

Longwood Babe Ruth League – Minor Division

Revised (1/21/2024)

1. Home Team and Visiting Team Responsibility

- The home team, as per the official league schedule, is responsible for supplying two (2) new baseballs to the Head Umpire and providing an Official Scorekeeper for record-keeping purposes.
- The visiting team is responsible for the official pitch count.

2. Time Limit of Games:

- No new inning will start after 1 hour and 45 minutes from the official start time. Weeknight games stop at 2 hours. The 2-hour rule doesn't apply to weekend games. The official start time is declared by the umpire when the defensive team is on the field, and the first batter steps into the batter's box.
- In the event a game ends due to a 2-hour time limit, the score will revert to the last completed inning. This will determine the final score of the game if the game is "official" per rule 5 below. The 2-hour rule does not apply to weekends.

3. Tie Games

- Tie games continue until broken, or time expires. A tie game is considered as 1/2 of a win and 1/2 of a loss in the standings. Tiebreakers involve head-to-head records, and if still tied, a one-game playoff will take place between the two teams involved.
- In case of a three-way tie, one team receives a bye in a single-elimination tournament.

4. Run Rule:

- In the Minor Division, all games will end under the following conditions:
 - The game is official.
 - Either team has a fifteen (15) run lead and has had equal times at bat.
 - The home team is leading.
- Time limits, as per section 2, will be in effect.

5. Official Games:

- A game is considered official when one of the following conditions is met, and if terminated afterward, the results are officially recorded:
 1. The completion of 4 innings if the visiting team is winning, or

2. The completion of 3 1/2 innings if the home team is winning, or
 3. The time limit has been reached.
- Any game stopped due to rain or other reasons before reaching the required number of innings is considered a suspended game and must be played to completion 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.

6. Batting Rules:

- All players on the roster are included in the batting order for every game in both fall and spring.
- In innings 1 through 5, the maximum number of runs any team may score is 5. Once 5 runs score, that half of the inning is over. A player who has not completed his at-bat when the 5th run scores will return to the plate the next inning.
- In inning 6, there is no limit to the number of runs that a team may score.
- It is not possible for more than 5 runs to be counted for any inning except in the sixth (6) inning.

Courtesy Runner Speed-Up Rule for Catcher:

- The player in the batting order where the last out was recorded or any player not currently in the game may replace the current catcher (the player physically playing catcher when the 3rd out was recorded) as a courtesy runner at any time.
- The catcher will remain in the game, and the courtesy runner will retain all substitution rights (if the courtesy runner has substitution rights).
- If the player who made the last recorded out is on base, batting, or has already been a courtesy runner in that inning, the new courtesy runner would be determined by going back to previous outs to the next allowable courtesy runner or to any player not currently in the game.
- In the first inning, if a courtesy runner is used for the catcher (who is listed in the lineup when the lineups are turned in) and there are no outs recorded, the courtesy runner will be the player furthest removed from the catcher needing the courtesy runner or any player not currently in the game.

7. 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.

- If the minimum player requirement cannot be met, the game is considered a forfeit, and the win goes to the team with the required number of players.
- If both teams cannot field the minimum number of players, the game is declared a double forfeit.
- In case of a forfeit, both managers can petition the league president, division rep, and player agent to reverse the forfeit and reschedule the game.
- Unanimous consent of all five parties (league president, division rep, player agent, and both team managers) is required for rescheduling, playing, and counting the game in the standings.
- Once the game starts, if a team cannot field at least eight (8) players, that team forfeits the game.
- A player leaving a game due to injury or illness is skipped over in the batting order and is not considered an out when their turn at bat arrives.
- If a player leaves a game for any reason other than injury or illness, they must remain in the batting order and are considered an out when their turn at bat arrives.
- If a team cannot field the minimum number of players due to a scheduled game on a recognized religious or school function, the game may be canceled and rescheduled without penalty, provided notification is submitted at least 48 hours prior to the game date. Games cannot be rescheduled for any other reason.
- A borrowed player is only allowed to meet the minimum amount of players required to avoid a forfeit. Borrowed players are only allowed to play outfield positions and must be the bottom of the batting lineup.

8. Players Arriving after the Start of Games:

- If a player arrives after the start of the game, they must be added to the bottom of the batting order.
- Defensively, a late player will be counted as playing a defensive inning for any inning they missed.
- For example, if a player shows up after the second inning begins, the manager must play that player for one inning to comply with the minimum play rules.

9. Pitchers/Pitching:

- A pitcher may return to the mound in the same inning or subsequent innings if removed on the manager/coach's first visit or between innings if they remain in the game. However, on the manager/coach's second trip to the mound in the same inning to the same pitcher, the pitcher must be removed and cannot return during the game.
- A pitcher is limited to six innings per calendar week, including re-scheduled and make-up games. One pitch constitutes an inning pitched. The Babe Ruth calendar week is Monday through Sunday. There must be a 2-day rest between pitching assignments if a pitcher throws more than two innings in a single game (e.g., if pitching on Thursday, they

can't pitch again until Sunday; if pitching on Saturday, they can't pitch again until Tuesday). Using an ineligible pitcher result in a forfeit, and unofficial games don't count towards the weekly pitch inning count.

- The Babe Ruth calendar week is Monday through Sunday. A pitcher must have 2 full calendar days of rest between pitching assignments if they pitch more than two innings in any one game. Using an ineligible pitcher in a game result in a forfeit, and unofficial games do not count towards the weekly pitch inning count.
- If a pitcher pitches 1-35 pitches, the player is required to take a days rest. Any pitcher that pitches 36 or more pitches will be required to take 2 days rest.
- In addition to the inning limitations and rest requirements, pitchers are also subject to a pitch count maximum. In the Minor Division, a pitcher may not exceed 65 pitches per day. If a pitcher reaches this maximum during a player's at-bat, they are allowed to continue pitching to that batter until the at-bat is complete. This pitch count does not include pre-game warm-ups or warm-up pitches between innings.

10. Minimum Playing Time Rules:

- For both the spring and fall seasons, each player must play a minimum of three defensive innings and have at least one at-bat per game.
- Every player will be given the opportunity to play in the infield for at least one inning per game.
- If a team is mathematically unable to comply with the minimum play rule, they will not be subject to a forfeit.
- No player will be the starting substitute in two consecutive games.

11. 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 by noon of the following day to the League President or designated representative.
 2. 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.
 4. The protesting manager must submit, in writing, the conditions which he/she deems protestable. The report must document the specific issue in enough detail for the
 5. Protest Committee to rule.
- Protests must follow specific procedures and can only be based on rule interpretation, not umpire judgment calls. The league president decides on additional penalties, such as serving a game's suspension, for ejected players or coaches.

- The written protest and Committee ruling will be presented at the next regularly scheduled Board Meeting

12. Scorebook

- If a manager or coach was ejected from the game by the umpire or board member, the scorekeeper MUST note the ejection in the scorebook.

13. Dress Code

- The league furnishes each player with a hat, shirt, and belt or socks. Every player must wear a complete and matching uniform for all league games, including matching pants. Exposed jewelry such as wrist watches, bracelets, large or loop-style earrings, and neck chains are prohibited.

14. 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.

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 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, playtime, and infield play), then that game shall be declared a forfeit. The manager also may face additional penalties as determined by the league board