

Incarnation Youth Baseball League

Rules & Handbook

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1. General Rules & Regulations Governing Incarnation Youth Baseball

The Incarnation Youth Baseball League (IYBL) generally follows the rules of Little League, Intl., except as noted or clarified below:

- 1.1. The philosophy of the Incarnation Youth Baseball League is that fundamentals should be stressed. Please note that **the first three letters of fundamentals are FUN and that winning should not be over emphasized.**
- 1.2. Age and Eligibility of Players:
 - 1.2.1. T-Ball players must have reached the age of five before April 30th (2/02). Exceptions can be made on a case by case basis with consideration given to parent request and assurance of aptitude and ability to avoid distraction from other players of appropriate playing age.
 - 1.2.2. No player may play in the league should they reached the age of thirteen (13) before April 30th. (3/06)
 - 1.2.3. Determination of suitability for a division is based on grade level and age considerations.
 - 1.2.3.1. Farm League - Pre-K - K, generally targeted at 4-6 year olds. Players must not turn 7 before 8/31 of the current year in order to be eligible.
 - 1.2.3.2. Coach Pitch - 1st - 2nd Grade, generally targeted at 7-8 year olds. Players must not turn 9 before 8/31 of the current year.
 - 1.2.3.3. Minors - 3rd - 4th Grade, generally targeted at 9-10 year olds. Players must not turn 11 before 8/31 of the current year.
 - 1.2.3.4. Majors - 5th - 7th Grade, generally targeted at 11-13 year olds. Players must not turn 13 after 4/30 of the current year.
 - 1.2.4. Generally, the league seeks to keep players within the bounds of their age/grade group. Exceptions can be made to this per parent/coach/Board request to move a player up or down. Requests should be made to the League's registration manager and will be subject to Board Approval.

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- 1.3. Prior to each season coaches shall be selected by the President and approved by the Board of Directors. It has been the tradition and is the continued intent of the league to bring back those coaches who are interested from the prior season and to offer open coaching positions to those coaches moving up in division with the longest continuous seniority. It is the further intent of the league to have coaches who are concerned about the image of the league and are excellent role models and examples for the players. Therefore the following are among the factors that the President and the Board will use when selecting coaches each year:
 - 1.3.1. Behavior during games and practices and at league events including interaction with parents, opposing coaches and umpires
 - 1.3.2. Interest shown in the league, including attendance on the assigned Saturday for field maintenance, preparation of the field before games, recruitment of parents for Hut duty, and condition of team's equipment and uniforms
 - 1.3.3. Feedback from parents
 - 1.3.4. Regularity and content of practices
 - 1.3.5. Game preparation
- 1.4. Player Draft:
 - 1.4.1. Prior to the season each year, a draft will take place assigning players to teams. Drafts will take place at each level with the primary objective at the Farm League level to create enjoyment of the game and accommodate requests to pair with friends, while at the upper levels with the primary objective of achieving competitive balance across the division.
 - 1.4.2. Siblings, when eligible for the same division, will always be placed together on the same team unless the parent requests otherwise.
 - 1.4.3. Draft details will not be shared publicly. Any coach or league representative who shares details or specific considerations that played into determining a player's draft order could be subject to suspension.

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- 1.4.4. When possible, the League will seek to keep players on the same team for their years in the division. Ex. If a player plays for the Dodgers during their first year in the Minors he/she would return to the Dodgers for their second year in the Minors. However, when a division expands, contracts, or there is general agreement that there is a lack of competitive balance, per the Board's discretion, a redraft of all teams can occur.
- 1.5. Each team is limited to one head coach and up to three assistant coaches during games. (4/00)
 - 1.5.1. CORI (Criminal Offender Record Information) checks are required for anyone with direct and unmonitored (by a CORI'd individual or parent) contact with children. A CORI form must be completed prior to the start of the season. CORI checks are processed via the Archdiocese of Boston and suitability to coach due to CORI results is determined exclusively by the Church.
- 1.6. Only players and coaches are allowed in the dugouts during the games. (8/92)
- 1.7. All players in all leagues must wear team uniforms appropriately during games. (6/96)
- 1.8. Coaches must score the game and check the score with the opposing coach after each inning.
- 1.9. A legal game may be played using eight players. The team must have the eight players by game time or forfeit the game.
 - 1.9.1. Call Ups: If necessary, a team may field as its eighth or ninth player a registered player currently rostered to a team in a lower Incarnation division.
 - 1.9.1.1. For example, a Majors team that only has eight available players may call up a player from an Incarnation Minors Team.
 - 1.9.1.2. Under no circumstances may a team utilize an eighth or ninth player from any other Incarnation Team in the same division or the opposing team.

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- 1.9.1.3. In the event that a non-rostered player is called up to serve as the ninth player and the rostered player unexpectedly arrives for the game, both players will be permitted to play in the game. However, both players must sit for at least two non-consecutive defensive innings.
- 1.9.1.4. A non-rostered player is ineligible to pitch for the team that requires the non-rostered player's services, there are no other constraints applied to where in the batting order or field a called up player may play. (Rev. 2/22).
- 1.10. Every effort should be made to play each game as scheduled. If a game must be rescheduled, the coaches may request an alternate date by contacting the League Scheduler. Prior to one hour (1) before game time the Board will determine whether or not to postpone the day's games. If the Board has not postponed the game, coaches should meet at the field as scheduled. The coaches and the umpires will decide if the field or conditions are safe for play. The Board will base its decision to play that day's games on the best interest of the players, parents, and future playability of the fields. Board decisions to postpone are final. (2/20)
 - 1.10.1. If conditions are deemed to be unsafe the coaches must contact the League Scheduler for a make-up date.
 - 1.10.2. Upon commencement of any game, the umpire will assume the responsibility for any decision to call a game for any reason.
 - 1.10.3. A game shall be valid when the visiting team has recorded three outs in the third inning, or when, if the home team is trailing, the home team has recorded three outs in the third inning.
 - 1.10.4. If a playoff game is suspended for any reason, the game will be resumed from the exact point at which it was suspended.
 - 1.10.5. Any regular season game postponed for inclement weather and played less than three innings shall be deemed not an official game and rescheduled in its entirety.
- 1.11. All players of the team at bat, except for the base coaches, must remain in the dugout areas. (4/00)

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- 1.12. Base Coaches:
 - 1.12.1. Coaches may act as base coaches at all divisions.
 - 1.12.2. Players may act as base coaches at the Minor and Major League Divisions. Players must wear batting helmets when acting as base coaches.
 - 1.12.3. One T- Ball coach may be located in the outfield while that coach's team is in the field. (4/11)
- 1.13. Batters may not run on a dropped third strike.
- 1.14. Catchers, batters and runners in all leagues must wear appropriate protective equipment.
- 1.15. No on-deck batter is permitted outside or inside the dugout area (6/96).
- 1.16. Metal spikes are not allowed in any league division.
- 1.17. Umpires shall honor a call for time out by a team's coach or through their players when the play has ended. Majors and Minors Division players and coaches can ask for time out when the ball is in the infield and play has stopped.
- 1.18. In all divisions, a runner leaving the base before a pitched ball crosses the plate is automatically out.
 - 1.18.1. This is not an appeal play; the umpire shall call the runner out immediately or at the end of the play if the pitch is hit.
 - 1.18.2. In the event of a batted ball, the umpire will allow the play to continue and at the end of the play will call the offending runner(s) out for leaving early. All other results of the play shall stand. If the runner is the third out of the inning, the inning is over.
- 1.19. If a runner misses a base or leaves early on a tag up, the runner shall be called out on an appeal. An appeal must be made before the next pitch.
 - 1.19.1. In Minors and below the ball is dead at the stoppage of play and an appeal may be made before the next pitch.

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- 1.19.2. In Majors, an appeal can only be made when the ball is live and the umpire has not called time. If time is called by an umpire the appeal must be made after the umpire has called time back in, after the ball is in play (the ball is put into play when the pitcher steps on the rubber), and before the next pitch. If a coach or player on the team requesting an appeal calls time out before the appeal is made, the appeal will be denied.
- 1.20. In all divisions, no inning will start within thirty minutes of the scheduled start of the next game.
- 1.21. There are no extra innings except in the Majors Division or in playoff games. (2/10)
- 1.22. In all divisions except T-ball (see below), games will be scored as follows: 2 points for a win; 1 point for a tie; and no points for a loss. If the umpire, for any reason, calls a game and the score is still tied, the game will be scored as a tie.
- 1.23. Policing the fields before and after each game is the responsibility of each coach/team. This includes raking the field, picking up the trash and bringing the barrels and bases to the field and back to the Hut.
- 1.24. League players may play on tournament teams (i.e., AAU, etc.) during the Incarnation season. Pitching is at the discretion of the coach and the player's parents. (3/11)
- 1.25. Suspensions:
- 1.25.1. The Board, by a majority vote (with a minimum of 50% in attendance) shall at any duly constituted meeting have the authority to suspend any participant (player, coach, fan, etc.) in the League whose conduct is considered detrimental to the best interests of the League. (11/96)
- 1.25.2. The Board shall, upon evidence of the misconduct of any boy or girl, notify his coach and parents within 24 hours of the act. Said coach and parent(s) shall appear with the boy or girl before a duly appointed committee of the Board, which shall have full power to suspend or revoke such boy's or girl's rights to future participation in the League.

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- 1.25.3. Anyone who is ejected from a game must leave the park and church premises immediately. If a coach or player is ejected he/she will be suspended for the following game. A review panel, consisting of the Officers of the Board of Directors and the Rules Committee, will, upon hearing of the ejection from the head of the umpires, notify the coach or player within 24 hours to arrange a meeting of “inquiry”. The Board shall have full power to suspend or revoke the right to further participation in the league.
- 1.26. Subject to any exceptions specifically articulated in the section entitled ‘Regulation Bats’, we follow USA Baseball bat specifications, as described in the Little League rules. (2/18)

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Regulation Bats

1. The bat must be a baseball bat which meets Little League specifications and standards as noted in this rule. It shall be a smooth, rounded stick and made of wood or of material and color tested and proved acceptable to Little League standards.
2. Beginning with the 2018 season, non-wood and laminated bats used in the Majors and Minors, shall bear the USA Baseball logo signifying that the bat meets the USABat – USA Baseball's Youth Bat Performance Standard. All BPF – 1.15 bats will be prohibited in the Majors and Minors beginning with the 2018 season. Additionally, starting in 2018, the bat diameter shall not exceed $2\frac{5}{8}$ inches for these divisions of play. Additional information is available at LittleLeague.org/batinfo.

Majors and Minors Divisions

- A bat shall not be more than 33 inches in length; nor more than $2\frac{5}{8}$ inches in diameter, and if wood, not less than fifteen sixteenths ($\frac{15}{16}$) inches in diameter ($\frac{7}{8}$ inch for bats less than 30") at its smallest part. Wood bats taped or fitted with a sleeve may not exceed sixteen (16) inches from the small end.

NOTE: Solid one-piece wood barrel bats do not require a USA Baseball logo.

Coach Pitch and Farm League Divisions

- A bat shall not require a USA Baseball stamp to be a legal bat.

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2. Specific Rules for the T-Ball Division (Farm League)

- 2.1. T-Ball games will last no longer than 3 innings. (8/92)
- 2.2. During a T-Ball game, each player in the field shall have a turn at bat in that inning.
- 2.3. Each runner is permitted to advance one base per batter, with the exception of the last batter each inning, who may hit a home run and clear the bases.
- 2.4. Coaches are encouraged to allow each player to serve as the “home run hitter” at least once during the season.
- 2.5. A runner may not advance on any overthrow.
- 2.6. After all players have batted, the teams will change sides
- 2.7. All T-Ball players must play in the field during defensive innings. Coaches are encouraged to divide players into two groups, with one group playing the infield and another group working on fundamentals in the outfield. Groups should switch for each defensive inning. No player will be allowed to play the pitcher's mound or first base more than one inning per game. Every effort should be made to allow all players on the team to play pitcher and first base during the season. (6/94)

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3. Specific Rules for the Coach Pitch Division

- 3.1. All pitching is to be done by a coach of the team at bat. The coach (pitcher) shall begin his/her motion from the pitching circle/mark, which shall be agreed upon and marked by both coaches prior to the start of the game. This pitching circle/mark shall be 40 feet from home plate.
 - 3.1.1. The coach (pitcher) shall complete his/her pitch from the standing position.
 - 3.1.2. The coach (pitcher) may also act as umpire after the ball is batted. Except for playoffs when there will be regular umps to make all calls.
- 3.2. There are no walks and no called pitches. Strikeouts can occur only after the batter swings and misses on a third strike. Foul balls shall count as strikes.
 - 3.2.1. NOTE: If a batter is injured, the replacement batter will be allowed three strikes. (4/00)
- 3.3. Nine players must be on the field defensively and in correct positions. Three players must remain in the outfield prior to each pitch and all outfielders must be at least 10 feet into outfield grass (Rev. 2/18).
 - 3.3.1. A game can be played with eight players on a team with said team not fielding a player in the catcher position while on defense.
- 3.4. No advancing on overthrows to bases. (6/15)
- 3.5. Runners may advance on balls hit to the outfield until the outfielder releases the ball after completing a throwing motion. (6/15). Runners who have already completed a turn to the next base prior to the outfielder releasing the ball may advance to the next base at their own risk and are subject to being tagged out. Runners who have not completed the turn to the next base prior to the ball being released by the outfielder must return to that base, but are not subject to being tagged out as they are returning at the direction of the umpire.
 - 3.5.1. Balls are considered as reaching the outfield if they reach the outfield grass without making contact with any defensive players or their equipment. If ball is touched by a player or equipment (ie glove) before reaching the outfield grass, it shall be considered an infield hit

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- 3.6. Batted balls need to reach the infield grass to be considered live, otherwise the ball is foul. (6/15)
- 3.7. Ties go to the defensive team (i.e. out). (2/18)
- 3.8. Outfielders cannot make outs at the bases. They must throw the ball to the infielder to make the out (CF can't field the ball and tag 2nd base to get the force out). If they run the ball into the infield, the runners cannot advance bases once the ball crosses into the infield dirt. (6/15)
- 3.9. Coaches (pitchers) may not field a batted ball. A player is to be positioned on the dirt portion adjacent to the mound to field balls with at least one foot positioned in the dirt. If a batted ball hits a coach pitcher, the play is dead, and the pitch does not count. If a thrown ball hits a coach (pitcher), the play is dead and no runners may advance unless forced to do so. If the coach interferes with a player's ability to field a batted ball or attempt to throw a runner out, the batter and/or runner shall be called out. (2/20)
- 3.10. All players (the entire team) bat in continuous order throughout the game. The maximum number of batters that bat in a single inning is equal to the larger number of players of the two opposing teams except the last inning (example: if team A has 11 players and team B has 9 then the maximum number of batters per inning is 11). In all innings except the last inning if the team at bat has not made three outs when the final batter is up, the coach of the team at bat will announce to the opposing coach that the last batter is at the plate and the inning will end after that batter. The last inning will be played until three outs are made. (4/11)
- 3.11. Coach Pitch division games will last no longer than 5 innings. (6/94)

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4. General Rules Governing both the Majors & Minors Divisions

- 4.1. All players (entire team) bat in continuous order throughout the game. (4/00)
- 4.2. Free substitution will be allowed for players in the field. A player should not sit on the bench for any more than one inning without being reinserted into the game. (3/06) The only exception to this rule is for disciplinary reasons or injury that occurred during the game. In this case, the coach must notify the other coach and umpire of the fact before the start of the inning or game. Coaches must keep an official score book, scoring both teams. (8/92)
- 4.3. "Curfew." No inning will start after 7:45 p.m. (7:15 p.m. prior to April 15 due to darkness). If the score is tied at the curfew, the game will end as a tie, each team to be awarded one point. (2/18)
- 4.4. No pitcher may pitch in more than three innings per game and may appear only once per game as a pitcher. One pitch constitutes a pitching appearance. (2/02)
- 4.5. A pitcher may not pitch more than 6 innings in one calendar week, starting with Monday. To clarify 1 pitch = 1 inning = 1 appearance (2/04). A pitcher can pitch in 2 consecutive calendar days (not three) provided the total innings pitched in those 2 days does not exceed 3 innings. (4/11)
 - 4.5.1. NOTE: The calendar week as it pertains to pitching appearances automatically resets at the beginning of the playoffs.
- 4.6. If one pitcher hits 3 batters in a single game, the pitcher may be replaced (Umpire's discretion). (8/92)
- 4.7. Curveballs and any other type of breaking balls are prohibited. If in the umpires judgment a pitcher has thrown a curve ball or breaking ball a warning will be issued to both the offending pitcher and the pitcher's coach. The second violation in the same game by the same pitcher will result in that player being removed as the pitcher (the player may be reassigned to another position). (3/06)
- 4.8. Overthrows: On batted balls that are then overthrown and remain within the field of play (including foul territory), the runner may advance as many bases as possible at his/her own risk unless otherwise noted in the division specific rules. When the ball is thrown into

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out-of-bounds territory (including, but not limited to, dugouts and beyond fencing), the runner may advance only one base automatically; the ball is dead.

- 4.9. “Leaving early.” A base runner must remain with at least one foot touching the bag prior to a pitched ball reaching the plane aligned with the front of the plate. If, in the umpire’s judgment, the base runner leaves early, the baserunner shall be called out. If a pitched ball is hit while a runner leaves early, the play may continue until its conclusion. At the conclusion of the play the runner shall be called out. All other baserunners may remain on the base where they stood at the conclusion of the play. If the runner leaves early with two outs, the runner shall be called out and no runs will be allowed to score regardless of the outcome of the play.
- 4.10. Slide or Avoid Rule (4/15): Players must slide or avoid contact/collisions at all bases. The runner will be called out if there is a throw to the base and the runner goes into base standing and impedes the defensive player’s ability to make a play by not avoiding potential contact with the defensive player (umpire’s discretion). A defensive player may never physically block a base or home plate unless possessing the ball or the batter is automatically safe. The spirit of this rule is to avoid injury. (6/15)
- 4.10.1. A runner attempting to score may not deviate from his direct pathway to the plate in order to initiate contact with the catcher (or other player covering home plate). If, in the judgment of the umpire, a runner attempting to score initiates contact with the catcher (or other player covering home plate) in such a manner, the umpire shall declare the runner out (even if the runner covering home plate loses possession of the ball).
- 4.10.2. The umpire must consider whether the runner made an effort to touch the plate or whether he tried to initiate contact (with shoulder, hands, elbows or arms) when veering toward the plate.
- 4.10.3. The catcher or other defensive player cannot block the plate or any other base (or pathway of the runner attempting to score or touch the base) unless he is in possession of the ball. If, in the judgment of the umpire, the defensive player, without possession of the ball, blocks the pathway of the runner the umpire shall call the runner safe.

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- 4.10.4. Any runner attempting a head first slide at any base is automatically out.
- 4.10.5. If any contact between the runner and fielder before the runner touches the base (plate) is deemed by the umpire to be flagrant or malicious, the runner shall be declared out and also ejected from the game. The player will also be subject to possible suspension upon review by the Board of Directors.
- 4.11. If a player is injured, becomes ill or must leave the game site after the start of the game, the team will skip over the player when his/her at-bat comes up without penalty. If the injured, ill or absent player returns later in the game, he/she shall be restored to the original spot in the batting order.
- 4.12. If a player is injured during his/her at-bat before the at-bat is completed, a substitute player will assume the at-bat with the same count as the injured player. The substitute player must be the player who recorded the last out for the team.
- 4.13. If a player is injured, becomes ill or must leave the game site while being an active base runner, a substitute base runner will be allowed. The substitute player must be the player who recorded the last out for the team.

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5. Specific Rules for the Minors Division

- 5.1. Base Stealing is permitted in the Minors division subject to the following rules:
 - 5.1.1. A base runner:
 - 5.1.1.1. Must have contact with the base until the pitch crosses the plate;
 - 5.1.1.2. May advance a maximum of one (1) base per stolen base attempt; base runners may not advance an additional base on overthrown balls from catcher to second or third during steal attempt..
 - 5.1.1.3. May not advance on throws back to the mound;
 - 5.1.1.4. May not attempt to steal home at any time (i.e. not allowed on passed balls or wild pitches, not allowed on throwbacks to the mound, not allowed on overthrows of the catcher to the pitcher).
 - 5.1.2. Teams may steal up to three (3) bases per inning, after which no further stealing shall be allowed. Coaches shall communicate with the umpire to confirm that no further steals are allowed in the inning.
 - 5.2. Run rule - A team may only score five (5) runs per inning. The sixth (6th) inning will have no run limit. (2/20). If a ball in play produces a fifth (5th) run in innings one (1) through five (5), the play will continue to its conclusion but any subsequent runs scored on that play beyond five (5) will not be officially scored.
 - 5.3. In the event that an umpire announces prior to the start of an inning that the curfew rule is in effect and the next inning is declared the final inning of the game, the Run Rule will not be in effect for that final inning.
 - 5.4. Bunting is prohibited in the Minors division
 - 5.5. "In play / dead ball" – Once placed in play by the pitcher, a ball is considered live until play has concluded AND the pitcher has the ball and is standing within the pitchers mound.. At the conclusion of play on the field, but before the pitcher has the ball on the mound, a base runner, fielder or coach of either team may request time. The umpire may, in his discretion, grant time. Once granted time, the ball is dead until it is placed in play by the pitcher.
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6. Specific Rules for the Majors Division

- 6.1. Bunting is permitted in the Majors division.
 - 6.1.1. No slash bunting (i.e. fake bunting and swing away) is allowed. (2/18)
- 6.2. Base stealing is permitted in the Majors division, including the stealing of bases on passed balls, wild pitches, throws back to the pitcher and overthrows. Stealing of home is permitted but subject to the slide or avoid rule denoted in the General Rules section above.
- 6.3. The Infield Fly Rule is incorporated. (8/92)
- 6.4. "In play / dead ball" – Once placed in play by the pitcher (via a pitch or other baseball action), a ball is considered live until play has concluded AND the pitcher has the ball, is standing on the rubber, and the catcher is in position and ready to accept the next pitch. At the conclusion of play on the field, but before the pitcher and catcher are "ready to play," a base runner, fielder or coach of either team may request time. The umpire may, in his discretion, grant time. Once granted time, the ball is dead until it is placed in play by the pitcher.
 - 6.4.1. Example 1 – With a runner on base a pitch is thrown. The catcher receives the pitch and throws it back to the pitcher who is standing on the dirt of the mound. Before the pitcher has returned to the pitching rubber the base runner attempts to advance to the next base. This is a legal play and the ball remains live until play stops and either time is granted or the pitcher returns to the rubber with the baseball and the catcher is ready to receive the pitch.
 - 6.4.2. Example 2 – A ball is hit to the outfield. The outfielder throws the ball to the second baseman to attempt to get the runner out and the runner is ruled safe. While holding the ball at the conclusion of the play at second, the second baseman calls time, which is granted by the umpire. The second baseman overthrows the pitcher and the runner attempts to run to third. The runner must return to second because the umpire has granted time. (2/18)
- 6.5. Mercy Rule will be declared if a team is leading by 10 or more runs after the 4th inning.

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7. House Rules / Ground Rules (All Fields Covered)

7.1. Trees overhanging the field in fair territory

7.1.1. Batted Ball: If a batted ball strikes a tree branch that hangs into fair territory, the umpire shall make a determination on the location of the ball when it struck the branch. The umpire shall make a fair/foul determination and, if the ball was determined to be in fair territory when it struck a branch, the umpire shall declare a ground-rule double. However, if in the umpire's determination, the ball was going to travel over the outfield fence prior to striking a tree branch, the umpire can rule that the ball was a home run.

7.1.2. Thrown Ball: If a thrown ball strikes a tree branch, the play shall continue as a live-play, unless the ball deflects off the branch into out-of-bounds territory. In that event, the play is declared dead and runners are awarded the next base.

7.2. Scoreboard

7.2.1. If a batted ball hits the Scoreboard in left field on Field 1 on the fly, it shall be considered a home run.

7.3. Fencing:

7.3.1. If a batted ball that lands in fair territory rolls under or remains stuck in a fence, defensive players shall indicate by raising their hand and the play shall be declared dead by the umpire. All base runners are to be placed at bases per the determination of the umpire.

7.4. Spectator area on Field 3

7.4.1. There shall be a marked area for spectators to sit in left field on Field 3 (Coach-pitch/Farm League Field). This area shall be marked by a sprayed line that indicates the spectator zone. If a batted ball crosses the line on the fly, it shall be considered a home run. If a batted ball crosses the line on the ground, it shall be considered a ground rule double and all base runners are granted two bases from their original base.