

2018 SOFTBALL RULES ~ 14U & 16U

14U & 16U SOFTBALL

OFFICIAL RULES 13-14 YEAR OLDS (14U)

OFFICIAL RULES 15-16 YEAR OLDS (16U)

2018

The latest edition of the Babe Ruth Softball Rules & Regulations shall be the official playing rules of the Ridley/Interboro Babe Ruth Softball LEAGUE, subject to certain variations determined by the Board of Directors of the League. When any rule or its interpretation is in conflict, the LEAGUE intent will apply.

SECTION I GENERAL RULES OF PLAY

1. A ball that is hit fair and while bouncing in fair territory is touched by a spectator will be declared dead and any runner or runners will be permitted to go to the base to which the runner was advancing when the ball was touched.
2. A thrown ball which goes out of play in any manner will be declared an overthrow. Any runner or runners will be awarded one base in addition to the base to which the runner was advancing when the overthrow was made.
3. A thrown ball which goes into the dugout area or over the backstop will be declared an overthrow with all runners advancing according to Section B of this Article.
4. If a ball is overthrown and remains in play, all runners may advance at their own risk without limit to bases they can take.
5. In the above cases B. and C., the ball will be declared a dead ball once the overthrow has occurred.
6. A player who inadvertently throws a bat while a batter will be given a single warning. The umpire will give a warning to the manager and the entire team. The next infraction on the team with the warning will result in the player being recorded as an out. Note: The intent of this rule is for the safety of all players. The player who causes the infraction should be taken aside and explained the rule and its intention.

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7. Play will become dead when a Pitcher has Control of the ball within 8 feet of the pitching rubber and makes No play on any runner. Runners half way or more to the next base at any time of the Control will get the next base. Runners less than half way will be returned to the previous base. A runner will not be awarded more than the base she was entitled to if forced by a trailing runner.
8. Drop third strike will be in play for the Girls Majors Division.
9. At the Major level stealing will be unlimited.
10. Stealing in NOT permitted with the Run Ahead Rule is in effect. (see Article I, R)
11. Base runners must remain in contact with their bases until the pitched ball leaves the pitchers hand. Penalty: The player is removed from the base and an out is recorded.
12. Courtesy Runner for the catcher: Can be used with any outs. You must use a player currently not in the active batting order; if you have no substitutes then the player who recorded the last out will be the courtesy runner, no exceptions.
13. The area around the backstop will be kept clear of players, coaches, managers and spectators.
14. After the game is started, pitchers will warm up in foul territory. An adult must accompany the pitcher and catcher when they warm-up.
15. Team management will consist of a manager and a maximum of three coaches who will be officially recognized by the League and eligible for participation in uniforms and trophies.
16. The "*In field-Fly*" rule is in effect.
17. A half inning is over when eight (8) runs have scored or three (3) outs are recorded, whichever occurs first. This rule will apply to every inning except for the last (7th inning) which will have an unlimited run rule. If time permits, it is recommended to finish the last inning, to maximize playing time.
18. **Run Ahead Rule:** If, at any point in the game, any team is up by 10 runs for Majors, no runner may advance more bases than the batter is entitled to.

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eg. - The batter reaches first base safely or is out at first, the runner at first can only go to second. If this runner reaches 3rd base safely she will be returned to 2nd base with no penalty.

19. Four outfielders may be used, one of which could be a short fielder. The extra outfielder must be at least 15 feet behind the base. Nine players maximum still on the field.

20. Bunting will be allowed.

21. Fake Bunt/ Swing Away is NOT permitted in either division. The running slap hit will be permitted in both divisions.

22. Facemasks for Infields/Pitcher – Infields (including pitchers) will wear facemasks. Players not wearing facemasks will not be allowed to pitch or play the infield.

SECTION II GAME PRELIMINARIES

1. If prior game is completed the home team shall have the field for TEN (10) MINUTES prior to the starting time and the visiting team for the preceding TEN (10) MINUTES, if reasonable.
2. The manager shall give the starting lineup to the Official Scorer (Home Team) before meeting with the umpire, including last name.
3. The umpires shall proceed directly to home plate where they will be met by the manager of each team.
4. The managers will give to the Official Scorer (Home Team) the official score card, which shows the starting lineup, the other players who will play and those who will not play. Once the Official Scorer receives the lineup, it is official.
5. The plate umpire, as soon as the rules conference begins at home plate, has sole authority over the game. He now determines when a game shall be called, halted or resumed on account of weather and the condition of the playing field.

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6. All games will begin promptly at 6pm. There shall be a permissible delay of fifteen (15) minutes if a team does not have the required nine (9) players. The availability of nine (9) players shall compel the start of the game. If 1 team does not have 9 players, and the other team can spare a player, an opposing player can play for the team that is short players and it will still count as an official game.
7. If a game cannot be played because of the inability of either team to place nine (9) players on the field before the game begins, this shall be grounds for an automatic forfeiture.

SECTION III Field Dimensions

1. The pitcher's plate will be set so the distance between it and home plate (the rear of home plate) will be 43 feet for Majors. The Pitcher's circle is 8ft in radius.
2. Bases (1st and 3rd) will be sixty (60) feet from home plate.

SECTION IV OFFICIAL SCORING

1. It is the responsibility of both teams to have an Official Scorer at each game and to inform the visiting team of the home team changes as they are made.
2. The League Score Book shall be deemed the Official League Record and shall be the basis for the settlement of all pitching eligibility disputes and other related scoring matters. The home team shall be responsible for keeping the League Score Book.
3. The Official Scorer shall record the last names of all players available and their numbers, when the game starts so as to check player participation when the game is completed. The managers of both teams shall make this list available by using the Official Score Card.
4. If a game is protested, play suspended, or a tie occurs, the Official Scorer shall make note of the exact situation at the time of the protest, suspension, or tie game, including

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the score, number of outs, the position of the runners, and the balls and strikes on the batter. The plate umpire will assure the accuracy of the information and sign the score sheets.

5. The Official Scorer shall not make any decisions concerning the official playing rules, an umpire's decision, or a game under protest.

SECTION V PLAYER PARTICIPATION RULES

1. If a player arrives late, she can play at the manager's discretion.
2. You must bat 9 players with an option to bat 10 with the EH.
3. A player has officially played when she has completed three (3) defensive innings (9 outs) and at least one (1) turn at bat.
4. Exceptions to the above rule:
 - A. If only 6 ½ innings are played as a result of the home team leading, any player of the home team who has played three (3) defensive innings will satisfy the playing requirement, if this batter is one of the first three scheduled batters in the bottom of the final inning and this would have been their normal time at bat.
5. If the player does not bat, the player must officially bat in the next scheduled game. These players do not have to start the next game.
6. Any player on the visiting team who has completed a minimum of one (1) turn at bat and at least two (2) defensive innings will have officially played provided that this player would have been at her position at the conclusion of the game in the bottom of the final inning. If these rules are not followed, the player will be determined as not having participated.
7. No player shall be withheld from a game when she is physically able to play at the start of the game, subject to Article II, Section K.

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8. The penalty for failure to observe the player participation rule shall be automatic forfeiture of the game upon written protest by the offended manager to the President within twenty-four (24) hours.
9. The Rules Committee will review the official score book and verify if a violation has occurred. If a violation has occurred, they will award the win to the protesting team. No meeting of the Board of Directors will be necessary.
10. Re-entry: If a player is injured or ejected from the game and the manager has used all players, the manager may enter a player that was previously used. An ejected player may not be re-entered. If a player is injured her position in the batting order will be skipped over without penalty. If a player is ejected her order in the batting lineup will be recorded as an out. If a player leaves early and the game is continued she will not be allowed to rejoin that game when it picks up for completion and that spot in the batting order will be skipped.
11. Any of ten (10) starting players may withdraw and re-enter freely (except the pitcher), provided the player occupies the same batting position whenever she is in the line-up. The starting pitcher can re-enter as a pitcher only once. If the starting pitcher is removed from the game because of a second trip in the same inning, she may re-enter the game in any position with the exception of pitcher NOTE: If a player re-enters illegally as a pitcher, fielder or runner, there is no penalty except that she must be removed immediately when discovered. If she re-enters illegally as a batter, such illegal re-entry is penalized according to official baseball rules.
12. No player shall be double-rostered on any teams, or age divisions. Call ups are only as needed. You can not play a call-up player if you have 10 of your rostered players at the game. Call up players can play where needed on the field, but they can not pitch.

ARTICLE VI REGULATION GAMES AND POSTPONEMENTS

1. The regulation game shall consist of seven (7) innings for the Major League.
2. No new inning will be started 1 hour and 45 minutes after the start of the game. Several factors may cause a game to start late. The actual start time and the time representing 1 hour and 45 minutes should be discussed during ground rules. The

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end time is determined by the last out recorded in the bottom of any given inning. For example, if the last out recorded in the bottom of the fifth inning is made at 1 hour and 44 minutes, the sixth inning will be played. If the last out is made at 1 hour and 45 minutes, no sixth inning may be started and the game will be over.

3. When a Major League game is called because of inclement weather before a regulation game has been played, it will be considered an official game if five (5) full innings or four and one half (4^{1/2}) innings if home team is ahead. Any game not meeting the above inning requirements will be a suspended game. The game will begin at the exact point it was halted including outs and batter count (balls and strikes).
4. Darkness – Games ending due to darkness – If a game has been played for 1.5 hours the managers will meet to determine if an additional full inning can be played. If not, and official innings have been played, the winner will be declared. If the decision is to continue to play and the inning cannot be completed than it will revert back to the previous inning and winner declared. No games will be suspended due to darkness. If a game is tied than it will be recorded as a tie and winning percentage will be used to determine playoff seeding.
5. All postponement decisions, up to game time, shall be made by the league officials. If they are not present, both managers will make the decision and the managers will advise the Softball Division Coordinators to reschedule. If the managers cannot agree, the plate umpire for the game will have the final authority.
6. Once the game has been placed in the hands of the umpires, all decisions shall be made by the umpires.
7. Any postponed game shall be replayed as soon as reasonably possible under the direction of the Softball Division Coordinators.
8. If there is a ten (10) run differential after the trailing team has completed their fifth (5th) inning at bat, the game is complete.

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SECTION VII PITCHING RULES

1. One ball pitched constitutes one inning pitched.
2. Rolling innings rule: A pitcher may pitch no more than ten (10) innings (Majors) in two consecutive games.
 - a. Example (Girls Majors): If Sally pitches seven (7) innings in game one, then she has three (3) innings remaining for game two. If Sally pitches seven (7) innings in game one, then does not pitch in game two than her innings pitch total returns to ten (10) starting with game three
3. If a pitcher is obviously wild and has struck three (3) batters in an inning, 5 in a game, the home plate umpire can remove the pitcher. The removal of a pitcher is considered a judgment call and "*obviously wild*" will be decided by the home plate umpire **only**.
4. Two (2) time outs or abnormal delays in an inning by a manager or coach for the purpose of conferring with a defensive player shall cause the pitcher's removal from the game as a pitcher only.
5. Violation of any section of this article shall result in forfeiture of the game in which it occurs, subject to the rules of protesting games. The withdrawal of an ineligible pitcher after she is announced, but before she has pitched, shall not be considered a violation. Officials and managers are urged to take precautions to prevent protests. When a protest may arise out of this situation, the potential offender should be notified immediately and any corrective measures should be taken.

ARTICLE VIII PROTESTS

1. Protests shall be considered only if based upon the violation of a playing rule or the use of ineligible players. No protest will be allowed if based upon a decision involving an umpire's judgment. Equipment, which does not meet League specifications, must be removed from the game and shall not be the basis of a protest.

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2. The manager of the offended team solely has the right to protest a game.
3. Protests shall be made as follows:
 - A. The protesting manager shall immediately and before any succeeding play begins, notify the plate umpire that she/he is now playing the game under protest.
 - B. Following such notice, the umpire shall consult with his associate umpires. If he is convinced that his decision is in conflict with the rules, he shall reverse his decision. If he decides that his decision is correct, he shall announce that the game is being played under protest.
4. If it is discovered that an ineligible player is being used, such player shall be removed from the game and the game shall resume under protest and not depending upon the will or decision of the offended manager. If the ineligible player is recognized at the conclusion of the game, the manager may still submit her/his protest after having the official scorer concur.
5. The protesting manager shall have twenty-four (24) hours after the completion of the game to submit her/his protest in writing to the League President.
6. The League directors shall receive all protests.
7. If a player is discovered to be batting out of turn or has batted out of turn, a protest should be made in compliance with League rules.

SECTION IX EQUIPMENT

1. The complete uniform supplied by the League must be worn at all games by all participating players. Shirts must be tucked in.
2. Any offensive players must properly deliberately removing the helmet during a live ball play and seen by the umpire as a deliberate act, shall cause the violator to be declared out immediately. The ball remains alive.
3. All catchers must wear a catcher's mask during practice and pitcher warm-ups.

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4. No League player shall wear spike or metal-cleated shoes.
5. All equipment belongs to the League. Each manager is responsible for its reasonable care during the season of play and shall be responsible for its return. This shall include the uniforms, stockings, pants and shirts.
6. Requests for additional equipment or replacements must be made in writing to the Director in charge of equipment.
7. Babe Ruth Softball approved bats only will be used by the League. See page 11, rule 1-10 of the Babe Ruth Official Rule Book.
8. The Majors division will use a 12 inch.
9. No jewelry will be worn by any player.

SECTION X FIELD DECORUM

1. The action of players, managers, coaches, umpires and League officials must be above reproach. Uniformed players, managers, coaches and umpires only shall be permitted within the confines of the playing field prior to and during the games. All players, managers and coaches shall be seated on the bench unless actively participating. One (1) player will be permitted in the on-deck circle at a time. The first infraction results in a bench warning. The second infraction results in the removal of the offending player.
2. Incessant derisive remarks or behavior directed at the opposing team or the umpires will not be tolerated. Should anyone (player, manager, coach, etc.) continue after a warning by the umpire, or league directors, to hurl insults at anyone, that person will be removed.
3. If the team participates forfeiture may result.
4. No player shall circulate among the spectators or converse with them while the game is in progress.

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5. Managers will be given one (1) warning by the plate umpire to inform any parent of his/her unsportsmanlike conduct. If the parent refuses to cooperate, the game will be an automatic forfeit
6. A manager or coach may not come onto the playing field to question a judgment call made by an umpire. The manager or coach may have a player who is in the game request an appeal by the umpire who made the call. However, the decision to request assistance from another umpire is solely at the discretion of the umpire who made the call. A manager or coach who comes onto the playing field to question a judgment call is subject to removal from the game and the dugout area.
7. The throwing of helmets, bats or any equipment by a player, manager or coach, whether in disgust or not, will not be tolerated. No warning will be given and that person will be removed from the game.
8. Smoking/chewing of any tobacco items will not be permitted, by anyone, inside the fenced-in boundaries of the playing field during pre-game preliminaries and games.
9. Alcohol will not be permitted inside the fenced-in boundaries of the playing field at any time.

SECTION XI PLAYOFFS

1. Playoffs will be scheduled in accordance with the division structure of that year.
2. The minimum player rule is still in effect.
3. Should a tie exist for a playoff position, a coin toss will be used to resolve the tie, and not the use of head-to-head competition during the regular season. The above playoff rules apply.
4. Playoff structure will be determined before the playoffs of each season by the Board of Directors.
5. All teams in all divisions will be in the playoffs. Seeding determined by record. Records are determined by points earned by game outcomes: Lose 1 point, Tie 2 points, Win 3 points.

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6. All playoff games must be played to their conclusion. Games stopped due to weather, darkness or any other reason will be rescheduled and resumed from the point at which they were stopped.
7. The 1 hour and 45 minute game length rule will be in effect for all playoff games.
8. The championship game will be a full regulation game with no time limit. For 14U and 16U, this will be a 7 inning game.

* Section VI Rule 2 updated 4/12/18

* Section VI Rule 9 deleted, information added to Rule 2 4/12/18

* Section XI Rules 7 & 8 updated 4/12/18