



## Rookies Division (8U) Rules

Updated: 02/26/2020

These rules are to be interpreted in harmony with the latest version of the Babe Ruth (BR) Rule Book. Where they might deviate, go with the local rules, unless the Babe Ruth rule book says "must" or "shall" or "mandatory".

### 1.0 Game Preliminaries

The home team is determined by the official league schedule. Only league-approved coaches and players are permitted in the dugout or on the field. The **Home Team** is responsible for the following:

- Providing an Official Scorekeeper. The scorekeeper's main functions are getting the official game rosters from each team, noting the official start time of game in the scorebook, keeping track of outs, runs per inning, proper batting order of teams using player first and last name, and maximum runs per inning. \*\*
- Relaying the final scores to Division Commissioner and entering the results into website
- Providing 2 game ready/condition baseballs for the game
- Ensure that the field is locked up after the game
- Preparing (raking etc.) and chalking/lining the field
- Setting up the pitching machine
- Occupying the 3rd base dugout

The **Visiting Team** is responsible for the following:

- Occupying the 1<sup>st</sup> base dugout
- Providing a scoreboard operator for the entire game.

\*\*The official scorebook must be kept accurate for participation in All-Stars. Failure to maintain accurate records may result in our league not being able to play in All-Stars tournaments.

### 1.1 Coach Positioning

The team batting will provide coaches in the following positions based on availability:

1. Pitching machine
2. Third base coach
3. Dugout coach/parent
4. First base coach

The team fielding will provide coaches in the following positions based on availability:

1. Fielding Coach (positioned in foul territory 30+ ft beyond 1<sup>st</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> base)
2. Catching Coach (positioned behind the catcher to help retrieve balls and position catcher)
3. 2<sup>nd</sup> Fielding Coach (positioned in foul territory 30+ ft beyond 1<sup>st</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> base)

## **2.0 Time Limit of Games**

To facilitate the consistent start and end of games, and to provide equitable playing time to all teams, the following time limits will be observed. No new inning will start after 1 hour and 30 minutes (90 minutes) has elapsed from the official start time. The umpire will declare the official start time when the defensive team is on the field and the first batter steps into the batter's box. The umpire shall notify the official scorekeeper of the official start time, and the official scorekeeper shall record the time in the scorebook. The umpire is responsible for keeping the official time.

## **3.0 Tie Games**

A tie game shall be declared based on standard Babe Ruth Official Rules. A tie game after six (6) innings of play will continue until the tie is broken or the time expires. A tie game is considered as 1/2 of a win and 1/2 of a loss in the standings. If, at the end of the season, two teams have identical records including tie games, head-to-head record will be the first tiebreaker. If still tied, total runs scored will be the tiebreaker. If still tied, a one game playoff will take place between the two teams involved. Playoff games will only be played to determine the first four positions in the standings. The home team in a playoff game will be the lower seed. If a three-way tie occurs, one team will receive a bye in a single elimination tournament draw.

## **4.0 Run Rule**

The ten (10) run rule will be in effect as outlined in the Official Babe Ruth Rule Book. There is a maximum run limit of 4 per inning. The 6<sup>th</sup> inning will not have a run limitation.

## **5.0 Official Games**

A game shall be considered official when one of the following conditions is met. If terminated for any reason after reaching this point, the game results will be officially recorded.

1. The completion of 4 innings if the visiting team is winning
2. The completion of 3 1/2 innings if the home team is winning
3. The time limit has been reached.

## **5.1 Rain**

If a game is under weather delay PRIOR to the start time of the game, teams must wait a minimum of 30 minutes from the scheduled start time for an "all clear" before leaving the park. If the all clear is not given before the 30 minute waiting period, the game will be called as a "rain out" and will be rescheduled. If the all clear is given within the 30 minute waiting period, the game will begin and the start time will be noted. If a game goes under a weather delay while in progress, prior to the completion of the 4th inning (complete game), teams must wait a minimum of 30 minutes for the all clear. If the all clear is not given within the 30 minute waiting period, the game will be

rescheduled and play will resume from the point of the delay. **Time for the game will be suspended during the rain delay.**

Any game that is stopped due to weather or other reason that has not reached the required number of innings or the time limit, is considered a suspended game and must be played to its completion of at a later date. Time limits carry over to the completion portion of suspended games. If both teams have the same number of runs at the end of an official game, the game is declared a tie.

## **5.2 Game Time Clock**

For weekday games the game time will be the scheduled start time per the league website (unless there was a preceding game or weather delay). The umpire will declare the official start time. The Home Team shall keep the game time. For weekend games (when there is a preceding game) the game time will be started when the defense is on the field and the batter receives his/her first pitch.

## **6.0 Offense**

Teams must bat their entire roster at the game and able to play. If a player arrives after the start of a game they may be inserted at the bottom of the lineup, but the Official Scorekeeper must be notified. A player that is listed on the lineup at the start of the game and is then removed from the lineup during the game will be skipped. This will NOT be considered an out.

### **6.1 Bat Rules**

All bats will be marked with the USA logo and Babe Ruth approved. *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.

### **6.2 Courtesy Runner Speed-Up Rule for Catcher**

Any player not currently in the lineup shall replace the catcher with two outs. If the manager elects to bat the lineup, the player who made the last batted out will serve as the substitute runner.

### **6.3 Plays at the Plate**

IF A PLAY IS BEING MADE at home plate the runner MUST SLIDE OR AVOID THE TAG. If the runner makes contact with the fielder he is out and could be ejected from the game (malicious contact per the umpire's decision).

### **6.4 Base Running**

Runners may advance, at their own risk, until the lead runner is stopped by a defensive play and the ball is controlled by a defensive player. Balls hit into the outfield must be thrown to the

infield (not handed to an infielder). If an overthrow is made at any base, the runners may continue to the base towards which they were already in motion, and no more than 1 additional base; at their own risk. If runners are made out, regardless of location, they are out, even if they should not have advanced because of an overthrow rule. No additional bases may be earned because of additional overthrows in the same play. Once the runners are stopped by actual play or the overthrow rule, the ball may be returned to the pitcher, TIME called, and the play is over. EXAMPLE: There is a runner on first. Batter hits a grounder to SS, who throws to 2B but the catch is missed. Runner from 1B can stop safely at 2B or try to reach 3B, but not home. Batter/runner may try to reach 1B or 2B but not 3B or Home. Both runners are at risk of tag or force out at any time, even if attempting a base that this rule does not allow them to attempt.

### **6.5 Number of Pitches**

Players get a maximum of five (5) pitches from the pitching machine or three (3) swinging strikes. If the pitching machine is not throwing strikes, fix it immediately. If a pitch is clearly not hittable, and the player did not swing, the umpire will not count the pitch. Before each inning it is encouraged that the pitching machine coach test 1 or more pitches for safety and accuracy. If the last pitch is fouled off, the batter can receive another pitch (unless bunted foul).

### **6.6 Dead Ball**

A batted ball shall be considered dead when, before being touched by a fielder, it hits the pitching machine. The players will advance one base only if forced. The batter advances to first. If the ball hits the machine after a fielder touches the ball, the play will continue. If a batted ball hits a coach anywhere on the field of play it is a live ball (unless the coach intentionally altered the path of the batted ball).

### **7.0 Player Requirements to Start a Game**

Each team must have a minimum of Eight (8) players at the "official start time" for a game to begin. In the event the minimum cannot be met, the game could be considered a forfeit and the win is recorded to the team that has the required number of players. In the event both teams cannot field the minimum number of players, the game shall be rescheduled.

If a forfeit occurs, both managers may petition the league president, the division rep, and the player agent to reverse the forfeit and reschedule the game. Upon a majority consensus of ALL 3 parties (Vice President of Operations, Division Commissioner, and Player Agent) the game will be rescheduled.

### **7.1 Players Leaving Before the Conclusion of a Game**

Once the game is started a team may continue to play if the number of players falls below nine (9), but the minimum to continue play is eight (8). If a team cannot field at least eight (8) players, that team shall forfeit the game. A player who is not injured or sick that leaves early (if a substitute is not available) **IS** considered an out when his or her turn at bat arrives. A player who leaves a game due to injury or illness is skipped over in the batting order and will not be an out.

Babe Ruth League substitution rules apply. A substitute may be inserted if available. If a player leaves a game for any reason other than injury or illness, and a substitute is not available, that player must remain in the batting order and is considered an out when his or her turn at bat arrives.

If a team cannot field the minimum number of players for a scheduled game because it was scheduled on a recognized religious or school function, the game will be canceled and rescheduled without penalty, provided notification is submitted to the division commissioner, player agent, or league president at least 24 hours prior to the game date. Games cannot be rescheduled for any other reason.

### **8.0 Players Arriving after the Start of Games**

If a player arrives after the start of the game, the player must be added to the bottom (last position) of the batting order if the team is batting through the batting order, or used as a substitute, if the team is batting. Defensively, a late player will be counted as playing a defensive inning for any inning that they missed. For example, if a player shows up after the second inning begins the manager will have to play that player for one inning to comply with the minimum play rules.

### **9.0 Pitchers/Pitching and Defense**

The pitching machine shall be set up for all Rookies games at 46 feet from the back of home plate (set the front legs behind, and not on top of or touching, the closest pitching rubber-located at 46'). The speed will be set to #9. It is best to place the ball on the pitching machine as a 4 seam pitch. The seams should make a "C" towards the sky (see image to the right). Rotating the ball forward slightly will raise the pitch, and backwards will lower it. In the event no pitching machine is in service, the team batting will supply a coach to pitch to their batters.

#### **9.1 Infield Fly Rule**

No infield fly rule will be in effect for this division.

#### **9.2 Positioning of Players**

The pitcher must be positioned within an "imaginary" ten (10) foot diameter circle with the front edge set at approximately forty-two (42) feet from the rear point of home plate. The pitcher must start the play/pitch within the pitcher's circle (see 5.3 above). The pitcher can't stand in front of the front legs of the pitching machine until after the ball is released from the machine. After the ball is pitched the pitcher may move to any location on the field. Outfielders must not be brought in to the infield and infielders may not be positioned in the outfield. The "outfield" will be considered 30 feet beyond the base path.

#### **10.0 Intentional Walks**

Intentional walks are not permitted in the Rookies Division.

#### **11.0 Minimum Playing Time Rules**

Each player is required to play at least 3 innings of defensive play. No player may sit the bench or play the outfield position for more than two consecutive innings. That player may return to an outfield position after playing an inning in the infield. Coaches are encouraged to let every player

play at least one inning in the infield. No player may sit the bench more than one consecutive inning, unless they are injured and unable to play. Any player showing up late will have the innings missed credited as if they were played. There will be free substitution defensively among all players on official scorecard (both those listed as substitutes and those in the batting order). If a game is shortened for any reason the manager does not need to comply with the minimum play rule, they will not be subject to a forfeit. The player who did not meet minimum play time will start the next game and will not be substituted until he has met minimum play time from last game and the present game.

### **11.1 Position requirements**

All teams must field a catcher and a pitcher. A pitcher's position is determined as written in Rule 9.2. A catcher must be in the designated catchers box behind home plate.

### **12.0 Protest**

In the event of a protest condition, the following procedures must be followed:

1. The protesting manager must call time out before the next pitch is delivered. A protest that occurs on a game ending play or condition must be made and recorded by the umpire before he leaves the field. AN ineligible pitcher/player may be protested at any time by reporting it to the Division Commissioner or any Executive Board member.
2. The protesting manager must notify the home plate umpire and the Official Scorekeeper, who records the protest in the scorebook, and the opposing manager, stating the reason for the protest.
3. At this point the game continues under a "protest condition". Discussion over the validity of the protest will not occur at this point. But the umpire should use all discretion to avoid a protest.
4. The protesting manager must submit in writing, within 24 hours, to the Division Commissioner the conditions which he/she deems protest able. The report must document the specific rule infraction page and paragraph, with enough detail for the Protest Committee to rule.
5. The written protest and Committee ruling will be presented at the next regularly scheduled Board Meeting.

A protest request will only be considered if it is in reference to a rule interpretation. A judgment call by an umpire cannot be protested. If a protest is dismissed the game outcome stands as played. If the protest is upheld the game is replayed from the point of the protest.

### **13.0 Scorebook**

Both the managers and coaches of each team must sign the official scorebook immediately after the game. If a manager or coach was ejected from the game by the umpire, the scorekeeper MUST note the ejection in the scorebook. The ejected manager or coach may NOT sign the scorebook.

### **14.0 Dress Code**

The League furnishes each player with a hat and jersey. Every player must wear league issued uniform along with baseball pants. Penalty will be considered a violation of in house rules.

Exposed jewelry such as wrist watches, bracelets, large or loop style earrings and neck chains, or any other item judged dangerous by the umpire, may not be worn during the game. Medical alert bracelets or necklaces are not considered jewelry, but if worn, must be taped to the body.

### **15.0 Team Direction and Strategy**

Authority for team direction, strategy, and leadership rests with the team manager and coach. Team direction, strategy, and leadership during a game must come from the manager and coach who are present on the field. Parents may not "coach from the stands" in the form of giving signals and calling plays.

### **16.0 Safety**

Safety is paramount. If at any time a parent, Coach or Manager has safety concerns about the application of any playing rule or ground rule in a particular situation they may submit these concerns to the Division Commissioner or any OBR board member for a special ruling. All players shall wear a protective cup. No male player can play the catcher position without a cup. Managers are to ensure that players remain properly hydrated during games and practices. All League Officials, Managers, Coaches and Players are to adhere to Park rules adopted by the City of Orlando in regard to facility usage. **No tobacco use of any kind permitted.**

### **17.0 Violation of Any In-House Rules**

The following will occur for any In-House Rule violations:

First time offense will be given a written notice.

Second time of the same occurrence will be a suspension of one game.

### **18.0 Pool Play**

A list of Advanced T-Ball (6u) players who wish to participate in Rookies Division games will be put together by the Player Agent and the Executive Board (as needed) at the beginning of the season. The initial Pool Player list will be in order of the ATB Division evaluation scores. The Pool Player list will generally include 10 players as determined by the Player Agent.

A Rookies Division Manager who has 9 players for a game may, at his or her discretion, contact the Player Agent to have access to a Pool Player. A Manager with 8 players **MUST** contact the Player Agent for access to a Pool Player. It is recommended that the Player Agent is provided 24 hours or more of advance notice in order to find and confirm a Pool Player. Provided the manager has given the player agent ample time (24 hours). If the player agent cannot provide a player within 3 hours of the start of their game the manager may select a player on his own from the list.

The Pool Player will be drawn from the Pool Player list and contacted about availability. If the next player in-line is not available, the Player Agent will skip over that player and move to the first available player. Once that player plays in a Rookies Division game he/she will be placed at the bottom of the Pool Player list. If more than one Rookies Division Manager is in need of a Pool

Player, the request will be honored on a first-come first-served format. Pool Players are allowed to practice with Rookies Division teams if invited by the Rookies team Manager. A Pool Player should never be utilized for a Rookies Division game or practice if it conflicts with that player's primary team.

Note: If a Pool Player is used, they must bat last in the lineup, they are not allowed to pitch, and they cannot be substituted for at any time (unless there is an injury to the Pool Player).

### ***Important Notes on Ejections and Forfeits***

While the published league bylaws state that an ejected player or coach must serve a next game suspension, the league's board has adopted the rule that can be found in the Babe Ruth League rulebook. This rule states if a player or coach is ejected from a game, the league president, along with the rules committee, shall decide if additional penalties, such as serving a game's suspension, will be imposed. Should any manager violate the published 'Must Play' rules (those rules that mandate at-bats, play time, and infield play), he will be given written notice on his first offense and then will be suspended a game for the next occurrence.

**19.0 These rules supersede or clarify the 2020 Babe Ruth Rule Book  
All In-House Tournaments will be played using Babe Ruth Tournament Rules**