

NBIAA

Northern Burlington Instructional Athletic Association
P.O. Box 334, Columbus, New Jersey 08022

2012 Rookie Softball Rules (1st-2nd Grade)

Northern Burlington Cal Ripken Jr. Baseball League

GOAL: To introduce and instruct the fundamentals of the game of softball to first and second grade girls, while providing time for them to recreate and have fun. The pitching machine concept is included to promote batting skills development and to keep interest in the game.

The pitching machine, which will be employed for the first four innings of all games, will throw strikes consistently and provide the batter with a greater opportunity to succeed, while keeping the defensive players in the game. Fear of being hit by a pitched ball is greatly reduced and the game is safer, more fun, and improves the confidence and ability of all participants.

Pitching by players will commence after four innings to introduce both the batters and pitchers to live pitching.

Playing Rules: As adopted by the Babe Ruth/Cal Ripken Jr. Baseball and amended by agreement of participating Township Representatives.

Exceptions to Babe Ruth Softball Rules:

THE GAME

1. Comprised of girls who are in the first and second grades.
2. A 12-player roster is suggested, with all players placed in the batting order. The game may be played with as few as eight players and ten players may be fielded if present
3. This is an instructional league, and players learn by practicing and playing. Ten players are allowed on the field, defensively, in each half inning. With each new inning, the team coach must rotate the extra player(s) in the field and (a) different player(s) sits on the bench for the next half inning. Each player must play 1 half inning in the infield. It is most important that players actively participate every moment possible during the game.
4. An effort has been made to equip all teams with uniform shirts that are different in color to any opponent they may play. Players should be in proper uniform for all games, including uniform cap, jersey, pants if provided, and cleats or sneakers.
5. An 11" restricted flight softball will be used for all games. The home team furnishes the balls.
6. All weeknight games will start at 6:00 pm. Pre-game warm-ups must be no longer than 10 minutes for each team. The game will consist of 6 innings with a 2 hour max. No new inning may start after 1 hour and 45 minutes. A game is considered complete after 3 ½ innings if the home team is winning or 4 innings if the home team is losing at the time of cancellation by weather, darkness, etc. Games CAN end in a tie.
7. The half inning ends when 3 outs are made or 5 runs are scored. During the first 4 innings each batter gets 5 "Good" balls of the pitching machine. The ball must be put in play or the batter ends her turn and an out is recorded. During the final 2 innings balls and strikes are called.
8. 10 games will be played and scoring will be kept. Final records will determine seeding in the year-end tournament.
9. Home team must contact the visiting team if a game needs to be postponed due to weather or field conditions. A 1 hour minimum is requested. To re-schedule a game please contact your township coordinator.

THE FIELD

1. Standard youth base lengths of 60 feet. The pitching machine is placed at the pitcher's mound. Recommended speed is 40-45 mph, and there should be minimal arc on the pitch.
2. A circle will be lined around the pitching machine (approximately 15 foot diameter) to designate a safety zone. If a ball hits the pitching machine or comes to rest within the circle, the ball is dead. Runners advance one base.
3. A batted ball that hits the pitching machine will be declared dead immediately. The batter is awarded first base, and all runners advance one base.

PITCHING

1. At this level we want to encourage the girls to pitch learning the proper mechanics as described in the Babe Ruth Softball Rulebook.
2. The pitching rubber will be set at 25 ft. from home plate. The pitcher may move up a total of 5 feet if they are unable to reach the plate.
3. **2011 kid pitch rule modifications**
 - a. ***No walks in the kid pitch innings.***
 - b. ***After a pitcher throws 4 balls to a batter, the team which is at bat will have their coach come in and throw a maximum of 3 pitches to the batter. The batter either gets a hit or is out. If the batter is hit by a pitch during the coach pitch the batter does not advance to 1st base and the pitch counts as 1 of the 3 pitches.***

UMPIRES

1. Umpires will not be assigned to Rookie Baseball games. Each coach should umpire the games.
2. The batting team will be responsible for feeding the pitching machine during the team's at bat for first four innings.
3. The home team will be responsible for designating a coach to call balls and strikes during the innings while the players pitch.

TIMING OF GAMES

1. Games have a 2 hour time limit. No new inning may begin after one hour forty five minutes.
2. Games shall be no longer than 6 innings in length and may be stopped before six innings upon agreement and at the discretion of the coaches.

SCORING

1. Scores will be kept.
2. The score shall be kept by both teams for the purpose of the five runs per half inning and/or 3 outs. A half inning is over once the defensive team has recorded three outs, or the offensive team has scored five runs.
Formal league standings will be kept for the Rookie Baseball League. Team records will be kept to 'seed' teams for a year-end league tournament, which includes all teams in the division.

BATTING/PLAYING THE GAME

1. All rostered players present for the game shall bat in order, whether playing defensively at the time or not.
2. Batting helmets must be worn while at bat and while running the bases.
3. Each batter receives five pitched strikes or 3 swings and misses from the pitching machine. If the ball has not been hit into fair territory, the batter is out. Three swings and misses, or one or two strikes on fouls and then a missed strike is an out. The batter is not out on an uncaught foul ball.

4. A defensive player should assume the position of the pitcher to either side of the pitching machine while the machine is in use.
5. A defensive player will pitch for the last two innings of the game. Players are restricted to pitching **ONE** inning per game. One inning consist of 3 outs.
6. No stealing is permitted. Leading off the base after the pitch crosses the plate is permitted.
7. Sliding is permitted, and proper instruction is encouraged. **NO HEAD-FIRST SLIDING.**

DEFENSE

1. A fourth outfielder will be placed on the field defensively.
2. A fifth infielder is placed on either side of the pitching machine assuming the defensive position of the pitcher no closer to home plate than the pitching machine.
3. The catcher takes his normal position, in full protective equipment.
4. Players will pitch at least the last two innings of the six inning game, and should be moved up, if necessary. Any player may only pitch one inning per game.
5. A liberal strike zone of the armpit to just below the knee and to the inside of each batter's box is encouraged to get the batters swinging at pitched pitches, and to improve the confidence of the pitcher.
6. A batted ball that hits the pitching machine will be declared dead immediately. The batter is awarded first base, and all runners advance one base.
7. Outfielders shall be positioned in the grass not as part of the infield.
8. Once the pitcher has control of the ball inside the circle, play stops and runners who are less than half way must return to the previous base.

CONDUCT

Good sportsmanship is a requirement to play in all NB Cal Ripken Jr. Baseball Leagues. If a player throws equipment, uses profanity, or otherwise does not act in a sportsmanlike manner, he/she will be subject to the following:

1. Coach warning on first offense;
2. Must sit one full inning on second offense;
3. Removal from game on third offense.

HAVE FUN!!!