

Catawba County Baseball 2026

Local Rules Rookie League CoachPitch (7/8 yr. old)

This manual is an addendum to the **Official Cal Ripken rulebook**. It is meant to emphasize, clarify, and modify some rules for regular season play.

Section 1. Eligibility

- 1.01 Any player under the age of 9 as of May 1st of the current year is eligible to play in Rookie CoachPitch League.
- 1.02 There will be no exceptions to the eligibility rule.
- 1.03 Players should play in the Cal Ripken organization nearest their current residence. If a player wishes to switch programs within Catawba County, then that player must obtain a written release from the organization closest to their residence.
- 1.04 Cal Ripken organizations or coaches should not recruit players from other Cal Ripken organizations.

Section 2. Playing Rules

- 2.01 Each team may have ten (10) defensive players in the field (6 infielders & 4 outfielders).
- 2.02 Each team will bat its full roster.
- 2.03 A team must have at least eight (8) players to begin a game. An out will be counted for the ninth (9) place batter only. If the 9th and 10th player(s) show up, they will bat in that respective position in the batting order.
- 2.04 Each team will have a five (5) run limit in innings 1/2/3/4/5. The 6th inning will have no limit.
- 2.05 Each team will have their own coach pitching to their respective teams.
- 2.06 The coach will pitch from an area no closer than 35 feet and no further than 40 feet. A rectangular box, 10' x 5' will be drawn for the coach to pitch from. The defensive pitcher for the other team must line up behind the box, and not outside the line.
- 2.07 Each team will assign
- 2.08 The pitching coach will make every effort to move out of the way of the defensive players as soon as the ball is hit. This coach should only be pitching. He/She should not coach the runners. The pitching coach should not slow down play of the game by continuously giving verbal commands to the batter while in the batter's box. The Umpire will monitor these actions and can issue warnings and eventual removal from the said coach from operation of the pitching machine. These are per game consequences. Consequences for not complying with the previous notes are as follows:
 - 1st offense – verbal warning from Umpire
 - 2nd offense – verbal warning from Umpire
 - 3rd offense – The pitching coach will be removed.
- 2.09 If a batted ball strikes the pitcher, the ball is immediately dead and any runners will return to their base. The pitch counts as one of the batters 5 pitches, but is not a strike or foul.

- 2.09 Each batter will get a maximum of five (5) pitches. The batter either:
- *Hits the ball into play; or
 - *Strikes out; or
 - *Is called out due to pitch count
- In case of foul ball on the last pitch, the batter will receive another pitch.
- 2.10 Courtesy runner for the catcher at any time. Mandatory with 2 outs. If a new catcher is coming into the game the courtesy runner is also allowed only with 2 outs. If the head coach fails to put the new player in as catcher following their current turn at bat, the head coach will be ejected from the game. The courtesy runner for both scenarios must be a substitute from the bench or the last batter out if no substitutes.
- 2.11 Base length is sixty feet (60').
- 2.12 No bunting is allowed. If a batter attempts to bunt, the will be called out.
- 2.13 The Umpire may call time, in his judgment, when the lead runner stops advancing. The Umpire controls the game. The defensive player with the ball may request time when he has stopped the advancement of the lead runner. The Umpire will signal time out. The ball must be on the infield and in control of the defensive player in fair territory for the Umpire to signal time out. Time out cannot be called in order to stop the advancement of a runner. Trailing runners will be placed accordingly. If an Umpire calls time and a trailing runner has not acquired the next base, he/she will be sent back to the previous base. There is no half way rule. A runner acquires a base when he/she touches it. **Time out is not until the Umpire says "TIME OUT" or "TIME"**.
- 2.14 Defensive coaches are allowed in foul territory of the outfield to coach his/her players. One on the right field line and one on the left field line. The third coach can assist the catcher behind the plate to get the ball back to the pitcher in order to speed up play. The third coach behind the plate shall not interfere when the ball is put into play.
- 2.15 Infield fly rule is **NOT** in affect.
- 2.16 If a runner steps off the base before the ball is hit, the team will be warned one time. A second offense by any player on that team will result in the runner being called out.
- 2.17 If two (2) runners occupy the same base, the trailing runner will be called out.
- 2.18 If a trailing runner passes a lead runner in the base path, the trailing runner will be called out.
- 2.19 If a coach assists a runner by touching him in any way, the runner will be called out.
- 2.20 Any player throwing a bat in the act of swinging will be given on warning. The second offense by that batter will result in the batter being called out.
- 2.21 All non-wood bats **must have USABat Marking**. Barrel Maximum 2 5/8". No BBCOR Bats are permitted in the Cal Ripken Division
- 2.22 In the event a team has less than the numbers of players required to play, they may play a child off of a younger roster in their organization. I.e., a U-8 team that needs additional players for a game may pick up players from a U-6 team to play. This is only if they have less than 10 players.

Section 3. Playing Time Rules

- 3.01 Mandatory playing time of at least two (2) innings in the field is required for every player in the lineup. Penalty for the infraction of the playing time rule will be a forfeit.
- 3.02 The Coach has final authority on playing time for a player regarding attitude, practice attendance, and general conduct. The Coach must notify the opposing Coach, scorekeeper and Umpire prior to the start of a game as to the reason a player who is present and in uniform is not being allowed to play.
- 3.03 If a Player does not arrive before the beginning of the third inning, the Coach is not obligated to adhere to rule 3.01 above.
- 3.04 If a Player has to leave a game (injury, sickness, prior commitment, etc.) an out will be recorded when that Player's time at bat occurs.

Section 4. Protests

- 4.01 All protest can only be made by the Head Coach or designated Coach who is filling in for the Head Coach. No protest will be allowed on an Umpire's judgment call. The Umpire has the final word on all judgment calls.
- 4.02 A legal protest is one that involves one or more of the following:
- *A violation of playing rules
 - *The use of ineligible players
 - *Infraction of playing time rules
- 4.03 Protests for ineligible players and playing time infractions must be filed within fifteen minutes after completion of the game.
- 4.04 Protests for playing rules violation must be made at the time of the rule in question. **The Head Coach MUST notify the Umpire before the next pitch.** The Umpires will try to work out the ruling to prevent a protest. If this is not possible, the Umpire shall announce to both teams that the game is being played under protest.
- 4.05 Protest will be handled by a protest committee consisting of the League Director from each Organization inv. If a League director is affiliated with one of the teams in question, the Assistant director should fill in on the committee.
- 4.06 All Coaches should strive to keep from protesting games by trying to reach on an agreement with the Umpires and opposing Coaches.
- 4.07 The committee's ruling will be the final authority of all protests.

Section 5. Time Limit of Games

- 5.01 Game length is 6 innings or eighty (80) minutes. No new inning will be started after eighty (80) minutes of play.

- 5.02 A new inning is considered started immediately after the third out of the last inning is recorded. For example, if the third out in the bottom of the inning occurs at the seventy-nine (79) minute mark, then the next inning would proceed as normal.
- 5.03 The start time of the game begins when the Umpire concludes the pregame meeting with coaches. Umpire should tell both teams, and the scoreboard keeper if applicable, the start time.
- 5.04 The Umpire is the official time keeper and has the final ruling on when the time limit is reached.
- 5.05 If the Umpire believes a team is purposely delaying the game in order to prevent another inning being played (excessive timeouts, unnecessary substitutions, etc.) then the Umpire can allow another inning to be played.
- 5.06 If all five (5) innings have been completed with the game tied, and the time limit is not up, the game will continue until the time limit expires or a winner has been determined. If time expires with the game still tied, the game will be extended for one (1) extra inning. If the game is still tied, it will be declared a “suspended” game and finished at the end of the season if necessary to decide the year-end standings.

Section 6. Discipline

- 6.01 Any player who is ejected from a game will be suspended for the rest of the game and the following game. A second offense would carry the same penalty.
- 6.02 Any Coach who is ejected from a game will be suspended for the rest of the game plus the following:
- *1st offense—one game suspension immediately following ejection
 - *2nd offense—one game suspension immediately following ejection
 - *3rd offense—suspended for the rest of the regular season and league tournament
- A coach may make one (1) appeal to committee consisting of the League directors. If the appeal is ruled in favor of the Coach, he will not be charged with an ejection for the game.
- 6.03 Coaches must try to control their team fans. If a fan from a team gets ejected, the Head Coach of that team may also get ejected. If the Head Coach makes no attempt to control his team fans, he will be ejected.