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Rookie Ball Division Rules

revised April 25, 2017

Official Playing Rules

1. All House League games shall be played in accordance with Official Rules of Baseball, as set forth by Baseball Canada, except where modified by the rules contained in this document, Rules and Regulations of Central Ontario Baseball Association (COBA) or Ontario Baseball Association (OBA).

Rookie Ball Division at a Glance

Game start time	6:00 p.m.
No new inning time	7:45 p.m. <i>Any inning that starts after 7:45 p.m. shall be an open inning</i>
Drop dead time	8:00 p.m.
Number of innings	6
Minimum number of innings of play per player	3
Maximum number of innings at pitching, catching or combination of both	2
Over Ager maximum number of innings at pitching, catching or combination of both	2 innings in total
Minimum number of players to play the game	7
Minimum number of innings	4 (3.5 if the home team is in the lead)
Mercy Rule	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maximum of 5 runs scored per

	<p>inning.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ahead by 15 runs after 4 complete innings or ahead by 10 runs after 5.
Pitching distance	<p>44 feet (15.24 meters)</p> <p><i>A 8 foot diameter Safety Circle shall be marked off, with it's centre at a distance of 44 feet from the rear point of home plate.</i></p>
Pitching Machine Speed	<p>40 mph</p> <p><i>Prior to the game, coaches of both teams and the umpire shall test the pitching machine and agree that it is set properly. If no agreement can be reached, the umpire will have the final say.</i></p>
Base distance	<p>65 feet (22.86 meters)</p>
Bats	<p>There are no weight restrictions on any type of wood, bamboo or composite bats. For all other bats, the maximum drop weight allowed is drop 13. <i>All bats used must be baseball bats.</i></p>

Super 7's Team *new in 2017*****

Recognizing the differing abilities in the HHMBA's Squirt program, the Association recognized the need to offer an opportunity to those players who needed an additional opportunity to keep their interest and to continue to develop their skills. The creation of the Super 7's team, allows these players to remain on a team with players of the same age, while competing with older players of similar skill level. The Super 7's will follow the same rules as the players participating in the Rookieball program, with one difference, all players may not take a shift in the infield and may remain in the outfield for the entire game.

Equipment

1. Uniforms: Players must wear the uniform issued by their respective Association for all league games and finals. Players showing up for a game wearing a different shirt, pants or different coloured cap of their own choosing WILL NOT BE ALLOWED TO PLAY. The coaches will ensure that all of their players are wearing proper uniforms. Players losing any part of their issued uniform must arrange with their coach to purchase a replacement.
2. Compression sleeves: Players may wear a compression sleeve on one or both arms, however the sleeves cannot be grey, white or distracting in nature. (The same rule applies to clothing worn underneath the uniform for warmth, ie sweatshirt, or for any other reason).

3. Gloves: The catcher must wear a catcher's glove. The first baseman shall be permitted to wear a trapper or fielder's glove. All other fielders must wear fielders' gloves.
4. Balls to be used are provided by the Association.
5. Pitching machine:
 - a. The pitching machine will be positioned in the centre of the safety circle
 - b. The electrical cord must run along or under the ground from the pitching machine to the electrical outlet or generator and the cord must be buried to avoid the tripping hazard.
 - c. The home team is responsible for setting up the diamond, safety circle and pitching machine prior the commencement of the game. The home team is also responsible for returning the pitching machine to the designated storage area at the completion of the game.
6. Helmets: A batting helmet with flaps on both ears shall be worn when baserunning. Chinstraps on batting helmets are required.
7. Athletic protection (jock/jill) must be worn by all players. Coaches are strongly encouraged to ensure that their players are wearing protection.
8. Catcher's Equipment: A catcher shall wear a helmet, a mask with a throat protector, chest protector and shin pads during games and warming up the pitcher at any time, this includes practices.
9. Metal cleats are not allowed. Players can wear plastic cleats or running shoes.
10. The Offensive team will provide one adult (coach or parent) to feed the pitching machines. While on the field, these adults, must properly wear a bucket helmet. Players playing the pitching position must also wear a helmet with a face mask. Balls should be returned to the pitcher, who will in turn pass it to the pitching machine operator for the next pitch.

Teams

1. Each team shall have a starting lineup of at least 7 players. A maximum of 10 players can be fielded defensively. (Defensively, the team can field four outfielders). All players will be placed in the batting lineup and will take their turn to bat.
2. There shall be no penalty for players arriving late to the game. He/she shall be added to the bottom of the batting order at any point of the game.
3. No player can sit a second inning until each player on the team has sat once. No player should sit two consecutive innings, barring injury.
4. In Rookie Ball, no player shall play the same position twice in the same game.
5. In Rookie Ball, no player can play a second inning of outfield until he/she has played one inning in the infield. Pitching and catching are considered infield positions. The turn in the infield should be a complete inning, barring injury.
6. In Rookie Ball, an outfielder cannot make the primary play on the infield play.
7. In Rookie Ball, the outfielders should be positioned 15 feet outside the base path.
8. Barring injury and pitcher substitution, there should be no changing of positions on the field during an inning.
9. Offensively, all players shall be included in the line up and take their turn at bat.

10. If a player hits a foul ball on his fifth pitch or consecutive pitch(es), the batter continues at bat until he/she hits a fair ball or strikes out.
11. If the umpire calls a "No Pitch" and the batter swings, a strike will be called.
12. Only the manager or coaches of the offensive team shall be permitted in the coaches boxes at the 1st and 3rd place. Any person occupying the coaches box, who is under 18 years of age, must wear a coaching helmet. There are no coaches on the field during a defensive inning.

Game:

1. The home team, as determined by the schedule, shall take the third base dugout and start the game as the defensive team, while the visiting team shall use the 1st base dugout and start the game as the offensive team.
2. The coaches, captains and umpires should meet at the home plate 10 minutes before game time, to go over grounds rules. It is at this time that a coach with an over age player, shall declare this to the umpire and the other team. Batting lineups should be exchanged at this time.
3. Games shall start at the time specified, unless a team does not have the minimum 7 players present. If a team cannot field 7 players at game time, then a 15 grace will be given. No additional time will be added to the end of the game to reflect this time.
4. The batter is out when:
 - a. 5 strikes are called by the umpire without the ball being hit into fair territory. Pitches which are clearly not hitable, in the umpire's judgement, shall not be counted as strikes unless the batter swings at the pitch. The 5 strikes can be pitches within the strike zone that the batter does not swing at, or 5 pitches within the strike zone that the batter does swing at.
 - b. The ball is hit fair or foul and is caught by a member of the defensive team before hitting the ground. The ball is then alive and in play until time is called.
 - c. The batter, while attempting to hit the ball, throws the bat in a manner that may endanger others, it shall be at the discretion of the umpire to call the batter out.
 - d. If a batted ball is caught or intentionally touched by the Offensive team Adult feeding the pitching machine the batter is out and no base runner may advance.
5. If a batted ball hits the pitching machine or the Offensive Team Adult unintentionally, the ball is declared dead and the batter is awarded first base with the corresponding move of any base runners that may be forced to move. If a player enters the Safety Circle for the purpose of making a play and touches the ball, the ball is dead and the batter will be awarded First Base and all other runners will advance one base if forced.
6. When there are 2 out in an inning, the catcher for the next inning shall start putting on the catcher's equipment. A two out catcher's rule, should be used if he/she is on base, and the last out should be put on the base as the base runner and the catcher should start putting his/her equipment on to keep the speed of the game moving.
7. A coach must ask the umpire's permission to adjust the pitching machine during the game.

8. Batters cannot attempt to gain first base when the catcher drops the fifth strike. The call is out.
9. Base runners shall not leave their base until the ball is hit. There is no stealing.
10. Base runners cannot advance on an overthrow. On any balls that are hit and remain in the infield playing area, runners will advance ONE BASE ONLY, even if the ball is played and overthrown into the outfield are, the play is dead. On ball that are hit to the outfield, runners may continue to run the bases until the ball is thrown and is either caught or touches by someone playing the infield, at that time, runners may only advance to the base that they are approaching as the ball is touched by an infielder. If no infielder touches the ball, runners may advance until the ball crosses the foul line at which time the play is dead and the base runners stop at the base that they are approaching.
11. There will be no infield fly calls in Rookie Ball.
12. Bunting is not permitted in Rookie Ball.
13. If dead ball comes into effect mid-inning, the game will return to the last complete inning of play unless the home team takes the lead.
14. In the event that a game is terminated before the end of the 3rd inning, the score will revert back to what the score was at the end of the last complete inning, unless the home team has taken the lead. If less than 3 complete innings were played, the game is considered incomplete and a makeup game will be scheduled.
15. During the regular season, all tied game scores will stand and no extra innings will be played. Tournament Play and Play Off Play will have additional rules provided to coaches and officials prior to the event.
16. Baserunners must try to avoid tags by sliding or evading the defensive player, otherwise the offensive player will be called out, even if the runner reaches the bag safely.

Umpires

1. The decision of the umpire shall be final. The managers of each team are entitled to ask for time and if granted, may approach the umpire for explanation or clarification of a decision. These questions must not include questioning of called balls or strikes, foul or fair balls, safe or out decisions.
2. The umpire has the authority to eject any player, coach or manager for repeatedly objecting to decisions or for unsportsmanlike conduct or language. The umpire may also order a coach or manager to ask a spectator to refrain from heckling or the use of foul language. **New is 2016, an umpire can place a coach into "bench restriction" where the coach can remain in the game, but cannot leave the area of the bench, for the remainder of the game. A coach may enter the field in the case of player injury, and to shake hands at the completion of the game. Non-compliance could lead to the game being forfeited to the non-offending team.
3. The umpire may terminate the game before its completion for reasons of darkness, bad weather, dangerous field conditions, etc.

Weather Conditions

1. Unless notified prior to the start of the game of a cancellation due to weather, please show up to all scheduled games with the anticipation of playing.

2. Please check the website, Facebook and Twitter, as we will try to post cancellations on bad weather days.
3. Lightning/Thunder: Please remember the baseball season is a prime time for thunderstorms, so be aware of lightning/thunder:
 - Determine the threat of lightning or thunder in your area.
 - **SEEK SHELTER IMMEDIATELY.**
 - After the last lightning flash/roar of thunder, wait **30 minutes** before leaving shelter. Half of all lightning deaths occur after the storm passes. Stay in a safe area until you are sure the threat has passed.