



## **2018 Babe Ruth League Rules**

**Approved April 3rd, 2017**

**Updated: Daly 4/23/2018 - to remove Sr Babe Ruth and add New Mercy Rule.**

**The 495 League adheres to standard National Babe Ruth League Rules with the exception/addition to the following set of local rules.**

**Lightning Rule:** In the event thunder or lightning is seen or heard, the game shall be immediately halted and players should seek shelter. A 30 minute wait time will begin. If another thunder or lightning event occurs, the 30 minute clock resets. The 2.5hr game time clock continues to run.

### **Article A: General Regulations Applying to Manager and Coaches**

- I. A team's coaching staff or designated adult is in complete charge of the team whenever it is assembled as a team. This includes practices, games and any events or functions approved by the Association. The coaching staff is under the direction of the manager or his/her designate.
- II. There will be one (1) manager per team; Managers will be age 21 or older. Managers must submit accurate contact information to the league prior to the season, to include an email address and a phone number.
- III. In addition to the manager, there will be at least one Assistant Coach per team. Coaches must submit accurate contact information to the league prior to the season, to include an email address and a phone number.
- IV. A Manager or a Coach must be present at all practices, games or approved functions.
- V. Managers/Coaches are in complete charge and shall not be interfered with except in cases of rules violations and any other conduct deemed to be contrary to the welfare of the youth.

- VI. Managers/Coaches do not make policies, rules or regulations, rather they carry them out.
- VII. The Manager has final say and responsibility for his/her team, further, he/she has final responsibility for his actions and those of his/her Coaches and players.
- VIII. Any Manager/Coach ejected from a game will be suspended from the next scheduled game. The umpire will record the ejection in the opposing team's score-book. The Umpire will report the incident of the offending Manager/Coach to the **495 League President**. A player ejected may be subject to a full game suspension in addition to the ejection of the game in progress. All player ejections must be reported to the League President who will determine if the offense warrants an additional game suspension immediately after the game by the offender's manager and umpire.
- Every situation is different. Some examples of offenses that might result in an additional game suspension include any incidence of violence, blatant disrespect of another player or coach or umpire, damage to the facility or equipment, loud directed profanity. The League President will determine the penalty within 24 hours after consulting with anyone he needs.
- IX. A game will result in a forfeit if a team fails to field the minimum number of players after 30 minutes from the scheduled start time unless the late team has contacted the waiting team and gives a new reasonable arrival time. Umpires must wait, they are employees of **The 495 League**. The primary reason for this league is to play baseball, not to have forfeit wins.

#### **Article B: General Regulations Applying To Teams**

- I. All rosters must be submitted to the Board of Directors prior to the season opening.
- II. All rosters will conform to Sanctioned Babe Ruth rules.
- III. For clarification of Sanctioned age rules the following is an absolute must:
- a. Only Babe Ruth age thirteen (13), age fourteen (14) and age fifteen (15) may play on a Babe Ruth team.
- IV. Call-Over Policy
- a. A call-over policy is in place solely for the purpose of insuring a team has enough players to avoid forfeits. Managers are encouraged to call over players if they know they will have 10 or less players at a game.
  - b. A Babe Ruth Team may call over any 13, 14 or 15 year old player from another team in their town.

- c. Call-Over is only for the regular season, it will not be permitted for the play-off's.
- V. Each team must have a roster size of a minimum of 11 players per team and a maximum of fifteen (15) players per team unless a waiver is granted by **the 495 League Board of Directors**. If the town participates in Babe Ruth sanctioned tournaments, the town should also seek approval from the District Babe Ruth Commissioner as well.
- VI. Additions to a roster must comply with above rules. All roster additions must first be approved by the **495 League Board of Directors** prior to playing in a scheduled game.

### **Article C: General Regulation Applying To Equipment**

- I. Spikes
  - a. All players can wear proper spikes, metal or plastic, if they desire.  
**Note:** if playing on a Tuff Field they will not be allowed.
- II. All male catchers must wear a protective cup and **The 495 League** encourages the use of a cup by all male players.
- III. Players must be dressed in full uniform; this includes game shirt, game pants, game hat (game socks should be worn, but if missing they will not be considered as part of the uniform for this ruling). Game shirts must be tucked in at all times. Players not in "team" uniform will **NOT** be eligible to play in the game.
- IV. Players who are coaching bases must be provided with and wear a helmet.
- V. Bats (Babe Ruth)

We follow national Babe Ruth bat rules.

*For illegal bats, see the official Babe Ruth Memorandum located in the Documents section of the 495 websites.*

*New Batt Rules for 2018:*

Bats:

- a. Wood or
- b. BBCOR .5 mark or
- c. USA Baseball mark & 2 5/8" barrel
- d. Nothing else to worry about
- e. If an illegal bat is brought to umpire's attention during the at-bat, player gets a new bat. If he gets a hit with an illegal bat and it is brought to umpire's attention. He is out, all runners return.

## VI.

It will be the responsibility of the Manager or Coach to insure that there are **no** illegal bats in the dugout or on deck areas. The umpires will not look for bats before, during or after the game. A manager or coach must ask the umpire to check a bat to determine if it is illegal.

### **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.

*RE: Babe Ruth League, Inc. 2018 Approved and Non-Compliant Bats*

## **Article D: General Regulations Applying to the Game**

**Babe Ruth Major League baseball rules apply with the following exceptions:**

- I. The Game
  - a. There must be two qualified Umpires at each game.
    - i. Plate Umpire
    - ii. Base Umpire
    - iii. EXCEPTION: If there is no Base Umpire available, the game will proceed with only the Plate Umpire
    - iv. The use of a solo umpire is approved in an emergency situation.
  - b. An Umpire is defined as a person who is patched (sanctioned) by an umpire association approved by **The 495 League**. **The 495 League Board** has the right to exclude any umpire who it does not believe fit to umpire in the league or who demonstrates behavior or attitude not consistent with the goals of the league.
  - c. All umpires must submit a CORI form to their respective home town prior to the spring season. If an umpire does not have a home town, he/she can attend a 495 League meeting and submit form at that time.
- II. A waiting period of 15 minutes will be allowed, after the schedule game start time for the Umpire(s) to show up.

- a. If the Umpire(s) do not show up, the team that is not the FIELD OWNER will have the right to reschedule the game to their Home Field, be the Home Team and the offending team pay for the Umpire(s).
- b. **EXCEPTION:** If both Managers agree to use Coaches and/or parents to Umpire, then the game may continue. If the Umpire(s) show up, they must be inserted into the game immediately. If the Managers make an agreement of using coaches/parents, then protest will not be allowed for any erroneous calls made by the substitute Umpire(s). A Manager removing his team from the field for any reason that involves the inability for the substitute Umpire(s) to make proper calls, will forfeit the game.

III. The standard game shall be 6 1/2 innings with the home team leading or 7 innings completed.

- a. An official game will be considered final when 3 1/2 innings are played and the home team is leading or when 4 innings are played and the home team is trailing or score is tied. Games tied after 7 completed innings are recorded as a tie.
- b. Suspended games as a result of rain or other conditions will be rescheduled by the **495 League Scheduler**
  - i. **NOTE:** A Game can only be **suspended** once the game has become “an official game”. Any game that is stopped and postponed prior to the game becoming official will result in the game being rescheduled and starting over at the beginning with the score zero to zero.
  - ii. **Equipment Failure:** A game that is interrupted by equipment failure such as lights or other mechanical devices shall be considered a suspended game at any point and replayed from the existing point and situation.
- c. Rain-outs will be called by the Field Owner Manager no later than one (1) hour prior to game time and the opposing team’s Manager, umpires, and League Scheduler must be notified immediately. Please see the Rain-Out Procedure at the end of this document.
- d. In cases where two (2) or more games are scheduled on the same field, the first game will end no later than the scheduled starting time of the following game. If first game does not meet criteria stated in item b above, the game is considered suspended, it will be re-scheduled per provision stated in item b above.
- e. No inning will start after 2 1/2 hours play no matter what the score.

- IV. Calling the game because of darkness is strictly the Umpires call only. NO interference by the Managers, Coaches or Officials of **The 495 League** will be tolerated.
- V. A team will be awarded 2 points for a win and 1 point for a tie.
- VI. Scores must be reported by both teams using the scoring report form accessible through the 495 League team webpage within 24 hours of the completion of the game.
- VII. All players must play three (3) or more innings in the field in the first six (6) innings.
- VIII. There will be a continuous batting order of all eligible players present. Once established, the batting order will not be changed unless an injury or an event occurs which requires the removal of a player. Late eligible players will be added to bottom of batting order.
- IX. Free substitution is allowed except for pitchers.
- X. A game can start with eight (8) players and end with seven (7) players. Any number less is a forfeit.
- XI. **Borrowing Players** - If necessary to avoid a forfeit, teams may “borrow” players from the opposing team to play for them while in the field. Both managers must come to an agreement before such “borrowing” occurs that the game will remain official and cannot be protested for reasons of “borrowed” players. In other words, if managers agree to borrowing or loaning players to or from another team, they must accept the play that occurs during the game from those players.
- XII. Managers may not call off a game for a convenience reason; all dates during the season are potential game days. If a Manager feels he must cancel a game, he will receive a 7-0 forfeit. Players are expected to honor their commitment to their team.
- XIII. A courtesy runner is defined as the player who made the last offensive out.
- XIV. In the case of an injury only, a courtesy runner shall be allowed. The player removed cannot be put back onto the bases to replace the courtesy runner. The player removed, if able, is eligible to continue the game in his normal place on the lineup. The intent is to allow a player with a minor injury to walk it off, or get some attention without delaying the game or forcing his withdrawal. The injury decision is solely the decision of the offensive manager as he is responsible for the welfare of his players.
- XV. A team has the option of substituting a courtesy runner for the catcher scheduled for the next inning if that catcher is on base and there are 2 outs. The intent is for the catcher to begin putting on the catcher’s equipment to speed up the game.

XVI. The 495 League uses the MLB interpretation that a batter awarded first base by virtue of a walk is not eligible to be put out for overrunning first base if he immediately returns and makes no effort to continue to second base.

XVII. **Mercy Rule (NEW)**

- a. If a team is ahead by 12+ runs after 5 innings, or 4 ½ if the Home Team is ahead. Game over, DO NOT CONTINUE.

XVIII. **The Pitcher**

- a. One (1) pitch to a batter is considered one (1) inning pitched.
- b. No pitcher will be allowed to pitch more than seven (7) innings in any two consecutive team games. A pitcher that pitches in two games in the same day will require a full games rest before that pitcher is eligible to pitch again, even if the pitcher did not complete (7) innings pitched between the two games. Violations of any part of this rule are a forfeit.
- c. A pitcher must pitch until one (1) at bat is completed before being removed, except in cases of injury, then he/she must be removed for the remainder of the game as a pitcher.
- d. A pitcher must be removed from the mound upon the second visit to the mound by a Manager/Coach in the same inning. This is known as “removed by rule”.
- e. A pitcher who is removed from the mound for any reason may not re-enter as a pitcher for the remainder of the game.
- f. **SPECIAL PITCHING RULE for 15-year-old players (2017 and 2018 seasons).** 15 year old players may only pitch a maximum of 2 innings per game. Those 2 innings can be used by having one 15 year old player pitch 2 innings or by having two 15 year old players pitch 1 inning each.

XIX. Balks will be enforced for all ages

XX. **Game Protests**

- a. The **495 League** adopts the standard National Babe Ruth League rule 4.19 for game protests with the exception that the decision of the league rules interpreter will be final. Babe Ruth Rule 4.19 is quoted at the end of this document.
- b. A protested game that is replayed will utilize different umpires who will receive a full game pay.
- c. Summary of standard protest procedure:

- i. A protest can only be made when a manager believes an umpire's decision is in violation of the rules. No protest can be made of a judgment call.
- ii. A Manager must lodge a protest before the next pitch or next play. In the event of a game ending call, the protest must be made within 24 hours.
- iii. To protest a call, the protesting manager asks for time to lodge a protest which the umpire must recognize.
- iv. The protesting manager should calmly discuss the call with the umpire to discuss the rule in question. The managers should NOT come onto the field with a rulebook. The umpire may consult one if he wishes.
- v. The both managers should record in their scorebook the exact game situation (inning, outs, runner's positions, batter's count, player at bat etc...) and the ruling and all information necessary to make a decision. All umpires working the game should sign the books indicating they are correct and the game continues.
- vi. The protesting manager informs the League President who notifies the League Interpreter with the phone numbers of both managers and both umpires and he will make a decision which is final.
- vii. If the protest is upheld, the game will be restarted from the point of the protest in accordance with rule 4.19.
- viii. The current lineup and pitching rules are in effect. New players who show up for the replayed game get inserted at the bottom of the lineup. (example, if the current pitcher was eligible for 4 innings in the protested game, and he pitched 1 + the protested inning, he can finish the protested inning in the replay and pitch 2 more innings)

## **Article E: The 495 League Playoffs**

### **I. Players**

- a. Each player must participate in a minimum of 50% (rounded down) of the regularly scheduled games that are played and play at least three (3) innings per game to qualify for the playoffs. Participation in High School games count towards the 50% participation rule if played on the same date.
- b. Games missed due to injury will not be included in the minimum 50% rule.
- c. Only players listed on an official team roster are eligible for playoff games.
- d. The Scorebook MUST detail players attendance, or lack thereof, for every game and whether the absence is a recognized excused or not. If an absence is not documented, it is not excused if the book is examined for playoff eligibility.

### **II. Teams (subject to change every year)**

- a. Playoff format and team participation will be decided by **The 495 League** board every year.

- b. All teams in each division will make the playoffs and will be ranked 1-X (x = the total number of teams in the division)
- c. Standings (or seeding) will be determined by total points. (2 points for a win, 1 point for a tie)
- d. 2 way team Tie Breaker
  - i. Head to head
  - ii. Least runs allowed
  - iii. Most runs scored
  - iv. Coin toss

3-way ties are decided by the League Athletics website software which utilizes the above applied to the 3 teams affected ONLY.

- e. If we have 6 or fewer teams in a division, that division will play a double elimination tournament. If we have 7 or more teams in a division, that division will play a single elimination tournament.
- f. The home team will be the higher seed team throughout the playoffs.
- g. Each team forfeiting two (2) or more games, or causing the forfeiting of two (2) or more games will not be eligible to participate in the playoffs.

### III. **Game Site**

- a. Game sites TBD

IV. Trophies will be awarded to both teams participating in league playoff finals in both the Babe Ruth. (Champion and Runner Up)

V. Pitching will follow regular season rules and is continuous with the regular season.

### **Article F: Rain Out Procedure**

- a. HOME / VISITOR TEAM designation on the web site: The team designated on the schedule as HOME / VISITOR is for purposes of which team bats first only.
  - i. FIELD OWNER: Is the team that owns the field.
  - ii. HOME TEAM and FIELD OWNER may be different teams.
  - iii. **NOTE:** When the schedule is made, the rule used was to balance the number of times each team was HOME and VISITOR. The result is that you may

play at an out-of-town field, but you may be the HOME TEAM. Example, Marlboro plays at Hudson but Marlboro is listed as the HOME TEAM. Hudson is the FIELD OWNER.

- b. If a game is rained out, the Field Owner should notify the League Scheduler ASAP for a new game slot.
- c. Sundays are reserved for make-up games that could not be played that week. By default, all teams should expect to make up a rained-out game the next Sunday on the schedule. (For instance, if a game on Thursday, June 14<sup>th</sup> is rained out, that game will be rescheduled for the first available game slot on Sunday, June 19<sup>th</sup>)
- d. If the teams want to reschedule the game for a different date and time (other than the following Sunday) both teams must agree to a date and time and the date and time must be submitted to the scheduler BEFORE the default Sunday game time.
- e. The Home Team's organization pays for the umpires even if the Home Team is not the Field Owner.
- f. In the rare case that a makeup puts two out of town teams on a 3rd field (example Hudson (H) plays Northboro (V) on Fuller Field in Clinton, the responsibility is the HOME TEAM, Hudson in this example)
  - a. USA Baseball mark & 2 5/8" barrel

## Frequently Asked Questions

- 1) Is slash-bunting allowed? Yes. Slash bunting is when a batter acts like he is going to bunt, then swings away. This is not allowed by local rules in many youth leagues, but OK in Babe Ruth. Coach your fielders accordingly.
- 2) What kind of bat should I buy? See above (Article C, Section V) for updated bat rules.
- 3) Composite barreled bats must be BBCOR 0.50 certified or USA to be used in play.
  - a. Wood or
  - b. BBCOR .5 mark or
  - c. USA Baseball mark & 2 5/8" barrel
- 4) Are metal cleats allowed? Yes (495 local rule) Metal cleats are allowed for all ages.  
– **Please note: new Turf Fields will NOT allow Metal Cleats.**
- 5) What are the pitching limitations? (495 local rule) Pitchers can only pitch 7 innings in consecutive games. The time between games does not matter. Example, if a pitcher throws 5 innings in a game, he can pitch only 2 in the next game the team plays. If he pitches 5 innings in the first game of the season, and the second game is rained out, he can still only pitch 2 innings in the third game of the season. If a pitcher pitches 5 innings in a game, and he does not show up for the next game his team plays, he is eligible to pitch 7 innings in the next game. Violation of the rule will cause a forfeit of the game.

- 6) Is it legal to steal home? Yes. Coaches need to insure that the batter doesn't swing and catchers need to be taught NOT to cross in front of the plate as the batter still might swing anyway.
- 7) Is there a mandatory slide rule? (495 local rule) Players must either avoid contact or slide. Incidental contact will be ignored at 2B, 3B, and home plate. This is an umpire's call and is not arguable. A player coming in up with the intent to injure or dislodge the ball will be out and will be ejected. Rules concerning obstruction and interference are applicable. Remember, sometimes there is a collision where no one did anything wrong. So, there is no mandatory slide rule and the MIAA rule is not applicable.
- 8) What is the new Home Plate Collision Rule? 495 League makes every effort to err on the side of caution when it comes to safety, therefore we will enforce the new Home Plate collision rule as the following:
  - A runner attempting to score may not deviate from his direct pathway to the plate in order to initiate contact with the catcher (or other player covering home plate). If, in the judgment of the Umpire, a runner attempting to score initiates contact with the catcher (or other player covering home plate) in such a manner, the Umpire shall declare the runner out (even if the player covering home plate loses possession of the ball). In such circumstances, the Umpire shall call the ball dead, and all other base runners shall return to the last base touched at the time of the collision.
    - **Rule 7.13 Comment:** *The failure by the runner to make an effort to touch the plate, the runner's lowering of the shoulder, or the runner's pushing through with his hands, elbows or arms, would support a determination that the runner deviated from the pathway in order to initiate contact with the catcher in violation of Rule 7.13. If the runner slides into the plate in an appropriate manner, he shall not be adjudged to have violated Rule 7.13. A slide shall be deemed appropriate, in the case of a feet first slide, if the runner's buttocks and legs should hit the ground before contact with the catcher. In the case of a head first slide, a runner shall be deemed to have slid appropriately if his body should hit the ground before contact with the catcher.*
  - Unless the catcher is in possession of the ball, the catcher cannot block the pathway of the runner as he is attempting to score. If, in the judgment of the Umpire, the catcher without possession of the ball blocks the pathway of the runner, the Umpire shall call or signal the runner safe. Notwithstanding the above, it shall not be considered a violation of this Rule 7.13 if the catcher blocks the pathway of the runner in order to field a throw, and the Umpire determines that the catcher could not have fielded the ball without blocking the pathway of the runner and that contact with the runner was unavoidable.

We would like managers to coach the kids who are catching to stand on the infield grass until they have the ball. Then make the tag instead of standing in the baseline and waiting for the ball.

Official Babe Ruth Protest Rule 4.19

4.19

## **PROTESTING GAMES.**

Each league shall adopt rules governing procedure for protesting a game, when a manager claims that an umpire's decision is in violation of these rules. No protest shall ever be permitted on judgment decisions by the umpire. In all protested games, the decision of the League President shall be final. (In the 495 League, the League Rules Interpreter makes the decision)

Even if it is held that the protested decision violated the rules, no replay of the game will be ordered unless in the opinion of the League President the violation adversely affected the protesting team's chances of winning the game.