

WESTERVILLE YOUTH BASEBALL AND SOFTBALL LEAGUE
2017 JBBL COACH-PITCH "A" LEAGUE – FOR BOYS 8 YEARS OLD & UNDER
SUMMARY – PROGRAM AND RULES

This league is composed of 8 year old boys. The league will play with the "*Reduced Injury Factor*" ball and, although scores and standings will be kept, the main emphasis will be on skills and a basic understanding of the game. The league is organized and supervised by the Coach-Pitch General Manager, under the direction of the JBBL Commissioners, the Boy's Program Director, and the WYBSL Board of Trustees. Games are played in accordance with National Federation High School rules which would be applicable to Coach-Pitch, with the following modifications and clarifications:

1. GAMES, PLAYERS, FIELD EQUIPMENT AND CONDITIONS

- A. The home team coaches shall be responsible to install the bases and if necessary a non-permanent pitching rubber at the required distances prior to start of the game and remove and secure them in the field equipment box at the completion of the game.
- B. Base distance will be 60 feet. The pitching rubber shall be positioned 46 feet from the rear point of home plate. The ball used will be a "*Reduced Injury Factor*" ball selected by the league.
- C. Games are six (6) innings in length and will generally be played on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays. Make-up games will normally be played on the next available Saturday or Sunday, but may be scheduled based upon field availability and/or other previously scheduled make-up games.
- D. Weekday games will start promptly at 6:30pm. Rescheduled games will start promptly as scheduled. The home team will have the field for practice until twenty (20) minutes before game time, with the visiting team practicing after the home team until five (5) minutes before game time.
- E. No new inning is permitted to begin more than two (2) hours after the start of the game. A new inning is defined as beginning as soon as the third (3rd) out is made in the bottom half of an inning. If an inning in a **complete** game is not finished because of darkness or inclement weather, the score will revert to the last fully completed inning.
- F. Games less than six (6) innings are considered **complete** if they last at least four (4) full innings (three and one-half innings, if the home team is ahead) and are stopped for any reason. The final score is determined by reverting back to the last complete inning unless the home team is at bat and ahead when play is stopped. Games that are not complete are considered **suspended** games. When continued, play resumes exactly where it left off when play was stopped (batting order, position of any base runners, pitchers, etc.) and all rules apply as if it was one continuous game.
- G. Extra innings will be played if, after six (6) innings, the score is tied and time limits and daylight allow. But, if **complete**, regular season games may end in a tie. If so, each team will receive ½ win and ½ loss in the standings.
- H. There shall be no "slaughter" or "ten run lead" rule in this league.
- I. Scores shall be kept and standings will be posted at this level of play.
- J. Prior to the start of a game, only the WYBSL Fields Director (or other Board designee) has the authority to cancel the game. At scheduled game time and throughout the game, the authority to stop play because of darkness, inclement weather or other playing conditions rests with a Board member, if present, or with the coaches in the absence of a Board member. Games will be rescheduled by the Board, with final confirmation by the Program Director.
- K. A team must start, play and finish with a minimum of eight (8) rostered players. Loss of a player during the game which results in a team having only seven (7) players will result in a forfeit. After a forfeit is declared, the opposing team may supply players in order to continue as a scrimmage.

- L. In all cases, a game shall be forfeited only after a grace period of fifteen (15) minutes after the scheduled game time.
1. It is a part of good sportsmanship that a Head Coach will notify the General Manager and opposing Head Coach as soon as he/she knows that it will be absolutely impossible for his/her team to appear with the required minimum of players for a scheduled game or make-up game. As a courtesy, we expect this notification to be made as soon as possible – even if it is done days or weeks in advance.

Upon such notification, neither team shall appear for the scheduled game. However, this courtesy notification does not automatically trigger a forfeit.
 2. Game forfeits will be awarded only after a fifteen (15) minute grace period when weather and/or field conditions at the end of the grace period would normally allow a game to be started.

Therefore, even if a team does not appear with the minimum of players, or has notified the General Manager and opposing Head Coach as specified in 1. above, there shall be no forfeit awarded if weather and field conditions fifteen (15) minutes after the scheduled start time would not have allowed the game to be started. However, after a forfeit is awarded, the forfeit will stand – even if weather or field conditions would not have allowed the game to continue.
- M. Normal defensive alignment consists of ten (10) players – four (4) outfielders and six (6) infielders. All outfielders must be positioned in the outfield grass before each pitch. When a team is required to play with nine (9) players, the team will play with three (3) outfielders and six (6) infielders (including a pitcher and catcher). When a team is required to play with eight (8) players, the positions of pitcher and catcher are required. Defensive players shall not be substituted for or switched in the middle of an inning except because of injury or sickness.
- N. Each player will be given a team shirt and team cap, which the player may keep, prior to the first scheduled game. Each player must provide, at their own expense, a fielder's glove. During a game, no player will be allowed to play without wearing the team shirt and team cap supplied by the league. During games and practices, when a player is the batter, a base runner or the catcher, the team cap shall be replaced or covered by a helmet.

No additions, subtractions or changes may be made in team shirts and caps without the express written permission of the Program Director (or his/her designee). If such alteration is approved, all coaches and players of the team must wear shirts and/or caps that are altered as approved. Exception: A player, at his own expense, may have his name added on the back of his shirt above the number.
- O. No metal spikes or cleats may be worn.
- P. Catchers must wear a helmet with face mask and throat protector (a face mask with integrated throat extension may be worn without an additional throat protector), chest protector and shin guards during games, practices and while warming up a pitcher.
- Q. Players must not wear jewelry, metal hair ornaments or similar items during practices, scrimmages, or games, for their safety.
- R. Every player will play a minimum of three (3) defensive innings per game. A player must play an infield position and an outfield position during each game, and may play no more than one (1) inning at any position. **For the purpose of this rule, the infield position is defined as any infield position other than catcher.** A player must enter the game no later than the defensive third inning. This will ensure the player a minimum of nine (9) defensive outs. **No player may sit out for a second (2nd) inning until all players have sat out one (1) inning. No player may sit out for a third (3rd) inning until all players have sat out two (2) innings.** A game lasting only 5 and one-half (5½) innings, because the home team is ahead, does not relieve the coach of the

responsibility to play each player for the nine (9) out minimum. A game shortened due to curfew or weather may alter the rule unless the game is rescheduled or continued at a later time. Exception: If a player arrives after the start of a game, each inning that begins without the player in attendance shall be counted as an inning played by that player when counting the number of defensive innings played. Free defensive substitution is allowed.

- S. On defense, each team may have two (2) charged conferences during the first six (6) innings of a game. One (1) additional conference is awarded for each extra inning played. Conferences may be held on the playing field.

2. HEAD AND ASSISTANT COACHES' RESPONSIBILITIES

- A. Each team shall be issued an equipment bag and equipment box key prior to the start of the season. These must be returned, cleaned, to the General Manager within fourteen (14) days of the team's last game (or by a date specified by the league as the return date) or the coach will be held financially responsible for the value of the equipment.
- B. Adult coaches are not required to be in the uniform of his/her team at the team's games or while acting in any coaching capacity at any time during the game (for example, as a bench coach). But, if a coach wears a shirt or head covering with any inscription, words, designs or team logo, it must be the team shirt or cap supplied by the league, unless written approval is obtained from the Program Director (or his/her designee).
- C. It will be the responsibility of the Head Coach to secure an adult volunteer among the parents of his/her team to provide coverage at league-assigned time(s) in the concession trailer. If the Head Coach is unable to secure a volunteer parent or other adult to provide coverage, it shall be the responsibility of the Head Coach to provide such coverage himself/herself. **If no adult from the team provides coverage at a league-assigned time for the team, the Head Coach shall be charged with a one-game suspension, to be served at the Coach's next game following the violation, including the next subsequent season.**
- D. Prior to the start of each game, each team shall exchange their defensive player rotation plan and batting order with the opposing team. During a game, each team shall also notify the opposing team of any change in the defensive plan or batting order. If a game goes into extra innings, the player rotation plan will revert back to the rotation plan in effect at the beginning of the game.
- E. **Defensive Coaches.** No more than two (2) defensive coaches shall be allowed on the field. These coaches must remain behind the outfielders at all times and may not interfere with the play of the game. They may not touch or interfere with the ball at any time; if the ball is touched or interfered with by either of these coaches, it will be considered in play and base runners shall advance at their own risk.
- F. **Offensive Coaches.** While play is in progress, all coaches not performing base coaching or pitching duties must remain in the bench area off of the field of play. Also, no coach is permitted to stand at the edge of, or behind the backstop.
- G. It will be the responsibility of the winning team coach to phone the score to the WYBSL answering service on the day or night of the game (in the case of a tie, suspended game, or game canceled at the field, the home team coach shall be responsible to call). Report the pertinent information (league, winning team, losing team, date, field and score). The score must be reported no later than three and one half (3½) hours after the starting time of the game. For the first score not reported in the time-limit allowed above, the Head Coach will receive a warning. **A second violation will result in a one-game suspension for the Head Coach.** Further violations will result in additional penalties.

- H. Head Coaches, or designated Assistant Coaches, shall have responsibility for all matters that take place on, and in the vicinity of, the field in which a game, practice or scrimmage is taking place. This includes assuring that all WYBSL rules and policies are followed and adhered to. If the General Manager, the Commissioner, or a Board member is present during a game, practice or scrimmage they may intercede if they deem it necessary.
- I. A coach is permitted to use a scorekeeping and/or pitch-counting application on an electronic device. The use of these electronic devices will be limited to the coaches box on the field and dugout, providing the use of such device does not interfere with the progress of the game. Teams however cannot use electronic devices on the field for voice communication, electronic audio, and/or video recording.
- J. If a team does not have their Head Coach or one of their Assistant Coaches present at a practice – or for both teams, in case of a scrimmage or game – then the practice, scrimmage, or game shall not be played. A team not having their Head Coach or one of their Assistant Coaches present at a game will constitute a forfeit by that team.

3. BATTING AND BASE RUNNING

- A. A continuous batting order will be used. Each player in attendance is listed in the batting order and bats in that order throughout the game. Any player arriving late must be placed last in the batting order. The opposing coach must be notified of any addition or subtraction.
- B. The National Federation rule for bats shall not apply. Bats used in this league shall not be more than thirty-three (33) inches in length nor more than two and one-quarter (2¼) inches in diameter. Non-wood bats shall bear the appropriate factory-marked 1.15 BPF (Bat Performance Factor) label and the legend "Little League". Prior to each game, it shall be the responsibility of each Head Coach to check all bats to assure that only legal bats are in use during the game.
- C. The following rules regarding batting lineups will apply:
 - 1) If a player who is not in attendance at the start of the game is listed in the official batting lineup, and is not present to take his place at bat for his first appearance, the batter will be declared out for such first appearance. His name will then be eliminated from the official batting lineup with no further penalty. If the player subsequently arrives, he must be placed last in the batting order.
 - 2) If a player is in attendance at the start of the game, and subsequently must leave the game (because of school event or other reasonable cause, other than injury), his name shall be eliminated from the official batting lineup with no penalty. A player so removed from the lineup shall not be allowed to play in the game from that point, unless the game is continued on another day. If the game is continued at a later date and the player is in attendance, the player shall be placed in the same place in the lineup as his name first appeared.
 - 3) In a continued game, any player who was in attendance during the first date of play, and is not in attendance at the start of play on the date of continuance, shall be eliminated from the lineup with no penalty. If the player subsequently arrives, he must be placed last in the batting order. If a player was not present at the original game before it was suspended, but is present on the date of continuance, that player is added at the end of the batting order.
 - 4) If a player is injured or becomes ill during a game:
 - a. If a batter begins, but cannot complete an at bat due to injury, illness or other reason, he will be declared out. The player may remain in the game unless disqualified by the Head Coach according to rules provisions below.
 - b. If the head coach disqualifies the player because of injury/illness for the remainder of the game, the player's name shall be eliminated from the lineup with no penalty. The player shall not be eligible in the case that the game is continued on another day.

- c. If the head coach does not disqualify the player because of injury/illness for the remainder of the game, an out shall be declared at each instance of the player's scheduled batting appearance when the player is unable to take his place at bat.

If a player is injured or becomes ill and must be removed as a base runner after reaching base successfully, the last player on the bench (the most recent batter not on base) will be substituted as a pinch runner.

- 5) Notwithstanding any of the above, if a batting lineup contains only eight (8) players, an out shall be declared each time that a ninth player would have been eligible to bat. If a batting lineup contains nine (9) players and, for any reason (even if listed above in this Rule), a player is not able or eligible to take his place at bat when scheduled, an out shall be declared when such player was scheduled to bat.
- D. As a safety measure, only the batter may take practice swings and they must be inside the field of play. There will be no practice swings by “on-deck” or other batters. All other players and offensive team coaches – when not directing the base runners from the coach's box or acting as coach-pitcher – must remain on their bench or behind their bench fence, except when warming up. No coach, player or spectator is permitted to stand at the edge of, or behind the backstop.
- E. Prior to games and/or scrimmages, batting aides (such as; hit sticks, wiffle balls, hitting nets, and hit-a-way devices), may only be used by players in the outfield grass between the foul lines during the time that the player's team is to have the field for warm-ups (see Rule 1.D. above). Batting aides may not be used during a game or scrimmage. After games or scrimmages, batting aides may only be used in the outfield grass between the foul lines on the field which the game or scrimmage was played, and if there is not another game, scrimmage, or practice scheduled to use the field. Additionally, no batting practice, such as “soft-toss” or “flip” drills, causing balls to be hit against backstops or fencing, is allowing at any time, including practices, scrimmages and games. Only bats and devices designed to remain part of the bat, such as weighted bats, batting donuts or wind resistant devices are allowable during games.
- F. Each offensive inning shall consist of **three (3) outs or ten (10) batters**, whichever comes first. The batting order will continue with the next person in the batting order at bat for the next inning. You may not start the batting order all over each inning.
Clarification: If there is a runner on 3rd base that crosses home plate when the 10th batter of the inning (or 9th batter if playing with 9 players) hits a fair ball with 0 or 1 out and an out is recorded due to the batted ball, the run counts toward the total score.
- G. Each batter will receive a maximum of **seven (7) pitches**. If, after the seventh pitch, the batter has not hit the ball into fair territory or struck out, the batter will be called out. However, in the case of a foul ball on the seventh pitch, the batter shall receive additional pitches as long as the batter continues to hit foul balls and is not called out. There shall be no walks. The “delay by batter” rule will not be in effect.
- H. A batter who swings and misses three (3) times is out (three strikes). A foul tip is considered a strike, including the third strike. A foul ball is considered a strike except on the third strike or as described in G above; however, if a foul ball or foul tip, which goes above the batter's head, is caught by the catcher or any other fielder within the field of play before the ball touches the ground, the batter shall be called out.
Clarification: If the catcher catches a foul tip on a third strike the batter is out.
- I. If a batter is hit by a pitched ball, no base will be awarded.
- J. A batter who throws the bat will be verbally warned by the adult parent/family volunteer **one (1) time**. If the same batter again throws the bat, that batter will be called out. Warnings will be noted by the opposing coach. In all cases, a dead ball will be declared and no runners may advance.

- K. There is no infield fly rule.
- L. No bunting, stealing or leading off is permitted at this level of play. If a player leads off, the adult parent/family volunteer shall call "dead ball" and the player leading off will be given one warning and told to return to the base by the adult parent/family volunteer; if the player leads off again during the same time as a base runner, the player will be called out.
- M. Sliding is not encouraged. However, if a runner does slide, the runner will not be called out.
- N. A batted ball hit into fair territory is a live ball. A ball is considered dead when a thrown ball is in the possession of a player-pitcher, catcher, or other infielder in the skinned area, no runners are advancing and no play is being made.
- O. In case of an overthrow at a base or home plate, runners may advance as long as the ball remains in play. In the event an overthrow that goes out of play (defined as the bench fences extended or under or over the fence or backstop) the play is ruled dead and bases will be awarded as follows: 1) if the throw is the first play from the infield, all runners will be awarded two (2) bases **from the time of the pitch**. 2) if it is a throw other than the first play from the infield, all runners will be awarded two (2) bases **from the time of the throw**.
- P. A runner who leaves the base after the ball is dead must return to the base. At the time of a dead ball, if a runner has passed a base and is advancing to the next base, the runner will be awarded that base. This will be determined by the adult parent/family volunteer.
- Q. If the catcher is on base with two (2) outs (or if the tenth batter of the inning is up at bat), the last batter on the bench (the most recent batter not on base) may substitute as a runner for the catcher to expedite putting on the catcher's gear
- R. No player, including the catcher, may block a base or home plate from a base runner, whether or not a play can be made. The penalty for a violation of this rule shall be the award of the base to the runner.
- S. **Defensive Players.** No fielder can be positioned closer than 46 feet to home plate – and the player designated as the pitcher must remain within three feet, to the right or left, of the pitching rubber – until the ball is hit. The player designated as pitcher may not step in front of or obstruct the coach who is pitching. If the coach who is pitching is hit by a batted ball or interferes with the play of the ball, the adult parent/family volunteer can call the ball dead and the pitch will be replayed.

4. PITCHING

- A. Each coach-pitcher will pitch to his/her own team's players.
- B. The coach-pitcher must pitch from the pitching rubber.
- C. The coach-pitcher must pitch overhand to all players.
- D. As soon as a ball is hit by a batter, the coach-pitcher shall immediately move from the pitching area toward the foul line in a direction away from any play. If he/she does not do so, the ball will be considered a dead ball and the pitch will be replayed. The coach-pitcher may return to the pitching area only after a dead ball or the play is completed.
- E. The coach-pitcher shall make every effort to avoid contact with a batted or thrown ball in fair territory to avoid inhibiting a defensive play. However, if accidental interference occurs in fair territory, the adult parent/family volunteer will call a dead ball and the pitch will be replayed.
- F. The coach-pitcher is not a base coach and, as such, may not make any coaching calls or moves to encourage or instruct a base runner.

5. ADULT PARENT/FAMILY VOLUNTEERS

- A. Each team will provide an adult parent/family volunteer to count pitches, call foul balls, and call safe/out at the bases. Volunteers should be recruited by each Head Coach. Each team should have two designated volunteers; however, only one from each team will be used during the game. When a team is on offense, that team's volunteer shall be located behind home plate and will count pitches and call plays at third base and home plate; when a team is on defense, that team's volunteer shall be positioned to call plays at first and second base. The volunteers will change positions after each half-inning.
- B. Knowledge of the rules is helpful. Head Coaches are responsible for explaining the rules to their own team volunteers.
- C. Both volunteers should go over the rules with both coaches prior to the start of the game to eliminate any misinterpretation of the rules.
- D. A volunteer shall not act as a coach when performing duties on the field and, as such, may not make any coaching calls or moves to encourage or instruct a batter, base runner or fielder.
- E. A volunteer shall not have the authority to eject a player, coach, or spectator from a game. A volunteer should report any observed unsportsmanlike behavior to the coaches and to the Program Director for review.

6. CONCUSSION RULE

- A. Any player who exhibits signs, symptoms or behaviors consistent with a concussion (such as loss of consciousness, headache, dizziness, confusion or balance problems) must be immediately removed from the game, practice, or scrimmage by the player's coaches or WYBSL officials and shall not return to play that day. Further, the player shall not return to play until cleared with written authorization by a licensed physician which needs to be provided to the Program Director.
- B. When a player is removed from a game, practice, or scrimmage due to signs, symptoms or behaviors consistent with a concussion, his/her team's Head Coach, or Assistant Coach acting as the Head Coach, will notify the Program Director on the date of the occurrence.

7. CONDUCT. Unsportsmanlike conduct will not be tolerated in the league. Team coaches are responsible for their conduct and the conduct of their players and fans. A coach, player or fan can be ejected from a game and/or removed from the playing field area by order of the General Manager, Commissioner, or Program Director if they violate a league rule of conduct, as follows:

- A. In a game, no coach may utilize any player(s) not currently assigned to his/her team roster by the League. Violation of this rule will result in automatic permanent suspension of the coach(es) involved.
- B. No coach, player or fan shall ever engage in a physical altercation with any player, umpire, coach or fan.
- C. No coach, player or fan shall intentionally violate or refuse to follow any league or game rules.
- D. No coach, player, adult parent/family volunteer or fan shall come to the playing field under the influence of alcohol or an illegal drug; and no coach, player or adult parent/family volunteer shall use tobacco products at the playing field during a game or practice.
- E. No coach, player or fan shall engage in grossly unsportsmanlike conduct, including, but not limited to, throwing equipment, use of profanity, arguing with an adult parent/family volunteer over a call or directing remarks to a player, adult parent/family volunteer, coach or fan which are of a degrading or distracting nature.
- F. Only the Head Coach, or his/her designee in the Head Coach's absence, may dispute a judgment call by an adult parent/family volunteer. Disputes at this level should be rare and should be handled by a discussion involving **only** the adult parent/family volunteers and Head Coaches.

- G. After each game, in the practice of good sportsmanship, all coaches and players shall form two opposing lines and proceed through a traditional, orderly "handshake line". No coach or player shall avoid participation in this line or exhibit unsportsmanlike conduct in the line.
- H. No Coach, player, parent, or fan, shall at any time, threaten, intimidate, attempt to intimidate, harm or attempt to harm, any adult parent/family volunteer, player, coach, WYBSL official, or fan. Any person who violates this rule may immediately be banned from all WYBSL sites and activities for a period of time to be determined by the Program Director up to and including a permanent ban. This rule shall be applied regardless of where and when the offending conduct takes place.

If a coach, player or fan is ejected from a game and/or removed from the playing field area for conduct as described above (or in the case of G. above, does not participate as described), the person shall provide a written statement describing his/her version of the events and/or other explanation to the General Manager within twenty-four (24) hours of the incident, and may not attend or participate in any practice or game until doing so. The General Manager and program Director shall review the statement and gather any other information from other parties that they deem necessary to determine if a further penalty should be assessed. Such further penalty, if any, shall be assessed before the team's next scheduled game.

Any coach who violates the above guidelines may be immediately removed from his/her position by Program Director. In the event of such an occurrence, each coach would be provided with the opportunity to appear before the Board of Trustees at its next scheduled meeting in order to describe for the Board his/her version of the events which may exist for reinstating the coach.

WYBSL, JBBL and JGSL staff, managers, coaches and umpires are expected to enforce this policy at all times.

Automatic Penalties. In order to clarify and standardize penalties for violations, the following automatic penalties shall apply:

- 1. If a coach or player is ejected from a game because of a violation of the Conduct guidelines, or National Federation Rules related to unsportsmanlike acts, malicious contact or similar acts, that coach or player shall be suspended for (and shall not attend) the next game the coach or player would attend, including the next subsequent season.
- 2. If a coach, player or fan is ejected from a game and/or removed from the playing field area for violation of Conduct guidelines during a game, that coach, player or fan shall be suspended for (and shall not attend) the next game the coach, player, or fan would attend, including the next subsequent season..
- 3. If a coach, player or fan is ejected or removed as described in 1. or 2. above, and fails to comply with this policy, the applicable game shall be forfeited by the offending team.
- 4. It shall be the offending team's responsibility to enforce this policy.
- 5. All other provisions of the Conduct guidelines – including provisions regarding additional penalties – and the procedures described therein, shall be in full effect and shall be followed by all coaches, players and fans.
- 6. A second violation by the same coach, player or fan shall result in further penalty – which may include suspension for the season and/or an extended period of time.

- 8. **RULE VIOLATIONS AND PROTESTS.** No game may be played under protest. However, if rules have been violated, the General Manager and/or the Program Director have the authority to call "no game" or "suspended game" and order the game to be replayed or continued from the point of the rule violation. The complaining coach must notify the opposing coach of his/her intention to bring a complaint to the General Manager before the next pitch and must notify the General Manager (or Commissioner or Program Director if the General Manager is not available) of the disputed rule within two (2) hours after the end of the game.

9. **POST-SEASON PLAY.** After the regular season is concluded, the league may conduct a post-season tournament in accordance with the format set forth by the Board of Trustees.