

**North Cambridge Little Baseball League, Inc.**

**Official Major League Rules**

April 2012

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### Revision History

5/11/06 - rules received from Karen Lounsbury for posting

3/13/08 - Notes 1 & 2 added to rule 3.1 (approved by Board 3/12/08)

2/15/09 -

- Rule 1.5: Change “explained in 1.1” → “explained in 1.2”
- Rule 5.2: typo: “any” → “may”
- Rule 6.3: Change “as in 6.1” → “as in 6.2”
- Rule 6.7: Change “Comeau and Samp” → “Comeau”

5/5/09 (posted 6/21/09) –

- Rule 2.10: Add “The team the player is leaving cannot draft that player.”
- Rule 2.17: Added (no playing in higher leagues allowed)
- Rule 7.2: Modified regarding dates of selection of summer and all-star teams

3/11/10

- New Section 3 on Pitching, including requirement to submit pitch counts

4/16/11 –

- Rule 3.3a: Add daily pitch limits
- Rule 3.4a: Add rest requirements for 7-year-olds
- Rule 3.6: Exception for 7-year-olds added at end
- Rule 3.7: Added: A catcher for 4 or more innings cannot pitch that day
- Rule 3.9d: Pitch counts must be reported within 24 hrs or forfeit

4/12 – NOTED IN BLUE

## **SECTION 1: LEAGUE POLICY/CODE OF CONDUCT**

1.0 NCLBL plays under the National Little League rules except for the rules noted below. In the case of a rules conflict, NCLBL rules take precedence.

1.1 Coaches, players, friends of players, parents, guardians and other members of NCLBL must respect the dignity, authority, and well being of others, including umpires, at practices, games, and meetings and must refrain from injurious speech and action. Violations of the code of conduct are subject to disciplinary action.

1.2 In the case of a violation of the code of conduct, a coach, parent, or other interested adult may initiate a GRIEVANCE proceeding as described in Article IV, section 3 of the NCLBL bylaws. Note: a player's playing time and position on the field are not grounds for a grievance. Also, a personality conflict is not grounds for a grievance. The decision of the GRIEVANCE COMMITTEE is final, except in the case of a decision to EXPEL a player or a coach from NCLBL. A decision to EXPEL is in force only until such time as the decision can be reviewed by the board and supported by a two-thirds majority of the board with at least 50% of the board in attendance.

1.3 Any coach or player EJECTED from a game by an umpire is automatically SUSPENDED from the next physically played game. The offending coach, or the coach of the offending player, must notify the President or the Player Agent of the ejection within twenty-four hours. If a coach or player is ejected by an umpire a second time during the season, an automatic two game SUSPENSION is in effect. If a third ejection takes place in a season the Player Agent must convene a GRIEVANCE COMMITTEE to review that person's status in NCLBL before the next game.

1.4 If parents, guardians, friends of players, or other interested adults connected to a team are abusive to an umpire on a prolonged basis, the coaches of that team must be responsible for intervening to explain and reinforce the code of conduct. Coaches who fail to do so may be subject to a GRIEVANCE.

1.5 A player who violates the code of conduct may be BENCHED by a coach whenever necessary. The benched player may be substituted for, if necessary, in the same manner as an injured player as described in rule 5.5 in the NCLBL rule book. In addition a player may be SUSPENDED by a coach for a future game up to a maximum of one game. The suspended player MUST serve the suspension on his/her team bench, in uniform. Before the suspension the coach must attempt to inform the Player Agent and the parent of the player. Any further SUSPENSION or EXPULSION of the player must be negotiated via the GRIEVANCE process as explained in 1.2.

1.6 No person may coach in a game without first being certified by NCLBL.

1.7 Coaches must act in a mature and respectful manner when conferring with umpires on disputed calls. Balls and strikes cannot be disputed.

1.8 Coaches cannot employ tactics to delay or shorten the game.

1.9 Repeated violations of league policies may result in disciplinary actions on the part of the board.

## **SECTION TWO: ELIGIBILITY, SELECTION OF PLAYERS.**

2.0 To be eligible a player must be at least 10 years old and not more than 12 years old on April 30 of the year of eligibility.

2.1 A nine year-old may be drafted into the major leagues if the following conditions are met:

A. The manager on the player's minor league team recommends the move to the major league:

B. Parents of player agree to the move:

Majority of minor and major league managers agree to the move.

Note: it is understood that the recommendation must be initiated by the MINOR LEAGUE MANAGER and should only be used for players of "exceptional" ability.

2.2 If a team is not represented on draft day, the PLAYER AGENT shall assign an individual to draft players for that team.

2.3 Each team must have a roster of 12 players.

2.4 Rosters must be filled to at least 11 at the fall draft. Players are to be selected from age eligible minor leaguers who participated in NCLBL the previous season (whether or not they try-out) and new age eligible players to the program who have attended the fall try-out. Rosters will be frozen at the conclusion of the fall draft, with NO additions being allowed until the spring draft.

2.5 Rosters must be filled (in accordance with rule 2.3) at the conclusion of the spring draft and are to be confirmed on registration night by the PLAYER AGENT. Any openings on a team's roster must be filled by registration night. Players to be selected must be on a current minor league team or must have participated in the previous spring or fall try-out. The PLAYER AGENT may allow the farm league to be an additional source for players, provided a majority of the major league managers agree.

2.6 After registration night, all openings must be filled either through farm league or from undrafted participants of the previous spring or fall try-outs. **After registration night, all openings must be filled either through farm league or from undrafted participants of the previous spring or fall try-outs. Players may be selected from a minor league roster only with the recommendation and approval of the Player Agent and the Asst Player Agent.**

2.7 An injured player may be replaced ONLY after all teams have reached the maximum roster size (as defined in 2.3)

2.8 A team is entitled to draft a player, ahead of all other teams, if that player's parent has been a part of that team's coaching staff for at least one full year previously. However, this preference is in effect only in the first round of the draft.

2.9 A minor league player who is drafted on draft day by a major league team may not choose to remain in the minor league. If the player does not report to the major league team, he/she must leave the program for at least a year and may re-enter the program only through the tryout/draft process.

2.10 A player who leaves the program may return to their team at any time provided the manager is agreeable and the team has an opening. A player who wishes to return with an assignment to a different team can only do so after having sat out a FULL SEASON and can only return via the fall or spring try-out/draft process (farm league is NOT an option). The team the player is leaving cannot draft that player.

2.11 Any exceptions to rules 2.3 to 2.10 must be agreed upon unanimously by the major league managers (exceptions do NOT become new rules or amendments to existing rules). Note: This does not apply to decisions made by the GRIEVANCE COMMITTEE.

2.12 If an opening occurs AFTER the second week of the season, it is the OPTION of the TEAM whether they fill that opening or not.

2.13 After a player is selected in the draft, but before the first game of the regular season, a parent or coach, in case of hardship, may petition the PLAYER AGENT for re-assignment to another team. The petition

may be granted if all the major league managers are in agreement and the PLAYER AGENT is able to work out a trade or other compensation, if necessary.

2.14 After registration night no player may practice or play in a game who has not submitted an injury release form signed by a parent or legal guardian. The injury release form must be in the possession of the PLAYER AGENT. Before the first game of the season the PLAYER AGENT shall supply all the managers with a list of ineligible players. In the case of hardship a coach may appeal to the PRESIDENT for a waiver.

2.15 Children from outside Cambridge should not be encouraged to attend the tryouts of NCLBL.

2.16 Major League teams are encouraged, but not required to draft minor league 12 year olds to give them at least one year of major league experience.

2.17 No player may play in NCLBL and a “higher” league (i.e., Babe Ruth, Pony League, etc.)

### **SECTION THREE: PITCHING**

3.0 Any player on a regular season team may pitch.

3.1 There is no limit to the number of pitchers a team may use in a game.

3.2 A pitcher once removed from the mound cannot return as a pitcher.

3.3 The manager must remove the pitcher when said pitcher reaches the limit for his/her age group as noted below, but the pitcher may remain in the game at another position: In no event may a pitcher pitch more than 100 pitches per week.

a. **DAILY PITCH LIMITS**

League Age

10 – 12: 85 pitches per day . 100 pitches per week maximum

8 – 9: 75 pitches per day. 100 pitches per week maximum

7: 35 pitches per day. 50 pitches per week maximum

If a player pitches 1 – 20 pitches in a day, there is no requirement for a rest day.

If a pitcher reaches his daily or weekly maximum while facing a batter , the pitcher may continue to pitch until the first of the following occurs:

1. The batter safely reaches base
2. The batter is out
3. The third out is made to complete the half inning

If the pitcher exceeds his daily limit but continues to pitch in accordance with the above, the pitches thrown in excess of the daily limit will count towards the pitcher’s weekly limit.

- b. Warn-up pitches, pitches declared a “no pitch” by the umpire and pitches thrown as part of an intentional walk shall not be counted towards a pitcher’s pitch count.

### 3.4 REST RULES

- a. Pitchers league age twelve and under must adhere to the following rest rules:

If a pitcher pitches 66 or more pitches per day, three calendar days of rest  
If a pitcher pitches 51 – 65 pitches in a day, two calendar days of rest  
If a pitcher pitches 21 - 50 pitches in a day, one calendar day of rest  
If a pitcher pitches 1 – 20 pitches in a day, no calendar day of rest is required

- b. All pitchers league age 7 must observe the following rest rules:

If a pitcher pitches 36 – 50 pitches, two calendar days of rest  
If a pitcher pitches 1 – 35 pitches, one calendar day of rest

- 3.5 A pitcher may pitch in consecutive games in the same calendar week provided they observe the required day(s) of rest.

**A calendar week will be defined as Monday to Sunday.**

- 3.6 A player may pitch in more than one game in a day provided that they have not pitched in any other games that calendar week and that they only pitch 20 or less pitches in the FIRST game. The total number of pitches in the first game will be deducted from the maximum available for that pitcher for the second game and the days of rest will be determined by the COMBINED TOTAL number of pitches thrown by that pitcher in the two games. Example: A 12 year old pitcher makes 20 pitches in the first game of a double-header. That same pitcher is only available for 65 pitches in the second game (and would have to observe 3 days of rest after the game once they made their 41<sup>st</sup> pitch of the second game).  
Exception: 7 year olds may NOT pitch in more than one game in any calendar day.

- 3.7 If a pitcher delivers more than 66 pitches in a game, he cannot play the position of catcher for the remainder of that day. (eliminate balance of the rule)

- 3.8 Any team may lodge a protest for a violation of this rule. Protests shall be made in accordance with NCLBL Rule 6.3.

- 3.9 The pitch count recorder must provide the current pitch count for any pitcher when requested by either manager or any umpire. However, the manager is responsible for knowing when his/her pitcher must be removed.

The pitch count recorder must be either a manager, a coach or someone designated by them. The teams are encouraged to agree on a neutral pitch counter, when available, for any game.

EACH team must keep track of ALL pitchers during the game and confer with each other after each half-inning and all pitching changes.

The HOME team's count will be classified as "official" should any disputes arise during the half-inning conferences and for the final pitch count numbers at the end of the game (Repeated and/or major discrepancies shall be treated as a violation of NCLBL Rule 1.1, Code of Conduct, and can be reported as such in accordance with NCLBL Rule 1.2 Grievance procedure).

- d. The winning team must report the names of ALL the pitchers and their final "official" pitch count numbers to the Game Report Form. This report MUST be completed within 24 hours of the game time; failure to update the information within the time frame will constitute a FORFEIT BY THE WINNING TEAM.

- 3.10 The pitch count recorder should inform the umpire-in-chief when a pitcher has delivered his/her maximum limit of pitches for the game, as noted in NCLBL Rule 3.3. The umpire-in-chief will inform the pitcher's manager that the pitcher must be removed in accordance with NCLBL Rule 3.3. However, the failure by the pitch count recorder to notify the umpire-in-chief, and/or the failure of the umpire-in-chief to notify the manager, does not relieve the manager of his/her responsibility to remove a pitcher when that pitcher is no longer eligible.
- 3.11 The withdrawal of an ineligible pitcher after that pitcher is announced, or after a warm-up pitch is delivered, but before that player has pitched a ball to a batter, shall not be considered a violation. Coaches are urged to take precautions to prevent protests. When a protest situation is imminent, the potential offender should be notified immediately.
- 3.12 Pitches delivered in games declared "Regulation Tie Games" or "Suspended Games" shall be charged against pitcher's eligibility.
- 3.13 In suspended games resumed on another day, the pitchers of record at the time the game was halted may continue to pitch to the extent of their eligibility for that day, provided said pitcher has observed the required days of rest and had not reached the maximum number of pitches for their league age. If the game becomes suspended during an at bat in which the pitcher reaches their limit, the pitcher may only continue as outlined in NCLBL Rule 3.3 (Exception).
- Example 1:** A league age 12 pitcher delivers 70 pitches in a game on Monday when the game is suspended. The game resumes on the following Thursday. The pitcher is not eligible to pitch in the resumption of the game because he/she has not observed the required days of rest.
- Example 2:** A league age 12 pitcher delivers 70 pitches in a game on Monday when the game is suspended. The game resumes on Saturday. The pitcher is eligible to pitch up to 30 more pitches in the resumption of the game because he/she has observed the required days of rest, provided it is not their third pitching appearance of the week. (NCLBL Rule 3.5).
- Example 3:** A league age 12 pitcher delivers 70 pitches in a game on Monday when the game is suspended. The game resumes two weeks later. The pitcher is eligible to pitch up to 85 more pitches in the resumption of the game, provided he/she is eligible based on his/her pitching record during the previous three days and it is not their third pitching appearance of the week. (NCLBL Rule 3.5).
- 3.14 Coaches are limited to one trip to the mound per pitcher per inning. On any subsequent trip to the mound the pitcher must be taken out.
- 3.15 A game that is suspended before the completion of the first inning must be replayed in its entirety. The number of pitches made shall be counted and the required rest must be observed based upon the number of pitches made by each individual pitcher.(in accordance with NCLBL Rule 3.4)."

#### EDITOR'S NOTE

There was no decision reached as to whether the pitch count rules shall be applied to NCLBL teams when playing in the Mayor's Cup, All-Star game, Summer League or other tournaments/games that are governed by rules other than the NCLBL rules. As of the adoption of these rules on March 3, 2010, the Rules are not mandated by the League for competitions where the play of the game is not governed by the NCLBL Rules. This is not to discourage coaches from abiding by the Rules for those games not governed by the NCLBL Rules but merely to state it is not mandated as of the date of this note (3/4/2010).

## **SECTION FOUR: GAME REGULATIONS**

4.0 The home team makes the decision to postpone a game because of adverse conditions such as bad weather. If possible, the opposing team's head coach and the UMPIRE COORDINATOR should be notified at least one hour before the scheduled game time.

4.1 Once the first pitch has been thrown, it becomes the responsibility of the HEAD UMPIRE to suspend a game because of adverse conditions.

4.2 A suspended or postponed game must be scheduled to be completed on the Saturday immediately following the suspension at a time established before the season by all the coaches.

4.3 In case of a double suspension or postponement (for example, the make-up game is rained out) the two teams **must** play the make-up game on the first available Saturday open for each team. The PRESIDENT will schedule the make-up game if the two teams cannot agree.

4.4 If a player was unavailable for a game, which had to be postponed or suspended, that player is eligible to play in the make-up or continuation game. EXCEPTION: A player who was suspended during a game (or was serving a suspension at that game) remains ineligible to play in the continuation.

4.5 The home team is responsible for bringing at least three new baseballs to each game.

4.6 If a team cannot field nine players, it must forfeit. (suspended games included) A team has only fifteen minutes after the scheduled starting time to field a team (there are no exceptions) When a team can field 9 players, play **MUST** begin. The HEAD UMPIRE will be the timekeeper.

4.7 No team may borrow a player from another major league team. It may, however, borrow players in the 10-12 year old group from the minor league in order to avoid a forfeit at the start of a game (or the continuation of a suspended game) as long as there is no conflict with the players minor league schedule.

4.8 A game that is suspended before the completion of the first inning must be replayed in its entirety. Also, an inning pitched in a suspended game of this type does not count toward the weekly total of innings.

4.9 In games without lights, no inning may start after 7:30PM for the first two weeks of the season. After the first two weeks, no inning may start after 7:45PM. The beginning of the inning is defined as the 3<sup>rd</sup> out of the previous inning. The umpire will be the official timekeeper.

## **SECTION FIVE: SUBSTITUTIONS**

5.0 Each player must play at least three innings in a six-inning game. "Three innings" is defined as playing in the field for nine defensive outs and making at least one appearance at the plate.

5.1 A player in the starting line-up who has been removed for a substitute may re-enter the game once, in any position in the batting order, but not until the substitute has batted once and played defensively for a minimum of six outs. Example: Abramowitz, a starter on the home team, is removed for a substitute, Buoniconti, after the third inning. The earliest that Abramowitz may return to the game would be the bottom of the fifth. (Buoniconti plays in the field in the top of the fourth and the top of the fifth and bats in the bottom of the fourth)

5.2 A player entering the game as a substitute must play his/her three innings in one stretch. Once a substitute is taken out of the game, he/she may not re-enter, except in the situation described in 5.4 and 5.5



5.3 A player who is injured while running the bases, or one who is struck by a pitch while batting, may be replaced by a teammate who acts as a “courtesy runner”. The courtesy runner shall be the last previously retired player. If the injured player cannot take his/her place in the field in the next inning or cannot bat in his/her next time at bat, that player must be removed from the lineup.

5.4 A previously injured player may re-enter a game, at the discretion of the coach, even if it means playing less than the required six outs. Player must re-enter game in original batting order.

5.5 If a team cannot legally replace an injured or ejected player, the opposing coach shall choose the replacement from among the remaining players

5.6 Umpires should not be expected to enforce or explain substitution rules or eligibility requirements.

## **SECTION SIX: RULES OF PLAY**

6.0 All players are required to wear uniforms to games.

6.1 Batters **must** wear their helmets back to the bench after batting.

6.2 Coaches may protest an umpire’s ruling but the protest **must** be announced before the next pitch is thrown and noted in each coach’s scorebook. The protest must be put in writing within 24 hours and presented to the RULES COMMITTEE which will decide the protest. NO RULES COMMITTEE member may take part in a decision affecting his/her own team. (Note: umpires’ judgment calls cannot be protested)

6.3 A protest based on ineligibility of players and coaches violations of pitching rules, and other factors may be lodged after the completion of a game. The protest **MUST** be put in **WRITING** and **PRESENTED TO** a **MEMBER** of the RULES COMMITTEE before the start of the next game involving either team. The RULES COMMITTEE will proceed as in 6.2.

6.4 A 12 run mercy rule is in effect: If at any time during the 4<sup>th</sup> or 5<sup>th</sup> inning the home team is ahead by at least 12 runs, the game is automatically over. If the visiting team is ahead by 12 or more runs at the end of 3-1/2, 4-1/2, 5 ½ innings the game continues and the inning is completed. If at the end of the 4<sup>th</sup> or 5<sup>th</sup> inning the visiting team is ahead by 12 or more runs, the game is over.

6.5 Head-first slides into bases are permitted, but not encouraged.

6.6 A player who receives a base on balls may proceed to first base and may continue to advance beyond first base, provided that he/she does not stop or hesitate at first base. Note: this rule does not apply to hit batsmen or any other situation where the ball has been declared dead

6.7 On deck batters are not allowed on the field at Comeau Field.

6.8 The first base and third base coaches’ boxes may be occupied by adult coaches or by players in uniform with batting helmets.

6.9 NCLBL does not recognize Special Pinch Runners, as defined by the Little League Rules.

### **6.10 (MAJOR LEAGUE)**

**A batter may not advance to base after a third strike under any circumstances**

## **SECTION SEVEN: POST –SEASON PLAY**

7.0 If two teams are tied for 1<sup>st</sup> place at the end of the season and if one did not have the season series advantage (3 wins out of 4), then a playoff game must be played on the first Tuesday after the last game of the regular season to decide the season champion.

7.1 The first place team is excluded from the playoffs. The playoffs will be a double elimination tournament with the following format:

Game 1: 2<sup>nd</sup> place team vs. 5<sup>th</sup> place team

Game 2: 3<sup>rd</sup> place team vs. 4<sup>th</sup> place team

Before the end of the regular season the LEAGUE SECRETARY will distribute a complete playoff schedule.

7.2 On or before the Thursday before Memorial Day, the Major League coaches will select players for the A, B, and C teams for Bay State Baseball Summer League following the existing rules for selection. Selection of the All Star Team will still take place at the June coaches meeting following existing rules.

“A” team. Each team may nominate as many players as it wants from among the 11 and 12 year old group. Each coaching staff then ranks the nominees, excluding its own players, and creates a list of its twelve preferred players, in order of preference. A point value is given to each player according to rank. For example, the top ranked player is given 12 points and the twelfth ranked player is given 1 point. The twelve players with the highest point totals will make up the “A” team. Also, alternates may be added in accordance with Baystate rules.

“B” Team: After the “A” team is chosen, the process is repeated with the nominations from 11 and 12 year old group. No coach may vote for players on his/her own team. The twelve top ranked players will make up the “B” team. Also, alternates may be added in accordance with Baystate rules.

“C” Team: The “C” team roster is fixed at thirteen full-time players. The “C” team coaches will decide how many 10 year old major leaguers will be on the “C” team. Those players will then be selected in the manner described above. If additional players are needed for the minors, those players will be chosen according to the judgment of the “C” team coaching staff. A minor leaguer on the “C” team must have received at least one vote in the minor league all star voting. In addition, five more players of the coaches’ choosing will be listed on the “C” team roster, in accordance with Baystate League rules, as reserves. The names of reserves must not be revealed and the reserves must not be notified of their status unless they are needed to avoid forfeits. (Note: the summer league coordinator may decide, upon receiving the backing of the board, to enter a second “C” team into Baystate League play.)

7.4 the coaching staffs for the Baystate League teams shall be chosen by consensus, with the PRESIDENT having final say.

7.5 The All Star Team coaching staff shall be the staff of the current division champions. If that staff is unable to coach the team, the PRESIDENT shall appoint a new coaching staff.

7.6 Each team may nominate one or more players for the Marchando (Sportsmanship) award and the Most Improved Player Award. Each coaching staff gets one vote but may not vote for a member of its own team.