

2019 USA Bat Standards

[Click Here](#) to see Bat Standard (as of 9/1/2018)

[Click Here](#) to see list of approved 2018 Bats

West Raleigh will follow the Cal Ripken/Babe Ruth bat rules as below.

****Check with other leagues for their bat restrictions (middle school, travel, high school, legion).****

CAL RIPKEN BASEBALL DIVISION (12 and under)

Bats-Starting on January 1, 2018 all Leagues, with the exception of the MCP league, must comply with the new USA Baseball bat standard. All bats in all leagues must bear the USABat licensing mark to be permissible for League and All-Star tournament play

PENALTY

If the illegal bat is discovered prior to a batter completing his "at bat" the bat is simply removed from play and the "at bat" continues.

A player who uses an illegal bat or non-conforming barrel dimension and hits a fair ball will be ruled out. No advancement on the bases will be allowed, and any outs during the play shall stand. This is an appeal play. The "at bat" will be considered legal once a pitch is thrown to the next batter.

Any bat discovered prior to the game that does not conform to the above rule shall be directed to be removed immediately and not be allowed for use during the game.

Player Eligibility, Tryouts and player Draft

Guaranteed Spot Rules (Amended in Fall 2014)

Spring Season

- Players are guaranteed a spot on a team if they played at West Raleigh Baseball the prior spring season. If a Spring season is missed, that player is no longer guaranteed a spot.
- New-to-West Raleigh siblings that are 7 years of age or older are guaranteed a spot on a West Raleigh team if they have a sibling who has a guaranteed spot in the Spring season, registers and plays that Spring. *
- New-to-West Raleigh guaranteed siblings that are 6 years old in the Spring season are NOT guaranteed a spot but are eligible to the Modified Coach Pitch (MCP) League.
- Siblings of MCP players of any age are NOT guaranteed a roster spot in any league.
- Play in West Raleigh's Fall Baseball program does NOT guarantee a roster spot in the Spring program.

Fall Season

- Players are guaranteed a spot on a Fall team if they played at West Raleigh Baseball the prior Fall or Spring season.
- New-to-West Raleigh players that are 6 years of age or older are guaranteed a spot on a West Raleigh team if they have a sibling who has a guaranteed spot in the Fall season, registers and plays that Fall.*
- New-to-West Raleigh guaranteed siblings that are 5 years old in the Fall season are NOT guaranteed a spot but are eligible to the MCP League.
- Siblings of MCP players of any age are NOT guaranteed a roster spot in any league.

<u>Fall ages</u>	as of 4/30/current year	<u>Spring ages</u>
<i>MCP 4-5</i>		<i>MCP 5-6</i>
<i>Minor 6-7</i>		<i>Minor 7-8</i>
<i>Rookie 8-9</i>		<i>Rookie 9-10</i>
<i>Major 10-11</i>		<i>Major (AL/NL) 11-12</i>

Player Tryouts

Typically, approximately 500-600 players will register and more than half must attend tryouts. Tryouts are out the West Raleigh facility at 830 Barringer Drive, Raleigh, NC 27606. Tryout schedules are typically posted on the website a week prior to tryouts.

New-to-league players must submit a copy of their birth certificate by either mailing (a copy only) to WR, emailing to wrbaseba.reg@gmail.com or bringing it to check-in prior to the beginning of tryouts.

Many of the registrants are guaranteed placement but require evaluation because they are "aging up" to the next age group or because they are trying out for advanced play in National League in the Spring.

In the Spring, the tryouts are usually on a weekend day in mid-February, with players of different ages trying out on different days and times. A second weekend date is scheduled, but there are no guarantees that this second weekend will take place. Therefore, we strongly recommend making every effort to attend the first tryout date, particularly for new players, as the second weekend could be cancelled due to rainouts and not made up. With the tight early-season schedules and restricted field availability, the league has occasionally had to make the difficult decision to abandon the second tryout date.

New-to-league players who do not attend tryouts will NOT be eligible to be drafted until all guaranteed-spot players and all new players who did try out are drafted. If open spots remain, these players may be selected by random drawing. This scenario, while possible, does not typically occur and should never be relied upon.

In the Fall, there is usually only one tryout date, though some accommodation may be made for Spring All Star players that played into late Summer. In Fall as in Spring, making it to the tryouts is imperative for new-to-league players.

What to Expect at Tryouts

Tryouts are set up so that players are given the opportunity to demonstrate fielding (usually ground balls and/or pop-ups), throwing, catching, hitting and running. Older players are also usually given the opportunity to show pitching and catching skills. Coaches look for good technique in getting in front of the ball, getting off a good,

accurate throw, being able to catch a thrown ball properly, good batting stance and swing. They also look at players speed and quickness, hustle and demeanor (e.g., if they miss a ball, they just get ready for the next play). Coaches, often along with their returning assistant coaches, score the players and then rank them according to their teams needs for the draft.

Players **MUST** bring their own glove, batting helmet, and bat to tryouts. Players trying out as catchers **MUST** bring their own catcher's gear. West Raleigh does not provide any equipment for tryouts. Players are strongly encouraged to wear baseball pants, baseball hat, and cleats.

Player Spot Availability

West Raleigh never really knows exactly how many new-player spots will be available until registration is complete. It will depend on the number of returning players, guaranteed spots, the amount of roster spots on teams and the amount of teams in each league.

Draft Process

For each league, the coaches draft players in the inverse order of finish from the prior year's regular season, so the team that finished last will draft first and so on. By the time of the draft, each league will know how many new-to-West Raleigh players can be drafted, and once the specific number of new players are drafted, all subsequent draft picks are from among the players who are guaranteed spots based on prior play in the league or siblings in the league. When the numbers of teams in a league is increased or decreased, normal draft rules may be supplemented to try to ensure fairness.

Draft Notification

If a player has been drafted, they will be contacted by their new coach, usually within a day of the draft. The coach will introduce themselves and let the player (or parent) know when and where the first practice will be held, and what the expectations for players on the team will be. A team's first meeting usually occurs the week following the draft.

If a player has not heard from a coach within 2-3 days of the draft date, the likelihood is that they were not drafted. Registration fees for undrafted players **WILL** be reimbursed within 7-10 days of the draft.

Become an Umpire

West Raleigh has a history of allowing its former players to return as umpires in the Minor League. In order to provide a better trained umpiring staff, Paul Lampe was contracted to take over coordinating the officiating of the Minor League. In order to provide a well-trained staff that can meet the demands of the league, each new umpire must attend at least one training camp per year. Each umpire must pay a booking fee to Paul Lampe, the assignor of the umpiring association that covers the games for each season. This fee covers your access to the website used to assign games as well compensates the assignor for his time in putting together the schedule, handling administrative issues and evaluating umpires.

West Raleigh is the premier youth baseball league in the area. The overall officiating at West Raleigh must match this premier level. West Raleigh Alumni umpires will start their career in the Minor League. This is a place where the umpire can improve his skills, mechanics and knowledge of the rules. This is also a place where the umpire can learn to control difficult situations, manage his own emotions and master the subtleties of umpiring before moving up to the older leagues where you must learn to work the plate.

While umpiring is a fun hobby and is a great way to stay in the game after you're playing days, it isn't for everyone. Umpires must have a desire for perfection, an ability to control their emotions and must be available to work. The best umpire in the world is of no value to the association or the assignor if he is never available to work.

Requirements for Umpiring at West Raleigh

- Must be at least 16 years old
- Must have reliable transportation
- Have an e-mail address and cell phone
- Must purchase uniform(s)
- Must attend training
- Must be able to work at least 3 out of 7 days during each week
- Must be able to handle difficult situations with authority and tact
- Must be willing to commit to learning the rules of the game and proper umpire mechanics

West Raleigh Rules
Version – November 13, 2017

Mission Statement

The mission statement of the West Raleigh Baseball Association (“WRBA”) is to provide a highly competitive baseball league for children ages 4-14 years old, in a safe and family friendly atmosphere, where the virtues of sportsmanship and community are promoted.

Governing Rules

These West Raleigh Local Rules govern all WRBA games. In addition, the rules of the Babe Ruth League and Cal Ripken Baseball govern in the National, American and Rookie Leagues.

Head Coaching Requirements

All head coaches applicants in all leagues will require review and approval from the West Raleigh Board AND pass a background check. Child Abuse/Harassment policy must be completed.

League Guidelines

The leagues for the WRBA are broken down into the following, where League Age for Spring Baseball (Fall in parenthesis) is determined by the child’s age on April 30th:

Modified Coach Pitch League 5-6 (4-5)

Minor League 7-8 (6-7)

Rookie League 9-10 (8-9)

American League 11-12 (Fall is Major League 10-11)

National league 11-12 (Fall is Major League 10-11)

WR BLUE Development 13-14+ (Age as of 4/30 of the current year they are playing in for Spring; age as of 4/30 of the upcoming year for Fall, based on travel ball rules)

Local Rules for All League Play (except MCP and WR BLUE Development)

- 1) The Pledge of Allegiance will be recited before each game.
- 2) A coach may have up to three (3) assistant coaches. There is a maximum of four (4) coaches for each team.
 - a) When on defense, one coach is permitted to be on the field to provide the catcher with signs but must be against the fence and no closer to home plate than the halfway point of the dugout. All other coaches must either be completely in the dugout or, if helping coach the defense, can stand on the dugout entrance.
 - b) Minor League coaches are permitted to have defensive coaches in the outfield as provided in these Rules.
- 3) In the Junior and National League, coaches must turn in a line-up card to the opposing scorekeeper prior to the start of the game. The home team scorebook is the official scorebook for the game. A player that is not on the line-up card cannot play in that game or a continuation of that game if postponed. The WRBA encourages coaches to put all players on the line-up card: in the Junior and National League, players not in attendance at the start of the game should be entered as substitutes; in all other leagues, players not in attendance at the beginning of the game should be entered in the line-up card and can be skipped without penalty.
- 4) If a game is called before it becomes a regulation game (e.g. due to rain or darkness), the game must be resumed from the exact point of interruption with the same ball and strike count on the batter and the same line-up. The home team is responsible for the maintaining the game situation for game completion.
- 5) When determining whether a game is called for time, game time is determined after the third out, not the beginning of the next inning.
- 6) When inclement weather forces postponement of a game:
 - a) As long as the game has 4 complete innings (3.5 if home team is ahead) the game is considered a complete game and will not be resumed regardless of whether time remains.
 - b) If after the 4th inning, a new innings is begun but is not finished and the game is called due to inclement weather, the official score reverts back to the last completed inning for purposes of determining a winner and loser (or tie game). Any pitches thrown in the inning that gets removed from the official score tally do count toward innings pitched and pitch counts as set forth in the pitching rules.
- 7) There will be a minimum of 20 minutes between consecutive games, beginning after the third out of the prior game or when that game is called for time. The first 10 minutes are for both teams to get their equipment into the dugouts and conduct warm ups, sharing the outfield. The visiting team gets the infield for 5 minutes and then the home

team gets the infield for 3 minutes. The 2 final minutes is reserved for pregame and pledge. Coaches must make every effort to work with the umpires and opposing coaches to comply with these time guidelines, but player safety is paramount and players must warm-up their arms prior to game time.

- 8) A player will be ejected from a game for malicious contact, as judged by the umpire, or for disruptive conduct if the disruptive conduct continues after being told by the umpire to stop. An ejected player must go to the concession stand area or off the property. An ejected player does not count as an out when he/she comes up in the order to bat, regardless of whether or not a legal substitute player exists (to not unjustly penalize the ejected player's teammates).
- 9) Only the Head Coach is permitted to request an interpretation of a call by an umpire, and it must be done as follows:
 - The Head Coach must first ask for and be granted time by the plate umpire.
 - The Head Coach can then respectfully approach the umpire who made the call in question, either the plate umpire or the base umpire.
 - Once an interpretation is given to the Head Coach the conversation is over and he must return to the dugout. If the umpire in question feels he could use some more information from his partner to render a different outcome of the call in question, he will do so at this time and render his final decision. Any further disagreement with the final rendered call will result in restriction to the dugout.
 - If the call is reversed, the opposing Head Coach may come to the foul line and not onto the field for an explanation.
 - This is the final decision from the umpiring crew and the game will resume at this point.
 - There will be no time added to the game time in order to discuss any issues that arise during the course of play.
 - The Head Coach will be held strictly accountable for his behavior and the behavior of his assistant coaches, players and of the parents of the players, and may be ejected for disruptive conduct of assistant coaches, players or parents of the players as the situation may warrant.
 - A coach may be restricted to the dugout or ejected from a game for any disruptive conduct if the conduct continues after being told by the umpire to stop. An ejected coach must go to the concession stand area or off the property.
 - A player, Head Coach or Assistant Coach ejected from a game will serve a minimum 2 game suspension (the game the ejection occurred plus the next

game), but can also be prohibited for up to the remainder of the season and end of season tournament at the Board's discretion.

- 10) Courtesy or pinch runners are not permitted, unless for an injured player.
- 11) In leagues with sequential batting, if a player suffers an injury during an at bat (which does not result in a free base) and it requires him/her to leave the game, the player's at bat and spot in the order shall not be counted and the next batter shall come to the plate without penalty to the team.
- 12) Tie scores are counted in the standings as a $\frac{1}{2}$ win and a $\frac{1}{2}$ a loss. End of season tournament games cannot end in a tie. The tournament championship game (including the "if" game) will not be called for time.
- 13) Designated hitters are not permitted.
- 14) Headfirst sliding is not permitted when advancing to a base, except for the Junior League. In all other leagues, if the runner slides headfirst he is automatically out. If the runner was out on the head first slide, the umpire shall also issue a warning to the player.
- 15) Catcher's Throat Protector – The catcher's helmet and mask combination shall meet the NOC-SAE standard. Any helmet or helmet and mask combination shall have full ear protection (dual ear flaps). A throat protector, which is either part of or attached to the catcher's mask, is mandatory. A throat protector shall adequately cover the throat. The commercially manufactured catcher's head, face and throat protection may be a one piece or multi-piece design. A detachable throat protector in addition to the throat protector integral to the mask is not required for an NOC-SAE approved hockey style mask.
- 16) Practice Guidelines
 - a) Prior to season – Each team should practice no less than 2 and no more than 4 times per week on average.
 - b) During season – Each team should practice no less than 1 and no more than 2 times per week on average.
 - c) Each team is encouraged to offer 3 to 4 events each week. This could be 1 game and 2-3 practices, 2 practices and 1-2 games or any combination. Every effort will be made to not exceed 3 games in any given week (as a result of make-up due to inclement weather). It is the intention of West Raleigh Baseball to provide adequate practice time. However, it is the responsibility of the head coach to supplement the allotted practices to achieve these minimum requirements. The entire team should be responsible for any fees as a result of additional practice field rental.
- 17) Bats-Starting on January 1, 2018 all Leagues, with the exception of the MCP league, must comply with the new USA Baseball bat standard. All bats in all leagues must bear

the USABat licensing mark to be permissible for League and All-Star tournament play.

- 18) Rainout Scheduling Policy: All games will be rescheduled on the first available date/time as the field schedule permits except where it would result in 3 consecutive days of games except for Minor League. Also except for Minor League and for tournaments, there will be no more than 3 games in a week (a week starts on Monday and ends on Sunday). Exceptions to this rule are rare and must be brought before the Baseball Committee for decision.
- 19) Slash Bunting (aka butcher boy, slashing or shot gunning): This is not to be confused with a drag bunt. The definition of a slash bunt is where the batter initiates a bunting stance (shows bunt) then pulls back and takes a full swing on the same pitch. The result of the play is that the batter is out.
- 20) All batters must keep one foot in the batter's box during their at bat. In all leagues except for MCP and Minor, the penalty is a called strike. In the Rookie League, the umpire will issue one warning per at bat, after which the penalty is a called strike.

WR BLUE Development Program

- 1) The WR BLUE Development program is a hybrid travel baseball program. These teams will practice at both WR and local practice fields, and play in local travel tournaments and represent West Raleigh Baseball by wearing a WR patch on their sleeves or they may purchase West Raleigh uniforms approved by the league.
- 2) Traditionally the Fall was for league age 12-13 year olds based on the player's age as of 4/30 of the current year. While our league is still based on those age groups, travel teams "Age Up" on 8/1 of the current year, so WR league age 12YOs will participate in 13U travel tournaments (13YOs in 14U tournaments, etc.).
- 3) Travel Seasons run 8/1 - 11/15, and 3/1 - 7/31, and maintain the playing age for the entire year.
- 4) Teams older than 14U may be allowed at the discretion of the West Raleigh Board of Directors.

Modified Coach Pitch ("MCP") Rules

- 1) The MCP league is purely developmental, and roughly half of the time commitment of our other leagues. There will be one, approximately 1-hour game per week and one, approximately 1.5-hour practice per week. There may be an additional game per

week towards the end of the season, but there will be no more than three events per week. There will be no umpires and no end of season tournament. The scoreboard will be used, but it is to be cleared at the end of each inning so there is no official score at the end of the game.

- 2) The MCP league is only for 5-6 year olds in the spring (4-5 year olds in the Fall).
- 3) Players that are 6YO in the spring (5YO in the Fall) can register for either MCP or Minor League. If those players tryout but are not selected to the ML, they have the option (stated on their registration) to be placed in the MCP League (and the difference in league fees will be refunded afterward).
- 4) Guaranteed spots-
 - a) This rule will not apply to MCP, except that 5-6 year old siblings in the Spring (4-5 year old in the Fall) of non-MCP players that played the prior respective Spring (or Fall) season and register and play WR in the current season are guaranteed a roster spot in MCP.
 - b) Siblings of MCP players of any age are NOT guaranteed a roster spot in any league.
 - c) Guaranteed 7-8 year olds in the Spring (6-7 in the Fall), per the sibling rule, are guaranteed to the Minor League but must try out to be placed on a ML team unless they have a sibling already on a ML team. However, the League reserves the right to place certain guaranteed 7YO's in the spring (6YO's in the Fall) into the MCP league if determined to be a safety risk.
- 5) Playing Field
 - a) Games will be played with a regulation size and weight soft core Tee-Ball.
 - b) The field size will be the same size as a Minor League field.
- 6) Any rule not covered here will be covered by Minor League local rules and/or the Babe Ruth League rulebook.
- 7) Rosters will be up to 13 players per team (A determination will be made by the League Commissioner on draft day to adjust the roster number if the registration numbers do not allow for 13 players).
- 8) ALL players will be in the field on defense and all players will bat each inning:
 - a) The Infielders must occupy one of six (6) different positions: pitcher, first base, second base, and third base, or short stop, catcher.
 - b) The Pitcher must stand within the pitcher's circle until the ball is hit.
 - c) The Outfielders must stand on the edge of the grass as the ball is hit (there is no limit to the number of outfielders as long as the all infield, pitcher and catcher positions are occupied)
 - d) Coaches must mix up the batting order each inning.

- 9) 5 Coaches will be allowed in the dugout (all other leagues at WR are allowed 4 coaches).
- 10) Offense
 - a) Coach 1 – In the Dugout, getting players ready to bat
 - b) Coach 2 – At the plate, helping players hit (Coach must place the ball on the T for the player).
 - c) Coach 3 – 1st Base Coach
 - d) Coach 4 – 3rd Base Coach
 - e) Coach 5 – Pitcher
- 11) Defense
 - a) Coach 1 – Down the 1st Base Line, helping Direct Play in the outfield
 - b) Coach 2 – Down the 3rd Base Line, helping Direct Play in the outfield
 - c) Coach 3 – Pitchers Helper - behind the pitcher's mound helping the infield out
 - d) Coach 4 – Stays in the dugout
 - e) Coach 5 – Score Keeper or in the field as needed
- 12) Defensive coaches may position themselves in the outfield or not closer than 3rd or 1st base to coach or direct play.
- 13) All Coaches and Players must be wearing closed toed shoes (molded rubber cleats or tennis shoes) at all times while at the ball fields for games or practices.
- 14) Catcher's gear is not required but is highly recommended; the catcher is to stand back and to the side of the Tee, out of the way of the batter swinging from a Tee while a Tee is being used. If a catcher chooses to sit behind home plate when a coach is pitching, full catcher's gear is required.
- 15) At the coaches discretion the pitcher may wear a helmet with full facial cage. In the event this is needed the coach should contact the Executive Director of Baseball to arrange for the equipment.
- 16) All Players will bat each inning, teams will not change sides after 3 outs. Any batter or base runner that becomes an out must return to the dugout. After a team records three outs in an inning, all base runners shall be cleared from the bases, and the batting team will continue to bat through the order until all players have had an at bat.
- 17) Contact between a runner and defensive player results in the runner advancing to the next base and a dead ball.
- 18) All Players will be in the field at all times. There will be no children on the bench when playing defense.
- 19) Each player must stay at their position prior to the ball being hit, example: The player playing 3rd base must stand close to or next to 3rd base before the ball is hit.

- 20) Scores will not be kept for MCP games but it is recommended that a score book is used to track who has batted.
- 21) No mercy rule in effect. Scores will not be recorded and line-ups should be used to track who has batted.
- 22) Games will be a maximum of 3 innings. No new innings shall be started after fifty minutes.
- 23) Home and Away teams will be designated on the league schedule.
- 24) On the last batter of each inning (The coach should notify the opposing team when the last batter comes to the plate); the defensive team should bring the ball to home plate, before the inning is over. (Tag Home Plate!)
- 25) Players must remain seated on their bench in the order that they are to hit. The next batter up may be standing w/bat and ready for his/her turn.
- 26) Bunting is not allowed. There is no infield fly rule in effect.
- 27) It is possible to have more than three outs in an inning, all players will bat and advance around the bases only if safe. Coaches are not required to bat the same order every inning; all players will bat every inning. Coaches have the option of changing the order from inning to inning so the same player is not always the last batter.
- 28) Coaches will throw three pitches to each player and may choose soft toss, underhand, or overhand as the coach deems appropriate. After three (and only three) attempts at hitting a ball out of the air, the coach will put the ball on the tee, and the player will swing until they successfully put a ball in play (unlimited swings per player off the tee).
- 29) Any ball that does not go at least 6 feet past home plate will be considered foul.
- 30) Once the ball has entered the infield and players have stopped, this will be at the discretion of the coaches; the ball is considered dead when the ball is in the possession of the defense.
- 31) Base Runners must wait for the ball to be hit before advancing to the next base.
- 32) If a runner is thrown out or tagged out because of interference from a defensive player, he or she is awarded the base. (Players cannot stand in the baseline).
- 33) The final batter of each inning will run for home, until the defense tags home plate, or the player.
- 34) Offensive players hitting, running or on deck or in the hole must have a helmet on at all times.
- 35) If a batted ball in the base path hits a Runner, they will be considered out.

Minor League Rules

- 1) The Minor League is a competitive and instructional league for player's ages 6-8 years old (5-7 for Fall Ball).
- 2) The field of play shall be on 60 ft. base paths. The pitching plate shall be located 40 feet from home plate.
- 3) Games shall be 6 innings, except that (1) no new inning shall begin after one hour and 30 minutes, and (2) if there is a tie after 6 innings (or more), additional innings may be played to try to break the tie, subject to the time limit to start a new inning.
- 4) There is a 10 run rule in effect as follows: when a team gets a 10 run lead, they must stop batting and take the field UNLESS they have not scored 5 runs in that inning. Regardless of the score, the leading team is always allowed to score 5 runs in an inning. EXAMPLE:
 - a) A team winning 2-0 can score 8 runs, then the side must change
 - b) A team winning 8-0 can score 5 runs, then the side must change
 - c) A team winning 14-0 can score 5 runs, then the side must change
 - d) A team losing 14-0 can score 24 runs, then the side must change
- 5) A play begins when the ball is hit. A play ends when the lead runner has been confronted and held on base by a defensive player. To stop a lead runner: the defensive player with the ball must confront the lead runner in such a way as to prevent that runner from advancing to the next base. Once this control has been established, the defensive player must raise his/her hand and call for "time out". Other runners may advance while the lead runner is being confronted and controlled. The umpire will decide if control of the lead runner has been established and either grant or deny "time out". Play ends when the umpire grants "time out". At that time, runners that are more than halfway will be allowed to continue to the next base. Runners that are not halfway to the next base will be asked to return to the previous base by the umpire. A "time out" being petitioned by a defensive player in possession of the ball in the outfield will NOT be granted, regardless of whether or the not the runners have stopped advancing.
- 6) Players must play their own position. They may back up other positions, but may not cover a position for another player.
- 7) Outfielders must play at least 10 feet behind the dirt infield. They are not allowed to come in any closer to the infield until after the ball is hit. Outfielders should be encouraged to play in the outfield and not enter the infield. The outfielders are not required to play at the same depth; however, they must be fairly evenly spaced apart. The intent of this rule is to prevent teams from fielding an extra infielder of what is

referred to a "short fielder". The umpires will use their best judgment to enforce the spirit of this rule.

- 8) The defensive player at the pitcher position must be within 10 feet of the pitching rubber. The defensive pitcher may stand even with or behind the pitching rubber, but not in front (closer to home plate) of the rubber. Infield defensive players may not move more than 2 feet (approx. 1 step) forward of the baseline until the ball has been hit.
- 9) Coaches must pitch overhand to their players. Coaches may move forward of the rubber staying within ten (10) feet in a straight line to home plate. As soon as the ball is hit, the pitching coach must move out of the way so as to not interfere with the play in progress. In the event that a pitching coach is hit with a batted ball, a dead ball is called, no pitch is recorded and all runners must return to the base from which the stated the play. A batted ball striking the umpire is considered in play.
- 10) All players are guaranteed an average of 2 defensive innings per game and 1 offensive at bat per game played, over every 2 consecutive games where a player is in attendance. Every player must enter a game by the 3rd defensive inning, to help satisfy the minimum play rule in shortened-game situations. The minimum inning rule is waived in games that are shortened by the slaughter rule or inclement weather. EXCEPTION: Players that did not attend regular scheduled practices or created disciplinary problems during the week of the game.
- 11) There is free substitution during the game for any position and full roster "sequential batting" in every game for each player in good standing. Substitutions (which include position changes) can only be made between innings unless there is an injury or other emergency.
- 12) As long as a team has 9 players total, no outs will be charged if a player must leave the game based on a conflicting activity or be removed from the game based on injury or illness. Players may also arrive late and be added to the bottom of the order. WARNING: If a Coach is found by the Baseball Committee to have manipulated this rule to gain a competitive advantage, the Coach will be removed as a coach from West Raleigh effectively immediately for that season and be ineligible to be an All Star coach, and further disciplinary action may be taken.
- 13) A game may start and/or end with 8 players. If a team is forced to start or end with 8 players, the 9th position will not be counted as an out.
- 14) Teams field 10 defensive players with 4 players in outfield positions.
- 15) Teams may use up to two (2) coaches in the outfield while on defense if desired.
- 16) There is no Infield Fly Rule.
- 17) Bunting is not permitted.

- 18) Batters are allowed 3 strikes. A batter is allowed seven (7) pitches in which to put the ball in play or strike out. If a batter fouls a ball off on the 7th pitch, they are given two (2) additional pitches. If the batter fouls off the last pitch after that, they are given two (2) additional pitches.
- 19) Walks or intentional walks are not permitted. If a pitched ball hits a batter, they may be removed from the game if they are upset, without penalty. The hit batter can return to the batting order during their next time at bat. If the batter continues to bat after having been hit, the pitch that was thrown will count as one of the 7 allotted pitches.
- 20) Leading and stealing are not permitted. The runner must remain in contact with the base until the ball reaches home plate. Leaving base early will result in an automatic out. All bases must be tagged – a missed base witnessed by the umpire results in an out. Appeals on missed bases are not permitted.
- 21) Catchers may use a regular glove in lieu of a catcher's mitt if desired. The catcher will receive the pitch from the normal catcher's position behind home plate.

Rookie League Rules

- 1) The Rookie League is an advanced league for player's ages 9-10 years old (8-9 for Fall Ball).
- 2) The field of play shall be on 60 ft. base paths. The pitching plate shall be located 46 ft. from home plate.
- 3) All players are guaranteed an average of 2 defensive innings per game and 1 offensive at bat per game played, over every 2 consecutive games where a player is in attendance. Every player must enter a game by the 3rd defensive inning, to help satisfy the minimum play rule in shortened-game situations. The minimum inning rule is waived in games that are shortened by the slaughter rule or inclement weather. EXCEPTION: Players that did not attend regular scheduled practices or created disciplinary problems during the week of the game.
- 4) If a player is injured, any player not currently in the game may be substituted for the injured player. The injured player cannot re-enter the game that day. However, the player may re-enter if postponed to another day and the player is healthy.
- 5) No more than 4 defensive outfielders will be allowed at any given time.
- 6) Games shall be 6 innings, except that (1) no new inning shall begin after one hour and 40 minutes, and (2) if there is a tie after 6 innings (or more), additional innings may be played to try to break the tie, subject to the time limit to start a new inning.
- 7) If after 4 or more complete innings (3½ if the home team is leading) a team has a 10 run lead, the game shall be called due to the mercy rule.
- 8) There is free substitution during the game for any position except the pitcher and full roster "sequential batting" in every game for each player in good standing.

- 9) A game may start and/or end with 8 players, and the 9th position will not be counted as an out.

FALL ROOKIE LEAGUE RULES- Same as Spring rules with the following additional exceptions:

- a) Only players League Age 8-9 are allowed to participate.
- b) Each team player must play two (2) innings of defense by the 5th inning and no less than three (3) innings of defense per six (6) inning game.
- c) Pitchers may pitch a maximum of two (2) innings per game and must pitch in consecutive innings. Other pitching rules are in effect.

National/American/Major League Rules

- 1) The National and American League is an advanced league for player's ages 10-12 years old (10-11 for Fall Ball).
- 2) The field of play shall be on 70 ft. base paths. The pitching plate shall be located 50 ft. from home plate.
- 3) All players are guaranteed an average of 2 defensive innings per game and 1 offensive at bat per game played, over every 2 consecutive games where a player is in attendance. Every player must enter a game by the 3rd defensive inning, to help satisfy the minimum play rule in shortened-game situations. The minimum inning rule is waived in games that are shortened by the slaughter rule or inclement weather. **EXCEPTION:** Players that did not attend regular scheduled practices or created disciplinary problems during the week of the game.
- 4) Games shall be 6 innings, except that (1) no new inning shall begin after one hour and 40 minutes, and (2) if there is a tie after 6 innings (or more), additional innings may be played to try to break the tie, subject to the time limit to start a new inning.
- 5) If after 4 or more complete innings (3½ if the home team is leading) a team has a 10 run lead, the game shall be called due to the mercy rule.
- 6) If a player is injured, any player not currently in the game may be substituted for the injured player. The injured player cannot re-enter the game that day. However, the player may re-enter if postponed to another day and the player is healthy.
- 7) No more than 4 defensive outfielders will be allowed at any given time.
- 8) For both the American and National Leagues there is free substitution during the game for any position except the pitcher, and full roster "sequential batting" in every game for each player in good standing. .
- 9) There shall be no use of temporary fences for games or practices.

FALL MAJOR LEAGUE RULES- Same as Spring rules with the following additional exceptions:

- a) Only players League Age 10-11 are allowed to participate.
 - b) Each team player must play two (2) innings of defense by the 5th inning and no less than three (3) innings of defense per six (6) inning game.
- 10) A game may start and/or end with 8 players, and the 9th position will not be counted as an out.
- 11) Pitchers may pitch a maximum of two (2) innings per game and must pitch in consecutive innings. Other pitching rules are in effect.

WR BLUE Development Rules

- 1) Head Coaches, who may either bring a team in whole or supplement or fill their roster after the WR tryouts, will select JS teams.
- 2) The field of play shall be on 80 or 90 ft. base paths.
- 3) The pitching plate shall be located 54 or 60 ft. from home plate.
- 4) Coaches should make a good faith effort so that all players are able to play 2 defensive innings per game and 1 offensive at per game or an average of that during the course of a tournament. EXCEPTION: Players that did not attend regular scheduled practices or created disciplinary problems during the week of the game.
- 5) The use of an Extra Hitter (EH) is highly encouraged for JS coaches.

Pitching Rules for WR BLUE Development

- 1) Coaches should follow and understand the pitching and rest rules prescribed by the individual sanctioning body under which they are playing under, i.e. Nations, USSSA, Top Gun, AAU or any other sanctioning body.
- 2) Coaches should also follow the Pitch Smart guidelines for 13 and 14 year olds, as outlined in the table below.
- 3) Coaches are not required to fill out the online pitching affidavit as each tournament has a method of tracking pitches and eligible pitchers for the duration of the tournament.

Pitching Rules (except WR BLUE Development)

- 1) It should be noted that the intent here is not to put rigid policies in place – but to protect and look after the wellbeing of our youth athletes by properly educating coaches and

parents of the latest medical knowledge surrounding youth baseball. The rules must be flexible and the Board or Baseball Committee may make changes during the season if deemed necessary. Education of coaches and parents will accomplish 95% of the intended goals – not rules.

- 2) Pitches where the pitcher intentionally "breaks" his or her wrist to produce a downward or sideways spin on the baseball) will not be allowed for the Rookie League 9-10, American League and National Leagues 11-12. We do not expect umpires to "monitor" this rule – we expect our coaches to demonstrate good sportsmanship and concern for the well-being of their youth players. In other words – self-enforced. There will be zero tolerance for arguments about whether pitches are "curveballs" during games, on or around the field.
- 3) The starting pitcher and a relief pitcher entering a game shall have eight warm-up throws. Between innings, the pitcher shall have five warm-up throws. A coach must be ready to catch the pitcher between innings when a catcher is not ready.
- 4) Pitchers must pitch in consecutive innings. A pitcher may not re-enter the game under any circumstance as a pitcher once he/she is removed from the pitching position. This includes games that may go into extra innings.
- 5) In addition to the pitch count guidelines outlined in the table below, a pitcher may pitch in no more than 6 innings in any week (a week starts on Monday and ends on Sunday). During end of season tournaments, the "week" is considered every 2 consecutive games (not days) when calculating the maximum amount of innings. However, the regular season pitch count rules remain in effect during tournaments.
- 6) One pitch thrown in an inning counts as a full inning pitched.
- 7) A pitcher may not start a new inning if he/she is within 10 pitches of the maximum allowable limit. For example, a pitcher who finished the 4th inning and has thrown 40 pitches may not start the next inning if the pitch count limit is 50 even though they have not reached the pitch count limit. The reason for this is so we do not introduce any more unnecessary time delays in the game due to pitcher substitution.
- 8) Coaches are encouraged to make pitching changes between innings to avoid excessive game delays, but such changes may be made during an inning if the coach deems it necessary.
- 9) If a player reaches his max pitch count in the middle of a batter's at bat – he may finish pitching to that batter even though they will slightly exceed the pitch count limit.
- 10) There are maximum pitch counts and rest rules for each league, as outlined in the table below.
 - a) Pitchers are required to observe minimum rest periods between pitch outings. A pitch outing is defined as one or more pitches thrown from the mound in a game. The table below defines the minimum rest time between outings

- b) Coaches will be required to count the number of pitches thrown by each pitcher during the game. If desired, coaches should track pitches thrown by the opposing team, but it is expected that the coach of the pitcher shall keep an accurate count.
- c) A pitching affidavit notebook is available online. Each coach must enter the following information in the pitching affidavit within 24 hours of the completion of the game: player name, date pitched, innings pitched, number of pitches thrown, and date of next availability. This pitching notebook/affidavit will be made available to any WR head coach to view. It is the responsibility of the League Commissioner to periodically review the pitching affidavits for completeness and intent. Failure to properly sign the pitching affidavit or adhere to pitching guidelines may result in game forfeit or player(s) not being eligible to pitch the following game

11) Starting with the Spring 2017 season, WR has adopted the MLB.com and USA Baseball pitch count guidelines as outlined in the following table.

12)

AGE	DAILY MAX (PITCHES IN GAME)	REQUIRED REST (PITCHES)				
		0 Days	1 Days	2 Days	3 Days	4 Days
9-10 (RL)	75	1-20	21-35	36-50	51-65	66+
11-12 (NA/AL)	85	1-20	21-35	36-50	51-65	66+
13-14 (WR BLUE Development)	95	1-20	21-35	36-50	51-65	66+

- 13) Intentional walks are not encouraged. If a pitcher does intentionally walk a batter, the pitcher must throw 4 pitches to be received by the catcher and those 4 pitches are counted in the overall pitch count
- 14) Babe Ruth/Cal Ripken governs obstruction rules for all leagues except WR BLUE Development.

- 15) Pitching defined:
 - i) Set position = Stretch position, Pitching plate = Pitching Rubber, Feint = Fake
- 16) In the set position the pitcher must stand with his entire pivot foot in front of and completely within the parallel end lines of the pitcher's plate.
- 17) The pitcher may not deface the ball. Penalty: The ball is immediately dead. The umpire may eject the pitcher. If the ball is pitched, it is an illegal pitch.
- 18) A pitcher may not rub dirt on the ball. An umpire may ask for the ball to be exchanged and warn the pitcher. If the pitcher continues this conduct, it may be deemed disruptive and the umpire may eject the player.
- 19) In the wind-up position there are no restrictions on how the pitcher holds the ball.
- 20) In his delivery from the wind-up position, the pitcher must take one step forward and/or one step backward.
- 21) The pitcher may not intentionally throw close to a batter. Penalty: Ejection. In case of doubt, the umpire may first warn the pitcher.
- 22) The pitcher may not wear tape, bandages, or other foreign material on his hands, wrists, etc. Penalty: Removal of illegal material.
- 23) The pitcher may not wear any distracting items on his hands, wrists, or arms. Penalty: Removal of distracting item.
- 24) The pitching restrictions begin when the pitcher "intentionally contacts the pitcher's plate."
- 25) The pitcher must stand with his non-pivot foot on or behind a line extending through the back edge of the pitcher's plate.
- 26) When he is in contact with the pitcher's plate in the wind-up position, any movement of the pitching hand outside the glove commits the pitcher to deliver. Penalty: balk.
 - a) The gorilla stance is legal as a set position, as long as the pitcher's arm does not swing. Penalty: balk.
- 27) When he is in contact with the pitcher's plate, a pitcher may not turn his shoulders to check a runner after being set. Penalty: balk.
- 28) The pitcher may not touch his pitching hand to his mouth while on the pitcher's plate. Penalty: balk if there is a runner on base, and ball, if there is no runner.
- 29) After touching his mouth with his pitching hand, the pitcher may not touch the ball with that hand unless he has wiped it off. Penalty: balk if there is a runner on base, and ball, if there is no runner.
- 30) The pitcher may not wear an exposed undershirt with white or gray sleeves. Penalty: The pitcher must obtain a legal shirt. Failure to do so results in ejection.
- 31) A white, gray, or multi-colored glove or mitt is prohibited. Penalty: The pitcher must obtain a legal glove/mitt. Failure to do so results in ejection.

32) Balks- Balk penalty is governed by Cal Ripken Rules for Little League (delayed dead ball).

On penalty of a balk, the pitcher shall:

- 1) in the wind-up position:
 - a) Stand facing the batter;
 - b) Not make a quick-return pitch;
 - c) Not pitch unless the catcher has both feet in the catcher's box at the time of the pitch;
 - d) Not use more than two pumps or rotations;
 - e) Not move from the wind-up position to the set position without first disengaging the pitcher's plate legally.
- 2) in the set position:
 - a) Come to a stop without interruption or alteration in one continuous motion;
 - b) Come to a "complete and discernible stop". Note: The "complete and discernible stop" is interpreted as complete cessation of movement of the arms and hands simultaneously with both feet on the ground and also not moving.
 - c) Come to the stop with his entire glove at or below his chin
 - d) Not separate a hand from the ball except to deliver, throw, or feint a throw;
 - e) Make only one stretch;
 - f) Step back partially within the 24-inch length of the pitcher's plate when disengaging the plate;
 - g) Not bring his entire pivot foot past the back edge of the pitcher's plate without delivering to the batter or throwing or feinting a throw to second;
- 3) in either position:
 - a) Take his sign from the catcher while in contact with the pitcher's plate;
 - b) After starting his movement to pitch continue without interruption or alteration;
 - c) Not feint a pitch;
 - d) Not feint toward first base;
 - e) Not drop the ball when the ball does not cross the foul line;
 - f) Step with the non-pivot foot directly toward a base when throwing or feinting there in an attempt put out or drive back a runner;
 - g) Note: Stepping directly to a base is defined as stepping with a 45-degree angle drawn between the base and home. That is, the pitcher must step more toward the base than toward home. Not throw to an unoccupied base when it is not an attempt to put out or drive back a runner;
 - h) Not fail to pitch after making any motion habitually connect with his delivery;
 - i) Not stand on or astride or within five feet of the pitcher's plate without the ball.

Switch Pitchers:

- 1) A pitcher must pitch using the same arm when pitching in any specific game (and any resumption of that game)
- 2) A pitcher's pitch count and days' rest shall only apply to the arm used for pitching, and the coach shall designate in the pitch log which arm was used if a switch pitcher pitches
- 3) All innings pitched, regardless of which arm is used, shall count towards innings pitched limitations during a week (or consecutive games during a tournament)

END OF SEASON TOURNAMENT RULES (EXCEPT WR BLUE DEVELOPMENT)

- 1) In all Leagues, for Spring and Fall Tournaments, tournament seeding will be based on the final regular season standings. Tie-breaking procedures, to determine final regular season standings and Tournament seeding, will be based on the tie-breaking procedures detailed on the WRBA website.
- 2) In all Leagues, for Spring and Fall Tournaments, the higher seeded team (as determined by the final regular season standings) will be designated the Home Team in all Tournament games, except for the initial Championship Game. In the initial Championship Game, the team coming from the winner bracket shall be the home team. In the event that there is a second Championship Game (i.e., an As-Needed Game), the Home Team will be determined by a coin flip between the two head coaches.
- 3) In all Leagues, all tournament games, except the Championship Game(s), will be played with the same time limits as the regular season games. The Championship Game(s) will have no time limit.
- 4) In all Leagues, the regular season mercy rules will be in effect for all tournament games, including the Championship Game(s).
- 5) In all Leagues, regular season weather-related game completion rules are in effect for all Tournament Games (including the Championship Game(s)), including 4 complete, and if play continues but an entire inning is not finished due to weather conditions, the official score reverts back to the last completed inning for purposes of determining a winner, loser or tie game.
- 6) Innings pitched is reset to zero prior to the first Tournament Game, regardless whether any regular season games are played earlier in the week. Pitch count rules continue to apply.
- 7) Innings pitched by a player are limited to 6 innings over any two consecutive Tournament Games for Spring. For example, in the NL, if a player pitches 3 innings in

Game 1, he is eligible to pitch 3 innings in game 2. If he pitches 2 innings in Game 2, he is eligible to pitch up to 4 innings in Game 3. In the Fall season, innings per game are the same as regular season (2 innings per game max).

- 8) League-specific regular season pitch count maximums and days between outings are in effect. Maximum pitch counts and days between outings are based on Tournament Days, not Tournament Games.

DRAFT AND TRYOUT RULES (except WR BLUE Development)

- 1) **Draft Attendees** – For a League Draft to be official, it is mandatory that the following persons be in attendance for the draft: the League Commissioner (or delegate), the Executive Director of Baseball Operations (or delegate), and a Coach (or representative) from each team in that league. No draft will be held without the League Commissioner (or delegate). If the League Commissioner cannot attend, he may delegate to a League Commissioner from another league or an Ad Hoc member. No more than 2 coaches or team representatives may attend the draft. Prospective assistant coaches may not enter the draft room unless their child has been drafted. This is true of all League drafts. No other persons should attend the Draft except members of the Baseball Board/Committee (or delegates) assisting in the running of the Draft.
- 2) **Draft Order** – Draft order will be determined by the order of finish from the previous Spring or Fall Season. The team which finished last the previous season will draft first, next to last second and so on. A team drafting 1st in the 1st round will also pick 1st in the proceeding rounds. Example, for a league with 5 teams, draft order will be T1, T2, T3, T4, T5, T1, T2, T3, T4, T5, T1, etc.
- 3) The League Commissioner will attempt to communicate this draft order to the Coaches at least 1 week ahead of draft day.
- 4) **Sibling Rule** – the means by which a certain player can be guaranteed a spot in the draft because they have a sibling that has played at WR in the previous Spring or Fall season and return to play in the subsequent Spring or Fall season. The new player 'sibling' is guaranteed a draft spot and considered a “returning player” (see below) in the Spring only if the other sibling played the previous Spring (in the ML, RL or NA/AL) and is playing this Spring, and in the Fall only if the sibling played the previous Fall or Spring (in the ML, RL or NA/AL) and is playing this Fall. The Sibling Rule also does not apply when the returning player played in the WR BLUE Development League or MCP League. However, if a new guaranteed sibling is 6-7 in the Spring or 5-6 in the Fall, the sibling is guaranteed a spot in the Minor League.
- 5) **Returning/Tryout Players** – This rule will determine if the player must tryout and if not, which team the returning player is placed. For any league, if a player makes it onto a

WR team in the Spring season, they are guaranteed a spot on a team in every consecutive Fall or Spring season. However, a player that makes it onto a team in the Fall is only guaranteed a spot in consecutive Fall seasons. If a Fall or Spring season is skipped, that player forfeits their guarantee status in future Fall or Spring seasons, respectively. When “sibling” is referenced below, this means “sibling” as defined and covered by the Sibling Rule.

- a) A player may not re-enter the draft without the consent of the Board of Directors, at its sole discretion. In order for a player to request draft re-entry, parents must fill out the Request for Draft Re-entry form and, at a minimum, show good cause. The Board may conduct interviews and meet with appropriate parties, including the player’s current coach, to evaluate the request. The player’s parents will be notified in writing and/or e-mail of the Board’s decision, which will be considered final. In addition, if granted approval to re-enter the draft, the player will no longer be considered a “guaranteed” roster spot for that season and therefore could potentially not be drafted by any team in that league.
- 6) If a team has to be retracted in any league for any reason, the players that would be returning to that team will be placed in the draft pool and are listed as a guaranteed spot.
- 7) Subject to a decision by the Baseball Committee, the draft is meant to add enough players so that the Minor League will have a minimum of 12 players on a roster, and all other leagues will have a minimum of 11 players on their roster.

MINOR LEAGUE

- 1) All new players to the league must tryout in order to be eligible to be drafted by a team, with the limited exceptions listed below.
 - a) Coach’s sons/daughters are placed on their respective ML team.
 - b) If the player has a sibling on an existing ML team, they are automatically placed on that same team and do not need to tryout unless the Commissioner determines the player is may be a safety risk and is eligible and best served being placed into MCP.
 - c) If two new to WR siblings are eligible for ML, are in the draft pool and one is selected in the draft, the other sibling must be selected by the same team tryout unless the Commissioner determines the player is may be a safety risk and is eligible and best served being placed into MCP.
 - d) If the player has a sibling in another WR league (ML, RL or AL/NL), they are guaranteed a spot on a team, but must still participate in the tryout.
- 2) If the player was on a ML team the prior Spring, they return to that Spring ML team (and do so in all subsequent Fall and Springs) until they age out of the Minor League.

- 3) If a player played in the prior Fall for a ML team, but did not play the prior Spring, that player must tryout and is not guaranteed a spot in the league in the Spring, or a spot on the same team in the Spring if they are drafted into the league.

ROOKIE LEAGUE; LEAGUE AGE 9-10

- 1) All new players to WR and all rising returning 9 year olds must tryout in order to be eligible for the draft, with the limited exceptions listed below.
- 2) Coach's sons/daughters are placed on their respective RL team.
- 3) If the player has a sibling on an existing RL team, they are automatically placed on that same team and do not need to tryout.
- 4) If the player has a sibling in another WR league (ML, RL or AL/NL), they are guaranteed a spot on a RL team, but must still participate in the tryout.
- 5) If a 10 year old player was on a RL team the prior Spring (or Fall), they return to that Spring (Fall) RL team.
- 6) **Rising 10 year olds:**
- 7) All but exceptional 10 year old players play in the Rookie League. The ultimate determination of eligibility of any 10 year old for AL/NL consideration rests with the WR Baseball Board.

LITTLE LEAGUE PLAYERS; LEAGUE AGE 11-12

AMERICAN AND NATIONAL LEAGUES

- 1) All new 11 and 12 year old players must tryout in order to be eligible for the NL and AL draft except that Coach's sons/daughters are placed on their respective AL/NL team
- 2) If a player has a sibling in another WR league (ML, RL or AL/NL), they are guaranteed a spot on an AL or NL team, depending on the outcome of the tryout and draft.
- 3) For returning 12 year old NL players, they return to their NL team with no tryout.
- 4) It is strongly recommended that all rising returning 12 year olds AL players that were on an AL All Star team tryout for the NL
- 5) Rising returning 12 year old AL players that attend tryouts and are not drafted to the NL return to their AL team.

MINOR LEAGUE DRAFT POOL

Determination of the number of kids in the Draft Pool:

- 1) The draft pool will be finalized by the League Commissioner and League Head Coaches prior to the start of the draft. There will be X number of returning players placed on the teams prior to tryouts.
- 2) If you do not show up for tryouts, you cannot play in the League unless you are guaranteed a spot.

- 3) A ML Head Coach must have at least two 6 year olds (including the Coach's child) on the roster by the end of the draft. The Commissioner must include an adequate amount of 6 yr. olds in the draft pool.
- 4) A ML team may not have more than 7 players of any one particular age.
- 5) Drafting siblings. If two or more siblings are trying out for the ML, and both are on the Draft Pool, coaches must select both. Players are slotted into the coach's current round selection and into their highest number round open draft slot

NATIONAL LEAGUE DRAFT POOL

- 1) The draft pool will be finalized by the League Commissioner and League Head Coaches prior to the start of the draft. There will be X number of returning players placed on the teams prior to tryouts.
- 2) If you do not show up for tryouts, you cannot play in the League unless you are guaranteed a spot
- 3) All rising returning 11 year olds eligible for the NL that do not show up for tryouts will not be considered for the draft pool unless they have good cause (as determined by the Board) and inform the league well prior to the draft of their desire to be considered for NL. If they have good cause and choose to be considered, prior to beginning the draft the NL Commissioner will cause the NL Coaches to discuss their knowledge of the player's skills and any other information provided about the player by the player's parents will be shared.
- 4) If the NL roster size is 12, a NL team may not have more than 7 players of any one particular age. If the NL roster size is 11, a NL team may not have more than 6 players of any one particular age.
- 5) Drafting siblings. When twin siblings are trying out for the NL, it is NOT required that if you draft one, you are required to draft the other. However, the League Commissioner should communicate clearly in advance with the parents in this situation.

AMERICAN LEAGUE DRAFT POOL

- 1) The draft pool will be finalized by the League Commissioner and League Head Coaches prior to the start of the draft. There will be X number of returning players placed on the teams prior to tryouts.
- 2) If you do not tryout and are not a guaranteed spot 11-12, you cannot play in the League.
- 3) If you are a guaranteed spot 11 or 12 year old that played for an AL team last season and you were not required to tryout, you are automatically placed on your previous AL team.

- 4) If you did not tryout and are a guaranteed spot 11-12 that did NOT play for an AL team last season, you automatically placed on the AL Draft Pool.
- 5) If the AL roster size is 12, an AL team may not have more than 7 players of any one particular age. If the AL roster size is 11, an AL team may not have more than 6 players of any one particular age.
- 6) Drafting siblings. If two or more siblings are trying out for the AL, and both are in the AL Draft Pool, coaches must select both. Players are slotted into the coach's current round selection and into their highest number round open draft slot.

ROOKIE LEAGUE DRAFT POOL

- 1) The draft pool will be finalized by the League Commissioner and League Head Coaches prior to the start of the draft. There will be X number of returning players placed on the teams prior to tryouts.
- 2) If you do not tryout and are not a guaranteed spot 9-10, you cannot play in the League.
- 3) If you did not tryout and are a guaranteed spot 10 that played for a RL team last season, you automatically return to your previous Spring RL team.
- 4) A RL team may not have more than 7 players of any one particular age.
- 5) Drafting siblings. If two or more siblings are trying out for the RL, and both are on the Draft Pool, coaches must select both. Players are slotted into the coach's current round selection and into their highest number round open draft slot.

DRAFT POOL CONSIDERATIONS

- 1) There is no such thing as a blind "hat pick." However, for any player that has a guaranteed spot and cannot attend tryouts, the coaches that are aware of the player's abilities shall candidly discuss that player prior to the ranking of players or other draft processes taking place and any information about the player shared by the player's parent shall be read to the coaches.
- 2) A proper balance of players within each age group is one of the critical success factors for our league. Therefore, the League Commissioner will closely monitor factors like: guaranteed spots by age and rankings of new kids trying out by coaches. The League Commissioner must ensure that we do not have an overbalance of kids from any one particular age – this is mainly true of the AL and RL Leagues.
- 3) In all leagues, the League Commissioner can talk to the coaches prior to the draft about the following factors: ensuring each team has capable pitchers to start the season and possibly catchers.
- 4) The League Commissioner can also make special recommendations to the Draft Order for the Spring season if a particular team is depleted from NL, or in the case of RL, the AL drafts. No one benefits from a RL team that has no pitching and is not competitive.

- 5) Maximum numbers of players per team for a particular age have been stated above (i.e. 6 or 7 max. at any one age per team). However, during the draft process, it is possible that a team may need to violate that rule if there are no other player age options in the Draft Pool. This can happen in late rounds or in the case of drafting siblings in late rounds.
- 6) In this case, the League Commissioner will make sure all coaches in the Draft Room know that a team may go over the 6 or 7 limit. When there are no options left but still players to be drafted – this is the only case in which a team can have more than 6 or 7 players of one age on the team. In no case will a team be allowed to carry more than 8 players of any age.
- 7) “Twins” or same League Age siblings – When twin siblings are trying out for the NL, it is NOT required that if you draft one, you are required to draft the other. However, the League Commissioner should communicate clearly in advance with the parents in this situation. Parents may not want one twin to be drafted into the NL and not the other. In addition, for new players to WR, it is NOT required that one player qualifying for the Draft Pool automatically qualifies the other.
- 8) Trades After the Draft – Trades immediately (within 15 minutes) after the Draft can be allowed. Example: to ensure that teams are equipped with catchers and pitchers to be competitive. All coaches and the League Commissioner must approve trades and the agreement must be unanimous. A coach is NOT required to make offers or accept offers for trades.
- 9) No Pre-Draft Placement of Players on Teams without approval from the League Commissioner and Board.

RULES REGARDING TRAVEL BASEBALL

- 1) If a player leaves the West Raleigh spring rec league, and/or summer all-star program for travel ball prior to completion of his 12-year old year to pursue another baseball option, that player will be welcomed back to the league as a non-guaranteed spot. However, his/her parents will no longer be eligible to serve in a leadership role in the league for either the returning player or any sibling remaining on any WRBA team. For the purposes of this rule, a Leadership role is defined as Board of Directors, Baseball Committee, Head Coach, Assistant Coach and/or Team Parent.
- 2) Nomination to Summer All-Star teams and Fall Select is considered a reward for competitive play, strong sportsmanship and loyalty/dedication to the West Raleigh organization. As specified in the current All-Star nomination letter, players who accept an all-star invitation must commit, in writing, to not play for a travel baseball

program during the given All-Star period (typically June 1 through mid-August). Similarly, players who leave the West Raleigh baseball program, for a travel organization, prior to completion of their 12 year old year, will be eligible for consideration for league play (as a non-guaranteed spot) but will not be eligible for future consideration for All-Star nomination/play.

- 3) If the Board of Directors determines that a current West Raleigh coach, assistant coach or parent is actively recruiting players/teams away from West Raleigh to a given travel team(s), such coach, assistant coach or parent will face disciplinary actions from the Board, up to and including permanent expulsion of the player/family from the League. The definition of recruiting shall include but not be limited to the following. Encouraging families to leave West Raleigh to join their team. Using or providing contact information, names, addresses, phone numbers, email addresses, etc. to those that are recruiting.

Code of Ethics

I hereby pledge to provide positive support, care and encouragement for my child participating in youth sports by following this Parents' Code of Ethics:

I will encourage good sportsmanship by demonstrating positive support for all players, coaches and officials at every game, practice or other youth sports event.

I will place the emotional and physical well being of my child ahead of my personal desire to win.

I will insist that my child play in a safe and healthy environment.

I will require that my child's coach be trained in the responsibilities of being youth sports coach and that the coach upholds the West Raleigh Baseball Coach's Guidelines.

I will support coaches and officials working with my child, in order to encourage a positive and enjoyable experience for all.

I will demand a sports environment for my child that is free from drugs, tobacco and alcohol and will refrain from their use at all youth sports events.

I will remember that the game is for youth – not adults.

I will do my very best to make youth sports fun for my child.

I will ask my child to treat other players, coaches, fans and officials with respect regardless of race, sex, creed or ability.

I will help my child to enjoy the youth sports experience by doing whatever I can, such as being a respectful fan, assisting with coaching, or providing transportation.

I understand that if I display poor sportsmanship, whether during or following a game, I will be subject to partial or permanent program suspension.

Unsportsmanlike conduct is defined as, but not limited to the following:

1. Harassment of participants or officials
2. Use of profane language and / or gestures
3. Public threats or physical violence

Regulations regarding adult's ejection or suspension will follow the guidelines listed below:

1. I understand that if I am asked to leave a game, I will be suspended from attending the next game to be played by my son's / daughter's team.
2. I understand that if I am asked to leave a second game during any one season, I will not be allowed to attend all the remaining regular season games and the end of season tournament activities.
3. I understand that the West Raleigh Baseball Committee will review all adult ejections or suspension and may extend any suspension beyond what is stated above as deemed appropriate for the offense.

I understand that any suspension may be appealed by using the following process:

The suspended individual (parents, guardians of a player) should submit in writing a detailed account of the incident to the appropriate league commissioner within 48 hours of the incident. The statement should give names of any witnesses that observed the incident. The league commissioner then will perform a preliminary investigation and make a recommendation to the West Raleigh Baseball Committee.

Sports Priority and All Star Selection Conduct Agreement

I understand that my child's youth sports priority this season is West Raleigh, except for school baseball, and if my child misses a West Raleigh game or is limited in the manner in which he participates in a West Raleigh game (e.g., pitching) because of my child's participation in a non-West Raleigh team, program, work out session, etc. (except for school baseball), then my child may be disqualified from potential all star selection and/or play, or other sanctions may be issued.

I understand that if I attempt to influence the all star selection process in any manner, my child may be disqualified from potential all star selection and/or play, or other sanctions may be issued. Examples of prohibited conduct include but are not limited to:

1. Asking any league official, including a head or assistant coach of any team, whether my child will make an all star team, what his/her chances are to make a team, what he/she or anyone else can do to better my child's chances of making a team, etc.
2. Asking any coach to alter my child's playing time, position, spot in the batting order, etc. for the purpose of influencing my child's potential for all star selection.

I understand that if I have any questions relating to All Stars, they should only be directed to the All Star Commissioner.

I understand that the West Raleigh Baseball Association Board of Directors shall have sole discretion regarding fact finding, decisions regarding disqualification and sanctions.

I have informed my spouse and/or any other guardian of my child about this Code of Ethics.

Coach Selection Policy

Head coaches for every team in the Spring, All Star and Fall seasons are ultimately decided by the West Raleigh Baseball Association Board of Directors. Factors considered by the Board, in no particular order, are as follows:

1. The Applicant's baseball knowledge and coaching expertise
2. The League and All Star Commissioners' recommendations
3. The Applicant's integrity and honesty
4. The Applicant's previous coaching experience at West Raleigh
5. The parent evaluations of the Applicant's previous coaching experience at West Raleigh
6. The Applicant's previous coaching experience elsewhere
7. The Applicant's interactions with players, coaches, umpires, parents, and league volunteers, employees and officials
8. The Applicant's continuous support of West Raleigh including, but not limited to, assistance with:

1. Workdays
2. Preseason clinics
3. Food drive
4. Concession stand
5. Vs. Cancer
6. Miracle League
7. Duke hospital deliveries

Applications and inquiries about becoming an All Star coach are held strictly confidential. All Star coaches have been chosen in varying ways throughout the history of West Raleigh Baseball. As of 2015, All Star coaches like all other coaches will ultimately be voted upon by the Board of Directors and no longer subject to voting by other coaches.

Tie Breaker Rules

If two or more teams have equal league percentages at the end of the regular season, the team that has the edge in regular season head-to-head competition will get the higher place in the standings.

Example: the intent is to break the tie by using the tied teams. If there is a four-way tie for first and Team A and Team B are 2-1 while Team C and Team D are 1-2, in games among the four of them, A and B would be tied for first by virtue of their 2-1 record, with C and D tied for third. Then look at head-to-head between the two (A and B) to break that tie, and then between the other two (C and D) to break that remaining tie.

Example: Teams A, B, and C are tied for fourth in the league standings with identical records. In games among the three, A was 3-1, B was 2-2, and C was 1-3. The tie is broken. A is fourth, B is fifth and C sixth.

Any time throughout the whole procedure that a multiple tie is reduced to two teams, no matter what criteria is being used, use head-to-head competition between those remaining if possible.

If a tie still exists, following the head-to-head comparison, it will be resolved by comparing how the tied teams fared against the rest of the league until the tie is broken.

Example: A and B finished with equal league records and split during the regular season, thereby tying for third place in the standings.

Go to the number one position in the league and compare how A and B did against that team. If the tie cannot be resolved there (both teams split with the number-one team), go to the number two team. Team A lost twice to the number two team but B split with the number two team. Therefore B would be third and A fourth (even though they finished tied for third in the final standings).

If the tie still exists, a draw will be held by the tied teams. All tied teams for a position will draw, with the numbers of the spots for which they are tied in a hat.

Example: A and B are tied for third and the tie is not resolved after going through the procedure above. The numbers 3 and 4 are put in a hat, the teams draw and assume the position of the number drawn. The drawing will be done in alphabetical order.

Pitching Rules

Years ago, West Raleigh Baseball looked into the growing body of evidence that youth pitchers are placed at greater risk of injury and long-term arm impairment by over-use and by throwing curveballs at early ages. We particularly considered the research and recommendations of the USA Baseball Medical & Safety Advisory Committee. Based on these findings, West Raleigh Baseball took a leadership step in protecting the health of our youth players by making two significant changes in pitching rules.

Pitch Counts

The Rookie, American, National and Junior Leagues in West Raleigh Baseball follow pitch count and minimum-rest rules rather than relying on traditional innings-pitched rules. A great deal of research has shown conclusively that innings-pitched rules are ineffective in reducing over-use injuries to young pitchers. Pitchers have been known to throw innings stretching over 50 pitches (even at West Raleigh where we tried to prevent over-use). Pitch count and rest rules implemented at West Raleigh are in accordance with the latest recommendations available for youth players. For details about each league's pitching rules and how they are applied, see the individual league rules.

Breaking Balls

In addition to pitch counts, West Raleigh prohibits the use of the breaking ball - pitches in which the pitcher deliberately breaks his or her wrist in order to induce a forward or side-angled spin on the ball - in our Rookie, American and National Leagues. This decision follows guidance from leading researchers indicating that pitchers who throw curveballs at an early age - under 13 years old - experience significantly more injuries, and shoulder and elbow pain than pitchers who do not. We strongly believe that one of our primary responsibilities is to ensure that our players can continue playing in good health as long as they wish - and eliminating the curveball from our younger age divisions is a strong step in that direction.

Enforcement

West Raleigh Baseball recognizes that the elimination of pitches in which the pitcher intentionally "breaks the wrist" is a controversial subject.... the most controversial aspect is probably enforcement. We at West Raleigh Baseball place health and good sportsmanship ahead of competitiveness, and this applies to this rule as well. We expect that parents, players and coaches will accept that there will be occasions when pitchers unintentionally break the wrist when throwing pitches - many young pitchers do "slide" their wrist as part of their natural throwing motion. Other pitchers can throw pitches that drop or slide without breaking the wrist (circle-changeups and two-seam fastballs can be mistaken for curves or sliders by the ball movement). Our coaches are counseled in how to deal with these situations - and part of that counseling is that discussion of whether or not a pitcher is throwing "breaking balls" is NOT to take place during games or on the ballfield or in the stands. These matters will be resolved between the coaches and the league commissioners after the game. Arguments on the field over curveballs will be considered equivalent to arguing balls and strikes with an umpire, and will not be tolerated. We intend to work to reduce and remove usage of the curve ball, and do so in a fair and even-handed manner. We expect that coaches will NEVER ask or permit their pitchers in the affected age group to intentionally throw a curveball, and will assume that any that are thrown are unintentional. Coaches' ability to improve their pitchers' mechanics so as to reduce or eliminate curveballs over the course of the season will be a consideration for future coaching assignments. We do not expect that our efforts will be perfect, but we want to do our best to protect the health of our youth players.

Success

All our All Star Championship teams have been following these rules, self-imposed by the coaches, for several years and this has not hindered our success. This experience confirms we can play good, competitive baseball and not risk the health of our players for the sake of winning.

Privacy Policy

The privacy and security of our program participants and their family/guardians is very important to us. This privacy policy describes how we collect, protect and use information we receive from website visitors.

What Information We Collect and How We Use It Participant Information

To participate in any of the programs offered on the site you will need to register. If the participant is a child, a parent or guardian will need to register them. To register you will need to provide personal information such as name, address, contact information and specific criteria (e.g., age or gender) that is established for each program. You will also be asked to provide payment information such as credit card numbers. You will need to select a unique user name and password to verify your identity for future access. This allows you to access and edit personal information that you have provided. Contact information is used for notification purposes (e.g., to confirm program registration) or when necessary for customer service. Payment information is used only to bill you for programs, products and services that you specifically request.

Consent to Use of Names and Images on Website

West Raleigh believes that it is important to maintain effective communications among league officials, players, families and the community at large. An important part of our communication strategy is our web site. We believe that an informative and attractive website helps us communicate within the league and helps us attract new players to West Raleigh Baseball. It can be used for online registration and payment of registration fees, and for signups for camps and clinics offered in conjunction with the league.

In keeping with this mission, West Raleigh Baseball Association reserves the right, at its sole discretion, to publish articles about teams, games, tournaments, and awards. In addition, West Raleigh Baseball Association reserves the right to publish and use photographic images of players and coaches, which may also show families or fans in attendance at the West Raleigh Complex. It should be noted that such photos may show players' last names and jersey numbers. By registering to play in West Raleigh Baseball,

parents or guardians give permission for West Raleigh Baseball Association to publish or use such articles and/or photos without restriction.

Our Use of Cookies

A "cookie" is a small piece of information that many websites use to simplify your online experience. We write this information on your hard drive, and we retrieve it when you visit our site. No one else can read a cookie that we write, and we cannot read cookies from other websites. Our cookies do not contain any personal information they simply identify the computer you are using. When you visit our site, the cookie helps us understand how you navigate from page to page on our site. Cookies help us design our site in a way that is easy to use and comfortable to our members. Your browser allows you to control whether and when websites write cookies to your computer. Most Web browsers automatically accept cookies, but you can change your browser to prevent that. If you do not allow us to use cookies, not all features of our website will work as designed.

Additional Uses

All of the information we collect, both what you tell us and what we collect through the use of cookies, is used to personalize your account, to customize our services and to allow our representatives to contact you when necessary. We release personally identifying information you have provided to process a request for a program, product or service or when we provide you with prior notice. We will also disclose personal information about an individual user if we believe in good faith that such disclosure is necessary to comply with an applicable law or valid legal process. We will use contact information that you provide to send you information about us and promotional material from some of our partners. You can opt out of receiving these promotions. Information may be released on an aggregated basis (meaning that the information from many participants is grouped together in a way that does not disclose the personal information of any particular participant). In addition to the disclosures described above, personal information about our users may be provided occasionally to outside auditors, consultants, and others we hire for routine website operations, to help us manage email communications with our members, or for other standard business activities. We ask all recipients to agree to protect the confidentiality, security, and integrity of the information.

Linked Websites

Our web site contains links to partners, advertisers and third party Internet sites and services that may collect data in connection with registrations, promotions, e-commerce, etc. These sites have their own policies regarding privacy and content that are not under our control. We encourage you to read the privacy policy of these sites. Please understand that we have no responsibility for linked websites and provides these links solely for the convenience and information of our visitors. If you click on a website link, we do not send any personal information to that website unless we have advised you about the disclosure. Please contact us if you have any questions or concerns about any links that you find on our site.

Security

We use a variety of security measures to maintain the safety of your information. All information we collect is stored in encrypted form in a secure database which is protected by a firewall and hosted in a high security operating environment that is monitored 7 x 24 and not accessible by the public. We use secure socket layers (SSL) encryption for all credit card transactions that we process and whenever we transfer registration data.

Changes to Our Privacy Policy

We may make minor changes from time to time as our services change, as our relationship with other partners develops, and as the Internet evolves. If we plan to make a significant change in the way in which we collect, use, or disclose personal information, we will notify registrants of the change.

WR Travel Ball Policy

RULES REGARDING TRAVEL BASEBALL

1) If a player leaves the West Raleigh spring rec league, and/or summer all-star program for travel ball prior to completion of his 12-year old year to pursue another baseball option, that player will be welcomed back to the league as a non-guaranteed spot. However, his/her parents will no longer be eligible to serve in a leadership role in the league for either the returning player or any sibling remaining on any WRBA team. For the purposes of this rule, a Leadership role is defined as Board of Directors, Baseball Committee, Head Coach, Assistant Coach and/or Team Parent.

2) Nomination to Summer All-Star teams and Fall Select is considered a reward for competitive play, strong sportsmanship and loyalty/dedication to the West Raleigh organization. As specified in the current All-Star nomination letter, players who accept an all-star invitation must commit, in writing, to not play for a travel baseball program during the given All-Star and Fall Select periods (typically June 1 through mid-November). Similarly, players who leave the West Raleigh baseball program, for a travel organization, prior to completion of their 12 year old year, will be eligible for consideration for league play (as a non-guaranteed spot) but will not be eligible for future consideration for All-Star nomination/play.

3) If the Board of Directors determines that a current West Raleigh coach, assistant coach or parent is actively recruiting players/teams away from West Raleigh to a given travel team(s), such coach, assistant coach or parent will face disciplinary actions from the Board, up to and including permanent expulsion of the player/family from the League. The definition of recruiting shall include but not be limited to the following. Encouraging families to leave West Raleigh to join their team. Using or providing contact information, names, addresses, phone numbers, email addresses, etc. to those that are recruiting.

WR Uniform Use Policy

Coaches should not have their teams wear West Raleigh All-star or league uniforms unless their teams are sanctioned West Raleigh teams. All players must purchase jersey tops and hats from the league uniform vendor. All other uniform gear may be purchased through WR vendor or on your own. All uniform attire must match the prescribed uniform combination provided by West Raleigh.

Lightning Safety - ThorGuard

West Raleigh Baseball Assoc. Weather Alert System.



West Raleigh Baseball Association has an incredible history of success and the necessary protocols and policies to keep our kids and families as safe as possible. This Summer we have invested donated money towards the top of the line lightning prediction system. We are excited about the opportunity take all of the ambiguity out of our current lightning policy to ensure the upmost safety for our West Raleigh family. We now take the next step, with the installation of the [Thor Guard](#) Integrated lightning prediction and warning system.

What is it?

Thor Guard is a proactive lightning warning system—in other words, it measures variables to determine the possibility of lightning, not the detection of lightning that has already struck. It measures the electrostatic build-up and changes in the atmosphere and compares this information to their database containing over 100,000 hours of historical thunderstorm activity. When the system reaches a preset level of red alert, a horn system is automatically activated (not subject to human interpretation) and all areas are cleared. The system is designed to give eight to eighteen minutes of advanced warning of imminent lightning activity. As weather conditions improve, the horn system is activated once again (three 5 second blasts of the horn).

How is it controlled/monitored?

It is all computer controlled and activated. It completely removes subjective decision making and replaces same with proven scientific equipment.

Who uses Thor Guard?

Over 1000 universities/athletic complexes across the globe use this system. The PGA Tour and the NFL both use the system.

Who pays for this technology?

West Raleigh Baseball Association totes the entire bill for the system, to include quarterly maintenance of all equipment. All equipment belongs to the league.

Will we have access to this information?

Thor Guard has a [Mobile App](#) for all iPhone's, iPad's, Android phones or tablets. It will be centrally managed on our website as well. You will not need any other weather app—just point your device's web browser to the web link provided for a quick, concise weather tool to see exactly what this system is seeing, for coverage at WRBA, where you actually need it.

Why?

Because this is about so much more than just baseball...

When in threat of lightning

- When the ThorGuardX is activated it will blast a loud **siren for 15 seconds**. Once the alarm sounds that means WR facility is in imminent threat of a lightning strike. Once the Alarm sounds EVERYONE needs to BE INSIDE their cars.
- WR will not resume activities until you hear **Three 5 second blasts**, signaling ALL CLEAR.
- DO NOT HANG OUT: Dugouts, Concession Stand or in the press box
- Failure to comply with the WR lightning policy will result in a forfeit of a practice(s) or, further discipline subject to the Board of Directors. We should take this matter very seriously.

Safety/Procedures/EAP

West Raleigh Coaches Acute Injury/Illness Management Protocol

- **Injury/Illness Assessment/Management Tenants**
 - Inherent to the nature of baseball games and practices, injured or ill players are often initially seen and evaluated by their coaches.
 - Coaches should use their best judgement in all of these instances.
 - Coaches should avoid trying to diagnose or manage injuries or illness beyond their individual comfort and expertise.
 - Coaches should involve parents ASAP in any cases deemed to be serious or warranting additional formal medical attention.
- **First Aid**

- When administering first aid, the coach should not exceed the scope of his or her training. The purpose of first aid is to merely stabilize the situation and provide basic care (ice, band aid, basic comfort, etc). Cases warranting more advanced treatment should be deferred to a medical professional.
- **Medical emergency**
 - In situations of suspected medical emergency, coaches should immediately refer to the West Raleigh Emergency Action Plan and proceed accordingly.
 - If indicated, do not delay in calling 911 and/or obtaining the AED (mounted between the bathrooms at the concession stand) and providing CPR.
- **Notification of parents**
 - Parents should be notified immediately if there is a treatable injury.
- **Return to play**
 - Once a player has suffered an injury that requires medical treatment by a doctor or other medical provider, the decision regarding the appropriate time to return to play should be made by that medical provider.
 - It is the responsibility of the parents to provide appropriate documentation/communication regarding return-to-play recommendations from the medical provider.
 - BOTH parents and the coaches should be comfortable with the child returning to play before he or she is allowed to return to practice or game play.



Heat Illness Prevention, Recognition, and Management

Josh Bloom, MD, MPH

Introduction

Problems related to heat and hydration impact athletes of all ages and ability levels. Heat illness can vary from mild to life-threatening. Fortunately, with awareness, proper planning and preparation, heat illness can be avoided.

Exertional Heat Illness

Exertional Heat Illness (EHI) typically, but not always, occurs with strenuous physical activity in humid and hot environments. Several conditions such as lack of acclimatization, deconditioning, obesity, dehydration, concomitant illness, certain medications, occlusive equipment, previous heat illness, certain medical conditions can predispose athletes to exertional heat illness even in more mild conditions.

Exertional heat illness can be categorized as follows:

- Muscle cramps
 - Painful involuntary muscle contraction (often starting in calves, hands or feet) often associated with dehydration, electrolyte imbalances, and muscle fatigue.
- Heat exhaustion
 - Inability to continue to exercise due to fatigue/energy depletion
 - Associated with heavy sweating, dehydration, sodium loss, and energy loss.
 - Often presents with signs and symptoms such as: dizziness, headache, nausea, diarrhea, decrease in urine output, pallor (pale skin), muscle cramps, weakness, headache, hyperventilation (breathing rapidly), nausea, and/or diarrhea.
 - Core (rectal) temperature generally between 97 deg F and 104 deg F.
- Exertional Heat Stroke (EHS)
 - *Life-threatening illness* characterized by: 1) core (rectal) temperature >104 F (40 C) and 2) central nervous system (CNS) dysfunction (confusion, mental status changes, collapse, delirium, etc).
 - Signs and symptoms include: Mental status changes (confusion, delirium, loss of consciousness), collapse, hyperventilation (rapid breathing), vomiting, diarrhea, seizures (convulsions), rapid heart

rate, hypotension (low blood pressure), and decreased sweating (although skin can be either wet or dry).

Prevention

- When possible, identify athletes at risk for heat illness.
 - Some at-risk athletes include: obese athletes, catchers, athletes on stimulant or other 'thermogenic' medications or supplements (such as ADD medication), deconditioned ('out of shape') athletes, athletes with prior history of EHI, athletes without appropriate acclimatization, athletes who have a current or recent illness (particularly with a fever), athletes with sickle cell trait.
- Encourage athletes to gradually acclimatize to heat and humidity.
 - This is best done by gradually increasing *duration of exposure to heat/humidity* and the *intensity of exercise* in the heat over a matter of many days.
 - Initially, begin with short, lower intensity practices/training and allow for more frequent and longer rest and recovery between exercise longer recovery
 - Focus on instruction rather than conditioning during the first several practices
 - During hot/humid times of the year, practice at cooler times of day (morning and evening).
 - During extreme conditions, consider indoor practices (which can include cage work, bullpens, indoor fielding drills, etc).
- Encourage all athletes (and umpires) to hydrate regularly before, during, and after exercise (*link to Ronai hydration article*).
- With young athletes it is extremely important to take frequent rest breaks and to ingest fluids every 15 to 30 minutes. Young athletes are at increased risk of heat illness.
- During hotter and more humid conditions, minimize clothing and/or equipment.
- Fluids and drinking opportunities should be unlimited during games and practices, particularly during hot, humid conditions. NEVER withhold water from athletes.
- Make efforts to have Certified Athletic Trainer (AT) available at games, tournaments, and practices when possible.

- If and when possible, check pre- and post-practice/game weights during hot/humid conditions (an athlete who is not within 3% of the previous pre-practice weight should not be allowed to participate until they are appropriately hydrated) – *not sure we need for baseball??*
- When possible, the AT or event personnel should ideally use a wet-bulb globe temperature (WBGT) or heat index daily to determine heat/humidity conditions for the day. Game and/or practice restrictions should be based on the readings of the WBGT or the heat index (*refer to the charts below - link*) to help make decisions regarding practices and games. The AT or event personnel should check the readings at least 30 minutes prior to competition and/or practices. Based on the initial reading for the day and the predicted high temperature for the day, the AT will continue to use the WBGT throughout the day if needed. On higher risk days, the AT will generally check the WBGT every two hours during peak times (i.e. 10 am to 6 pm). The AT or on site medical personnel should work in conjunction with the site event coordinator to determine any restrictions.
- When warranted by environmental conditions, the AT or event medical personnel should:
 - Provide ice towels in dugouts
 - Prepare cold water/ice immersion tubs (*link to cold water immersion tub instructions - <http://ksi.uconn.edu/ksi/assets/File/CWI%20cooling%20guidelines.pdf>*).
- *Any coach, parent, or other staff member who detects an athlete (or umpire) with signs or symptoms suggesting possible heat-related illness should immediately report this to the athletic trainer or available medical personnel.*

Treatment

Once a potential heat illness has been identified by the AT, or suspected by coach or supervising adults, initiate the following course of action:

- Muscle cramps
 - Remove from activity and transfer to cool, shaded environment, immediately start replacing fluids, and stretch affected area.
- Heat exhaustion
 - Activate Emergency Action Plan if necessary (*link to EAP article*). Monitor closely.

- Move to the shade and/or a cool environment. Use ice towels and/or ice bags (around neck, underarms, groin area) to cool body temperature down. Use ice immersion if available.
- Assess vital signs and take a core temperature (rectal). Rectal temperatures are the only accurate on-field measurement (oral, tympanic, forehead thermometers are often inaccurate and can be misleading)
- Exertional Heat Stroke
 - Call 911/Activate Emergency Action Plan (*link*)
 - Assess vital signs and take core temperature (rectal).
 - Use ice water immersion to cool body temperature as quickly as possible (*link to cold water immersion tub instructions - <http://ksi.uconn.edu/ksi/assets/File/CWM%20cooling%20guidelines.pdf>*). Once core temperature returns to 101 deg F remove from the water, but continue to keep cool with ice towels, ice bags, or air conditioning. Do not transport prior to adequate core temperature cooling.
 - DO NOT hesitate to initiate aggressive cooling via ice immersion if Exertional Heat Stroke is suspected (even in the absence of accurate core body temperature). Rapid cooling is critical to preventing end-organ damage and often is a life-saving intervention.
 - Remember, **COOL FIRST, TRANSPORT LATER.**

Hydration (*link to hydration article*)

- Stress importance of hydration before, during, and after exercise. This should start even a few days prior to heat exposure and hydrating well the day/evening before is particularly important.
- During exercise continue to encourage athletes to drink as often as possible.
- Rehydration typically should include more than just water as athletes may drink more and benefit from some electrolyte repletion (eg combination of sports drink and water)
- Encourage participants to carry a water bottle at all times, at the field and away from the field.

Conclusion

Exertional heat illness can often be prevented and appropriately managed with attention and awareness of environmental conditions that predispose athletes to heat illness, taking appropriate common-sense preventive measures, and rapidly recognizing and treating athletes who show signs or symptoms of heat illness.

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11. O'Connor FG, Casa DJ. O'Connor FG, Casa DJ. Exertional heat illness in adolescents and adults: Management and prevention. *UpToDate*. Accessed February 13, 2015.
12. [United States National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration](#). Heat Index Chart. Accessed February 13, 2015.

WBGT READING	ACTIVITY GUIDELINES & REST BREAK GUIDELINES
Under 82.0	Normal activities--Provide at least three separate rest breaks each hour of minimum duration of 3 minutes each during workout
82.0 - 86.9	Use discretion for intense or prolonged exercise; watch at-risk players carefully; Provide at least three separate rest breaks each hour of a minimum of four minutes duration each
87.0 - 89.9	Maximum practice time is two hours. For Football: players restricted to helmet, shoulder pads, and shorts during practice. All protective equipment must be removed for conditioning activities. For all sports: Provide at least four separate rest breaks each hour of a minimum of four minutes each
90.0 - 92.0	Maximum length of practice is one hour, no protective equipment may be worn during practice and there may be no conditioning activities. There must be 20-minutes of rest breaks provided during the hour of practice
Over 92.1	No outdoor workouts; Cancel exercise; delay practices until a cooler WBGT reading occurs

Georgia High School Athletic Association

Heat Index table is from the U.S. [National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration](#).

NOAA national weather service: heat index

temperature (°F)

	80	82	84	86	88	90	92	94	96	98	100	102	104	106	108	110
40	80	81	83	85	88	91	94	97	101	105	109	114	119	124	130	136
45	80	82	84	87	89	93	96	100	104	109	114	119	124	130	137	
50	81	83	85	88	91	95	99	103	108	113	118	124	131	137		
55	81	84	86	89	93	97	101	106	112	117	124	130	137			
60	82	84	88	91	95	100	105	110	116	123	129	137				
65	82	85	89	93	98	103	108	114	121	128	136					
70	83	86	90	95	100	105	112	119	126	134						
75	84	88	92	97	103	109	116	124	132							

80	84	89	94	100	106	113	121	129									
85	85	90	96	102	110	117	126	135									
90	86	91	98	105	113	122	131										
95	86	93	100	108	117	127											
100	87	95	103	112	121	132											

Caution

Extreme Caution

Danger

Extreme Danger

Sidebar/box:

Signs and symptoms of heat illness can include one or more of the following:

- excessive fatigue
 - dizziness
 - headache
 - nausea/vomiting
 - decrease in urine output
 - pale skin
 - muscle cramps
 - weakness
 - elevated core body (rectal) temperature
 - hyperventilation (rapid breathing)
 - confusion/delirium/mental status changes
 - seizures
 - collapse
 - low blood pressure
 - rapid heart rate
-

Sidebar/box:

Heat Illness Key Points:

1. Heat illness is common in athletes. It usually, but not always, occurs in hot and humid conditions.
 2. Heat illness can be prevented by *acclimatization to hot/humid conditions*, *adequate hydration* (before, during, and after exercise), and *awareness/early recognition of heat stress*. Remember to hydrate 'all week long' during hot/humid times of year.
 3. Identify athletes at risk for heat illness.
 4. Monitor environmental conditions with *Wet Bulb Globe Thermometer* or *Heat Index*.
 5. Exertional Heat Stroke is a medical emergency and should be suspected in any athlete with mental status changes (confusion, collapse, delirium) and elevated core body temperature (>104).
 6. Treatment for Exertional Heat Stroke is immediate cooling! This is best done in a cold water immersion tub. Cooling should not be delayed for transportation to the hospital. Remember: cool first, transport later.
 7. Rectal temperatures are the only accurate way to measure core body temperature on the field.
 8. If rectal thermometer is not available, do not hesitate to initiate cooling measures if heat illness is suspected.
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Emergency Action Plan

West Raleigh Baseball Exchange Club Park

West Raleigh Baseball Association

Emergency Personnel: Coaches and parents

Emergency Communication: Personal cell phone of coaches; email league@westraleighbaseball.org

Emergency Equipment:

- Basic First Aid supplies (basic bandages/bandaids, ice packs, Benadryl)
- AED (located on the outside of the main building near the concession stand between bathrooms)

Roles of First Responders/Medical Personnel:

1. Immediate care of the injured or ill athlete by the coach present.
2. Send designated coach or parent to retrieve AED & activate EMS.
 - a. Use cell phone to call 911.
 - b. Provide name, location, number of individuals involved, condition of injured individual(s), first aid treatment provided, specific directions to location.
 - i. West Raleigh Exchange Club Park
830 Barringer Drive
Raleigh, NC 27606
 - c. Send designated coach and/or parent to meet EMS at the park entrance.
 - d. EMS vehicles should enter/exit via primary entrance and drive to involved field/location of individual. Area directly in front of Concession Stand should remain clear at all times to allow appropriate emergency vehicle access.
3. The coach present should stabilize the athlete as best as possible.
4. **DO NOT move the athlete.**
5. Assess ABC's (airway, breathing, circulation) and provide information to 911 dispatch.

6. Initiate necessary first aid, CPR/Rescue Breathing, AED use.
7. Continue to monitor until EMS arrives.

Warm-up Safety Guidelines

Most of you by now have heard about the terrible incident in Wilmington where an 11 year old that was pitching BP, hit by a ball and died from it. **Effective immediately:**

- **No child under the age of 16 is permitted to throw BP (no exceptions)**
- Anyone swinging a bat, whether BP, soft-toss, tee, etc. **must wear a helmet**
- Any player throwing soft toss, helping with tee practice or otherwise around kids swinging bats **must wear a helmet**
- BP, soft-toss and tee practice are **only permitted in designated areas**; bats are not to be swung anywhere else except at the plate and on deck (and those swinging on deck must be careful as well)

Nothing is worth risking the safety of our kids. Please be extra vigilant in enforcing these rules.

Important Arm Care Information

Major League Baseball and USA Baseball recently released a program addressing arm safety in youth baseball called "Pitch Smart." This program explains risk factors for arm injuries in youth baseball players and outlines strategies to prevent these injuries. It is extremely informative. Please take a few minutes to review the information on the [PitchSmart website](#).

A couple key points:

- Winter time (right now) is the logical time to rest the arms from throwing competitively.
- As a general rule for injury prevention, as well as for athletic development, we encourage young athletes to play multiple sports and avoid specialization at an early age.
- When players/teams start gearing back up for their spring season, a gradual ramp up of throwing (intensity and distance) over a few weeks is important to

prevent some early season arm injuries. Your coaches will provide input on this during the pre-season WR baseball clinic this winter and also will help direct this during the start of the spring season.

Sudden Cardiac Arrest

Coaches and parents, please review this FREE module on Sudden Cardiac Arrest in athletes. It is short (less than 10 minutes), but thorough and clear. It does require you to sign-up/register with the NFHS (National Federation of State High School Associations) which is a very quick, simple and entirely free process.

[NFHS Learning Center: Sudden Cardiac Arrest](#)

Preseason start-up throwing program

In sports medicine, we frequently see arm injuries in two major time-frames. The first, and most common, are the *classic overuse injuries*, and are generally caused simply throwing too much. These injuries typically occur during the middle or late in the season and are due to the cumulative stress and fatigue of throwing overcoming the arm's ability to recuperate. Several factors can help prevent many of these injuries including: avoiding throwing with arm fatigue or arm pain, strict adherence to pitch counts (as mandated at West Raleigh), good throwing mechanics, and a common sense approach by coaches and parents to general arm care.

Another relatively frequent, but less talked-about, problem is the *early season arm injury*. These are typically caused by throwing 'too much, too fast.' These injuries are often seen the first few weeks of baseball season when young athletes are trying to throw hard, fast, and long before their arms are properly conditioned and ready to throw. This can occur as early as tryouts or first practices as young ballplayers try to impress coaches and teammates. These injuries can typically be averted by allowing the arm to become acclimated to throwing over a period of a few weeks with gradual progression in load, intensity, and volume of throwing. This can be accomplished by a '*pre-season interval throwing program*'

The following is a sample of youth interval, preseason throwing program. A good time to start this program is mid to late January to enable 4-6 weeks or so of good arm conditioning prior to start of regular practices. I recommend throwing every other day for these four weeks. Remember, a dynamic warm up will allow you to 'warm up the body before you warm up the arm.'

[Click to view the Preseason Interval Throwing Program.](#)

-Josh Bloom, MD, MPH

Pitch Smart

<http://m.mlb.com/pitchsmart/>

Concussion Training

<https://www.cdc.gov/headsup/youthsports/training/index.html>

Safety Course

<http://www.sportdev.org/ItemDetail?iProductCode=OCBFAID&Category=ONLINE&WebsiteKey=f50aacb2-a59e-4e43-8f67-29f48a308a9e>

Concussion Recognition

https://www.cdc.gov/concussion/HeadsUp/pdf/Baseball_Clipboard_Sticker.pdf

