



LAKELAND MINOR BALL LEAGUE 2024 League Rule Interpretations

Purpose – during the May 25th / 26th, 2024 crossover league play weekend, our tournament hosts responded to a few Lakeland League Rules that were discussed and the interpretation captured below. These interpretations will be discussed at our Fall – Lessons Learnt meeting and may result in rule edits Motions for the Winter – AGM in January 2025.

1. GENERAL COMMUNICATION

1.1. Questions: Please check our website at www.lmbl.ca, with your Minor Ball Association Executive, and/or Softball and Baseball Directors if you have any questions. Many of the questions that have been sent to the League Executive are items that have already been explained at League meetings or emails to the Association. It is the Association responsibility to pass League information along to their team coaches & managers.

1.2. League Rules are posted under the website Rules Tab. Our league rules take precedence over Baseball Alberta or Softball Alberta rules. Where there is no league rule, follow the BBA or SBA rules.

1.3. Disciplinary Guidelines: Please refer to Baseball Alberta disciplinary guidelines related to:

- 1.3.1. Not showing up for a scheduled league game;
- 1.3.2. Cancellation of a scheduled league game;
- 1.3.3. Refusal to travel to a scheduled league game;
- 1.3.4. Refusal by a Team(s) to Play/Makeup a scheduled game;
- 1.3.5. Team Removing Themselves from the Remainder of the Season;
- 1.3.6. Playing an Illegal / Ineligible Player;
- 1.3.7. Player and/or Coach Conduct Towards Umpires;

Interpretation: *These guidelines encourage sportsmanship between players, teams, and associations. This also includes the concept that no chanting or heckling opposing team's pitchers, batters, or players is permitted. Players are encouraged to cheer for their own players; however, any game incidents of unsportsmanlike behavior of Players, Coaches, or Parents towards opposing teams or umpires, please address it immediately on the diamond. If it remains unresolved, then please submit an email to your own Association President and League President for review. Describing the alleged event including Game ID#, result of the attempted field resolution, team coach / manager names for further investigation of any of the items above.*

2. SOFTBALL RULES

2.1. Stealing: U11 Softball – As per Minor Softball Rules pdf posted on website.

a) Stealing

- i. Base runners may steal on any legally pitched ball when it has left the pitchers hand.
- ii. A player can only advance one base on a steal attempt.
- iii. A player cannot advance to home on a steal, passed ball, or wild pitch. The player must be batted in or forced home by a walk or is part of a continuation of a play (i.e. overthrow).



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Interpretation: To clarify, this rule is that on one pitch, a player may attempt to steal one base. If successful, that player must stay on that base until the next pitch is delivered, where the player may attempt to steal another base. Once they are on third base, they must then be batted in where they are scoring only from a force (ie. walk) or from a hit. Also, no stolen bases are permitted during the coach pitch phase.

2.2. No Walk Modified Rule: U11 Softball – as per Lakeland Minor Ball League Rules document titled: LMBL SOFTBALL Rules 20240501_rev01

- b) Purpose** – to encourage players to hit rather than waiting for a walk, to prevent innings resulting in a long series of walks and keep the game moving.
- i. If a pitcher reaches a count of four (4) balls, the coach will come on the field and pitch the remaining strikes. No pitched walks. Hit by pitch still takes a base.
 - ii. The coach must be from the hitting team and must NOT interfere with the play when the ball is hit.
 - iii. The pitcher on the field stays in the pitching position and will continue to pitch for the next batter.
 - iv. If a coach comes in to throw the remainder of strikes, they must throw underhand pitches from the pitching rubber or up to 2 steps in front of the rubber.

Interpretation: No matter the pitch count, a MAX of three (3) pitches (regardless of coach accuracy). They must NOT throw over that, if the batter is unable to hit the pitch(es) that is thrown by the coach, they are out. No stolen bases are permitted during the coach pitch phase.

Count	Coach Pitches
4-0	3 pitches
4-1	2 pitches
4-2	1 pitch
If the ball is hit foul – the coach continues with another pitch until ball is hit into fair territory.	

- c) Additional Clarity** - the coach comes in and will pitch up to three (3) pitches (regardless of coach accuracy). A player hit by a coach pitch still takes a base. However, foul balls will not result in an 'out', and the player will still see more pitches. Added benefit is then the umpire doesn't have to determine if the coach pitch is a ball or strike. The League doesn't want to put the umpires in the position to make calls on coach pitching / accuracy.

2.3. Third Strike & Infield Fly Rules: Softball – As per Minor Softball Rules on Website.

d) Third Strike Rule

- i. **Currently on Website (from pre-2022)**

Rules	U9	U11	U13
Third strike rule is not in effect	X	X	
Infield fly rule is not in effect	X	X	



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Superseded – will be removed from website during off-season.

ii. Revision to Lakeland Rules to Match Softball AB (2024 & beyond)

Rules	U9	U11	U13
Third strike rule is not in effect	X	X	X
Infield fly rule is not in effect	X	X	X
Revised rules in effect, May 30 th , 2024 in the Lakeland league.			

e) **Additional Clarity** - To clarify, our intentions are to move towards Softball Alberta & Softball Canada rules – to remain consistent. These efforts will continue over the next year with our Rules & Umpires Subcommittee.

2.4. Equipment – Balls

i. Currently on Website (from pre-2022)

Rules	U9	U11	U13
11" Indoor Ball	X	X	
11" Ball (COR .47)			X
Superseded – will be removed from website during off-season.			

ii. Revision to Lakeland Rules to Match Softball AB (2024 & beyond)

Rules	U9	U11	U13
11" Indoor Ball "Softie"	X		
11" Red Dot Optic - Youth Mid Seam (Rawlings Product #PX11RYLC)		X	X
Revised rules in effect, May 30 th , 2024 in the Lakeland league.			

3. BASEBALL RULES

3.1. No Walk Modified Rule: 11U Baseball – as per Lakeland Minor Ball League Rules document titled: LMBL BASEBALL Rules 20240501_rev01

- a) **Purpose** – to encourage players to hit rather than waiting for a walk, to prevent innings resulting in a long series of walks and keep the game moving.
- i. This rule shall not apply for the May Crossover and June Final weekend tournaments, whereas the pitch count rules shall apply.
 - ii. If a pitcher reaches a count of four (4) balls, the coach will come on field and pitch the remaining strikes. No pitched walks. Hit by pitch still takes a base.
 - iii. The coach must be from the hitting team and must NOT interfere with the play when the ball is hit.
 - iv. The pitcher on the field stays in the pitching position and will continue to pitch for the next batter.
 - v. If a coach comes in to throw the remainder of strikes, they must throw underhand pitches from the pitching rubber or up to 2 steps in front of the rubber.



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Interpretation: No matter the pitch count, a MAX of three (3) pitches (regardless of coach accuracy). They must NOT throw over that, if the batter is unable to hit the pitch(es) that is thrown by the coach, they are out. No stolen bases are permitted during the coach pitch phase.

Count	Coach Pitches
4-0	3 pitches
4-1	2 pitches
4-2	1 pitch
If the ball is hit foul – the coach continues with another pitch until ball is hit into fair territory. Unless foul ball is caught by defensive player.	

- f) **Additional Clarity** - the coach comes in and will pitch up to three (3) pitches (regardless of coach accuracy). A player hit by a coach pitch still takes a base. However, foul balls will not result in an 'out' – unless caught, and the player will still receive another pitch(es). Added benefit is then the umpire doesn't have to determine if the coach pitch is a ball or strike. The League doesn't want to put the umpires in the position to make calls on coach pitching / accuracy.
- b) **Request** – All Associations, please solicit feedback from all your 11U baseball coaches / managers whether this rule should remain for this age level in the 2025 season.
2. **11U* & 13U Baseball Pitch Count Rules**
- a) **Purpose** – to encourage teams to develop more pitchers and to protect the pitchers from injuries.
- i. 11U*, 13U, 15U, and 18U pitching rules for the tournaments will follow Baseball Alberta Provincial Championship Play Pitch Count Rules.
 1. * = 11U pitch count limits will be raised by 5 pitches.

Interpretation: To clarify the pitch count rules are taken from the Baseball Alberta Handbook. Please see the attached pdfs titled:

- Pitch Count Rules Summary
- Appendix 2 – Pitch Count Logbook Example

b) **Host Sites – Best Practices**

- i. Pitch count logbook: this is the job of the pitch counter to tick off the pitches every time the pitcher throws a pitch (Balks and Pick offs do not count toward pitch count).
- ii. Pitch Counter shall notify umpire / coaches when the pitcher is within 10 of the maximum pitches allowed. Please make sure you are not behind on the flip chart because the coaches rely on that to know when to make a switch if needed.
- iii. Pitch count logbook: Host will need one of these per team per game (ie. 2 per game)
- iv. Game Summary Report: Pitch counter will need to fill this in after every inning, then give to tournament coordinator so they can update their chart
- v. Weekly Pitching Report: after the first game give this to coaches to bring



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- back and forth to get updated after every game they play.
- vi. Host site to provide a poster board that keeps all the teams pitch count as the tournament proceeds. See below for an example

EXAMPLE : 11U pitch count totals June 25 - 26 2022

	saturday		Sunday			saturday		Sunday			saturday		Sunday			saturday		Sunday	
Teams - players #	Game 1	Game 2	Game 1	Game 2	Teams - players #	Game 1	Game 2	Game 1	Game 2	Teams - players #	Game 1	Game 2	Game 1	Game 2	Teams - players #	Game 1	Game 2	Game 1	Game 2
Elk Point					St. Paul 1					Cold Lake 1					Cold Lake 2				
Kyle #2			66		Tom #12	13		54		Don #42	5	18	75						
jonny #11	25			75	Bob #23	24			75										
sam #56	11	19																	
jake #99	25	50																	
Elizabeth					Pierceland					Bonnyville					Goodfish				
St. Paul 2					Lac La Biche					Piamondon					St. Paul 3				

Pitch Count Rules Summary

The intention of this document is to summarise and explain the Baseball Alberta pitch count rules that are used by the Lakeland Minor Ball League for the mid-season and final weekend tournaments. Pitch count rules are taken from the Baseball Alberta Rulebook. See Appendix 1 for the complete Pitch Count General Rules. The intention of this document is to summarise and further explain the Baseball Alberta pitch count rules, in order to help coaches understand and follow the pitch count rules.

1.0 Why are pitch counts used by Baseball Alberta?

The primary reason for using pitch counts is to prevent arm injuries. Throwing too many pitches increases the risk of a player injuring their arm. Secondary reasons for implementing pitch count limits is to increase competitiveness and to increase player development. When pitch count limits are used, this prevents a team from relying on 2-3 pitchers for all games which will lead to more competitive games. By increasing the number of players that must pitch for a team, this also leads to increased skill development for more players.

2.0 What are pitch count limits and how are they tracked?

There are five pitch count categories/thresholds that determine that amount of rest that is required before that player may pitch again. The number of pitches for each category depends on the age group. When a player falls in a category, they must then have the required rest before being allowed to pitch again.

Player pitch counts are tracked on the "Pitch Count Log Book". Each team is tracked on a separate sheet. The player's name and number are written down and each pitch they throw is marked off. The last pitch of an inning should be circled (this will help with filling out the game summary sheet). A solid diagonal line should be marked after the player's last pitch of the game.

Balks and pick off attempts do not count as pitches.

See Appendix 2 for an example on how to fill out the pitch count log book.

3.0 Pitch Count Rules/Categories

The table below shows the pitch count limits and categories that are used for the Lakeland Minor Ball League mid-season and final tournaments. Baseball Alberta Provincial Championship Play Pitch Count rules are used (except that 11U pitch count limits are increased by 5 pitches).

Pitch Counts – Crossover League Play and June Final Weekend Games					
	11U	13U	15U	18U	Rest Required
LOW	1 - 30	1-30	1-35	1-40	None
MEDIUM LOW	31-45	31-45	36-50	41-55	1 Day
MEDIUM	46-60	46-60	51-65	56-70	2 Days
MEDIUM HIGH	61-70	61-75	66-80	71-85	3 Days
HIGH	71-80	76-85	81-95	65-105	4 Days
MAXIMUM	80	85	95	105	4 Days

Required Rest is defined in “Days” starting at 12:01am and ending at 11:59pm of the next calendar day. This means that there must be the required full calendar days between pitching appearances.

Example 3.1: A 13U player throws 40 pitches on Friday. They require one day rest (Saturday) and would be allowed to pitch on Sunday.

Example 3.2: A 13U player throws 40 pitches in a game that ends Friday at 6pm. The team’s next game is Saturday at 7pm and the coach plans to have the player pitch again because it has been more than 24 hours since they last pitched. This would be a pitch count violation as they require a full calendar day of rest (not just 24 hours).

The maximum pitch count is the daily maximum that a player may throw. The only exception is that pitchers are permitted to finish the batter if the maximum pitch limit has been reached.

Example 3.3: A 13U pitcher starts a batter with a pitch count of 83. They throw one ball and one strike and are now at 85 pitches. They are allowed to continue pitching until the at bat is finished but are not allowed to start pitching to another batter.

Example 3.4: A 13U pitcher starts an at bat with 84 pitches. The batter hits a fly ball on the first pitch that is caught and is out. The pitcher is now at 85 pitches. They have reached the daily maximum, must be removed from the game and now require 4 days rest before pitching again.

4.0 Pitching Two Games in the Same Calendar Day

Pitchers are allowed to have two appearances in the same calendar day (provided that they do not require rest after the first appearance). The pitcher may only throw up to the daily maximum in the two appearances combined.

If a pitcher requires rest after the first appearance, they cannot pitch again in the same calendar day.

Example 4.1: A 13U pitcher throws 25 pitches in the first game of the day. They are allowed to pitch in the second game of the day as they are in the LOW category and do not require any rest. The pitcher may throw 60 pitches in the second game (effectively, they begin the game at 26 pitches and can pitch to the daily maximum of 85).

Example 4.2: Following Example 4.1, the pitcher throws 25 pitches in the second game of the day. The daily total pitches thrown is 50. The pitcher is in the MEDIUM category and now requires 2 days rest before they may pitch again.

Example 4.3: A 13U pitcher throws 40 pitches in the first game of the day. They are in the MEDIUM LOW category, require 1 day rest and are not allowed to pitch in the second game of the day.

5.0 Pitching Two Consecutive Days

Pitching on two consecutive days is perhaps the most challenging interpretation and creates the most questions.

Even though it is not specifically stated in the Baseball Alberta Rulebook, if a pitcher is in the LOW category and does not require rest, their pitch count resets to zero at the start of the next day. They may then pitch up to the daily maximum for their age category.

However, it becomes more confusing if trying to have the pitcher throw in multiple games on the second day. This is because when a player leaves a game, they now have a two day total pitch count and will require the appropriate rest. This means that they may not be able to throw to the daily maximum that they were able to when the day began.

The rule states “A pitcher who has pitched on 2 consecutive days and whose total exceeds the low category maximum allowance will not be able to pitch again on the second day”. The number of pitches that is referred to in this rule only becomes the total when the player leaves a game on the second day. So while a pitcher may be entitled to throw to the daily maximum at the start of the day, they may not actually reach the maximum if they attempt to do it over two games in the day (depending on how many pitches they threw the previous day).

Example 5.1: A 13U pitcher throws 30 pitches on Friday. They do not require rest and will be able to throw 85 pitches on Saturday.

Example 5.2: Following Example 5.1, the pitcher throws 30 pitches in the first game on Saturday and leaves the game. Their two day total is now 60 and they are in the MEDIUM category and require 2 days rest. They are not able to pitch in the second game on Saturday.

Example 5.3: A 15U pitcher throws 15 pitches on Friday. They throw 15 pitches in the first game on Saturday. Their two day total is now 30. They are in the LOW category and do not require any rest. They are allowed to throw 80 pitches in the second game on Saturday (for a daily total of 95).

6.0 Pitching on Three Consecutive Days

Players may pitch on three consecutive days as long as the first two days combined do not exceed the LOW category threshold. The pitch count would start at zero on day three and the player would be permitted to pitch to the daily maximum total.

Example 6.1: A 13U player throws 10 pitches on Friday and 15 pitches on Saturday. The two day total is 25 and the player is in the LOW category (does not require rest). They would be able to throw 85 pitches on Sunday.

7.0 Baseball Alberta Rules that are not Applicable to Lakeland League

Lakeland Minor Ball League does not have any restrictions regarding pitching and catching in the same game. Therefore, the Baseball Alberta pitch count rules regarding catching after pitching do not apply. However, moving a player to catcher after pitching should be avoided if possible.

Baseball Alberta has specified the maximum number of pitches that a player may throw over four days. These maximum numbers only apply to four day tournaments and do not apply to Lakeland Minor Ball League weekend tournaments.

Appendix 1: Baseball Alberta Pitch Count General Rules

PITCH COUNT GENERAL RULES

- Any player on the team is eligible to pitch, and there are no restrictions to the number of pitchers a manager may use in a game.
- Pitchers shall be permitted to have 2 appearances in the same calendar day. If a pitcher requires a rest following 1st appearance, they cannot return in the same calendar day (see examples below).
- Pitcher cannot pitch 3 consecutive days unless a pitcher's first 2 days combined does not exceed:
 - 11U – 20 league/25 provincials
 - 13U – 25 league/30 provincials
 - 15U Boys/Girls – 30 league/35 provincials
 - 18U – 30 league/40 provincials
- If a pitcher's Day 1 + Day 2 exceed the figure above for their division, they require rest as defined in the pitch count chart. Pitcher's cannot pitch 4 consecutive days.
- A pitcher who has pitched on 2 consecutive days and whose total exceeds the low category maximum allowance will not be able to pitch again on the second day.
- The official scorekeeper will calculate the total pitches thrown for that calendar day and determine the required rest starting the next calendar day. Athletes must not exceed the maximum pitch count total for that day.
- Once a player assumes the position of pitcher, they cannot catch for the remainder of the game.
- If a player pitches in the first game of the day and is eligible to pitch again in the same day, he may pitch or catch in the second game, but not both.
- Pitchers will be permitted to finish the batter if the maximum pitch limit has been reached.

- Required Rest shall be defined in "Days" starting at 12:01am and ending at 11:59pm of the next calendar day.
- If a game continues past 12:01am, those pitches are counted as if the pitched prior to midnight. If a game is suspended, when it resumes it is defined as a different day.
- A pitcher who is removed from the mound during a game shall not be permitted to return to pitch in the same game, even if the pitcher is retained in the game at another position.

Source: Baseball Alberta 2024 Rulebook

Appendix 2: Pitch Count Log Book Example

PITCH COUNT LOGBOOK GAME FORM



PITCH COUNT PHASES

- Low
- Medium Low
- Medium
- Medium High
- High

RANGES	REST
1-30	0
31-45	1
46-60	2
61-75	3
76-85	4

Division: 130

Team A vs. Team B

Date: May 27, 2024

PITCHER	GAME PITCH TOTALS																																Total Pitches	Days of Rest Required
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32		
#1 Adam A.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	85	4
#2 Bob B.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	10	0	
#3 Chris C.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	30	0	
#4 Doug D.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	13	0	
#5 Ed E.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	10	0	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31			
	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50	51	52	53	54	55	56	57	58	59	60	61	62			
	63	64	65	66	67	68	69	70	71	72	73	74	75	76	77	78	79	80	81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90	91	92	93			
	94	95	96	97	98	99	100	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x			
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31			
	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50	51	52	53	54	55	56	57	58	59	60	61	62			
	63	64	65	66	67	68	69	70	71	72	73	74	75	76	77	78	79	80	81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90	91	92	93			
	94	95	96	97	98	99	100	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x			

OFFICIAL SIGNATURES
 Home Team Manager _____ Away Team Manager _____ Official Score Keeper _____

* collect signatures after game

Appendix 3: Pitch Count Knowledge Check Questions

Lakeland League Pitch Count table applies for the following questions.

1. A 15U pitcher throws 70 pitches. What pitch count category is the pitcher in and how many days rest do they require?
2. A 13U pitcher throws 40 pitches in the first game of the day. How many pitches can they throw in the second game of the day?
3. An 18U pitcher throws 40 pitches in the first game of the day. How many pitches can they throw in the second game of the day?
4. An 18U pitcher starts a batter with a pitch count of 103 pitches. He throws one ball and one strike. Does the coach need to remove the pitcher from the game? Why or why not?
5. A 13U pitcher starts a batter with a pitch count of 81 pitches. He throws four straight balls and walks the batter. Does the coach need to remove the pitcher from the game? Why or why not?
6. A 15U pitcher throws 35 pitches on Friday. How many pitches can they throw on Saturday?
7. A 13U pitcher throws 20 pitches on Friday. They then throw 20 pitches in the first game Saturday. How many pitches can they throw in the second game on Saturday?
8. A 13U pitcher throws 20 pitches on Friday. They then throw 30 pitches in the first game Saturday. What pitch count category is the pitcher in and how many days rest do they require?
9. A 15U pitcher throws 20 pitches on Friday. They then throw 10 pitches in the first game Saturday. How many pitches can they throw in the second game on Saturday?
10. A 13U pitcher throws 10 pitches on Friday and 10 pitches on Saturday. Can they pitch Sunday? If so, how many pitches can they throw?

Appendix 4: Pitch Count Knowledge Check Answers

1. MEDIUM-HIGH, 3 days rest required
2. They are in the MEDIUM-LOW category and require 1 day rest, they cannot pitch in the second game
3. 65
4. No, he does not need to be removed from the game. The pitcher is allowed to finish the batter even though he has reached the daily maximum pitch count.
5. Yes, the pitcher must be removed from the game because he is at the maximum daily pitch count after the at bat has finished.
6. 95 (daily maximum)
7. They cannot pitch in the second game on Saturday as they are in the MEDIUM-LOW category and require 1 day rest.
8. MEDIUM, 2 days rest required
9. 85 (for a daily total of 95)
10. Yes, they can pitch Sunday. Allowed to pitch to 85 (daily maximum)