

## CRCLL “A” Division Playing Rules

The Single A level of Little League baseball is set up to develop players ranging in ages from 6 to 8. Little League Age six year olds are only permitted to play in the A Division with one year of Little League Tee Ball experience. It is intended to help the players understand the game and how it is played, and helps develop them for the AA Division. The development of the children is directly dependent on how the coaches and parents participate with their involvement in practices and games. Encouragement and good sportsmanship from all is expected. The following are rules to abide by, in games played at the single A Division Level in Coon Rapids Cardinal Little League in coordination with the Little League Rulebook:

### Pre-Game Setup and General Information

- **Umpires:** Youth Field Umpires will be provided when available. In absence of umpire, the batting team provides a coach to act as the home plate umpire, the person is responsible for keeping tracks of balls/strikes, fair/foul ball determination, and home plate calls. The Coach/Pitcher is responsible for making calls at 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and 3<sup>rd</sup> base. Input may be taken from 1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> base coaches, but ultimately Pitching coach has the final say in decisions.
- The home team sits on the 3rd base bench, the visiting team will sit on the 1st base bench. It is each team's responsibility to leave the dugout clean following the game.
- Games will be no more than 5 innings and should last no more than 90 minutes with typical game lasting ~75 minutes. Game clock starts when the first pitch is thrown. A game may be less than 5 innings at the discretion of coaches agreement.
- Last inning declaration by the umpire/coach should happen before an inning starts. Games should be played to a minimum of 1 hour, but emphasize getting as much baseball in as possible. If the players are willing to play on, please do so.
- Cancellations due to weather will be made up if at all possible
- Batters, base runners, and catchers must **ALWAYS** wear helmets when on the field of play.
- Prior to the start of the game, coaches should have a complete lineup of batting order and fielding positions for the entire five inning game for the opposing coach to be able to follow, if requested. Coaches should attempt to design a rotation game by game to give each player a chance at learn every position alternating infield/outfield over the course of the season.
- Absolutely no umpire calls are to be challenged, argued or disputed, by coaches, players or spectators. Violations of this rule should be reported to the CRCLL BoD.

## **Gameplay:**

### **Pitching**

- Identifying and using a coach, assistant, or parent (with completed background check) who can consistently throw strikes is crucial to player development and game pace. As a coach, do not insist on pitching if you cannot provide consistently hittable pitches. Please make it a priority to find the best person for the job, this includes having a single coach pitch to both teams if they are willing to fill the role.
- Pitchers are permitted to pitch while standing, but may want to consider working from one knee or sitting on a ball bucket as the height will be comparable to a AA player. Ideally, the ball will be crossing the plate at a relatively flat trajectory giving the player the best opportunity to make contact with the ball.
- Players will be given the choice of coach pitch or machine pitch for four pitches. If the ball has not been hit into play after four attempts, a Tee will be utilized. The player is given one opportunity to hit off the batting tee, a strike on the tee will result in the player being called out.
- Pitchers should maintain a similar distance as the pitching machine and be positioned on the mound.

### **Batting / Offense**

- If the batter throws the bat more than 10 feet from their batting position, they will get 1 warning. If it happens a second time during the course of the game, the batter will be called out, and the play is dead.
- Continuous batting order. The inning will end after the defense gets 3 outs, or the batting team scores 5 runs. The next batter in the order will be first to bat in the next inning. No more than 5 runs per inning.
- If a ball is hit to the outfield, once the ball is thrown in and crosses from the outfield grass to the infield dirt, the play is effectively over. If any runner is not more than halfway to the next base, they will return to the previous base with no further penalty. Evaluation of halfway distance at time of ball crossing into infield will be sole discretion of umpire.
- Any ball that contacts the pitching machine is a dead ball and the batter gets a single. Only runners that are forced to advance will be allowed to advance one base. A batted ball contacting a coach pitcher is a LIVE ball.
- Batting team is allowed to have 2 adult base coaches, one in the first base coaches' box and one in the third base coaches' box. No other coaches from the batting team (unless pitching) are allowed on the field of play.
- Max hit is a double, unless the ball is hit over the fence. CRCLL is not allowing triples or in-the-park homeruns at this divisional level. Runners may also advance two bases on doubles.
- Tie or "bang-bang" plays will be awarded to the runner.

### **Base running / Offense**

- Players may not leave a base until the ball is hit into play (no leaving early, leading off, or stealing is permitted). Baserunners are never allowed to “tag up” on fly out.
- There will be no extra bases on over throws. This includes throws from the outfield and throws that go past the first baseman.
- There will be no called outs for running outside of the baseline, unless it is to avoid an imminent tag out by the defensive team. Please educate players on appropriate baseline running.

### **Fielding / Defense**

- No player may sit out more than 1 inning per game as rosters allow. No player will EVER sit a 2<sup>nd</sup> inning until all other team members have sat for an inning.
- Up to ten players may play defensively in the field (4 outfield, 4 infield, 1 pitcher, 1 catcher). If the defensive team is short players, it may borrow players from the other team for defense only (if players are willing).
- The player “pitcher” must stand to either side of the pitching machine, in line with the coach operating the machine for safety reasons.
- Players cannot position themselves in the pitching machine circle, and any attempt to do so will result in a hit for the runner and a dead ball (player safety issues)
- Force outs and double-plays can be made by any infield players at any base (including pitcher) – while we are allowing any infield player make a force out, players should not be leaving their assigned position. Coaches should teach the players to attempt to make the throw to the next closest base to make the out, to help teach the players the correct baseball play.
- Outfielders must throw the ball to an infielder to get an out, this applies to double plays as well. Tag outs and force outs are not allowed by outfielders. If an outfielder does this the runner will be considered safe. This is to promote teaching the outfielder to make a throw for an out at a base.
- Outfielders should be standing at a minimum distance of 4 feet behind the infield dirt. Coaches can choose to move back further, but not closer.
- Fielding team may have 1 coach in the outfield to keep players safe and on task, if needed.
- Catchers are required for every game. Make it clear to players there will be a rotation into this position.

### **Playoffs/Tournament**

- Playoff rules will be the same as in season unless an appropriate change is deemed beneficial by the league director, any rule changes will be communicated prior to the first day of the playoffs.

If you have issues with anything else that you feel needs to be addressed, please feel free to contact your Division Director