

## 2009 Methuen West Cal Ripken Home Rules Bambino/Rookie/Minor Leagues

**Ages:**           **Bambino: 7 – 8**  
                      **Rookie: 9**  
                      **Minor: 10 - 12**

*Introduction: The Home Rules at the Bambino, Rookie and Minor League levels are intended to emphasize instruction and sparking interest in baseball. Emphasis on competition increases with each level, but teaching the fundamentals of the game and the inclusion in the game of all the children in the program are the most important goals at these levels.*

### **Section 1: Player Rules**

#### **1. General**

1.1 The 'local league rules' identified are adopted with the intent of maximizing every players involvement, enjoyment and contribution in each game, without regard to age or ability.

#### **2. Team rosters**

2.1 Each team will have 1 Manager and up to a maximum of 3 Coaches.

2.1.1 Only 3 Adults (managers/coaches) are allowed in the dugouts during games.

Teams can have additional CORI'd assistants, but during games – not more than 3 adults may be in the bench area.

2.2 Team rosters will be maintained according to availability of players, ideally at **13 players – not to exceed 15.**

#### **3. Playing Time:**

3.1 The following rules will be monitored through Game Rosters.

3.2 For every game played, coaches are expected to sign each other;s game roster and turn in their game roster to the umpire.

3.3 The league Directors and VP will review the forms for compliance.

3.4 Any deviation from the rules will result in a one-game suspension of the offending manager. After the second violation, the board will review the situation to determine the outcome.

3.5 *Number of Players – **Bambino League Only***

3.5.1 At this level, each team may field four (4) outfielders for a total of 10 players in the field. (Note: Coaches are asked to do their best to ensure that idle fielders do not damage to the infield or outfield by digging holes.)

#### 4. Number of Innings

- 4.1 The goal is to create balanced playing time for every player at the Bambino, Rookie and Minor League levels.
- 4.2 During any game, each player at this level must play a minimum of four **(4) innings** of each six (6) inning game (based on a maximum roster of 13 players).
- 4.3 If a child is tardy and arrives after the game has begun, the coach is only required to play this child 2 innings. If a child arrives after the first inning completes with no notification, the coach may play this child a minimum of 1 inning.
- 4.4 In the case of **extra innings, the playing time resets to zero**. In extra innings, no player may play more than 1 additional inning than any other player.
  - 4.4.1 Pitchers continue to be bound by max number of innings rules and by rule 8.6 below.

#### 5. Infield/Outfield Mix:

- 5.1 The goal at this level is to teach players the fundamentals of the game. In order to do this and to keep the interest levels high, the following rule is implemented to keep kids from being buried and lose interest in the game
- 5.2 Every child should play at least **1 infield inning per game**.
  - 5.2.1 It is understood that some kids may not be able to play the infield without risk of injury. The coach must discuss this with the parents and the child if this is the case. *Parents must agree to keeping the player in the outfield.*
  - 5.2.2 Some children may decide they do not want to play in the infield. These wishes must be kept in mind. However, the overriding rule is implemented to keep some balance of the above.
- 5.3 Every child must play **at least 1 inning in the outfield** per game and **no player may play more than 3 innings in the infield per game**.
  - Exception 1: In the case where only 9 players show, no player may play more than 4 innings in the infield per game. Every child must still play at least 1 inning in the outfield.
  - Exception 2: There may be occasions where a child simply can't or does not want to play infield and the safety of the child must override this rule. The parents must consent and opposing coaches must be notified.
- 5.4 In the event of **extra innings** – for every 9 defensive outs, a player can play only 6 of them in the infield.
  - 5.4.1 Each team should be developing more than one catcher. Because of this, the expectation is that this rule applies to catchers as well. Any player who starts the game at the catching position, or moves to this position, must play at least one inning in the outfield.

#### 6. Pitching exceptions to infield/outfield mix and innings:

- 6.1 Pitchers are subject to the max innings per week rule along with max innings per game rule. A manager must manage the pitching staff to handle his pitchers such that they do not exceed the maximum innings per game per player nor the maximum innings per week (while also satisfying the rest rules below).
- 6.2 If a pitcher remains in that position for all of his active innings, he is excused from the one outfield inning rule. However, if he remains in the game after being removed from

the pitching position, or is reinserted into the game as an active player, he must play at least one inning in the outfield.

- 6.3 Players who are scheduled or likely to pitch in relief must fulfill the outfield inning obligation. If a player is scheduled or likely to pitch the final three innings of a game, they must play one of the first three innings in the outfield.

## 7. Substitution / Batting Order

- 7.1 **Free substitution** is allowed in the field.
- 7.2 Batting order is to be round robin. For example, if you have a 15-player roster, you must set up a 1-15 batting order, and each player must bat consecutively. No one player can bat again until every player has on the team has batted.
- 7.3 **Teams must set a batting order at the beginning of the season** and follow that order for the entire season. A copy of the batting order must be submitted to the league director and kept on file at the hut.
- 7.4 Teams **must rotate their batting order per game**. A player who bats first in game 1 is moved to last in game 2. All other players move up one slot.
- 7.5 A team may reset their batting order once for the playoffs. After it has been reset, the same rules apply for the playoffs as the do for the regular season. A playoff batting order must be submitted to the league director and kept on file in the hut before the playoffs begin.

## 8. Pitching Restrictions - (as outlined in the Cal Ripken/Babe Ruth Rule book) apply as follows:

- 8.1 A calendar week is Monday through Sunday.
- 8.2 A pitcher may pitch no more than (6) innings per calendar week.
  - 8.2.1 This includes rain-outs, make-ups, playoffs.
  - 8.2.2 12 year old players (Minor League) are not allowed to pitch more than 3 innings per week.
- 8.3 If a pitcher delivers (1) pitch in an inning, it counts as a full inning.
- 8.4 Pitchers must have (2) calendar days of rest between pitching assignments if he pitches more than (2) innings in any one game.
- 8.5 Games where an ineligible pitcher pitches will be considered a forfeit.
  - 8.5.1 If it is rectified and a score change occurs, the League Director, VP and President may agree to keep the results in tact. However, it is up to the coaches to request such a review.
  - 8.5.2 Regardless, the Manager of a team using an ineligible pitcher will be suspended for (2) games as a mandatory corrective action.
- 8.6 A pitcher may return to the mound (1) time during a game assuming that the max number of innings allowed for this pitcher has not been reached.
  - 8.6.1 This is considered one assignment. A returning pitcher in the same game will then need (2) calendar days rest.
- 8.7 If a game is determined to be "no game", due to weather or other circumstances, the pitching eligibility reverts to the same as it was prior to the beginning of the "no game" situation.

8.8 The “quick pitch” is an illegal pitch.

8.8.1 The umpire may request removal of a pitcher if more than one quick pitch is done per game and the umpire believes it is a potential safety issue.

8.9 At the end of each game, the managers shall record the pitching statistics and it should be reported under the comment field on the web site so that all pitchers and their innings are accounted for and made visible to all other coaches.

8.10 **BAMBINO LEAGUE ONLY:**

8.10.1 Preparing Pitchers:

8.10.1.1 During games in **April and May**, a Manager or Coach will pitch each of the first three innings. Players will pitch the last three innings or any innings thereafter.

8.10.1.2 During games in **June and July**, players will pitch the entire game.

8.10.1.3 Pitchers are allowed to pitch from a spot approximately six (6) feet in front of the rubber (40' from home plate). There is a fixed rubber at the Oakland Street field.

8.11 Immediately after hitting **their 3<sup>rd</sup> batter**, they must be removed from pitching and cannot return as a pitcher during that game. The player may remain in the game in another position.

## Section 2: Game Rules

### 1. Game Times / Length

1.1. Games are expected to be no longer than **2 hours**.

1.2. Games can be extended for up to 1 additional hour (at the discretion of the umpire) if there is no game scheduled to follow and enough light is available to continue play. . Both coaches can petition the umpire to end or suspend the game, should they agree that conditions do not warrant the continuation of the game at that time.

1.3. Games must start on time. If a team cannot field **9 players within 10 min.** of the posted start time, they are allowed to start the game with 8 players, providing that the opposing team is able to provide them with a player to be used as a right fielder, during the defensive half of the inning. If an additional (ninth) player does not appear before the ninth batting position, the short handed team will be charged with an automatic out. Any team with less than 8 players at the start of the game will forfeit that game.

1.4. When a field is scheduled for another game, for the game in progress, no new full inning can begin **15 minutes prior to the start of the next game**.

1.5. *Example:* With a game scheduled for 7:00 PM on the field they are playing on, a game in progress may not start a new inning after 6:45. Results of that game are final.

1.6. Umpires will be responsible for implementing this rule and cannot be questioned.

1.7. There is a **10 run “Mercy Rule”**. This applies when one team is ahead of the other by 10 runs or more and the losing team has batted in the fourth inning. If at any point in time that one team is up by 10 or more, the game ends as long as the losing team has batted within that inning.

1.8. Games in progress during rainouts are official after the losing team has batted in the fourth inning. If a game is rained out after the fourth inning but that inning is not complete, the score reverts to the score after the last full inning completed.

## 2. Scoring

- 2.1 A maximum of **four (4) runs per inning** may be scored by a team in each of the first five innings.
- 2.2 In the **sixth inning** or any inning thereafter, there is **no limit** to the number of runs a team can score.
- 2.3 In the instance of a game being shortened due to time constraints, the fifth inning may become the final inning (with unlimited scoring). This may happen only if both managers and the umpire are in agreement that the fifth inning will be last, due to the imminent inability of the teams to realistically finish all six innings in the allocated time.

## 3. Advancing Runners

### 3.1 Rookie / Minor League Rules

- 3.1.1 A base runner may steal **one base at a time** once the ball is alive and in play and has crossed the plane of the plate.
- 3.1.2 Teams will be limited to **five stolen bases in an inning** (advancing on a passed ball is considered a stolen base, advancing on an overthrown ball during a batted ball situation is not). There are no restrictions on number of steals at the Minor League Level, although good sportsmanship should be considered.
- 3.1.3 Advancement Rules:
  - 3.1.3.1 When on base, players may advance if a player has a failed/over-thrown pick-off attempt.
  - 3.1.3.2 When on base players are allowed to steal a base – only one at a time.
  - 3.1.3.3 Players may **not advance on an over-thrown** attempt to catch the runner while stealing. As soon as the ball is over-thrown, the play is considered dead and the runners may not advance further. Any attempt to advance is reversed and no play can be made. There is no continuation of the play and the runner must be returned to the previous base.
- 3.1.4 Players **cannot steal home**. Nor can they advance to home on a passed ball. Players can only advance home on a batted ball, or in a bases loaded situation when a batter is walked or hit by a pitch.
- 3.1.5 The ball is considered “dead” when the pitcher has control of the ball and is standing on the pitcher’s mound. If a runner is more than half way to a base, he may continue to the base with the possibility of being tagged out. Players less than half way to the next base must return to the previous base.
- 3.1.6 There are no balks.
- 3.1.7 The batter may not advance to first on a dropped/missed strike three.
- 3.1.8 Bunting :
  - 3.18.1 Bunting is allowed at the Minor League Level.
  - 3.18.2 Rookie League players are only allowed to bunt one time per game, per player. Players at this age level should be encouraged to develop their swing. Fielding skills at this level are also not sufficiently developed to make the bunt a meaningful play.
- 3.1.9. The infield fly is in effect at the Minor and Rookie levels.

### 3.2 Advancing Runners – Bambino League

- 3.2.1 A player may only advance on a walk or a ball that is hit into play.
- 3.2.2 There is **no stealing** of bases at this age level. This includes direct steals, overthrows to the pitcher and passed balls
- 3.2.3 There are no balks.
- 3.2.4 The batter may not advance to first on a dropped/missed strike three.
- 3.2.5 There is no infield fly rule.
- 3.2.6 There is no bunting.
- 3.2.7 There is no tagging up on a fly-ball out.

## 4. Safety

### 4.1 Bat Weight Restriction

- 4.1.1 Most bats are now being sold with a Bat Performance Factor (BPF). In 2008, bats must have a **BPF of 1.15 or less**. If they do not have a printed BPF, the maximum drop that will be allowed is -9. (Bats with a printed BPF of 1.15 or less *may* have a larger drop factor).
  - 4.1.1.1 Legal Examples:
    - A bat has a BPF of 1.15 and a drop of -10. This is a legal bat.
    - A bat has without a BPF rating has a drop of -9, -8, or less. This is legal.
  - 4.1.1.2 Illegal Example: A bat does not have a BPF and has a drop of -10, -11 or greater. This is an illegal bat.

### 4.2 Base Runners

Although proper base running techniques should be taught at this level, important rules are in place to ensure the safety of the runner and fielder.

- 4.2.1 Base runners must **slide to avoid** collision.
- 4.2.2 Base runners are not allowed to barrel into any player to dislodge the ball.
- 4.2.3 Base runners **MUST** slide at home where there is a play at the plate. This will be the judgment call of the umpire. If the catcher has the ball, the base runner must slide. If there is no play at the plate, the player may run through the base.
- 4.2.4 *Walks with the bases loaded – **Bambino League Only***
  - 4.2.4.1 A runner **may not be ‘walked in’**. If bases are loaded and a child has reached a count of 4 balls, runners do not advance – the walk is not granted. The child must either put the ball in play or strike out.
    - 4.2.4.1.1 If a child is pitching, the coach of the team at bat will pitch to the hitter. The coach inherits the count at as many strikes that already exist.
    - 4.2.4.1.2 If a coach is pitching, he continues to pitch – and may not walk the run in.
    - 4.2.4.1.3 The coach pitches until either the child puts the ball in play or strikes out. To clarify, it is **NOT** a situation where the player continues to bat until the ball is put in play.
    - 4.2.4.1.4 Exception: If a batter is hit by a pitched ball, he is always awarded first base – even if the bases are loaded. A run is allowed to score in this event.

### 4.3 Miscellaneous Safety Rules

- 4.3.1 When a player is hurt play will stop IMMEDIATELY. The player will then be attended to by the Manager and/or Coach. The umpire should keep all other players away from the injured player. Parents should remain in the stands unless summoned by the Team Manager. NOTE: When play is resumed, the umpire(s) will decide if any base advancement is warranted.
- 4.3.2 All batters and runners must wear helmets. Catchers also must wear helmet/mask with “billy goat” (no skull caps) and cup. There is no “on-deck” batter allowed. The only player with a bat is the batter. Coaches must inspect helmets (and other equipment) to make sure that they are not damaged, prior to use.
- 4.3.3 All players not active in the game, must remain in their dugout (their bench area behind the fence). No on deck hitters are allowed on the field.

## Section 3: General Rules

### 1. Umpiring

- 1.1. Only the manager may question an umpire’s call in regards to a rule. Judgment calls cannot be questioned.
- 1.2. There is a **‘zero tolerance’ policy** towards making comments to the umpire. If you have a problem with how the game is being called, ALL comments and concerns are to be addressed to the Umpire Coordinator, Division Director or League Vice President.
- 1.3. No comments should be directed to the umpires. Coaches and Managers represent the league and they must act on the umpire’s behalf should they notice comments coming from the stands.
- 1.4. We use player-umpires. Coaches should not ‘plead’ or ‘complain’ about the strike zone during play. If there is an issue of strike zone or an issue of rules implementation – BOTH coaches should approach the umpire BETWEEN innings and help to instruct and train the umpire.
- 1.5. Umpires will be completing game summary reports and will identify any teams where we are having problems in this area.

### 2. Administration

- 2.1 The home team will provide (2) new baseballs to the umpire prior to the game.
- 2.2 The home team will be assigned the third base dugout.
- 2.3 Rainouts are determined by the League (President / VP) after an evaluation of field conditions. If games are cancelled, a message is left on the League telephone number 978-416-7273. If the coaches involved need to cancel/reschedule a game; a call must be made to the League Director and Scheduler.
- 2.4 Bench area:
  - 2.4.1 **Spectators, friends and family must be kept away from the bench area during games.**
  - 2.4.2 The bench should be kept orderly during games (no climbing on fences, water fights, or other activities should be stopped).
  - 2.4.3 Each coach must ensure that the bench area is clean after each game.

- 2.5 Players are not allowed to taunt any player from the other team. This includes chants that are intended to (or even unintended if they coincide directly with pitches, swings or attempts to field) disrupt the other teams pitcher or batter.
- 2.6 Lightning; The presence of lightning during a game is a potentially very dangerous situation. It is the responsibility of all (including umpires, coaches and parents) to report lightning observed to the coaches and umpire. It is the umpires obligation to suspend the game and coaches and parent responsibilities to guide players and spectators off of the field to safe locations.
  - 2.6.1 The umpire is occupied with his duties overseeing the game and may not observe lightning. Coaches and spectators should not continue the game after lightning has been observed assuming that the umpire has deemed it safe. Coaches should call time and bring the situation to the umpire's attention.
  - 2.6.2 There is a 20 min rule The game cannot be restarted until 20 minutes after the last lightning has been observed. This 20 minutes serves as a caution to prevent residual lightning strikes from injuring any participants, once the game is resumed.
  - 2.6.3 Games should not be immediately cancelled because of a brief thunder storm. Many storms are of short duration, and result in acceptable weather, once they pass through. More sustained storms will result in postponements or game terminations, depending on the score and number of innings played.
- 2.7 Game Balls – There are at least 2 baseballs used in each game. At the end of the game, each team should receive one of the used baseballs to be given to kids. 'Game Balls' can be used to not only encourage good play, but good sportsmanship. Being engaged in the game, backing up a base, doing the little things – these are all great things to use game balls for. Try to distribute for the 'right attitude' and 'right approach' as well as 'great plays'.

Coaches are encouraged to call in scores to the Eagle Tribune. A small summary of the game is sufficient. Avoid using negative terms (e.g. trounced, shellacked). Note at least one player from the opposing team that played well. If the score is very lopsided, it is appropriate to reduce the gap (21-2 is announced as 6-2). When calling or writing, identify Methuen Cal Ripken as the league, the division and the teams playing.

  - 2.7.1 You can submit scores at <http://plus.eagletribune.com/ze/info/sports.htm>.
  - 2.7.2 Or, you can send an email to: [sports@eagletribune.com](mailto:sports@eagletribune.com)
- 2.8 Should playoffs be scheduled, the order will be determined as follows:
  - 2.8.1 Each Win is 2 points
  - 2.8.2 Each tie is 1 point
  - 2.8.3 If there is a tie for a specific position, then the following order will be followed:
    - 2.8.3.1 Head to head win/loss
    - 2.8.3.2 Head to head total score
    - 2.8.3.3 Strength of schedule (some divisions have an unbalanced schedule – teams with matching records will have their scheduled reviewed, and those that have a harder schedule will move on)
    - 2.8.3.4 If it remains balanced, then a coin flip will determine the standings.

- 2.9 Trophies are given only to the team that wins the championship round of the playoffs.
- 2.9.1 All teams qualify for the playoffs, regardless of regular season record. Regular season record is used to determine the seeding for the playoffs, but coaches are encouraged to emphasize skill development over winning, during the regular season.
- 2.10 The board reserves the right to modify the format of the playoffs, if necessary (e.g. chronic bad weather. However, in those cases, all teams would still be included in the playoffs.)

### 3. Conduct

- 3.1 If, in the Umpire's judgment, a batter intentionally throws a bat, or helmet, that player will be called out, the ball is immediately dead, any runners if advanced must return to their previously occupied base and **the player will be removed from the game.** Fielders can also be ejected for intentionally throwing his glove or for other overt displays of temper or un-sportsmanship.
- 3.2 The Umpire is authorized to eject any participant for actions intended to injure, using profane, abusive or threatening language, or other overtly unsportsmanlike actions during a game.
- 3.3 Any player, manager, or coach ejected from a game has to leave the field of play immediately. .
- 3.4 Any player, manager, or coach ejected from a game will be subject to a one (1) game suspension that must be served during the next scheduled game.
- 3.5 The Discipline Director will review all behavior issues by coaches, parents and players and may, at its discretion, alter the punishment. If it is to be less severe, it must be approved by the Board. If it is more severe, they have the authority, on behalf of the Board, to make this decision.
- 3.6 A suspended player must show up at team's next game in uniform and sit on the bench. If they fail to show up or fails to be in uniform, they must show up for the next game in uniform and sit on the bench. Procedure continues.
- 3.7 **Suspensions with extenuating circumstances.** The league reserves the right to extend a suspension based on the nature and intent of the action. Said suspensions will be determined by the league Discipline Director.
- 3.8 **There is an appeal process for suspensions.** Suspensions maybe appealed through the (by phone call or in writing) Discipline Director. All suspensions will be reviewed by the division director, vice president, and league president. Appeals must be made known to a league official (Discipline Director, League president, League VP, Division director) within 24 hours of the incident. Time maybe a factor if there is a game the day after the incident. Answers to appeals will be made before the next game.

4. Any rules not mentioned above will default to the National Babe Ruth Rule Book.