

# AYLMER PIRATES



## 13/15U Rules and Coaching Guide

Updated May 20, 2024

## **Introduction**

Welcome to Aylmer Minor Baseball's 13/15U program. This is an instructional program with an emphasis on teaching the fundamentals of baseball, having fun and stressing good sportsmanship. Each session will be approximately 90 minutes.

The first two sessions should consist of mainly practise for the hour and a half. The time should be spent doing warm ups, throwing progressions (short to longer) and then while one team hits off of the pitching machine the other practices fielding and then switches. This will give the kids a chance to be re-introduced to the fundamentals of the game and prepare them for when the games begin in week 3. Awards are handed out at the last session with pizza and drinks.

## **Equipment**

This age group plays on a regular diamond with regular baseball equipment. Pitching will be from a 50 ft mound - this is basically right at the front of the clay pitching mound. Pitching machine can be used if pitching is not an option. The machine should be set up at 50ft and speeds of 45 - 50 mph.

The following equipment will be given to each team or made available at each session:

- Bats (not exceeding 2 ¾ diameter)
- Bases
- Hitting tees
- Helmets
- Baseballs
- Catchers equipment
- Assorted training equipment
- Pitching machine
- Electrical cord

A large red bin has been installed which will contain all the required equipment. Access will be provided.

## **The Game**

Most of the standard Rules published in the 2023 Baseball Ontario Constitution and By-Laws manual shall apply with some exceptions. The main rules and exceptions are as follows:

### **Pitching**

- Pitching machine is positioned a distance of 50 feet from home plate.
- Coaches need to use their discretion when putting in a pitcher.

- A ball that contacts the pitching machine will be called dead. The hitter will be given first base and each base runner will advance to the next base.
- One offensive coach will be required to feed balls into the pitching machine. This coach must avoid the live play and must not make contact with a hit ball or any defensive player.

### **Hitting**

- The batting order will be determined prior to the start of the game and will not change during the game. The batting order should be rotated each game to ensure each player gets to hit at the top of the batting order.
- A hitter will receive a maximum of 3 strikes to hit the ball before they are called out. A player cannot run on a third strike if it is dropped by the catcher. A foul ball does not count as a third strike.
- Batters must not throw the bat (intentional or unintentional) upon hitting the ball. After a thrown bat the play will be called dead. Players will receive one warning and a chance to hit again from the same strike count. Any further instances by the same player will result in the player being called out. All base runners will return to their starting base.
- No bunts or walks.
- Infield fly rule does not apply.
- Bats shall not exceed 2 ¾ diameter. Players may use their own bats if they are baseball approved. No softball bats will be used.

### **Fielding**

- One defensive coach will be allowed on the field to assist players. The coach must stand just outside of the infield.
- Defensive players in the pitching position must wear a helmet with a mask and be positioned behind the release point of the pitching machine.
- Defensive players in the catcher's position must wear catcher's equipment. A defensive coach may fill this position in the event there are not enough defensive players.
- There will be a maximum of 10 defensive positions consisting of 6 infielders and 4 outfielders.
- All players must play a different position from game to game. A player does not have to play certain positions such as catcher, pitcher or first base if they are not comfortable or not able to safely play the position.

### **Base Running**

- Runners cannot leave the base until the batter makes contact with the ball. Infractions will result in a dead ball and one warning. If a player continues to lead off they will be called out. No stealing. (\*\*if both coaches agree to allow players to steal - they can do that but we will leave that up to coaches discretion)
- In the case of a passed ball the base runner may only proceed to the base they are heading to. No extra base shall be awarded.
- Once a defensive player has gained control of the ball in the infield the base runners may only proceed to the base they were on path to.

- If the ball is hit into the outfield the base runners may advance until the ball is brought back into the infield.

### **General**

- Each half inning will end after either 3 outs or once the batting team scored 5 runs
- A regulation baseball or any ball approved by the AMBA board will be provided for all games.
- No new inning shall be started after 7:15 or for the late game - 8:45pm.
- Maximum number of innings to be played is 7 with a full game being 5 innings.
- No smoking or inappropriate language shall be used on the baseball grounds.
- Home teams use the first base dugout and visitor teams use the third base dugout.
- Infield practice can be held prior to the start of the game. Coaches should coordinate to share the field. Teams can practice together.
- A copy of the lineup should be shared with the other teams score keeper prior to the game.

### **Field Setup**

- Pitching or pitching machine setup 50ft from the back of home plate.
- Bases are 65 feet apart.
- Standard batters boxes and foul line marking.

### **Tips and Fundamentals**

The below tips and fundamentals are to be used as a guide and should not be considered absolute.

#### **Hitting Fundamentals**

- Bat selection – the proper bat size for the average 13/15U player should be between 28-32 inches and 18-22 ounces
- Batters should stand adjacent to the plate in an athletic position (feet shoulder width apart, back straight, and bent slightly at waist with butt out). Hands holding the bat should be together (not spaced) and above shoulder. Be sure to have players stand back far enough to be able to extend arms as the tendency at this age is to stand too close to the tee or plate.
- Beginners should swing in balance without spinning around, starting with the weight back. Follow through over the opposite shoulder. Do not let the bat go.
- Advanced players can be taught the use of a timing step. Transferring power from the back leg forward.

### Baseball Grip



Bat grip – knuckles aligned.



Proper hitting stance

### Catching and Fielding Fundamentals

- Be prepared - knees slightly bent and weight on the balls of their feet
- Balls thrown above the waist should be caught with thumbs together.
- Balls thrown below the waist should be caught with pinkies together.
- Ground balls should be fielded with 2 hands either in the “alligator” position or with pinkies together with palms up starting with hand(s) on the ground.
- Move to catch the ball



Proper ground ball fielding stance

### Throwing Fundamentals

- Grip ball along the seam with two or three fingers along with the thumb.
- Point shoulder to target when setting up to throw.
- Throwing arm should be even or above the height of the shoulder.
- Step with opposite leg toward target when throwing.
- Follow-through to opposite pocket when throwing.
- Ball should be held with finger tips, not touching palm of the hand.



Proper 4 seam grip

### Base Running Fundamentals

- After hitting the ball, lay bat down – do not throw bat!
- Run directly to first base. Tail to the left for close plays, turn to the left if there is a chance for additional bases.

Remember to keep the fundamentals fun, basic and simple. The key to learning is by doing!

## AMBA 13/15U Ball Sessions

Coaches should show up 10-15 minutes early for each session to help with field setup. Proceed to your area of the field as designated on the schedule. For the first session coaches should introduce themselves to their team and try and get their players to introduce themselves.

### Session 1 and 2

#### 1.0 Introductions

Introduce yourself to the players and parents. Encourage the players to introduce themselves. Remind players about safety rules such as not touching pitching machines, careful when swinging bats, not throwing the ball when someone isn't looking, etc. Also ask players to respect and take care of all the equipment provided.

#### 2.0 Take attendance

#### 3.0 Warm up (3 min)

#### 4.0 Practice (45 mins)

For the first session the teams playing on the diamonds should practice for approximately half the practice. This should help to get the kids comfortable and allow the coaches to get an idea of the ability level of each player. Teams should share the field and rotate between hitting and infielding on the diamond and throwing and catching in the outfield.

#### Station 1: Hitting / Fielding (Diamond)

The Jugs pitching machine will be setup on the diamond. Split the players up into two groups so you have half your team ready to hit and half your team fielding. The players not hitting will field the balls. Give each batter approximately 10 pitches.

#### Station 2: Throwing and Catching

Coaches should re-familiarize and demonstrate how to properly throw and catch the ball as per the throwing and catching fundamentals. Use any of the following activities:

- Throw and catch amongst players to warm up
- Break up into a couple of groups. Have the player's line up and have the coach throw grounders. Players field the ball and throw back to the coach. Coach throws to the next player, etc.
- Practice catching overhead / pop-fly's. Use tennis balls. (5 mins)

## **Game Sessions**

### **1.0 Take attendance**

### **2.0 Warm up (2 min) – short jog / stretches**

### **3.0 Practice ( 13 min)**

#### **3.1 Throwing Progression**

- Player throwing back and forth (sitting, on knees, standing)

#### **3.2 Pop Flies/grounders**

#### **3.3 Hitting**

- either use wiffle balls or set up a net from the bin and have the kids hit off of a tee into the net

### **4.0 Game – 75mins**

## **Final Session – Week 10**

### **1.0 Awards**

All teams will meet at the Kinsmen Pavilion after their final games for pizza and drinks. Year-end awards will also be handed out.

## **Wrap Up**

Congratulations on completing the 2024 13/15U season. Please let us know what worked and what did not so we can continually improve the program.

Coaches and volunteers are critical in putting together and running a well-organized, development based program. Aylmer Minor Ball sincerely appreciates the commitment you have made to your community and hope that the experience was fulfilling for you as well. We also hope that you will continue to support and offer assistance for years to come be it as a coach, board member or volunteer.

Thank you on behalf of Aylmer Minor Baseball