

## **Flagler Babe Ruth Buddy Ball Rules**

**GAME** – The game will consist of 4 innings of play and have a time limit of 1 ½ hours, whichever comes first. Scorekeeping and League Standings are not permitted. No stealing, leading off bases, sliding, infield fly rule or bunting permitted. Runners can leave the base once the ball is hit.

**SAFETY** – A player's safety and welfare is paramount during any competitive game. At no time should a player's safety be compromised for the sake of scoring a run, advancing bases or attempting to win the game. Please encourage safe participation at all times, on and off the field.

**HITTING** – Depending on the skills of the batter, they can use the batting tee or have the coach or buddy pitch. Pitching underhand or overhand is determined by the players batting skills and eyesight. A batter gets six (6) pitches or tee-aided attempts to hit the ball. Balls and strikes will not be called, but the umpire will keep track of pitches or swings. If a player misses all six (6) attempts, have the player proceed and run to first base. This step encourages the player to continue the activity and develop their base running skills and not dwell on their inability to hit the ball.

All players present for the game shall bat in order whether their playing on defense or not. Teams will bat in a "running batting order". On Deck batter and buddy should station themselves in the On-Deck area while awaiting their turn at bat. An inning is completed once all players have batted around. The last batter in the inning will run all bases and score. Outs will not be counted in determining when an inning is completed. Once the running batting order has finished their at bats, they will take the field and the opposition will come up to bat.

**PITCHING** - Coaches or buddies will pitch either under or over- handed and this should always be dictated by a players hitting ability. If the player would like their buddy pitch to them, it is highly recommended and encouraged.

**EQUIPMENT** – RIF (Reduced Injury Factor) type Baseballs are to be used. . The bat barrel diameter cannot exceed 2 ¼ inch and not exceed 33 inches in length. **Batting Helmets will be worn by all players while hitting and running bases. If players would like to use a batting helmet while in the field, this should be encouraged for their safety.**

Shoes can be any type of athletic wear, sneakers, vinyl baseball shoes or any special medical footwear prescribed by the doctor. **Metal cleats are not permitted for players, buddies or coaches.**

**COACHES** – There will not be an official umpire for games. The role of the coaches are to manage and implement the rules as well as to keep the game moving. The coaches will also help to assign the Buddies to the players before the game starts.

**PLAYING OFFENSE** – Interactive participation of the player and his/her buddy.

All players are required to wear a Batting Helmet when batting or running the bases. Buddies will always have the option to assist their player when batting or running the bases. If players are going to require physician prescribed headgear while playing, they will be required to wear it at all times. Any prescribed Medical Equipment that a player needs should be indicated in the doctor's instructions on the permission slip and Managers should ensure compliance.

When a runner is stationed at first base, the buddy should stand in the 1<sup>st</sup> Base Coaching box, ready to assist their player towards second base. When on second base, the buddy stands immediately behind the runner to help them advance toward 3<sup>rd</sup>. Base. When on 3<sup>rd</sup> Base, the buddy will stand in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Base Coaching Box ready to assist the runner toward home plate to score the run.

**BATTING** – During the at bat sequence, the Buddy can assist their player in swinging the bat, if it is necessary. If not, the buddy should be stationed 8 ft behind and parallel to the batter in preparation to assist the batter toward first base, once the ball is hit. The Buddy should run outside the foul line while the runner is running inside the foul line toward first base. This will allow the Buddy to assist the runner if he/she falls while running to the base.

Buddies follow the same idea while running to the other bases as well. If a batter is not going to require his buddy's assistance while running, the buddy can station themselves in the appropriate coaching box or encourage their player from the dugout area.

**PLAYING DEFENSE** – Interactive Participation of the Player and Buddy.

All players that are on defense and in the field will have their Buddies assisting them. Players should be stationed in positional play with the exception of the Pitcher. All Buddies should station themselves in earshot or immediately behind their positioned player. While assisting the Catcher, always stand two (2) feet to the catcher's side and be ready to assist and get the ball back to the coach that is pitching. Please use common sense in determining where you stand, especially depending on the batters hitting ability.

**SPORTSMANSHIP** – All players, buddies and coaches should conduct themselves in a very responsible and respectful manner towards each other and demonstrate "Good Sportsmanship" at all times. At the end of each game, teams should line up and congratulate each other "GOOD GAME" and shake hands. Sportsmanship is the only ship that should be sailed while playing the game of baseball! Inappropriate or Unsportsmanlike conduct by anyone will be dealt with at the discretion of each local League President.