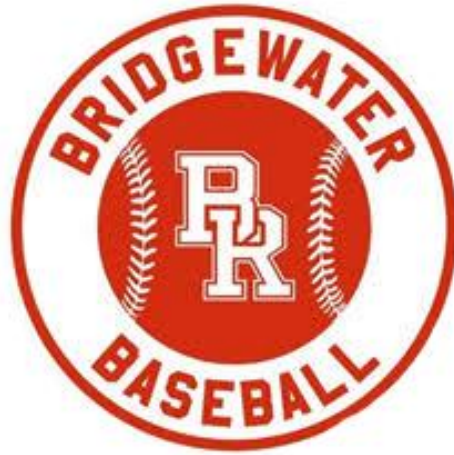


Bridgewater Baseball (BBSI)



Minor League (3rd & 4th Graders)

Rulebook

2025 Season

(v.1.1)



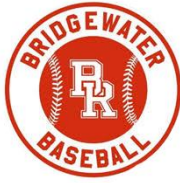
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Contacts

League	Name	Email / tel #
Commissioners (Minor, Lower League)	Marianne Larson JR Lubisco	marianneslarson@gmail.com lubiscojr@gmail.com
Middle League Chair	Mike Pikulin	michael.pikulin@veoliaes.com
VP, BBSI	Dan Pan	dppan@comcast.net
President, BBSI	Mike Brewster	mikebrewster80@gmail.com



Important

- Please make sure to follow all COVID-19 protocols (check our website for the latest information at www.bridgewaterbsi.com)
- Please remind your parents that the Medical Release forms and Code of Conduct forms were completed during the online registration and they should be updated as necessary
- Managers should also carry a complete contact list of players, parents, all managers, and Pony / Senior League commissioners.
- Make sure that you have a first aid kit with you at all times. Always make sure you have ice packs.
- Please keep a record of injuries by submitting an accident report to the commissioner of the league.

Please be patient with players and parents.

Please teach the kids how to play correctly.

Please encourage good sportsmanship

THANK YOU for volunteering your time to be a volunteer coach!



Welcome

Welcome to Bridgewater Baseball and Softball Inc! We are extremely thankful to you for volunteering your time to support the league and the players. It should be a rewarding experience for coaches, players and parents.

The Minor League (3rd and 4th graders) continues from Farm AA as an instructional/competitive league where the primary goal for the season is to teach advanced baseball fundamentals (pitching, batting, balls, strikes, stealing, throwing, catching and being a good teammate).

Farm AA should have given the players advanced concepts and rules of baseball. Please continue to teach these concepts and rules as we transition into a more competitive format while keeping the game fun! **Standings are not kept during the regular season,** but “real baseball” and competition are now part of the game.

With this in mind, we have set individual player goals for the season.

- Each Player will learn to play the game with the coaches on the sidelines.
- Each player should be able to throw and catch a baseball between the bases (60 feet).
- Each player should become accustomed to hitting live pitching from opposing players.
- Advanced players will continue to learn to pitch and catch.
- Each player will learn competitive base running and stealing.
- Each player will continue to learn the advanced vocabulary of the game.
- Each player will demonstrate the proper conduct both on and off the field. This includes staying on the bench while your team is at bat, being a good sport, and being a good teammate.

The end of the season will include Playoffs and a Championship game.



Managers/Coaches

REQUIREMENTS

Each team will have a Manager and Assistant Coaches must have the following:

- Rutgers S.A.F.E.T.Y. certification
 - Rutgers certification is good for life
 - Certification requirement also applies to all parents wishing to help out (i.e. inside the dugout, on the field, etc.)
- Background check
 - Must be checked every 2 years
 - Please visit our website at <http://www.bridgewaterbsi.com> and click on the BBSI tab, then "BACKGROUND CHECKS" for more information
 - Please DO NOT submit your background check application until you have been approved to be a manager/coach by your league commissioner

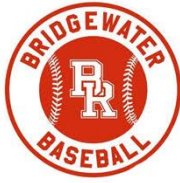
RESPONSIBILITIES

- To Request a practice field
 - Send your request to: ***scheduler@bridgewaterbsi.com***
 - Email must contain: Division (i.e. Farm AA), Team Name, Date, Time and Field, Requestor's name and cell number
- Rescheduling a Game
 - Send your request to: ***scheduler@bridgewaterbsi.com***
 - Coaches from both teams are responsible for identifying an available field by looking at the calendar
 - Email must contain: Division (i.e. Farm AA), Team Name, OLD GAME info (date, time, field #), NEW GAME info (date, time, field #), Requestor's name and cell number



Schedule

1. Bridgewater Recreation teams are formed by the commissioner based on player's school, skill level, and requests in order to create balanced competitive teams. We also have teams from out-of-town that play in the recreation division which are projected to compete at roughly the same level as the Bridgewater Recreation teams.
2. Minor League season begins in early April. Practices start mid. to late March.
3. Tuesday/Thursday games will start promptly at 6:00PM or 8:00PM.
4. No new innings will begin after 1 hour 45 minutes (6:00PM game → 7:45PM; 8:00PM game → 9:45PM).
5. If there is an 8:00PM game scheduled following the 6:00PM game, the 6:00PM game must end at 8:00PM. A hard stop means the game must end regardless if the inning started at the 1 hour 45 minute mark or not or if the game is complete or not.
6. If there is no game after, and the inning started before 1 hour 45 minutes, that inning may be completed but don't drag it out for 2.5 hours. Please use your best judgement.
7. Games should be played to completion, regardless of score (i.e. no game should end before 1 hour 45 minutes of play), unless both coaches agree.

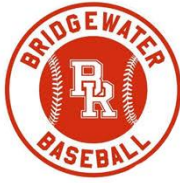


8. If the umpire calls the game due to darkness, the final score will revert back to the last full inning.
9. Minor League schedule will be posted on the Bridgewater Baseball website the week prior to the start of the season.
10. A manager or coach (preferably both) should be at the field at 5:45pm to greet their players and get organized for the evening.
11. Parents should be instructed to have their children at the field approximately 5-10 minutes before the scheduled time.
12. The first 15 minutes of each game will be used by each team to warm-up and teach skills (Every year the player's get older and move up, it is extremely important for the coaches to teach them the rules of the game and how to play at the next level. Pre-season practices and skills are important).
13. For the Championship game, **all 6 innings must be played (no time limit)**.



General Rules

1. Except as otherwise noted, we will follow the most current Cal Ripken rules and regulations. All managers and coaches should be familiar with these rules.
2. Players must wear their full official team uniform during games.
3. Standings will **NOT** be kept during the season.
4. There should be no more than 4 coaching staff in the dugout during games.
5. Games will be six innings (pending time, weather and darkness).
6. An inning is classified as: **(5) runs, (3) outs or once through the lineup, whichever comes first.**
7. There is NO unlimited run inning in regular season games.
8. During **Playoffs**, ONLY the team that is trailing in the last inning will have an unlimited run inning to give them a chance to catch up.
9. During spring, a 10-run "Mercy" rule will NOT be enforced unless both managers consent.
10. During fall, a 15-run "Mercy" rule will be in effect unless both managers agree to something else.
11. All players are to be included at all times.
12. A manager or coach (preferably both) should be at the field at 15 minutes prior to game time to greet their players and get organized for the evening.
13. Players should be instructed not to leave the field during the practice/game.
14. Please instruct parents that any player who cannot make a practice or game should contact the team manager.



15. The managers of each team should meet prior to the game to determine if any changes are needed to the basic game schedule. (Examples: safety issues, with players and or the field, weather, an extra inning if time is available). Both managers should agree in advance to any changes.
16. One team member (player) may coach either 1st or 3rd base, unless both managers agree otherwise. The player **MUST** wear a helmet.
17. All players must remain on the bench at all times unless they are in the field or up to bat. No sitting with parents.
18. No one other than players and coaches should be in the bench area.
19. There is no eating during a practice or game. Drinks are okay. Snacks and drinks can be consumed at the end of the evening.



Rules of Conduct

1. All managers, coaches, and other volunteers must read, and abide with the Bridgewater Baseball Code of Conduct for managers and coaches at all times.
2. It is the responsibility of the manager to maintain proper decorum and behavior among the parents of the players as well as the players and coaches on his team.
3. Any abuse directed at a player or umpire by anyone involved with the team is ultimately the responsibility of the manager.
4. Instances of unacceptable behavior should be addressed by the manager immediately and reported to the commissioner for follow-up.
5. Coaches or any other team assistants not coaching first base or third base must stay in the bench area.
6. The use of alcohol, tobacco, or foul language on or around the playing field is not allowed and will not be tolerated.
7. Only the **Manager** is allowed to discuss a call with an umpire. Clarifications of calls or rules are the only things that may be discussed with an umpire. The umpiring calls may not be disputed.
 - a. Any discussion with an umpire should be done when the ball is dead and be done face to face in a civil and non-threatening manner. Remember that this is an instructional league. The umpires are learning too.
 - b. If an umpire makes an incorrect call, it is your obligation to teach the umpire just as you would a player. Any abuse of an umpire by a manager or coach will result in immediate removal from his or her coaching duties.
 - c. Managers should notify the Umpire Coordinator if there is a very good or very poor umpire, so he can properly evaluate his talent pool.



8. Regular season games may not be protested. Playoff games may be protested in accordance with official Cal Ripken Baseball rules.
 - a. The umpire must be notified immediately and before any succeeding play begins. A written protest must be filed with the Commissioner within 24 hours. The umpire must also submit a written report to the Umpiring Coordinator within 24 hours.
 - b. Good sportsmanship dictates that every effort must be made to resolve the dispute at the time it occurs.

***** Manager/Coaches – Important *****

This is a game for the kids. We are volunteers here to support the kids. Let's be patient. Mistakes will be made. Let's set a good example for the kids on how we handle them. Encourage good sportsmanship and be positive.

Report any incidents to your commissioner immediately. They will be recorded and reviewed by the Board to see if necessary action needs to be taken during the season.

Any major incidents will be taken into consideration upon applying to manage or coach for the following season.



Roster Rules

Each team must have a minimum of 8 players on the field at all times during the game. If a manager knows ahead of time that he will not be able to field a team of at least 8 players, then:

- **Spring Season:** The manager should request a temporary substitution player (Play-up) from the Farm AA League.
- **Fall Season:** The manager should contact the other manager he is playing to determine what should be done.
- During playoff games only, if a player is injured during the course of a game and the number of players drop below 8, then that game shall be suspended.
- If a player has to leave a game for any other reason before it is completed, and the number of players drop below 8, then his team shall forfeit the game.
- When 8 or fewer players are available and no temporary substitution player is available, the manager should borrow players from the opposing team and place them in outfield positions to make 9 defensive players. Borrowed players do not bat for the team they are assisting.

FAIR PLAYING TIME RULE

The intent of the **Fair Playing Time Rule** is rule is to prevent players from playing the whole game while other players sit 2-3 innings a game.

- No player may sit two innings until every player has sat one complete inning.
- Except for injury, no player sits two consecutive innings.
- No player may sit more than two innings in any game including ones which go beyond the 4 innings.
- After eight innings a player may sit a third inning provided every player has sat at least two (2) innings already.
- If there is an exception, the manager will be expected to justify it.



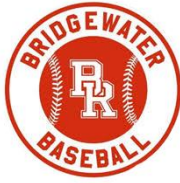
If a manager intends to sit a player for an entire game for disciplinary/behavioral reasons or injury, this must be declared to the umpire and to the opposing manager before the game.

- a. If a **behavioral problem occurs during a game**, the player's manager must immediately notify the opposing manager and the umpire of the benching and must notify the Commissioner that day.
- a. If a **behavioral problem occurs during a practice**, the Commissioner must be told before the next game about the intent to have that player sit out the game.
- b. If the **reason is disciplinary**, the player's family and the Commissioner must be notified. Discipline problem is defined as a behavioral problem that occurs during a game or practice, and is unduly disruptive in the opinion of his manager.

TEMPORARY SUBSTITUTION RULE ("PLAY UPS")

The Farm AA Commissioner will work with Farm AA managers and coaches to create and maintain a list of Farm AA players (and their parents) who would like to be considered for Minor League Play-ups.

- Farm AA play-up will be selected on a **rotating basis**
- Farm AA play-up player in the Minors will always **bat last** and **must play the entire game**, including playing **at least one inning each in the infield**
- Farm AA play-up player **CANNOT pitch** in Minors game
- Farm AA play-up players may not replace a player after the game begins
- Farm AA play-up players **may not be used during the playoffs**
- Play ups **must not interfere with player's own Farm AA game, Tournament game and/or practice commitments**. For example, a Farm AA player should NOT miss his Tournament practice in order to participate in a Minors play up game
- Safety will always be the priority in field assignments



PROCEDURE TO SECURE A "PLAY UP" PLAYER FROM FARM AA LEAGUE

If a Minor team manager knows in advance that less than nine (9) players will be available for a game, he can request a temporary substitution player from the Farm AA League using this procedure:

1. Manager will contact the Farm AA Commissioner and cc: Minors Commissioners to obtain the latest Play Up list
2. Manager will identify and contact an eligible Farm AA player's family from the list with the game date, time and field information
3. Manager may have to repeat step #2 until a suitable player is found
4. Once a player is found, the manager will confirm the substitution via email to the player's family, and copy both the Farm AA and Minors League commissioners.
5. Play ups will not be permitted to play if nine (9) players are present at the start of the game. They will be told ahead of time that their services may not be needed. Play ups may not replace a player after the game begins.

Failure to follow any of these procedures may result in forfeiture of that game.

In addition, a disciplinary action may be taken against the offending manager and/or coaches so please follow the process outlined above!



Batting

1. The full roster should be used in the batting order.
2. **An Inning** is classified as **5 Runs, 3 outs**, or **once through the line-up**, whichever comes first. There is **NO** unlimited run last inning.
3. If a player shows up after lineups have been exchanged, he should be placed at the end of the batting lineup, regardless of where the team left off after their lineup, that player is re-inserted into his original batting position in the lineup.
4. In accordance with Cal Ripken Baseball rules, Players may not swing a bat in the on-deck circle. The on-deck batter should have his helmet on, have his bat picked out, be standing in the designated on-deck area, and be ready to step up to the plate.
5. A batter **may not** attempt to advance to first if the catcher **drops the third strike**.
6. **There is no infield fly rule.**
7. **Extended Strike Zone Rule** – The strike zone will be 'shoulders to knees, one ball inside and one ball outside the plate'.
 - a. **Coaches do not argue or question balls and strikes.** If you feel it is a problem after an inning or two, politely discuss the issue with the other manager and then discuss it together with the umpire after the inning.
8. All players remain on the bench when their team is up.



Base Running

1. Base runners may NOT steal home. They can only advance by:
 - a. A bases loaded walk; or
 - b. A batted ball hit fair; or
 - c. If a batter is hit by a pitch
2. Stealing of second and third is permitted; however, a player may only steal one base per batter.
 - a. Thus, a runner may steal 2nd base during batter A's at bat, but may not continue to 3rd base until batter B is at bat. This rule holds true even on an overthrow or misplay during an attempt to steal.
 - b. If a runner steals 2nd base with a runner on 3rd base, the runner on 3rd base may not advance home on the throw there is no stealing of home.
 - c. **Delayed stealing is not permitted.**
 - i. Stealing on the throw from the catcher back to the pitcher.
 - ii. Stealing if the pitcher drops the throw back from the catcher.
 - iii. Drawing a throw from the catcher at the present base and using that as an opportunity to steal the next base.
 - d. Only under the umpire's instructions, may a runner who mistakenly attempts to steal an additional base, return to the previous base without being tagged out.
3. A base runner may not leave his base until the pitch crosses home plate. A runner who leaves early and is called safe on a steal must return to the base from which he started. If the runner leaves early and is out, the play stands. Runners who continue to leave early will be called out.
4. A runner must slide into a base (except first) if there is any potential play at the base. A player not sliding in this instance may be called out if he was required to slide and does not, in the umpire's judgement.
5. A player who unnecessarily or maliciously "bowls" over an opposing player may be ejected from the game or called out, based on the umpire's judgement. Malicious conduct will be reported to the Commissioner for possible disciplinary action.



Pitching

With the increase in Spring Tournament League play, concern for the potential over use of Tournament Pitchers and in an effort to get more recreational players involved the Rules committee has instituted this rule change.

SPRING

- A tournament pitcher may pitch a maximum (1) inning per game and (4) innings per week;
- A recreation-only pitcher may pitch a maximum of (2) innings per game and three (3) innings per week;

FALL

- Pitchers may pitch a maximum of (2) innings per game and three (3) innings per week.

3RD GRADE PITCHER

This rule is in place to encourage the use of 3rd Grade pitchers, without humiliating the 3rd Grader who is having a hard time finding the plate. The league commissioner will enforce this rule.

- Every team **MUST** pitch a 3rd Grade pitcher a minimum of 3 outs per game.
- The use of a 3rd Grade pitcher must occur **prior to the 4th inning.**
- A manager may replace a 3rd Grade pitcher, due to excessive (5) walks, only with another 3rd Grade pitcher.

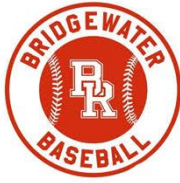


- 1) Except as outlined above, pitching rules shall be in accordance with official Cal Ripken Baseball rules and regulations as stated in the rules manual. For the sake of clarity, these rules are repeated below. We have left out the chart for 4 or more innings since this could never apply in our minor league program. These rules are intended primarily for the safety and long-term health of the players. **ABSOLUTELY NO DEVIATIONS SHALL BE PERMITTED.**
- 2) Any player on the roster may pitch.
- 3) A Calendar Week for purposes of Pitching Rules is defined to be Sunday through Saturday.
- 4) For the purposes of rest as outlined on the chart below, delivery of one or more pitches during any inning counts as an inning pitched.
 - a) The withdrawal of an ineligible pitcher after that pitcher is announced, but before a ball is pitched, shall not be a violation.
- 5) Innings pitched in Tournament Spring Leagues (USABL, Union County Spring, etc.), scrimmage games or games declared “no contest” shall be charged against the pitcher’s eligibility. If a game is resumed in a following week, the last pitcher in the game may continue up to the extent of his or her remaining eligibility for that week (**maximum 1 inning per game, 2 innings per week**), regardless of the number of innings pitched previously in the game.

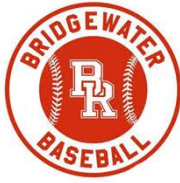


Last day player pitched	Next available day if 2 innings
Sunday	Tuesday
Monday	Wednesday
Tuesday	Thursday
Wednesday	Friday
Thursday	Saturday
Friday	Sunday
Saturday	Monday

- 6) An **“Extended Strike Zone”** is used! This means the shoulders to the knees. Relax and go easy on the umpires. The two managers might want to remind the umpires of this zone prior to the start of each Minor League game.
- 7) **Intentional Walk** – Intentional walks are NOT permitted. Any coach who intentionally walks a batter or “pitches around” a batter will be suspended and/or removed.
- 8) **Hit Batter** - If a pitcher hits two batters in the same inning in any one game, that pitcher must be removed from the mound for that game. The player will now be eligible to play any other fielding position for the remainder of the game.
 - a) Use your best judgment, before automatically removing a pitcher. The rule exists for safety reasons, not competitive reasons.



- 9) Failure to adhere with the letter and spirit of these pitching rules may lead to a manager's or coach's suspension, or removal from the Bridgewater Baseball program.
- 10) At the start of the post-season playoffs, all pitchers shall have maximum pitching eligibility, regardless of pitching during the regular season. Otherwise, all regular rest rules apply during the post-season playoffs.



Catching

- The league will provide full catcher's gear.
- In addition to this equipment, the player in the catcher's position must wear a protective cup (Not supplied by the league).



Fielding

- **Positions:** There may be up to ten players on the field. Four players can play outfield (Left, Left Center, Right Center and Right) and only six players will play infield (1B, 2B SS, 3B, C, and P).
- **No short fielders.**
- All players should be placed in the proper position by the manager/coach.
- If more than 10 players, have them on the bench or instruct them with coaches on the side.

A player may be switched from any position to another position after each inning. Other than changes related to pitching, defensive changes during an inning should be avoided.

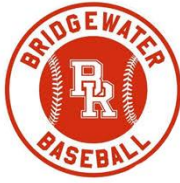
- It is **HIGHLY RECOMMENDED** that all players **GET A CHANCE TO PLAY MULTIPLE POSITIONS** on a regular basis. It is the responsibility of the Managers/Coaches and BBSI to develop all players at multiple positions. As a reminder this is Recreational baseball and not **TOURNAMENT PRACTICE!**
- If a player would be a safety issue at a certain position (catching, infield, etc.), please explain to the player and the parents what is required to play some positions.
- In the event that the rule is violated, the Bridgewater Baseball Board of Directors will not permit the individual to Manage or Coach during the following season.

If there are not enough coaches for the game, designate a parent to watch the bench.



Equipment

1. Player uniforms (spring - pants, shirt, and hat; fall – shirt and hat) will be distributed prior to the start of the season.
2. All players are advised to wear a protective cup. (Not supplied by the league).
3. Catchers and pitchers MUST wear a protective cup.
4. Players should wear their full uniforms (pants, shirt, socks, and hat) during games. Shorts are not acceptable.
5. Players **must bring their own glove** and are welcomed to bring a bat.
6. We strongly urge parents to write the players name and phone number on all equipment.
7. If players bring their own bats, parents & coaches should refer to the “Hey Coach” (Stuff for Everyone) page on the BBSI website or the Babe Ruth website at <http://www.baberuthleague.org/bat-rules.aspx>.
8. **All bats must have “USA Baseball” label to comply with Babe Ruth / Cal Ripkin rules.** All non-wood, USA Baseball bats’ barrel size can be either be 2 1/4” or 2 5/8” with a maximum of 31” in length.
9. Players should wear plastic spikes. Soccer spikes are fine. Opened-toed foot apparel is not permitted.
10. Players should dress appropriately based on weather conditions, cold, heat, rain, etc.



Recommended Drills

Keep it Simple and Make it Fun! - Skills should be taught all season long. Be creative, have contests, goals, etc.

Running

1. Run straight to each base.
2. Touch each Base.
3. Run through first base. Don't slide into first base.

Drill: Run through First Base. Run from First to Second. Run from Second to Home.

Fielding

1. Good stance – wide stance and knees bent.
2. Glove and hand out in front.
3. Use both hands to catch the ball.

Drill: Have the players field gently rolled ground balls without a glove and throw back. Repeat with glove.

Hitting

1. Good stance – Shoulder width and feet square to the plate.
2. Hands up by ear and stay balanced.
3. Push the hands back and small step straight towards the pitcher.
4. Keep the head steady and watch the ball as you swing.

Drill: Soft toss hitting practice with wiffle balls into the fence.



Throwing

1. Eyes on target.
2. Get the ball back up high and behind the head.
3. Point your glove and step towards the target.

Drill: Soft toss back forth with one knee on the ground.

Pitching

1. Stand in front of the rubber and wait for the catcher and batter to be ready.
2. Start the pitching motion (pick one that is comfortable for them).
3. Throw the ball (ball up high and behind the head) to the catcher and get into a fielding position.

Drill: Practice throwing a towel by whipping it forward to simulate pitching.

Outfield

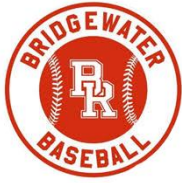
1. Glove up for fly balls.
2. In front of the ball for grounders.
3. Throw to second base.
4. Do not hold or run with the ball.

Drill: Have a coach toss fly balls to catch. Throw to second. Repeat with grounders.



Rain Outs & Lightning Policy

1. In order to determine if a game is cancelled due to weather, please check <http://www.bridgewaterbaseball.com> under the Field Conditions tab or call the recreation department hotline at 908-526-7107, after 4:00pm.
2. The web site will say "Open" or "Closed". If closed, please contact the other manager to confirm the cancellation and then contact your parents. Email communication is the recommended way and probably the most efficient way to communicate
 - a. If games have not been canceled, the two managers should show up at the field or contact each other to make a determination as to whether the game could be played.
3. It is not required to make-up rain out games in Minor League. If both managers want to, they can work with the league commissioner to try to find a date and field to reschedule the game.
4. In case of **LIGHTNING**, a thirty (30) minute postponement applies to all current games at a specific location. All people must seek shelter (in vehicles). If after thirty (30) minutes, lightning is still sighted, a Board Member, Commissioner, or a Senior Umpire can decide to cancel the game(s).
5. If lightning returns after play has resumed, the thirty (30) minute postponement starts over. The time limit for the game will remain in force during the lightning delay - no extra time will be granted for the delay for recreation games. The game(s) will automatically be cancelled upon the start of a second (30) minute lightning delay.
6. The cancellation of an earlier game, due to lightning, does not necessarily cancel all later games.



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