



# RULES: Jr. Farm (coach pitch) league

Revised 3/30/2021

Kempsville Recreation Association's mission as a league is to promote and develop good sportsmanship, fair play, skills, ethics, and maintain the highest integrity among all teams and all individuals participating.

The basic concept of the league is to make the game safe, fun, and interesting for our young players by using safe equipment and keeping their interest active in playing baseball. Some of the rules used for this league may be viewed as "untraditional baseball", but at this age level, keeping all the children safely involved in the game and preparing them for higher levels of competition is our main goal.

## 1. Conduct:

- a. KRA's policy for any misconduct by a participant, guest, or coach will be handled in a disciplinary way, to be later reviewed by the Board of Directors. Officials have the authority to eject any participant, guest, or coach from a game, at which time the offending party is to leave the ballgame and KRA grounds. Warnings are not necessary. Coaches are expected to act in a sportsmanlike manner and assist if necessary. The game will not proceed until the violator has complied. All volunteers are an extension of KRA and are expected to act in an appropriate manner. KRA will not tolerate misconduct.
- b. KRA will not tolerate any actions or statements by spectators, players or coaches that is disrespectful to anyone present. This includes any comments directed towards game officials. Please try to refrain from making even simple statements to the official such as "Awe, come on ump!" This is **NOT** teaching sportsmanship to the players which is the first and foremost thing coaches should be teaching them by example.
- c. Any player or coach ejected from the game by an official for fighting shall automatically be suspended for the next two (2) weeks; this includes practices, and two (2) league games. No official notice of the suspension shall be necessary. The head official will notify the league's commissioner of the suspension. In the event a player or coach deviates from this ruling, it will constitute a forfeit and the opposing team will receive credit for a win. Additionally, the player or coach who deviates from this rule will be suspended for an additional week, still including practices and a game. Suspended coaches are not allowed to be on KRA grounds while serving a suspension.
- d. Any player or coach ejected from a game by an official for unsportsmanlike conduct shall be automatically suspended for the next week of practices and one (1) league game. No official notice of this suspension shall be necessary. The head official will notify the league commissioner of the suspension. In the event a player or coach deviates from this ruling, it will constitute a forfeit and the opposing team will receive credit for a win. Additionally, the player or coach who deviates from this rule will be suspended for an additional week, to include practices and one (1) league game. Suspended coaches are not allowed to be on KRA grounds.
- e. Any player, coach, or spectator guilty of unsportsmanlike conduct toward an official on City property will be subject to suspension.
- f. Any player, coach, or spectator guilty of striking an official in any manner on City property during or after a game shall be expelled from participating in any league sponsored by the Parks and Recreation Department in accordance with Community League Parks and Recreation Department by-laws.
- g. The following are examples of unsportsmanlike conduct. **PLEASE review with your players and parents.**
  1. Boos, hisses, jeers, and other taunts targeted at any team by the opposing team (that includes comments by the parents).
  2. Any intentional acts that may cause injury to another player.
  3. Any arguing, loud or animated discussion (for the benefit of surrounding ears) that projects unfavorably on the spirit of sportsmanship.
  4. Any use of foul, vile, or profane language or gestures on or within the immediate vicinity of the playing field.
  5. Comments made by the fielding team to base runners are not necessary (negative comments are considered unsportsmanlike conduct).

## **2. Eligibility:**

- a. The minimum age is six (6) years old as of Sept 30th and the maximum age cannot be nine (9) years old prior to Sept 30th. Minimum age exemption is allowed with the approval from KRA's Boys' Athletic Director or President.
- b. Use of players not on official team roster will result in a game forfeiture for every game in which the ineligible player has played. A one game suspension of the coach will be imposed on the team's next league game.
- c. Parents or coaches found falsifying birth dates of players will be expelled from this league for a time to be determined by the Board of Directors.
- d. A player must be attending school or a recognized home school program to participate in the league. Individuals who are suspended or expelled will not be allowed to participate until they are officially reinstated in school.
- e. In the event of any team not having a complete roster of players, the following shall apply: 1) Shortage of players: As players come forth, they shall be assigned to the team that would have the next draft choice. 2) Attrition: The league commissioner in the event of a player loss will hold a waiting list. The next player on the list will be assigned to fill the vacancy.

## **3. Equipment:**

- a. Coaches will "sign out" all necessary equipment needed for the season. He/she will be responsible for its return immediately after the last game of their season. All equipment must be returned in good condition (i.e. - please clean mud off equipment before returning).
- b. All uniforms worn during game play must be consistent with the players on the team. Coaches should not allow alteration of any kind to uniforms without permission. Catchers must wear protective safety helmet and mask, throat protector, chest protector, and shin guards. He may use a fielder's glove. Boys are highly recommended to wear a protective cup when catching.
- c. Bats are to be no longer than 29 inches in length and no larger than 2 ¾ inches in diameter. They may be wooden or aluminum and must be wrapped or have rubberized sleeves.
- d. Baseball shoes with metal cleats will not be permitted. Only rubber cleats or tennis shoes will be allowed.
- e. Players may not wear watches, pins or any jewelry of any kind during play.

## **4. Coaches:**

- a. It is the coach's responsibility for designating a team parent for post-game refreshments if the team decides to have them.
- b. Coaches from both teams that have the first game of the day are responsible to assist in field and grounds preparation. Coaches may send a team representative if he/she cannot be present.
- c. Teams who have the last game of the day are responsible for returning the bases, scoreboard and any other league supplied field equipment to the equipment shed.
- d. If no league official is on site at the end of the day, the coaches are responsible for closing and locking the equipment shed.
- e. There is to be no smoking, alcoholic beverages or profanity on KRA grounds. Violators will be removed and are subject to dismissal from the league.

## **5. The Playing Field:**

- a. The distance between bases will be 55 feet.
- b. A 5-foot line will be placed midway between each base, perpendicular to the runner's base path (excluding home plate to first base).
- c. The center of the pitcher's circle shall be 40 feet from home plate and must be 8 feet in diameter (4 ft radius).

- d. The batter's box shall be approximately 6 feet by 3 feet. The inside line shall be parallel to and four inches away from home plate. The front line shall be 3 feet from the center of home plate. This is optional.
- e. The coaches' boxes shall be 4 feet by 8 feet and shall not be closer than 3 feet from the foul lines.
- f. All bases should be firmly tied down to anchors to prevent injury.
- g. On deck circles shall be 6 feet in diameter (3 ft radius) and be placed away from the bench area for safety reasons.

## 6. General Game Rules:

- a. Each team shall be limited to 13 players or less.
- b. A game can be played with a minimum of eight (8) players. In the event one team has seven (7) or fewer players, the game will be forfeited. The coaches may choose to play the game by loan of players from the opposing team. The forfeit will stand. Continuing the game is in the interest of the players and is encouraged by KRA.
- c. When rain forces a game to be terminated and four (4) innings have been completed, the game is considered officially complete. The official score will be that of the last completed inning. If the four (4) innings are not completed, the game will be replayed from its beginning and a rescheduled date will be set by the league. If the home team is ahead after 3 and one-half innings, it will constitute a complete game.
- d. Games will consist of six (6) innings with a time limit of one hour and thirty minutes. No new inning will start if the time of one hour and thirty minutes has been reached. However, any inning started must be completed, except with the agreement of the opposing coach.
- e. A team may score a maximum of five (5) runs in their half of an inning. After the fifth run is scored, the ball is considered dead and no other runs will count. The team at bat must then take the field. During the regular season the last inning is not unlimited, game times must be kept as close to 1 ½ hours as possible to not delay follow on game. If the last inning is unlimited in post season play this will be put out to all teams prior to the tournament starting.
- f. If after four (4) complete innings a team is ahead by eleven (11) runs or more, the game is considered over and the team ahead is declared the winner. If the winning team is the home team, this rule would apply after three and a half innings. If time permits and both coaches agree, the remainder of the game may be played until the final inning or the hour and a half time limit has been reached. Additional runs scored during this period will not count toward the official score.
- g. Games with a tie score are official, providing at least four (4) innings have been completed.
- h. A fielding team will consist of a maximum of ten (10) players, of which four (4) must be played in the outfield beyond the normal configuration of the infield. All players must play at least three (3) innings in the field based on a complete six (6) inning game. All players may be freely substituted during a game. Any players leaving the game defensively may return to the game and play in any position. Coach must request time from the umpire to make any defensive player substitutions during an inning.
- i. Players MUST remain on the BENCH when not playing in the field, at bat or in the batter's circle. It is the coach's responsibility to enforce this rule.
- j. The home team will occupy the first base bench and the visiting team will occupy the third base bench. This will be designated on the schedule with the home team listed on the right.
- k. The scorebooks of the home team and the visiting teams must be filled out with the player's names and uniform number. Home team will be the designated official scorer, but it is recommended that the visiting team keep an accurate book as well. In the event of a protest and information is insufficient, the protest will be denied.
- l. Umpires and the opposing team's coach must be notified upon the arrival of a late player, he or she may not participate until notification is completed. That player will be added to the bottom of the batting order.

## 7. Offense related Rules:

- a. The coach (or designated adult representative) pitches to their own team. He/she is allowed to pitch over or under hand between 36 (front of circle) and 44 (back of circle) feet from home plate and must keep at least one foot within the pitcher's circle.
- b. Each batter gets five (5) pitches. If the batter does not hit the ball fair within 5 pitches the batter is out. Batters are awarded another pitch for foul balls hit on the fifth pitch and those after until he/she misses the ball completely for an out or hits it fair
- c. The pitching coach is to **exit the playing field immediately** after the ball is in play. Coach is to exit the field on the **third base side** as not to disrupt runners or plays on the field. If a ball is thrown back to the coach pitching who did not leave the field, the play will be called dead

at that time, regardless of whether he catches it or not. Umpires discretion as to who the target is. Coaches pitch from the circle and coach from outside the baselines. Coach interference can be called by the umpire resulting in time on the field and the batter being called out.

d. Base runners must have a foot on top of the base until the ball is hit. There will be no leading off or base stealing. Players who violate this rule and leave a base early shall receive one warning and be returned to the base they were on. A second offense during the same trip around the bases is an out called by the umpire. If the player leaves a base early and as a result of the play (ball hit in play) the base he left is now occupied, the runner who left early is out, no warning is required. (two players can't occupy the same base) Violations must be seen by the umpire, not the coach, players, spectators etc.

e. Base coaches may not touch a base runner while the ball is in play. This will result in an out called by the umpire if he feels the coaches conduct assisted the player in any way. Umpire judgment call.

f. Head first sliding is prohibited. Players caught violating this rule will be called out by the umpire.

g. A batter will be called out if he/she intentionally throws their bat upon swinging at a pitch.

h. Batting order is to include all players and remains constant, regardless of whether they are playing in the field.

i. During the game, any player warming up will be outside of the fence bordering the ball diamond with the exception of the on deck batter who can be in the on deck circle with a helmet on. Warming up in the on deck circle using a hitting stick or other training aid held by a coach or parent is not allowed. These may be used outside the fence away from the field of play and clear of spectators.

j. If a base runner interferes with a fielder's ability to make a play on the batted ball, the runner will be called out; this is an umpire judgment call. If a base runner off his base in the field of play is hit by a batted ball before the ball touches any other player on the field he/she is out.

k. Collision avoidance: Base runners that INTENTIONALLY run into a defensive player that is blocking a base path or base will be called out. If the umpire feels the contact is malicious in nature the player will be ejected from the game. Accidental contact although it may look ugly may not warrant an out. This is an umpire judgment call.

## **8. Defense related Rules:**

a. If coaches have young kids and desire to put a coach in the outfield to assist this is fine if agreed to by both coaches and umpire is informed before the game.

b. Defensive coach will act as an extra catcher to speed up the return of pitched balls when a less skilled player is in the catcher position. The umpire will make the decision to put a coach there if the teams have not figured this out on their own. He/she will remain behind the catcher at the fence until the ball passes the batter. A foul tip can do serious damage to a coach with no protective gear on. Stay against the fence and protect yourself.

c. The defensive player in the pitcher position must keep at least one of his/her feet inside the pitcher's circle while the ball is being pitched to the batter. The player must be standing to either side of the circle or the back portion of the circle and is not allowed to stand in front of or interfere with the coach pitching.

d. The ball remains in play until a defensive player secures possession of the ball in glove or hand within the pitcher's circle, after which no player shall advance to the next base unless he/she already started and has passed the halfway line from each base. Umpire makes this call.

e. Umpire may call time on the field if a defensive player holds the ball in front of the lead runner and all running has stopped on the field (base runners standing on bases). If the ball is behind the lead runner then time will not be called until the ball gets back to the circle.

f. If the ball has been thrown in to the player pitcher in an attempt to stop play on the field and results in an overthrow/missed attempt to catch by the pitcher, base runners may advance one base at which time the umpire will call time. The one base is not automatic, if the players aren't advancing they will stay on the base they are on. Ultimately up the umpire judgement of a viable attempt by the defense to return the ball to the circle to stop play.

g. No infield fly rule. All fly balls must be played.

h. One base advancement by runners on overthrows to a base only applicable if both coaches agree before the game and umpire informed. Recommended if younger players involved. Otherwise balls that are overthrown are live. Overthrows that go out of play are dead, Umpire will define out of play areas.

i. If a fielder obstructs a base runner, when not positioned to catch an incoming ball, the umpire may award an additional base to the runner at the end of the play if he feels the obstruction prevented the runner's progress.