play. Overly aggressive base running (i.e. excessive leads, baiting of pitchers, etc.) should be discouraged*
- 5.4. **Mercy Rule** - Once a 10-run lead is acquired - NO stealing or advancement on passed balls allowed. A 15-run mercy rule will be in effect after 4 innings (3 ½ if the home team is winning) and a 10-run mercy rule will be in effect after 5 innings (4 ½ if the home team is winning). This will result in an end to the contest and the team in the lead declared the winner. No game shall continue after the Mercy Rule has taken place, not even if the coaches agree
- 5.5. **Fielder Injury** - In case of fielder injury due to batted ball, ball is dead, batter and/or all runners advance one base, even if they are not forced.
- 5.6. **Infield Fly** - The Infield Fly Rule will be used.
- 5.7. **Courtesy Runner** - A courtesy runner for the catcher may be used only when there are two outs. There will be no courtesy runner for the pitcher. The courtesy runner will be the player who made the last out
- 5.8. **Bunting** – Bunting is allowed at this level
- 5.9. **Dropped 3<sup>rd</sup> Strike** - The dropped third strike rule will be used.

## 6. MISCELLANEOUS RULES

- 6.1. **Coaches** – Teams shall have a maximum of 1 manager & 3 other volunteers.
- 6.2. **Umpires** – **FALL ONLY** – One umpire will be provided by the home team for each game.
- 6.3. ~~**Schedule** – The game schedule will be finalized at the league scheduling meeting. A representative from each team must attend the meeting. After the schedule meeting, there will be a \$25 fee for~~

~~any games that need to be rescheduled, unless the reschedule is due to weather or a school function.~~

- 6.4. **Protests** - The Policy Committee will hear all protests. All protests must be submitted, by fax, mail or e-mail, to the Policy Committee Chairman within 48 hours of game, along with a non-refundable \$25 check payable to LVCRL. Protests must follow the rules of major league baseball.
- 6.5. ~~**Call-up Players** – Teams may roster a minimum of 10 and a maximum of 15 players. Each organization shall identify a pool of at least 5 players that are currently rostered in minors who can be “called-up” in the event that the higher level team needs more players for a game. The lists of Call-up players must be submitted to the league player agent prior to the start of the season. If a Call-up player plays up a number of times equal to 50% of his regular scheduled games, he must remain at the higher level permanently. Players that are called up cannot pitch. **All kids being called up must be reported to league player agent, league president and the opposing manager, in writing, prior to the start of the game.** Players that are called up are subject to comply with the minimum playing requirements.~~
- 6.6. ~~**Tournament Teams** – Players must try out for the league age post-season tournament teams. They cannot try out for an upper level team unless there are not enough players at the level. They must try out for their league age team first and if selected cannot move up to the next level unless they are released by the lower team head coach.~~
- 6.7. ~~**End of Season** – Standings will be kept through the regular season. The standings will be used to determine participation in & seeding for an end of season tournament. Banners will be issued to both the winner of the end of season tournament and the team that finished in first place in the regular season.~~

## **7. CAL RIPKEN BAT RULES (from [www.baberuthleague.org/bat-rules.aspx](http://www.baberuthleague.org/bat-rules.aspx))**

### CAL RIPKEN BASEBALL DIVISION

All non-wood bats must have the USABat Marking. The Barrel Maximum is 2 5/8". No BBCOR Bats are permitted in the Cal Ripken Division.

**If a player steps in the batter box with an illegal bat, the player will be ejected with an out being counted every time they would have come to the plate. Additionally, the coach will be suspended for 2 games and a \$250 fine will be levied to the organization.**