

## GJLS COACHING BASICS

The intent of this document is to provide support to GJLS coaches. This document is not all encompassing and is not to be seen as a replacement for the complete rule books that are in place. Topics include:

- Field prep guidelines
- Game expectations
- Practice ideas and drills
- Communicating with parents
- Concession stand responsibilities

### Field Prep guidelines:

Teams are jointly responsible for getting the field ready for play. If you will be running late, let your other coach know

Lining materials and bases are in the sheds by the fields

- Tee ball, A-Minor, A-Major: Chalk a 10' line halfway from 1st to 2nd, 2nd to 3rd, and 3rd to home, to assist in base running rule enforcement
- A-Minor and A-Major: Chalk a line for the pitching location, 5' in front of the 45' mound that is in place

If one team preps the field, the other team needs to put bases away and rake after the game. Fill in any pitching and batters box holes and tap it down.

### Game expectations for all leagues:

Have your lineup ready so that innings can turn over quickly. Use a courtesy runner for your next catcher if on base with two outs. **Getting catchers ready in between innings is the biggest time suck during games. Be proactive with catchers.** This is a great opportunity to assign a parent volunteer an easy job that can really make an impact. Especially during COVID with the necessary wiping of equipment!

Exchange lineup cards with opposing coaches. Here are sample lineup cards used in the past:

- [sample lineup](#) with one player sitting per inning
- [sample lineup](#) with two players sitting per inning

It helps to give one to your other coaches and to a "dugout parent" and they can help with getting your catcher ready.

Each coach is responsible to bring 1 game ball per game.

Mercy Rule: 15 runs after 4 or 10 runs after 5

Respect other coaches and umpires. Do not argue in front of parents and kids.

Reporting scores: the commissioner of each league will decide their preferred method to report scores. It may be a text thread or a google form. Nonetheless, please be prompt in reporting scores.

### Slightly different rules by league:

Tee Ball:

- Link to [rule book](#)

A-Minor:

- Bases 60' (first set of pegs) and mound 40'
- Coaches pitch all 6 innings
- Each hitter gets up to **6 pitches** but only three strikes. Three strikes and you're out and you do not get your remaining pitches. IF THEY DO NOT SWING AT THE 6TH PITCH THEY ARE OUT, REGARDLESS OF WHETHER IT IS A BALL OR STRIKE. The at bat continues on a fouled last pitch.
- 3 outs or 10 batters can bat per inning, whichever happens first.
- *The following is the most difficult modified rule to fully understand in our lower levels. Please read carefully and recognize it is not perfect, but it is in place to avoid arguments by the adults at a children's sporting event:*

On an outfield hit: The play is dead when an infielder **touches** the ball in the infield. If a baserunner attempting to go an extra base isn't halfway to the next base, they will need to go back to the previous base **at the end of the play**. If the baserunner is more than halfway AND makes it safely to the next base, they are safe.

- PLEASE NOTE: If the infielder receives the cut off throw and turns to make a play, they may tag any runner that is not safely on a base and as long as they maintain control of the ball. Otherwise, the rule above is in effect (a runner must go back to the previous base once time is called if they were not halfway when the infielder originally controlled the ball).
  - If the infielder throws the ball in attempt to get a runner out, the ball is considered back in play and a runner that was behind the halfway mark when the infielder originally controlled the ball is now eligible to take the next base. The action of throwing the ball is the indicator that gives a clear cut action by which coaches and ultimately the umpire can make a ruling on.
- When teaching baserunning, teach your players to always finish running to the next base once they are sent. **Do not stop them in the middle of the base path just because the opposing team gained control of the ball in the infield. This is an unnatural action and is not fundamental base running.** Coaches

yelling “come back” while a runner is advancing leads to confusion and can put the runner in danger of being tagged out.

- When teaching your team to relay the ball to the infield... Teach the infielders to catch the ball and turn to see if they can make a play in their immediate proximity (by tagging a runner). If there is no play, teach them to hold the ball until time is called. It is up to each individual coach if they want to teach their players to make throws to try to get outs on relays, but this is with the understanding that baserunners are not going to be called back to previous bases based on the halfway mark when the ball is back in play. Familiarize yourself with the specifics of this rule in the rule book as it is a major part of the A-minor game.
- This is an instructional league. Make sure kids play all over the field. Every kid MUST play the outfield (catcher is considered outfield) at least twice in each game. No player can play the same position more than twice (extra innings revert to inning 1)
- **Coaches are umpires.** Do not argue in front of parents and kids. In the past, we've played tie goes to the defense because not many defensive plays are made. I think that's a good practice.
- Here is the [link to the A-Minor rule book](#). Bookmark it on your phone in case you need to reference it during a game.

#### A-Major:

- Bases 60' (first set of pegs) and mound 40'
- Coaches pitch the first 3 innings and kids pitch innings 4-6. Coaches pitch any extra innings.
- During coach pitch, each hitter gets up to **5 pitches** but only three strikes. IF THEY DO NOT SWING AT THE 5TH PITCH THEY ARE OUT, REGARDLESS OF WHETHER IT IS A BALL OR STRIKE.
- **During kid pitch, the umpire calls balls and strikes. If a batter gets 4 balls, the coach comes in to pitch. The number of strikes on the batter remains. The coach shall pitch no more than 3 pitches to the batter, unless the third pitch is a foul ball.**
- *The following is the most difficult modified rule to fully understand in A-Major. Please read carefully and recognize it is not perfect, but it is in place to avoid arguments by the adults at a children's sporting event:*

On an outfield hit: The play is dead when an infielder **controls** the ball in the infield. If a baserunner attempting to go an extra base isn't halfway to the next base at that point, they will need to go back to the previous base **at the end of the play**. If the baserunner is more than halfway AND makes it safely to the next base, they are safe.

  - PLEASE NOTE: If the infielder receives the cut off throw and turns to make a play, they may tag any runner that is not safely on a base and as long as they maintain control of the ball. Otherwise, the rule above is in effect (a runner must go back to the previous base once time is called if they were not halfway when the infielder originally controlled the ball).
    - If the infielder throws the ball in attempt to get a runner out, the ball is considered back in play and a runner that was behind the halfway mark

when the infielder originally controlled the ball is now eligible to take the next base. The action of throwing the ball is the indicator that gives a clear cut action by which coaches and ultimately the umpire can make a ruling on.

- When teaching baserunning, teach your players to always finish running to the next base once they are sent. **Do not stop them in the middle of the base path just because the opposing team gained control of the ball in the infield. This is an unnatural action and is not fundamental base running.** Coaches yelling “come back” while a runner is advancing leads to confusion and can put the runner in danger of being tagged out.
- When teaching your team to relay the ball to the infield... Teach the infielders to catch the ball and turn to see if they can make a play in their immediate proximity (by tagging a runner). If there is no play, teach them to hold the ball until time is called. It is up to each individual coach if they want to teach their players to make throws to try to get outs on relays, but this is with the understanding that baserunners are not going to be called back to previous bases based on the halfway mark when the ball is back in play.
- Make sure kids play all over the field. Every kid MUST play the outfield (catcher is considered outfield) at least twice in each game. **Players may not play the same position more than twice.**
- Here is the [link to the A-Major rule book](#). Bookmark it on your phone in case you need to reference it during a game. **Pay close attention to letters R, S, and T.**

AA:

- Bases 65' (2nd set of pegs) and mound 45'
- Kids pitch entire game
- Runners must remain on the base until the ball crosses home plate. Stealing of 1st and 2nd base is permitted after the ball crosses the plate. Runners cannot steal home.
- **Once the pitcher has control of the ball on the mound** and runner progress has stopped the play is dead.
- No dropped third strike rule
- Maximum of 5 runs can be scored per half-inning. Once 5th run crosses plate, the half-inning is over and teams trade sides.
- Here is the [link to the AA rule book](#). Bookmark it on your phone in case you need to reference it during a game. **Pay close attention to pitch count rules in letter U.**

AAA:

- Bases 70' (3rd set) and mound 50'
- Runners may lead off and steal on pitchers first movement. Runners can steal home.
- No dropped third strike rule in effect
- Here is the [link to the AAA rule book](#). Bookmark it on your phone in case you need to reference it during a game. **Pay close attention to pitch count rules in letter X.**

### Practice Ideas:

Practices should focus on fundamentals. Base running, being baseball ready, alligator chomp when fielding a ground ball, field first throw second. Don't make practice simply a batting practice where kids are standing around. If you have the help, do multiple stations and rotate kids.

Drills: There are many ideas for drills in the [coaching manual](#).

### Communicating with parents:

Communicating with parents is integral in creating a positive experience for families.

- 1) Introductory email including ([sample](#)):
  - a) Your information
  - b) League rules
  - c) Expectations
  - d) How you will communicate
  - e) Practice and game schedules if you have them
  - f) Concession stand responsibilities
- 2) Reminder email a few weeks into the season encouraging positive parent involvement and concession stand responsibilities
- 3) Thank you email prior to the tournament with tournament details. Encourage involvement if parents would like to volunteer next season.

**All teams will utilize GameChanger to communicate with their team/families during the season. Gamechanger will also be used to score the games and keep the standings of each league. Details of the use of GameChanger will be presented at the drafts.**