

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

**Official Minor League Rules**

April 2018

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## Official Minor League Rules

### Revision History

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

3/13/08 - Add Notes 1 & 2 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 3.2: Remove 2 sentences starting at “3.4 Coaches are limited...”

Rule 3.5: Add to end “but no more than 6 innings per week”

Rule 6.3: Change at end “as in 6.1” → “as in 6.2”

Rule 6.7: Change “Comeau and Samp” → “Comeau”

2/22/09 –

Rule 3.5: Fix typo, add missing “6”: “but no more than 6 innings per week”

5/5/09 (posted 6/21/09) –

Rule 2.5: “Up to three seven year olds” → “Up to four seven year olds”

Rule 4.6: Amended to allow suspension of games when team cannot field 9 players

Rule 4.8: Amended to allow borrowing of players if team cannot field 9 players

Rule 7.2: Policy on C2 team added to end

4/16/11 –

- Rule 3.5 removed

- Rule 5.0 replaced by 5.0(a) and 5.0(b) regarding batting order

- Rule 7.1: revised, on selection of all-star team

2/12 – NOTED IN BLUE

4/26/2014- Governance – 6.10

3/16/2015-**NOTED IN RED**

4/22/2018-Change in pitching rules

**MINOR**  
**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. 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 7 years old and not more than 12 years old on April 30th of the year of eligibility. **BAY STATE IS PHASING IN NEW AGE ELIGIBILITY DETERMINATIONS WHICH ESSENTIALLY CHANGES THE DETERMINATION DATE TO JANUARY 1 AS OPPOSED TO OUR CURRENT APRIL 1. THE BOARD VOTED TO ADOPT THE BAY STATE RULE ALONG WITH ITS PHASE IN COMPONENTS (MARCH 2015).**

- 2.1 If a team is not represented on draft day, the PLAYER AGENT shall assign an individual to draft players for that team.
- 2.2 Each team must have a minimum roster of 13 players. Teams may not go above 13 until ALL teams have reached 13.
- 2.3 All rosters must be filled by the end of the first week of the season. Generally, all vacancies, no matter when they occur, are to be reported to the PLAYER AGENT within 24 hours and that vacancy is to be filled on a first request basis. Players to be selected must be on a current farm league or tryout roster and be age eligible.
- 2.4 Twelve year-olds may not be drafted into the minor league, except in an expansion year.
- 2.5 Up to four seven-year olds are allowed per minor league team.
- 2.6 After registration night, no minor league player can be taken to the majors without the recommendation of the PLAYER AGENT and the approval of their MINOR league manager.
- 2.7 An injured player may be replaced ONLY after all teams have reached the maximum roster size
- 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 one full season 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).
- 2.11 Any exceptions to rules 2.2 to 2.10 must be agreed upon unanimously by the minor 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 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 minor league managers are in agreement and the PLAYER AGENT is able to work out a trade or other compensation, if necessary.
- 2.13 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 head coaches with a list of ineligible players. In the case of hardship a coach may appeal to the PRESIDENT for a waiver.
- 2.14 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.

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

### **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 Pitchers are allowed six (6) innings per calendar week (week runs Monday to Sunday).

7 year olds are allowed only three (3) innings per week

3.4 If a pitcher appears in 3 or less innings they are required to observe one (1) day of rest.

If a pitcher appears in 4 or more innings they are required to observe three (3) days of rest.

One (1) pitch in an inning constitutes one (1) inning pitched.

3.5 A player may pitch in more than one game in a day provided that they pitch three (3) innings or less in the first game. The day(s) of rest to be observed are the total number of innings they pitch in the two games combined.

Exception: 7 year olds may NOT pitch in more than one game in any calendar day.

Example: Player pitches two (2) innings in first game of doubleheader and two (2) innings in second game. Player MUST observe three (3) days of rest.

3.6 A game that is suspended or cancelled before the first inning must be replayed in its entirety. No inning pitched shall be charged to either pitcher, unless the first inning has been completed. If a game is suspended or cancelled after the first inning is completed all innings pitched shall be counted and the required day(s) of rest must be observed.

Innings pitched in games declared "Regulation Tie Games" or "Suspended Games" shall be counted against a pitcher's eligibility.

3.7 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 has innings available the week the game is resumed. NO pitcher may pitch in more than six (6) innings in any game, suspended or otherwise. NO 7 year old may pitch in more than three (3) innings in any game, suspended or otherwise.

Example 1: Player pitched three (3) innings in a suspended game. Game is resumed on a Saturday two weeks later. Player pitched 4 innings on Monday. Player is eligible to pitch only two (2) more innings in the suspended game.

Example 2: Player pitched four (4) innings in a suspended game. Game is resumed two weeks later. Pitcher can only pitch two (2) more innings provided they have at least two (2) innings of eligibility left that week and has observed their required days of rest if they pitched in a game that same week.

Example 3: Player pitched one (1) inning in a suspended game. Game is resumed two (2) weeks later on Saturday. Player pitched 5 innings on Wednesday night. Player is NOT eligible to pitch on Saturday due to the required three (3) days of rest for pitching on Wednesday

3.8 The winning team must report the names of ALL the pitchers on BOTH teams and their total number of innings pitched 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. ALSO, Teams are requested to keep track of pitches pitched by each pitcher and report this also.

3.9 Any team may lodge a protest for a violation of the Pitching rules. Protests shall be made in accordance with NCLBL Rule 6.3.

3.10 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.

3.11 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.

### **Minor League Only**

3.12 Twelve year-olds are not allowed to pitch

3.13 The balk rule and the infield fly rule are not in effect in the minor league.

3.14 If a pitcher cannot reach home plate consistently and the opposing coaches agree, a pitcher can be moved to a position three feet in front of the rubber. If the coaches cannot agree, the pitcher must pitch from the rubber.

### **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 members, the game should be suspended unless the coaches of the teams involved agree to play the game with the available players. If the game is played and the players for the short team appear after the game starts, they shall be placed into the game so as to field nine players. Play must begin no later than fifteen minutes after the scheduled starting time (unless suspended) and when team can field nine players, play **MUST** begin. The head umpire will be the timekeeper.

4.7 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.

4.8 No team may borrow a player from another team, unless one team is short nine players and the coaches agree that a player can be loaned from another team. Once a team can field nine players of their own, no team may borrow a player, and any borrowed players shall return to their original team.

4.9 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 next inning is defined as the 3<sup>rd</sup> out of the previous inning. The umpire will be the official timekeeper.

4.10 There is no limitation on the number of batters per inning (SEE BELOW). **THE BOARD VOTED TO ALTER THE FORMAT OF THE MINOR LEAGUE GAMES AS FOLLOWS; DURING THE FIRST FOUR INNINGS OF ANY GAME, AN INNING WILL BE CONSIDERED OVER AFTER EITHER THREE OUTS ARE RECORDED OR NINE PLAYERS HAVE COMPLETED THEIR AT BAT. THE BOARD ALSO EXPRESSED A DESIRE THAT THE UMPIRES COMPRESS THE TIME SPENT BETWEEN INNINGS FOR WARM-UP AND THAT IF A CATCHER IS ON BASE WITH TWO OUTS THAT THEY BE SUBSTITUTED FOR SO THAT THEY CAN THEN DON THEIR CATCHER'S GEAR TO BE READY FOR THE NEXT DEFENSIVE INNING (MARCH 2015).**

## **SECTION FIVE: SUBSTITUTIONS**

5.0 Each minor league team shall have two options at each of their games to employ one of the two following batting orders. The team must announce its batting order option at the beginning of the game and

employ that option for the balance of the game. If no option is announced prior to the first pitch of the game, the option described in (a) below shall be employed.

- (a) a batting order in which all the players on the team bat before the batting order is repeated
- (b) Same as currently written

5.0 (b). The batting order at the start of the game will include all players including substitutes. The starters are to hit the first time through the order. On the second time through the order the batter substitute is to bat. This is to insure all players hit at least one time. The starter and substitute will alternate hitting when the time comes. In the event a player comes late he/she can be added to the batting order where a substitute has not been entered and will hit the next time the batting spot is due to hit.

EXAMPLE: Below is an example of the batting order prior to the start of a game with all players on time.

- 1. David Kale
- 2. Joe Rudgis
- 3. Frank Grover
- 4. Peter McCann
- 5. Linda Janul
- 6. Stephen Crowley                      Sub: John Crowley
- 7. Joe Carroll                              Sub: Jonathan Blount
- 8. Ed Hallett                                Sub: Carolyn Rodrigues
- 9. John Capo                                Sub: Peter Crowley

5.1 All players must play in the field for at least six outs in a six-inning game.

5.2 As long as rule 5.1 is observed, players may be freely substituted on defense.

5.3 A player who is injured while running the bases, or being 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 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 15 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 15 runs, the game is automatically over. If the visiting team is ahead by 15 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 15 or more runs, the game is over. Note: The mercy rule is still in effect if the game is shortened due to the time limit described in rule 4.9.

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

6.6 No leads or base stealing. The play ends when the pitcher has the ball on the mound. The mound is defined as the dirt circle around the pitchers rubber. Play does not begin again until the ball is put in play by the batter.

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 Each team must provide an adult back-up to return passed balls. The adult back-up may not touch any live ball other than a passed ball or be subject to an interference call by the umpire.

6.10 Governance - Any Major or Minor League Rule may otherwise be modified on an "ad hoc" basis by the President with the consent of the Vice-President or the Player Agent, if the modification is determined to be in the best interests of the League.

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

### **Rule 7.0 (MINOR LEAGUE)**

Change the rule to provide for a five-team league and delete reference to the six-team league.

### **7.1 (MINOR LEAGUE)**

On or about the second Sunday in June, each minor league team will select one (1) player for the all-star team to represent their team. After each team is represented, each team will nominate no more than two (2) players to be selected to fill six (6) slots according to the following process: Each coaching staff ranks the nominees, excluding their own players from the list of twelve nominated players, in order of preference. A point value is given to each player according to rank. For example, the top ranked player is given ten (10) points and the tenth player is given one (1) point. The six (6) players with the highest point totals will be named to the all-star team in addition to the five players representing each team. The all-star team coaching staff shall pick the twelfth player and they may add as many additional player(s) of their own choosing. The coaching staff may choose from the entire minor league roster for these choices. If any injuries or dropouts occur on the team, those vacancies must be filled from the list of nominees according to the prior vote of the coaching staffs.

In the event that a team would like to nominate more than 2 additional players to be considered the players must be nominated by another coaching staff and seconded. Each team must vote for all players eligible. So if there are 14 players nominated and you have only two (2) nominations you would rank by vote ten (10) players.

7.2 The North Cambridge "C" team roster is fixed at 12 full-time players. The "C" team coaches will decide how many and which minor leaguers will be on the "C" team. 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.) If a C2 or nine year old team is to be organized for the Bay State Baseball League, it shall be picked by the minor league coaches according to rule 7.2 of the Major league rules, except that selection will be made at the coaches meeting in June, as opposed to the week before Memorial Day.

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

7.4 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.

7.5 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.