



# Southeast Volusia Babe Ruth General Softball League Rules

Updated 7-22-2024



The official rules of playing shall be found in the current Babe Ruth Softball Official Regulations and Playing Rules book. These rules are amended by the following local Ground Rules and By-Laws in accordance with Rule 3:13. All divisions play by Babe Ruth rules with the addition of local playing rules for those divisions.

## 1. Game Time Limits

- 6 innings or time limit shall be considered a complete game
- 10U – no new inning after 1:15 of the start time
- 12U - no new inning after 1:30 of the start time
- Tie Game: In the event of a tie, or once the time-limit has expired game will be declared a tie.

**Note:** The game clock begins at game time or after the plate meeting with the umpire. Managers, Umpires and/or Official Scorekeepers should note the start time and agree on the no new inning / cutoff time at the plate meeting.

## 2. Equipment:

- **Batting helmets:**
  - All offensive players must wear helmets with faceguards while on the playing field.
- **Fielding mask**
  - **10U & Below**
    - All defensive infield players, including Pitcher, must wear a protective fielding mask
  - **12U & Above**
    - Pitchers & Corner Positions (1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup>) defensive players must wear a protective fielding mask
- **Catchers**
  - The catcher must wear protective headgear, chest protector, and shin guards
  - Catcher must wear a mask during warm-up. **Any manager, coach or parent warming up a pitcher must also wear a catcher's mask regardless of on the field or on the side. If a coach is caught not wearing a mask while warming up pitchers anywhere prior to a game in warmups or during game, the MANAGER will be suspended for that current game.**
- **Bats:**
  - ALL bats must Marked as "Official Softball Bat" or "Official Fastpitch Bat"
- **Softballs:**
  - 10U and below - Ball size is 11-inch official softball
  - 12U and above - Ball size is 12-inch official softball
  - Each head coach will be given two boxes of 12 balls with their equipment bag. One box is for practice balls, and the other is to be used for games. Each coach will supply one new ball for games.
- **Equipment Bag**
  - Each head coach will check out an equipment bag (if needed) that contains catchers gear and will be kept by the coach for the duration of the season. The coach will be required to return the bag before trophies will be handed out. Tees are not to be taken from the Sports Complex.

### 3. Game Schedules:

- All games are scheduled and approved by NSB Athletic Department
- All games are official games. If play is interrupted for any reason, an attempt to reschedule or pick up the game will be made. The game is considered complete after 4 complete innings or after 3 ½ innings if the home team is winning.

### 4. Forfeits / Player shortage

- There will be no forfeits or game cancellations. Pool play will be utilized to fill any player shortages for 10u and older before game time.
- Each team may play a game with 8 players. Teams may borrow players from other teams in the same age division, or lower. The team may not borrow players in excess of a lineup of 9 players (including any substitutions). Borrowed players will not pitch or catch and must bat at the end of the batting order.
- Any player in the lineup who must leave the field due to an injury will not result in an out if she misses her place in the batting order. She may return to the original place in the batting order when physically able. Any player leaving the field for any other reason will result in an out when her turn comes to bat and if she misses her turn at bat she may not re-enter the game.

### 5. Pool Play Protocol

- At the beginning of each season, the League will create and manage a pool/list of eligible players to be utilized for teams, which for valid reasons as cannot field nine (9) players. These players will be contacted and assigned to the teams by the League on a rotating basis. The management of the player pool list will be done by the League.
  - The goal of this regulation is to provide an additional method of ensuring games are played, rather than being rescheduled due to occasional player shortage. Obviously, the more notice that is given to the League of the shortage, the more likely a pool player(s) can be assigned in time. Pool players who are assigned to games may not pitch or catch, and must bat at the bottom of the batting order. All minimum play and substitution requirements still apply.

### 6. Dugout / Field

- All Divisions: One roster coach or approved volunteer must remain in the dugout while players are present in the dugout. 8U and older while on defense two coaches (Maximum) may be outside the dugout (in the immediate area) and in foul territory. The only equipment that may be outside the dugout with the coaches during this time can be a covered bucket for each

### 7. League age:

- Softball division assignments by player league age:
  - Ages 4 - 5                      6U/Coach Pitch
  - Age 6                              6U/Coach Pitch
  - Ages 7 – 8                      8U Rookies
  - Ages 9 – 10                      10U Minors
  - Ages 11 – 12                      12U Majors
  - Ages 13 - 15                      15U Juniors

Players may choose to go to evaluations for the division one age older but must be drafted by a team *no later than the end of the 6<sup>th</sup> round*. Players must attend their correct age evaluation as well to be

considered to play at the older division. Special considerations (ex. Special needs, safety concerns, etc) may be considered by the NSB Athletics Director upon request. A player's eligibility to play in post-season tournaments may be effected if they play out of their division.

## 8. Uniforms

- Each player is issued a socks and shirt by the league.
- Parents will need to provide solid gray pants, socks, belts and glove. A team may choose to wear different color pants if agreed upon by entire team and everyone matches.
- All players must be in full uniform

## 9. Scorekeeping

- Official scorebook must be kept by the home team for each game. This includes the use of electronic scoring.
- Line-ups will be exchanged 10 minutes prior to each game. You MUST list each player's number, first initial & last name

## 10. Interleague

- Will be considered when a division cannot field 4 teams within the league or at the request of the district

## 11. Batting Cages:

12. Batting cages are available for use to all teams. Players must wear tennis shoes in the cages. **NO CLEATS** Please be mindful of time spent in cages when there are others waiting.

## 13. Skills Assessments:

- Divisions 8U and above: All 8U and above players MUST attend one day of player evaluations. Two evaluation dates per division will be announced during the open registration period. If a player misses the evaluations, and there are open spots for players at the time of team formation, the players will be selected to the teams by random/blind draw.
- Skills Assessment: shall consist of activities necessary to evaluate players in an effort to have equal competition throughout the division.

## 14. Draft Procedures 8U and above:

- All teams are formed new each season. Players that participated in the evaluations will comprise the player pool eligible to be selected to a team during the draft. Draft style will be a serpentine style draft. (Example for a 6 team Draft: Round 1, teams will select Team 1 thru Team 6; Round 2 would then select Team 6 thru Team 1; Round 3 would mirror Round 1; Round 4 would mirror Round 2 and so on...) The draft order will be determined by blind draw prior to the player evaluations each season.
- Draft Protection: A manager may declare, to the league, one roster coach. For the purposes of player draft protection, this coach must be named PRIOR to the start of the evaluations. Manager's children as well as the ONE roster coach's children will be protected and automatically taken in round 3 and round 4. If there is only one protected player, they will be automatically selected in round 4
- 12U and above: A sibling of any selected player, eligible to play in the same division by virtue of league age only, will automatically be placed on the same team in the next available round. if the parents request children to be on the same team. If parents do not require children to be

on the same team, the sibling will be protected from being drafted by another team for ONE CONSECUTIVE ROUND

- 10U and below: A sibling of any selected player, eligible to play in the same division by virtue of league age, will automatically be placed on the same team in the following available round.
- Please note this rule does not guarantee players who evaluate for older divisions selection to a team just because they have a sibling in that division. They must still be drafted.
- All Trades must be submitted to the league for approval within 24 hours after the start time of the draft.

### **15. Mandatory play**

- Every Player must play in the field for 2 consecutive innings (6 defensive outs) and bat at least once per game. Any player who does not meet minimum play in a game must start the next game and complete his or her minimum play missed and then complete the minimum for that game before being removed.
- Players who arrive to the ball field after the start of the game are not subject to the minimum play requirements.
- 8U & 10U: Each team will bat the entire roster and will have free substitution.. Every Player must play 2 innings (6 defensive outs) per game. Any player who does not meet minimum play must start the next game and complete the remaining minimum play missed plus the current game's minimum play. Players are exempt from the 2 inning mandatory play if they show up after 1 completed inning.
  - Second half of the spring season: Each 10u player must play a minimum of 1 inning in the infield.

### **16. Run Rule**

- There will be a 4 Run per inning rule in effect for all divisions. A half-inning will end when there are three recorded outs or when the offense scores 4 runs in their half-inning.
  - For any division that has a run limit, all runs will count on a HR that goes over the fence. The ball must go over the fence and not be a inside the park HR.  
Example: Team has scored 3 runs in a game and a player hits a 3 run HR. All 6 runs will count that inning.
- The game will end if one team (a) has a 12-run lead after three (3) innings (or 3½ if the home team is winning) or (b) is ahead by 10 runs or more after four (4) full innings of play.

### **17. Noisemakers**

- The use of noisemakers is not permitted in the stands or dugouts. This includes, but is not limited to horns, drums, bells, boom boxes, and whistles.

### **18. On-deck batters**

- For 10u and above: All on-deck batters will position themselves behind the batter against the fence in foul territory near the dugout. With a right-handed batter up they will be on the 3<sup>rd</sup> base side and with a left-handed batter up they will be on the 1<sup>st</sup> base side. Players will NOT cross over while the batter is in the box and the battery is assembled. In order to keep the game moving along, on-deck batters may assist in retrieving foul balls and passed balls when there are no runners on base and when applicable it is not a dropped third strike.

### **19. Courtesy Runners**

- A courtesy may run for the pitcher and/or catcher every time they reach base. Each courtesy runner used must be a player who is not in the game at the time, or if none available, the last recorded out. Each courtesy runner may only pinch run once per inning. Using this rule in Catcher Speed Up situations, i.e. 2 outs or 4 runs scored, is encouraged to save time.

## 20. Jewelry

- No jewelry will be permitted to be worn during games. This includes any form of hard headbands or beads in the player's hair.

## 21. Pitching Limitations / Rules

- **Distance:**
  - 10U – 35 Feet
  - 12U 40 Feet
- Any player on a regular season team may pitch. (NOTE: There is no limit to the number of pitchers a team may use in a game)
- Pitchers limited to ***a rolling 9 innings per 2 Games***. **Managers are strongly encouraged to focus on pitcher development and to take every opportunity to allow maximum participation in pitching**

## 22. All – Star Eligibility Spring Season)

- For a player to be eligible to play All-Stars they must play 50% of the games played plus one (12 game season would mean player played at least 7 games)

## 23. Weather Policy

- NSB Staff will notify all coaches with weather updates in regards to game cancellations.
- The NSB Sports Complex has installed the Thor Guard Lightning Prediction & Warning System at the complex. This is to inform you of the updated inclement weather policy stemming from the Thor Guard installation.
- The Thor Guard System constantly measures the millivolts of static electricity both in the air and on the ground in a 2 mile radius. When the system detects enough electricity in the area to predict a lightning strike within an 8-20 minute window, the warning system will sound.
- The following is the procedure for all Recreational activities during inclement weather:
  - The first horn will sound for 15 seconds. This indicates that the Thor Guard System detects a lightning strike will occur in the 2 mile radius in less than 20 minutes.
  - When the horn sounds, ALL outdoor activities will cease immediately and will be cleared. All patrons are asked to seek safety in their cars, as we do not have the space to safely accommodate waiting patrons.
  - While there is still potential lightning within the 2 mile radius, a strobe light will continually flash.
  - When the Thor Guard System determines that it is safe to resume activities, the strobe light will turn off and you will hear 3 five (5) second horn blasts.
  - If after 20 minutes of weather delay, the game is called final.
    - **Players, parents, spectators, and coaches are to immediately seek shelter in their cars in case of danger of lightning**

## **10U DIVISION Ground RULES**

### **1. Stealing**

- Teams are allowed to steal (1) one base per inning.
  - A passed ball on a pitch and the runner advances to the next base is considered a steal.
  - A runner steals a 2<sup>nd</sup> time in the same inning and reaches base safely, time will be called and they will be asked to return to their original base. If they do not reach base safely they are out.
- Catchers can attempt to throw the runner out on a steal. A runner may only steal/advance one base per pitch, even if an overthrow occurs.
- Players may steal home. If there is a play at the plate, the runner must slide or avoid contact with the fielder making the play. If violation occurs, the umpire will give one warning. Any subsequent violation will result in the runner being called out and the run will not count.
- No Stealing is allowed on coach pitches
- No Steals on Walks

### **2. Coach Pitch**

- A coach will pitch after 1 walk in an inning and 4 balls on batter. The coach pitch will be from the 35ft pitcher's mound. Strike count is assumed. Batter may hit or strike out only – no walk. Pitcher will return to pitch after batter completes at bat.

### **3. Overthrows**

- In the event an overthrow, the runner may advance only ONE base beyond the base he/she was attempting at the time of the overthrow. The advancement is at the runner's own risk, and he/she can be tagged out.
- An overthrow is defined as a passed ball during a defensive attempt to throw out a runner at any base or a throwback to the pitcher to call timeout. This includes any passed ball that may come to rest in the infield, outfield or foul territory after the defensive attempt.
- A relay from one player to another, which is dropped, is not an overthrow
- There is a maximum of one (1) overthrow per AT BAT, INCLUDING the pitcher.  
(Example- -Batter hits ball to shortstop, short stop overthrows 1st and batter attempts 2nd base, 1st baseman throws to pitcher to stop play and overthrows pitcher, runner CANNOT advance
- The base advance on an overthrow must be earned, whereby if the runner chooses not to attempt the next base, the base is not automatically awarded (i.e.: The batter hits the ball to the shortstop, who fields the ball and throws to 1st base. The 1st baseman misses the ball; the batter/runner can now advance to 2nd base at his/her own risk, but if runner remains at 1B, they are NOT automatically awarded 2B.