**RYL Lobball Division Rules**

**General Game Rules**

1. All Lob Division players must reach the age of 7 to 9 years old before May 1. A younger player may play in the Lob Division provided the player’s coach and parent agree the player is capable of competing in the Lob Division and it is safe for that player to do so.
2. Game will last 5 innings, in case of rain out, 4 completed innings will constitute a complete game. In the event of the home team winning after 3.5 innings, the 3.5 innings shall constitute a complete game.
3. There will be no umpires for the games, and the coaches will make all calls pursuant to these rules.
4. The defensive team may have 1 or 2 coaches in the outfield to facilitate maintaining players’ focus and providing coaching advice.
5. The defensive team is required to provide an adult behind the catcher to retrieve a ball which eludes the catcher and to return it to the opposing adult coach pitcher, in an effort to maintain game speed. The adult backup should be cognizant of the need to allow the defensive catcher to learn and participate and not exclude the catcher from the ball retrieval entirely.
6. The baseline shall be 60 feet.
7. There shall be a circle surrounding the pitcher’s mound. The circle shall be ten (10’) in diameter. The center of the pitcher’s circle shall be forty-six feet (46’) from the point of home plate.
8. The ball used for gameplay in Lob Division will be a regular little league baseball.
9. No jewelry of any kind shall be worn. EXCEPTION: Medical IDs are allowed.
10. Mercy rule: This rule does not apply to the Lob Division. At this level, it is far more important to play and learn than to be concerned about a lopsided score.
11. Games shall last 1 hour 30 minutes, allowing for an inning that started before the time limit was reached to completely finish. Coaches shall note the game start time after the first pitch in the top of the first inning. In the event that there is a failure of the coaches to note the start time of the game, then the scheduled start time of the game shall be used as the official start time.
12. In the event of a tie following the expiration of time or five (5) innings of play, extra innings will be permitted. If the lack of light would impair the safety of the players, or if there is another scheduled game on the same field, both coaches can agree to suspend play and resume at a mutually convenient date and time to play until the tie is resolved. In order for a suspended game and resumption of play to be worthwhile, the respective coaches may further agree to play another game following the game suspended and resumed. An additional game in this circumstance would not count towards the win-lose records of either team.
13. No steel cleats are permitted.
14. All bat types are legal, as long as they do not pose a player safety issue.
15. It is recommended that all (male) catchers wear a protective cup.
16. No game shall start or continue unless each team can and does field and play eight (8) players. In the event a team fails to have eight available players to start or continue a game, then forfeiture shall be called and the opposing team shall be declared the winner of the game, recording a score of 1 to 0. If the shortage of players occurs for a game a replacement may be chosen from in-house tee ball teams. Players from opposing teams can also be used so the game can be played.
17. Any coach who is ejected from a game shall also be required to sit out their next scheduled game. Without umpires, a technical ejection is not possible. Instead, if the behavior of a player or coach is objectionable, the matter will be brought to the attention of the commissioners. The commissioners shall determine if disciplinary action is required. Discipline can take the form of game suspensions, or expulsion from the league. Coaches are responsible for their players and fans and shall suffer the same penalty if due to the behavior of those fans as if the behavior was their own.
18. The coach may deny the right of a player to participate in a game for disciplinary action or unexcused absences from practice. The coach shall submit a complete player roster to the opposing scorekeeper before the game. The coach should then designate players who are being disciplined. MAKE SURE YOU TALK TO THE PARENTS FIRST.
19. Official scoring will be from the scoreboard-be fair-be honest.
20. No infield practice before games unless agreed upon by both opposing team's coaches and there is enough time to start the game on the schedule. Both teams should be afforded equal time.
21. No team may score more than 5 runs in a single offensive ½ inning. In the event, a team shall score 5 runs in a single ½ inning with less than three (3) outs, the ½ inning shall immediately end, regardless of the number of outs the defensive team has achieved and any offensive base runners that may still be on the field.

**THE BATTER**

1. All players for a team that are available to play at the beginning of the game shall bat and be in the line-up, regardless of whether the player is playing a defensive position, or what defensive position the player is playing.
2. No ball and strikes will be called, and a batter who swings and misses three times will not be an out. The tee will be placed for the batter following 3 swinging misses.
3. No bunting, one team warning will be issued and then the next bunt attempt will result in an out.
4. A batter may not throw the bat. One team warning will be issued, any batter from the same team who later throws a bat shall immediately be called out. If the infraction occurs after the ball is batted fair and is in play, the play proceeds normally for all players. Once play is stopped the batter will be called out. This is a safety issue, don’t be concerned with hurting someone's feelings, work on this in practice.
5. Each batter shall receive no more than four (4) pitches unless a foul ball occurs on the fourth (4th) pitch. The player can foul the fourth (4th) pitch indefinitely. Following the fourth (4th) pitch, provided the pitch does not result in a foul ball, the tee will be placed for the baller.

**THE RUNNER**

1. A base runner may not lead off the bag or leave the base before the ball is batted by another batter.
2. A runner may not steal any base at any time.
3. The first time a runner leaves a base early, the team for which the runner plays shall receive a warning, and the runner shall return to the base from which the runner had left too early. If any runner from the same team so warned leaves the base too early, the violating runner shall be immediately called out.
4. All runners must avoid contact at all bases. Violation of this rule shall result in an out (umpire discretion), and no warning is necessary. ‘Avoiding Contact’ is defined as sliding, going around the defensive player, or giving yourself up. From a Coaching standpoint, it is best to instruct players to slide in all situations where contact is possible.
5. Courtesy Runner Rule: A team may use a substitute runner for that team’s catcher when there are two (2) outs in the inning and the catcher on base (runner). A team may not use a substitute runner for any other position player. If a runner is used for an injured player, the injured player may not return to the game until after one (1) complete inning of sitting out, starting from the point of the substitution and injury, and laying through the next half inning’s three (3) outs. (An Inning in this situation is defined as the remainder of the inning in which the injury and substitution took place, plus the 3 successive outs in the next one-half inning.)
6. In an attempt to provide lob division players instruction and skills that mirror play at higher levels while simultaneously preventing scores from being artificially inflated due to runners running while defensive players are learning, play is stopped when an infielder is in possession of the ball in the infield and is not making an attempt at a play.
7. For the purpose of this rule, the infielder is defined as the pitcher, the catcher, first basemen, second base, third base, and shortstop.
8. For the purposes of this rule, the infield is defined as three (3) feet outside of the base path toward the outfield between first base and second base, and the base path between second base and third base.
9. For the purposes of this making an attempt at a play is defined as an infielder who immediately upon receiving the ball throws to another player upon that infielder’s team to try and get a runner out. Running towards a base in confusion, and there is no force out at that base, does not constitute making an attempt at a play.
10. When play is stopped by this rule, any runner who is more than halfway to the next base (beyond the hash mark) may advance to the base the runner was attempting to reach.
11. Runners may advance at their own risk if a defensive player makes an attempt to get that runner out. An attempt to get a runner out is defined as a throw to the base the runner is leaving, a throw to the base the runner is heading toward, or running at the runner while in possession of the ball with the intention of getting out.
12. The home team field crew shall add chalk lines, perpendicular to the baselines (“hard lines”) halfway between the bases, except between the home plate and first base.
13. This rule does not apply if there is a force out at any base. All runners are free to advance at their own risk on a force out. Once the runners have advanced one (1) base following a force out, this rule-stopping play is in effect.

7. Runners may advance a single base following a defensive player overthrowing another defensive player.

8. If a defensive player obstructs, or interferes with a runner, the runner shall be awarded the next base. Managers will stress the teaching of baseball awareness and point out exactly what interference is. This rule shall be enforced at all times to avoid serious collisions and for the safety of the players.

**THE PITCHER**

1. Pitchers will be made by an adult coach who will be pitching to his own team.
2. The adult coach pitcher must have one foot inside the circle at the time of the pitch. The defensive player playing the position (though not actually pitching) shall also have at least one foot inside the pitching circle.
3. When the ball is put into play, the adult coach pitcher must leave the field of play in a direction that least interferes with the play. If the adult coach pitcher causes interference, the batter/baserunner may be called out, and the runners on base are allowed to advance one base, at the discretion of the coaches from both teams.
4. If the adult coach pitcher is struck by a batted ball, the play is considered a dead ball, the batter is awarded first base, and any runners already on base shall be awarded one (1) base. If it is determined that a coach intentionally was hit by a ball or makes no effort to video a batted ball, then such behavior can be considered unsportsmanlike, subject to review by commissioners.
5. Male athletes will be pitched over hand and female athletes will be pitched under hand.
6. It is recommended that the defensive player playing the position of pitcher wear a helmet with a faceguard on it.

**DEFENSE**

1. Infield Fly Rule: This rule is not in effect in the Lob Division. All batted balls must be played.
2. Lob Division shall use ten (10) defensive players, using the “extra” or tenth (10th) player as an additional outfielder. The additional outfielder must not play a “rover” position. It is recommended that there be a left fielder, a left-center fielder, a right-center fielder, and a right fielder. (if a team has more than 10 players, confirm with an opposing coach before adding)
3. Each roster player shall play in a defensive position in the field at least two (2) completed innings per game, unless disciplinary action is necessary by the coach. In the event of disciplinary action, the coach must submit the reason for disciplinary action to the opposing coach when exchanging rosters for the game before the game begins. Any player is not subject to disciplinary action and not playing two (2) completed innings shall start the next scheduled game and play at least three (3) completed innings. There will be NO EXCEPTION to this rule.
4. No player shall play the same position more than 2 innings in a game. (An additional player to the field. If an 11th or 12th player is agreed upon by the opposing coach, that/those players must play in the outfield.)