

# 2025 RACINE COUNTY YOUTH BASEBALL LEAGUE RULES & REGULATIONS FOR PONY LEAGUE

Last Updated 2/24/2025

The role of managers and coaches is to teach youth baseball. Teaching good sportsmanship and developing youth to become responsible citizens through fair play and teamwork is as important as developing a winning attitude.

All league games will start promptly at 6:00PM and have a time limit of 2 hours and 15 minutes (unless otherwise noted on the schedule) Pony League games are Wednesdays and Fridays.

## RULES

- 1) Pony League will follow the 2025 NFHS League (High School) rule book except for the changes listed in this Racine County Youth Baseball rules amendment. Any rules or manuals published prior to this edition are null and void.
- 2) League fees are \$500.00 per team, due and payable to the league treasurer on or before May 1, 2025. (Checks will be made out to Racine County Youth Baseball).
- 3) The roster coach and/or assistant coach will attend the Coaches Meeting held before the start of the season or will forfeit first scheduled game.

## GRADE ELIGIBILITY

- 1) Player's grade is determined to be the player's grade at the time of registration (Jan-March) of the current season year. Regular player's grades for the Pony division are 7<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>, and 9<sup>th</sup> grades. **Any player that was selected for and played on his HS team is barred from pitching in the Pony Division.**
- 2) If a 6<sup>th</sup> grader petitions for placement on a Pony team only (play up), with community and commission approval, they are on roster as regular players and lose eligibility to play in the Major division.
- 3) Any roster Major league player petitioning to 'crossover' to the Pony division must be a 6<sup>th</sup> grader. Exceptions will be made on a case by case basis with said player's community recommendation and final approval by the commission. Crossover players must be noted on the rosters as such. Crossover players must wear their original team uniforms at games. Crossover players may only play for teams from their own community. Major cross-over players must use a Pony division approved bat and not their bat from the Major division.

## THE TEAM

- 1) All teams must have a roster approved by their commissioner. If required a roster will be provided by the commissioner to settle any disputes.
- 2) Only rostered players may participate in any and all games. Games played with a non-rostered player shall be forfeited.
- 3) Leagues may add players to the team roster after the season starts only with prior approval of the commission. No additions to rosters after June 1<sup>st</sup>. Each commissioner must be notified of the added player prior to the player entering a game. The player must wait 2 days after approval before being eligible to play. Teams will forfeit all games that the added player plays before the 2 day waiting period is complete.
- 4) Teams may start a game with only 8 eligible players. The ninth spot will be an automatic out until another player is present. If you start with 9 players and lost 1 to an injury only, the rostered spot will not be an automatic out.
- 5) Team Bench is limited to team's rostered players, three coaches and one scorer.
- 6) The Maximum team roster size is 14 players.

## THE FIELD

Pony League Fields shall have 90 foot bases and a distance of 60'6" from the back corner of home plate to the front of the pitchers rubber. If the field is used for Rookie/Minor/Major League play then every effort must be made to completely bury or remove those pitcher's rubbers.

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## PLAYERS

- 1) All Pony league games will use a continuous batting lineup and all players submitted on the lineup card will bat. Late arriving players should not be added to the lineup card until they arrive, once they arrive the player will be added to the last spot in the lineup, regardless of where the team is in the batting order. A player purposely (refusing to play, has left, or been removed from the lineup) missing his spot in the lineup will be removed from the game, an out will be charged to the team (exception, no out is charged for a player being removed from the game due to an injury or illness), and the player will NOT be allowed to return to the lineup or play defense. A player mistakenly batting out of order does NOT need to be removed from the game but is subject to batting out of order rules.
- 2) Defensive substitutions are open, but all Pony league players will play a minimum of 3 defensive innings. The only reason for a player not playing 3 defensive innings is a) disciplinary (you must notify opposing manager prior to the start of the game) b) injury or illness, or c) end of game.
- 3) Major League players crossing over into the Pony League can play anywhere in the field except the positions of Pitcher and Catcher, and will not receive more playing time than a rostered Pony player of that team.
- 4) In the event that a player is injured, a courtesy runner may run for the injured player. This courtesy runner will be the player that made the last recorded out, even if the last recorded out was the preceding inning. Exception, if the last recorded out is the pitcher or catcher of the next inning, the next recorded out may be used.

## PITCHERS

- 1) All pitchers, once removed from the mound, may not re-enter as a pitcher.
- 2) Pitchers are restricted to the pitch counts on the pitching graph sheet. All batters pitched to after a pitcher has reached his maximum pitch count will bat over if the opposing manager chooses to do so.
- 3) Pitchers rest days are determined by the pitching graph sheet, a rest day is a complete day of no pitching, the number of hours between pitching appearances is not a factor in determining appropriate rest days.
- 4) Regular season pitch counts and rest days do NOT factor into tournament pitching rules.

## GAME SCORING AND GAMECHANGER

- 1) All games must be scored using GameChanger. Final scores, pitch counts, standings, etc. will all be done via GameChanger. Game schedules and makeup games will be done via GameChanger as well.
- 2) Both teams must score the game via GameChanger. The home team's GameChanger will be the official book. See the GameChanger procedures handout.

## UMPIRES

- 1) The home team will furnish a home plate umpire.
- 2) The umpire cannot be an immediate relative (father, mother, brother, sister) of a player on either team. This rule can be overruled if both coaches agree and before the first pitch of the game is thrown. Violation of this rule will result in a forfeit of the offending team.
- 3) Please verify the score the umpire and other team, each  $\frac{1}{2}$  inning.
- 4) Umpires must be at least 18 years old or certified for Pony League games. Violation of umpire age qualification will result in a forfeit for the home team.
- 5) Any compensation for umpires is the responsibility of the local organizations. League appointed umpires (County Tournament, All Star, Playoff, WS) are the responsibility of the Racine County Youth Baseball League. Possible standard format for umpire pay.

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## EQUIPMENT

- 1) Local organizations are responsible for all of their own equipment and league fees.
- 2) The home team must furnish 2 National approved balls for each game.
- 3) Bats must be either NFHS approved -3 BBCOR or they can be a -5 with a barrel diameter of 2 ¾". The batter will be called out for an illegal bat after one pitch is thrown.
- 4) All league players must wear approved batting helmets at all times while at bat or running the bases. The only exception is if the helmet falls off naturally while running the bases. Players removing their helmet on base paths will be called out at the time of infraction. After a play is over, if a player then removes their helmet before leaving the playing area, a team warning will be given and the next violation will result in an out.
- 5) All players must wear a shirt with a unique identifying number and a cap.
- 6) Metal spikes are allowed.
- 7) All male players must wear a protective cup.

## THE GAME

- 1) A written lineup card with legible full player names and uniform numbers must be submitted to the opposing coach at least 10 minutes before the start of the game.
- 2) Regulation game consists of 7 innings or 2hrs 15mins. Up to 7 innings will be played until the game clock reaches 2hrs 15mins, then no additional innings may start. Innings started before the game clock reaches 2hrs 15mins will be completed unless the home team is batting and winning. A complete game will be 5 innings or 4.5 if the home team is ahead and the game is shortened by weather, darkness, etc. No games should end in a tie, games must be completed under any available lights or rescheduled to another date and time when the game can be completed.
- 3) When there is a play at any base, the runner MAY slide to avoid contact with the defensive player. If the player does NOT slide and is deemed to be unsafe by the umpire, they may be called out. In the Pony League base runners may slide head first when advancing to 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> base or returning to a base. Base runners may NOT slide head first when advancing to home plate. (Reminder - the defensive player may not be in the base path unless he/she has possession of the ball)
- 4) The home team is in charge prior to the umpire's arrival. The home plate umpire is in charge after arriving.
- 5) Teams wishing to take infield practice before a game should be at the field so as not to delay the start of the game. The visiting team has the last 15 minutes games start to take their infield practice.
- 6) Offensive conferences are limited to one per team per inning.
- 7) A manager that is losing by 15 or more runs after 5 innings may discontinue the game.
- 8) Courtesy runners are allowed (optional) for the catcher and/or pitcher after two outs have been recorded. The courtesy runner will be the player that made the last recorded out, even if the last recorded out was the preceding inning. Exception, if the last recorded out is the pitcher/catcher of the next inning, the next recorded out may be used. When a courtesy runner is used for a catcher or pitcher, the player he substituted for must be used as the catcher or pitcher in the next inning.
- 9) If a runner misses a base, the umpire will make the out call at the end of the play with no appeal procedure.
- 10) **Reschedule of Rainouts – All rescheduling of rainouts will be done by the host commissioner. A date and time will be given to each team. Failure to show will result in a forfeit. (Games will be rescheduled within 3 days and played within 14 days of the originally scheduled date). Games not rescheduled within the 3 days can be rescheduled by any commissioner at any location.**
- 11) Game cancellations other than for weather require a mandatory one week notice to the opposing coach. Also they must notify their commissioner. The new date and time will be assigned by the commission.
- 12) All on deck batters **MUST** warm up behind the existing batter. Exception: When playing on Yorkville's Large diamond, on deck batters may warm up by their own dugout. In addition in an effort to speed up the game on deck batters playing on Yorkville's Large diamond will be responsible for retrieving all foul balls inside the backstop including any dead balls that goes past the catcher.
- 13) Hidden Ball Trick is Illegal.

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## PLAYOFF, WORLD SERIES AND ALL STAR GAME

- 1) Playoff seeds will be determined by Commissioners based on each team's wins/losses. Games not played will be reviewed separately by the Commissioners to determine if a winner should be declared based on each of the "not played" game's circumstances. Once all wins/losses have been applied/reviewed, ties will be broken based on head to head matchups, then by runs allowed throughout the entire season.
- 2) The League Commissioners will direct the best 2 of 3 World Series games between division champs.
- 3) World Series and All Star games will be scheduled annually by the League Commissioners. The issuing of trophies will be determined by the League Commissioners.
- 4) Managers will be responsible for organizing All-Star teams from each division of each league game with direction from the League Commissioners to be determined annually.
- 5) Length of Playoff and World Series games will be the same as regular season play.
- 6) Pitch count rules for the playoff and world series games will be the same as regular season rules.

## RCYB COACHES CODE OF CONDUCT

- 1) Coaches will conduct themselves in a manner that displays good sportsmanship and fair play at all times.
- 2) Coaches will not use foul language at any time while conducting a game or practice.
- 3) Coaches will be equally representative of good sportsmanship in winning and losing.
- 4) Coaches are prohibited from arguing an umpire's decision and insure that players remain under control at all times.
- 5) ONLY the head coach or acting head coach may address the umpire in a professional manner. Any other coach, base coach, parent, or player who addresses the coach is subject to ejection at the umpire's discretion.
- 6) Coaches will insure that umpires are aware of any unique league rules that apply.
- 7) Coaches will make sure that all players treat equipment and uniforms in the proper manner.
- 8) Coaches will know and follow all game rules that apply.
- 9) Do not take advantage of an unknowledgeable coach by changing the rules.
- 10) Do not deliberately run up a score on opponents.
- 11) Coaches are encouraged to give all players a fair chance to participate in games.

\*\*\*As a reminder, NFHS Coaches Code of Ethics also applies, on page 80 of the NFHS rule book.

- 12) Game Officials are the umpire-in-chief and one or more field umpires. **It is important the umpires, managers, and coaches go over the ground rules before the start of the game. (The manager is then responsible for relaying ground rules to the team).** Any umpire has the authority to order a player, coach or team attendant to do or refrain from doing anything that affects the administration of the rules and to enforce prescribed penalties. Umpire jurisdiction begins upon the umpires arriving at the field (within the confines of the field) and ends when the umpires leave the playing field at the conclusion of the game. Any umpire's decision which involves judgment, such as a hit is fair or foul, a pitch is a strike or ball, or a runner is safe or out, is final. If there is reasonable doubt about some decision being in conflict with the rules, **ONLY** the head coach (or acting head coach) may ask that the correct ruling be made. The umpire making the decision may ask another umpire for information before making a final decision. No umpire shall interfere with another umpire's decision unless asked by the umpire who made the original ruling. No umpire may be removed from a game unless he/she becomes ill or is injured. His/her right to disqualify players or to remove non-players for objecting to decisions or for unsportsmanlike conduct is absolute. Ejections will be made at the end of playing action.

**The Facebook page for Racine County Youth Baseball is used for weather/cancelation of games**

### League Commissioners:

Raymond – Alex Zurawski

Union Grove – Doug Preston

Yorkville – Matt Swanson

Wind Lake – Dennis Mueller/Jacob Miller

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## **GAME PROTESTS**

A protest shall be considered only when based on the violation or interpretation of a playing rule. No protest shall be considered on a decision involving an umpire's judgment. Any umpire's decision which involves judgment, such as if a hit is fair or foul, a pitch is a strike or ball or a runner if safe or out is final. Equipment which does not meet specifications must be removed from the game and shall not be the basis for protest. The managers or acting managers of contesting teams only shall have the right to protest a game. They may not leave the dugout until receiving permission from the umpire.

Protests shall be made as follows:

- a.) The protesting manager shall immediately, before any subsequent play begins, notify the umpire that the game is being played under protest.
- b.) Following such notice the umpire shall consult with the associate umpires. If the umpire determines that the decision is in conflict with the rules, the umpire shall reverse that decision. If, after consultation, the umpire is convinced that the decision is not in conflict with the rules, the umpire shall announce that the game is being played under protest. Failure of the umpire to make such announcement shall not affect the validity of the protest. The managers of both teams will then have the umpire sign their scorebooks at the point of infraction.

Any protest for any reason whatsoever must be submitted by the manager, first to the umpire on the field at the time of the infraction, and then in writing to a League Representative within 48 hours. The umpire-in-chief shall also submit a report (verbally or in writing) immediately.

The League Representative will then form a committee of commissioners who are not associated with either of the teams involved in the protest. A protest meeting date shall be set and held within 1 week of notification of protest, and both managers will be notified. The committee shall hear and resolve any such protest as above, including playing rules. If protest is allowed, game will be resumed from point when infraction occurred. The game will be scheduled to be played within one week of protest meeting date. Lineups and batting orders will remain the same as the originally played game.

## **NON PROTESTABLE VIOLATIONS**

- 1) Non protestable violations should be reported to your commissioner as soon as possible. If you are uncomfortable reporting the violation to your commissioner, any other commissioner can be notified. Game protests are for actual playing rules on the field of play, see game protests above. Non protestable violations are instances that are in direct conflict with RCYB playing rules off the field of play that are not easily identified, basically any type of cheating, ie. Illegal rosters, minimum playing rules, illegal players, illegal/doctored bats, etc.
- 2) Non protestable violations can be brought to the commissioners at any time after the violation is identified. It does not need to be done during the game, at the time of the violation like a game protest. Once notified, the commissioners will investigate to see if the instance did in fact happen and if it is in fact a violation. If a violation did in fact occur, the commissioners who are not associated with the team involved will take appropriate action up to and including removal from the league for all coaches and players involved. In addition all games throughout the season in which the violation occurred will be subject to possible penalties up to and including forfeits.