



# Cloverdale Minor Baseball

## 5U Blastball Rules

### Overview

Players' first experiences in baseball should be filled with active and engaging activities that are developmentally appropriate for their age. In 2013, Cloverdale Minor Baseball chose to adapt the Rally Cap Program at the Blastball (5U) level. The Rally Cap Program is Baseball Canada's official initiation program. It was developed with the purpose of making baseball attractive to young players, and to ensure their first experiences with the game were positive and long lasting.

The goals of the Rally Cap program are:

- Create an environment in which children and adults can have fun with baseball
- Teach baseball skills, rules, and strategy to our players
- Model and teach competitiveness with an emphasis on good sportsmanship
- Promote increased self-esteem & structure among children and adults

Coaches will be provided with teaching materials and entire practice plans (to be used during Rally Cap sessions) developed by Baseball Canada for this age group. Cloverdale Minor Baseball will also provide support and training for new coaches through continually developed in-house programs. Cloverdale Minor Baseball Association will designate a Rally Cap day at the start and another at the end of the season. This is so players can gauge their skill progression from the start to the end of the season.

### Structure – 3 Teams

In Rally Cap baseball at the Blastball level, 3 teams meet at the park at the same time. At the start of the season, the emphasis will be on specific baseball skills development and modified baseball games will be added to the program as the skills are better mastered. Two (2) teams will be playing a game while one (1) team will be practicing in the outfield. After each inning played (both teams have been up to bat), teams rotate. The session is complete once each team has had one (1) practice, and two (2) complete one-inning games. This concludes the game portion of the session. The teams then participate in a base race where the teams will run a relay race going around the bases. Upon conclusion the teams should shake hands and the Rally Cap session is complete. Hitting is done from a Tee, and official Rally Cap foam bats and balls are used. ***No personal bats or baseballs of any kind can be used by players during games.***

Example:

- Team A hits first while Team B takes defensive positions in the field and Team C goes to the outfield to PRACTICE hitting, fielding, running, throwing and general baseball knowledge. When Team A completes all their batters (and the last runners remaining on base run to home), the two teams switch. Team B hits, team A takes the infield while team C continues to practice. When team B goes through their entire batting order, all 3 teams make a change:
- Team A goes to the field to practice, Team C goes up to bat and Team B goes to the infield. When Team C goes through their entire batting order, they switch. Team B goes up to bat, Team C takes the infield while team A continues to practice. When team B goes through their entire batting order (and the last runners remaining on base run to home), all 3 teams make a THIRD AND FINAL change:
- Team B goes to the field to practice, Team C hits and Team A takes the infield. When Team C goes through their entire batting order, they switch. Team A goes up to bat, Team C takes the infield while team B continues to practice. When Team A goes through their entire batting order (and the last runners remaining on base run to home) the game portion is over.
- There will then be a base race where the teams will run a relay race going around the bases.



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- Upon completion of the base race the teams should shake hands and the Rally Cap session is complete.

### **Structure – 2 Teams**

In some instances, there may only be two teams scheduled for a particular time slot. This may also apply if one of the teams has very few players and those players are dispersed among the other two teams to give a reasonable number of players each team. In the 2-Team structure the warm-up session will be extended from 15 minutes to 30 minutes. This will allow both teams to have the important practice session for skill development.

Upon completion of the warm-up and practice session the teams will play two (2) innings with both teams taking a turn at bat and in the field in each inning. Upon completion of the two innings the game portion is over. There will then be a base race where the teams will run a relay race going around the bases. Upon completion of the base race the teams should shake hands and the Rally Cap session is complete.

### **Game Rules**

- 1) Each session will last 75 minutes. The first 15 minutes of the session is dedicated for teams to warm up and prepare, leaving 60 min for actual playing time. If all 3 games are completed before the 60 minutes of playing time runs out, teams may choose to continue rotating in same order until time runs out
- 2) After each inning played, teams will rotate.
- 3) At each turn batting, all players will come to bat. The ½ inning will end when all players have completed their turn.
- 4) There are no walks, no strikeouts, no base stealing and runners can only advance on batted balls.
- 5) The hitter, and any base runners, may only advance one base on a hit ball.
- 6) When the last batter in line up hits, the batter as well as any base runners occupying a base, must run to home. The coach of the hitting team must loudly indicate to the defensive team when the last batter is about to come up.
- 7) Teams will score runs the same way they score runs during a regular game (i.e. touching home plate.)
- 8) Teams will also have the opportunity to earn points or runs on defence. A point can be earned by catching a fly ball or by throwing a runner out at a base.
- 9) To throw a runner out, the ball can be thrown to any base before the runner reaches first base. An out at first base can only be made by running to and touching first base before the hitter, if the ball is hit to the pitcher, 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> baseman. This is primarily in place to avoid first baseman and the runner colliding in the event of an errant throw to first. Runners will remain on the bases and continue to run if they are thrown 'out'. Coaches may allow players to get in the habit of throwing to first base, but it is recommended that balls hit to the pitcher, first baseman and/or second baseman not be thrown to first.  
*With hitting being the most fun part of the game, the program has been designed to help players hit the ball no matter what the skill level. Two formats can be used for hitting:*
- 10) Dependant on their development stage, each player can choose to hit the ball off the Tee, or have the coach pitch (underhand soft toss) to them. Coach pitch will not be allowed until the half way point of the season, and a maximum of 3 pitches are allowed. If the batter does not successfully hit a pitched ball after 3 tries then the ball must be hit off the Tee.



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- 11) Each hitter will have a maximum of five chances to hit the ball off the Tee. If the tee is hit, and not the ball, it counts as one of his/her 5 chances but the player can try again. If the batter does not hit after 5 attempts, the coach will roll the ball into the playing field to allow the hitter to run the base paths and allow the defence to field the ball and make plays.
- 12) When the last batter hits the ball, the ball must be thrown to Home plate in order to get the batter out.
- 13) The batting order will change each time a team comes to bat (first hitter becomes last, etc.).
- 14) Defensive positioning will change each time a team comes to bat. It is recommended that defensive positions shift alignment when the team up to bat gets to the half-way point of their batting order during each game. This will allow for each player to play 4 different defensive positions when the Rally Cap session has concluded.
- 15) Base paths should be 45 feet apart
- 16) Players at bat must hit the ball past a designated line in front of the plate in order to be considered a "fair ball". This line should be approx 5 feet directly in front of home plate, and can be marked with cones supplied to each coach by CMBA