

## **ELCO Youth Baseball**

### **Coach Pitch League (8U) Rules**

Generally, this league will follow Little League Baseball rules. The ELCO Youth Baseball (EYB) Executive Committee shall have the final authority over all rule interpretations. The following are additional specific regulations to the EYB “Coach Pitch” League Baseball rules.

#### **1. Team Rosters**

- 1.1 Players eligible to participate in this league are seven (7) and eight (8) years old and must not attain the age of nine before, or on April 30th. Player’s eligibility to participate in the program will be based upon registration.
- 1.2 Any player outside of the ages of seven (7) and eight (8) years old, as referenced above, will be permitted in the Coach Pitch League only with EYB Executive Committee approval.

#### **2. Playing Time**

- 2.1 Since this is a developmental league, all kids should be taught and play as many positions as possible. Please keep in mind the safety of the child. He should not be asked to play a position he is not comfortable or able to handle.
  - 2.1.1 No player should be thought of as “my 1st baseman” or “my shortstop”, etc.
- 2.2 Teams are to play ten fielding positions (four outfielders – Right, Center Right, Center Left, and Left– no Short Field position). Outfielders must not be within ten feet of the baseline. The defensive team must play outfielders beyond the infield (“in the grass”) and play one infielder in the pitching area. A catcher must also be provided.
  - 2.2.1 If a team is short a player(s) for a game, team must first drop the additional outfielder, reverting back to traditional three outfielders (left, center and right). Next, if still short a player(s); drop another outfielder – or, if opposing team is willing to provide the catcher position, do so.

**Note:** Under normal circumstances, there should never be a game where there is a consideration to ‘forfeit’ the game – kids just want to play, parents/grandparents/family members just want to watch – be creative, work together and make it happen.
- 2.3 Players should play a minimum of two innings in the infield every game. Pitchers and catchers are considered infielders.
- 2.4 All players bat in a continuous batting order. Rotate lineup so that different kids bat at the top of order each game.
  - 2.4.1 If a player leaves the game, that player’s batting spot is simply skipped.
- 2.5 If a player is absent from a game, playing time and at-bats are not ‘owed’.

#### **3. Pitching Rules**

- 3.1 Coaches shall pitch to their own players/team.
- 3.2 Coaches will pitch from in front of ‘the mound’.
- 3.3 Coaches will pitch in a manner to allow for the highest probability of success for the batter - using a ‘release point’ <5 ft. (less than five feet) to simulate a kid’s pitch (i.e. coaches should be kneeling, sitting on a bucket, etc...). Remember, coaches are not pitching in a manner to make any batter look bad, or to make them fail.
- 3.4 If a batted ball strikes the coach/adult pitcher, it is a ‘live’ ball. Coaches are to make every attempt to remove themselves from the course of play.
- 3.5 Pitchers, not coaches, are expected to ‘field their position’ and ‘play the position’ from the area located adjacent to the ‘the mound’ area. Be sure that the pitcher can see the batted ball.

#### **4. Batting**

- 4.1 Balls and strikes shall not be called, but a batter may strike out swinging. There are no walks during coach pitch.
- 4.2 Foul balls are strikes. Player cannot strike out on a foul ball.

- 4.3 There is a twelve pitch limit. After twelve pitches, if the batter does not hit the ball or attempt to swing, the batter is called out. The twelve pitch maximum encourages the most timid players to swing at some point or be called out.
- 4.4 When the coach is pitching there will be no called strikes, if a player is looking at several pitches you may need to move them along/‘get the bat off of the shoulder’
- 4.5 No bunting. [Please note: although bunting is prohibited during games, it is an important skill to work on in practice as time permits. Bunting may be utilized in 10U and beyond]
- 4.6 Use common sense when it comes to base running. When a player makes an obvious error, the base runners will get the base they are going to only.
  - 4.7.1 If a player hits the ball past outfielders/through the gap, the batter may advance at their own risk of getting out. Please use common sense.
  - 4.7.2 A runner(s) is awarded one base on an overthrown ball that leaves the field of play.
- 4.7 All batters and base runners will wear hard plastic helmets with chinstraps at all times when on the playing field. The first time a batter or base runner intentionally removes his/her helmet, a warning will be issued. Second and subsequent offenses will result in the player being called out.
- 4.8 Any batter that throws their bat, intentionally or not, will receive a warning for the first offense and will be called out for second and subsequent offenses.

## 5. Game Rules

- 5.1 During all games, the “on-deck” batting position and/or practice swings by players other than the player “at bat” is PROHIBITED. Practice swings may only be allowed by the player “at bat” within the confines of the batter’s box, or within near proximity of the batter’s box within the confines of the playing field. During practice where multiple hitting drills may be going on simultaneously, it is incumbent upon the coach to secure the area from other players and spectators.
- 5.2 Home team is responsible for setting up the field 30 minutes prior to game time.
- 5.3 Each team is allowed fifteen minutes of batting/infield practice prior to the game time. Visitors have the fifteen minutes immediately prior to game time.
- 5.4 Games will consist of six full innings, unless called because of darkness or inclement weather. An inning may NOT be STARTED after 120 minutes of play. The safety of the players comes first. If a game is called due to weather or lack of daylight, three completed innings will be considered a complete game for the purposes of rescheduling.
- 5.5 The offensive and defensive teams will alternate whenever there are three outs, five runs scored, or ten batters, whichever comes first. It is permissible to keep a play in motion once the fifth run has scored to see if the defensive team can get make a play/get an out or to allow a hitter to complete his/her at bat. However, any runs more than five will not be counted.
- 5.6 Home team will provide two new game balls. Standard “hard” balls are to be used. Reduced Injury Factor (RIF) Tee Balls are not used at this level.
- 5.7 There are no leads off bases and no base stealing. Runners may not advance on a wild pitch or passed ball and may only advance when the ball is put into play.
- 5.8 Feet first sliding into base is permitted at second, third and home. Proper sliding technique is imperative before allowing your team to slide.
- 5.9 The umpire will be the coach that is closest to play. Responsibilities for calls are as follows:
  - Plays at 1B – First Base Coach
  - Plays at 2B – Pitch Coach
  - Plays at 3B – Third Base Coach
  - Plays at Home – Pitch Coach
  - Plays in right field – First Base Coach
  - Plays in Center Field – Pitch Coach
  - Plays in Left Field – Third Base CoachThe person responsible for the call can ask for assistance if they did not see the play clearly.

5.9.1 If there is a ruling on a play that cannot be mutually agreed upon, the ruling shall favor the offensive player.

- 5.10 Defensive coaches are permitted. There should be no more than two defensive coaches on the field. It shall be the coaches' discretion as to where to position them. Defensive coaches must be positioned as to not interfere with play.
- 5.11 Free substitution rule in effect. A player removed from a defensive position can be entered back into a defensive position an unlimited amount of times without penalty.
- 5.12 There is no infield fly rule. Runners may tag up within the confines of traditional baseball rules and may be doubled off a bag if they leave before the catch.
- 5.13 Standings are not kept and there is no need to report the score to the league. However, as children will invariably know the score, it is permissible within the rules of good sportsmanship for one team to be declared the "winner" of the game.
- 5.14 All catchers must wear catcher helmet with throat protectors, shin guards, and chest protectors. Catchers are recommended to wear protective cups (gender applicable). Catchers should attempt to use a catcher's mitt, but a regular glove is acceptable.
- 5.15 Bats must state, "Approved for play in: Little League ®" and barrel diameters cannot exceed 2 ¼ inches. Bats approved for "Tee-Ball" are also allowed.

## **6. Administrative and Field Requirements**

- 6.1 Games are six innings long, yet no inning shall start after two hours has elapsed since the start of the game. A game may be stopped earlier at the coach's discretion. The safety of all players comes first.
- 6.2 The pitching rubber will be placed 46'0" from the back of the pitching rubber to the back of home plate.
- 6.3 The bases will be placed 60'0" from the back of the plate to the back of the base.

## **7. Field Conditions and Make Up Games**

- 7.1 Home team coach decides if the field is playable. Please use common sense.
- 7.2 Cancelled games may be made up as soon as possible by agreement of both head coaches. Consult with Field Commissioner on field availability.

## **8. Practice Requirements**

- 8.1 Due to field scheduling limitations, if you need to schedule a practice outside of your regular practice day(s) - due to weather or other cancellations - please contact the Field Commissioner.

## **9. Sportsmanship**

- 9.1 Arguing or ragging is strictly prohibited and will not be tolerated. This applies to players, coaches, and fans. The head coach is responsible for the conduct of their assistants, their players and fans.
- 9.2 Rule Interpretation - If you feel there has been a misinterpretation of a rule, call time out and discuss it in an appropriate manner with opposing coach. If you are not satisfied, contact the rules commissioner following the game for clarification.
- 9.3 Abuse of equipment is strictly prohibited. Throwing of bats and helmets is not allowed.
- 9.4 Absolutely no foul language is allowed.
- 9.5 Code of Conduct will be in effect.