

PONY-BABE RUTH LEAGUE RULES SPYBA & PWYA

The SPYBA Pony and Babe Ruth Leagues will operate in accordance with the official WIAA High School Rules, with the exceptions listed below. The following rules and policies represent a re-statement of some of these basic rules, as well as differences or additions that will also apply to the operation of the Leagues and/or the games.

1. PRE-GAME PRACTICE RULES

A. The home team gets the first base dugout and the diamond for pre-game practice from 5:00-5:30 P.M. The visitors will have the third base dugout and will warm up from 5:30-6:00 P.M. Batting tunnel/cage use times are just reverse. When Plover vs. Point games are played at a Point field, the Point team will take the 3rd base dugout, regardless of home or away status. (i.e. the visitors will have the cage from 5:00-5:30 P.M. and the home team from 5:30-6:00 P.M.). In the case of a double-header game, no new innings shall begin after 1 hour and 50 minutes after the start of the second game (i.e., if the second game starts at 8:15 P.M. no new inning shall begin after 10:05 P.M.). NOTE: There is no time limit for the championship game in the league playoff.

B. Both teams are responsible for putting out and returning the bases and umpire equipment at the end the game.

C. The opening game should begin on time. An Umpires/Managers meeting and rules discussion should occur behind home plate 5 minutes before the scheduled start time.

2. PLAYING FIELD CONDITIONS AND SUSPENDED GAMES

A. Once play has begun on a particular evening, in the event of rain, severe lighting, high winds, or unplayable field conditions, a mutually agreeable decision shall be reached between the Umpire-in-Chief and the two coaches as whether to continue or suspend play. Such a decision shall be made within fifteen (15) minutes of the advent of such conditions. Completion of five (5) full innings constitutes a complete game, four and one-half (4 ½) if you are the home team.

B. Lightning** – Once Lightning is observed or Thunder is heard, and a flash to bang count of less than 30 seconds has been noted, the game must be suspended . Once play has been suspended play cannot be resumed unless 30 minutes have elapsed without lightning. (In this case 30 minutes since last note of lightning and thunder being within 30 seconds of each other. Sky to ground strikes, or “bolts” of lightning visible in the skyline will be considered imminent threats and will result in game suspension or continued suspension.) There are instances where lightning “flashes” may be observed (sometimes referred to as “heat lightning”) where the distance is so far away that an accurate flash to

bang count cannot be established or far exceeds 30 seconds. In these cases the umpire and/or the overall league coordinator may continue or resume play using the flash to bang method as guidance. Any resumption of play must be approved by the League coordinator or Overall Coordinator.

** - National Lightning Safety Institute recommends using the "flash to bang" method of measuring lightning distance. Using this method one counts the seconds from seeing a stroke of lightning to hearing the thunder. For each 5 second count, lightning is 1 mile away. (At 25 seconds, the strike is 5 miles away, 20 seconds, the strike is 4 miles away). At a count of 15 seconds (3 miles) there is imminent danger, and immediate defensive action should be taken. (Note: SPYBA may not have the room to provide "Safe shelter" to all participants.) All participants must clear the area and seek safe shelter. Safe structures include completely enclosed buildings, or a fully closed metal vehicle with windows tightly closed. (Note: Press boxes and dugouts are not considered safe shelters and should be evacuated)

C. In the event a game is suspended prior to completion of five (5) full innings, the game will be resumed at the point of suspension, including balls, strikes and outs. In the event a player is absent from the initial game, he shall be allowed to play in the continuation game, but must be inserted in the last batting position in the order. In the event a player is absent from the continuation game, he will be dropped from the line-up and no out shall be counted.

D. Suspended or cancelled games must be rescheduled as quickly as possible by the League Coordinator.

E. If inclement weather, field conditions, etc. interfere with play so the game is called (ended) by the umpire, it is a complete game if five (5) full innings have been played, or if the home team has scored a greater number of runs in four and a fraction times at bat than the visiting team has scored in five times at bat. In the event that more than five (5) full innings have been played, the final score will be the score at the end of the last full inning completed.

F. Any rescheduling must be approved by the League Coordinator.

G. In the event of a tie ***after regulation (or less if time limit has been reached)***, the California Tie-Breaker Rules will be followed. One ***additional*** inning will be played to determine the outcome. The inning starts with a runner on 2nd base and one out. The runner on 2nd is the player who made the last out of the previous inning. Regular play continues and a win, loss or tie is determined. This rule applies to all games except the Consolation game and Championship game.

3. PLAYERS NEEDED TO START AND PLAY A GAME

A. Seven (7) players must start and be on the field at all times to conduct a game. Any teams with less than seven (7) players available to play at the scheduled start of the game shall forfeit the game. A scrimmage game should be played with the players available or players from the other team. The 7 players needed to start a game must be on the official roster of that team. Rosters will be exchanged at the start of the regular season. The object is for the boys to play a game. ***Players from the opposing team can be used defensively to complete a defensive lineup (corner outfield only). Last batter is the player to be used. THIS RULE APPLIES IN THE REGULAR SEASON ONLY***

B. Any player reporting to a game after six (6) outs, or one (1) complete inning, may not play in the game. The second inning does not officially start until the pitcher throws the first pitch. This rule does not apply if the player is late due to a school function. This rule may be waived at the discretion of both managers, and the reasons for the waiver shall be reported to the League Coordinator.

C. When a team has only seven (7) players to begin a game, the first player reporting is to play the remainder of the game, regardless of policy “3B” above. The Pony League (13 year olds) and Babe Ruth League (14 & 15 year olds) will utilize nine (9) players on the field, normal **infield** positions and three (3) outfielders.

D. In the Pony league, no outfielder may take an initial pickoff throw at any base from the pitcher.

4. PLAYING TIME AND RE-ENTRY RULE

A. The league will operate with a CONTINUOUS BATTING ORDER whereby all players on the lineup sheet bat in the order that their name appears on the lineup sheet (not just the 9 on the field) Players showing up late for the game shall be added to the end of the batting order. ***If a player is injured during a game or is unable to finish, the team will not be charged with an out when that player’s turn comes up in the line-up; you will simply skip over that spot.***

B. Every player in the lineup for a particular game shall play a minimum of four (4) innings in each game. In the event that a game is shortened to less than seven (7) innings because of the ten (10) run rule, this policy is waived.

C. A pitcher having thrown a minimum of one (1) pitch shall not return as a pitcher in that game (i.e., once a pitcher leaves the mound as pitcher, he cannot pitch again in that game). Any player may re-enter a game in any position except pitcher.

D. Rules “4A” AND “4b” may be waived if a particular player is being disciplined by the manager. Any disciplinary action taken by a manager MUST be reported to the League Coordinator.

5. TEN RUN RULE

A. A game shall be considered over if after five (5) complete innings the visiting team is ahead by ten (10) runs **or** the home team is ahead by ten (10) runs after four and one-half (4 ½) innings. **The run rule does not apply to the Championship game.**

6. PITCHING RULES

A. A Babe Ruth (14/15 year old) pitcher can pitch a maximum of **three (3)** innings per game in the regular season. A maximum of four (**4**) **innings** during the playoffs. A Pony League (13-year-old) pitcher can pitch a maximum of **three (3)** innings per game in the regular season. A maximum of **four (4)** innings during the playoffs. One pitch constitutes an inning pitched.

B. Balks are called in both the Pony and Babe Ruth leagues

C. Managers or coaches are allowed one (1) trip to the mound each inning. A second trip in the same inning shall require the removal of the pitcher. A pitcher walking towards the baseline to discuss play with the manager/coaches shall be counted as a trip to the mound.

D. Only five (5) warm-up pitches will be allowed between innings unless in the umpire's judgment, it is necessary to increase pitches to prevent injury.

E. Pitchers must run for themselves unless they are a new pitcher entering the game the next inning so they can warm-up.

F. A minimum of 4 innings (or 3 ½ if home team is ahead at 1 hour 50 minute mark) must be played even if beyond the time limit.

G. ***No Intentional walks allowed. Every batter must be pitched to.***

7. SPORTSMANSHIP RULES

A. Umpires have been directed to insure a game that is fun and promotes good sportsmanship. To promote these goals, the umpires HAVE DISCRETION to remove a player or coach from a game for any of (but not limited to) the following reasons:

- Deliberately and maliciously throws a bat, helmet, or other object.

- Exhibits behavior that is not in the spirit of fair play and good sportsmanship.

Especially if he has been previously warned about his behavior (including contesting called balls & strikes).

- Maliciously runs into a fielder or other player.

- The use of bad, profane, objectionable language **or gestures** while on the field or in the dugout.

B. Managers and coaches are responsible for the attitudes and sportsmanship displayed by their team ***and fans and are expected to lead by example.***

C. No alcohol or tobacco products shall be consumed in the dugouts or on the field during play by players, managers or coaches.

D. Any coach, assistant coach, parent or player who is listed on the umpire evaluation form for inappropriate behavior concerning the game will be contacted by the League Coordinator and/or by the Overall Boys Coordinator to discuss possible actions (i.e., including the possibility of suspensions and/or expulsions).

E. In the event any SPYBA Coach **or player** is ejected from any game at any venue he/she must report the incident to their Over All Coordinator within 24 hours. Failure to do so will result in disciplinary action up to and including termination of Coaching privileges.

F. For safety reasons on deck batters needs to be in the on deck circle located behind the batter.

8. UNIFORMS AND EQUIPMENT

A. League uniforms shall not be worn except for games and League approved functions. Caps may be worn at any time and are required during play. League approved uniforms shall be worn by players and shirts **MUST** be tucked in at all times during play. League approved uniforms consist of league supplied jerseys, caps; socks and gray baseball pants (piping is permitted).

B. Players and their parents are responsible for keeping uniforms clean and in reasonable repair. Normal wear is expected, however, holes should be repaired to ensure that the uniforms are usable for as long as reasonably possible. Parents are asked not to make major alterations to the uniforms and to follow the washing instructions when cleaning their son's uniform.

C. Equipment is the property of the league and should only be used for practices, games and League approved functions. At the end of the season, the uniforms and equipment shall be turned into the League Coordinator by the date requested. Managers shall encourage players to use only equipment supplied by the League to ensure legal and safe equipment for the players. Any non-league equipment to be utilized for game play shall be checked by the home plate umpire prior to the start of the game.

D. Protective gear such as: hockey style helmet with elongated face mask, chest protector, shin guards and protective supporter with cup (provided by player) shall be worn by the catchers.

E. Metal spikes will be allowed in both Pony and Babe Ruth Leagues for games not played on the artificial turf. Games played on turf require non-metal spikes/shoes. Metal spikes will not allowed on the portable pitching mound on any type field.

F. NO metal jewelry may be worn or be on the players person during the game (i.e., chains, watches, earrings etc.) with the exception of medical alert or religious jewelry, and this MUST be taped to the players body.

G. BABE RUTH LEAGUE – A -3 bat weight differential is enforced. Beginning January 1, 2012, all bats not made of a single piece of wood shall meet the Batted Ball Coefficient of Restitution (BBCOR) performance standard, and such bats shall be labeled with a silkscreen or other permanent certification mark. The certification mark shall be rectangular, a minimum of a half-inch on each side and located on the barrel of the bat in any contrasting color. Aluminum and composite bats shall be labeled as approved tamper evident, and be marked as to being aluminum or composite. This marking shall be silkscreen or other permanent certification mark, a minimum of one-half-inch on each side and located on the barrel of the bat in any contrasting color. There shall be no devices, attachments or wrappings that cause the handle to become flush with the knob. Molded grips are illegal

H. USA approved bats or BBCOR bats -3 drop certified are allowed

9. PROTESTS

A. No protests are allowed – the umpire’s decision is final. The umpire shall be treated with respect.

B. Common sense and communications will be expected in the case of a conflict in rulings. The league encourages BOTH coaches and the umpire-in-chief to discuss the rulings and decide on a mutually agreeable solution.

C. No rulebook can completely cover every situation that may occur in a game or over the course of a season. Coaches are expected to meet any unexpected situation with common sense and with cooperation for the good of the program in mind. The Board of Directors reserves the right to make rulings or interpretations on rules covered in the official rulebook, or our additions to those rules. Coaches will be expected to abide by and accept those interpretations. Failure to do so may result in the Board taking disciplinary action. It is not always the strict letter of the rule that may settle a dispute, but the intent of the rule must also be considered, and the effect the rule violation has on the outcome of the game.

10. BASE RUNNING AWARDS

A. TWO BASES are awarded if a fair ball becomes dead because of bouncing over or passing through a fence, or if a live thrown ball goes into a stand for spectators, dugout, or over, through or lodges in a fence provided it is not thrown by a pitcher FROM HIS PITCHING RUBBER.

B. ONE BASE is awarded if a pitcher or any throw by the pitcher FROM HIS PITCHING POSITION ON HIS PITCHING RUBBER goes to a stand or dugout, or over, through or lodges in a fence or umpire's equipment.

11. INFIELD PLAY

A. The infield fly is a fair fly ball, with less than two (2) outs and runners on 1st and 2nd or bases loaded. The ball must be catchable by an infielder, including the pitcher or catcher with ordinary effort. This rule does not include line drives or attempted bunts. Runners may advance at their own risk after the batted ball is caught by a fielder or hits the ground. If a declared infield fly Bounces foul before passing 1st or 3rd base, the ball is foul and there is no out.

12. MISCELLANEOUS RULES AND POLICIES

A. All players and substitutes shall be in the dugout unless participating in the game or preparing to enter the game.

B. Any umpire's decision which involves JUDGMENT is final and non-appealable. Judgment calls include whether a hit is fair or foul, whether a pitch is a ball or a strike or whether a runner is out or safe. If there is reasonable doubt about a decision being IN CONFLICT with the rules, the manager may request that a correct ruling be made. The umpire making the decision may ask for information from another umpire before making the final decision, however, no umpire shall criticize or interfere with another umpire's decision UNLESS ASKED BY THE UMPIRE MAKING THE CALL.

C. A batter-runner who reaches first base safely and then over-runs or over-slides may immediately return without being put out, provided he does not attempt or fake an advance to second base. This privilege of return does not apply to a base on balls.

D. Any runner is out when he does not slide or attempt to avoid contact with a fielder WHO HAS THE BALL AND IS WAITING TO MAKE A TAG, OR IF HE MALICIOUSLY RUNS INTO A FIELDER (UMPIRE DISCRETION). A catcher shall not block the baseline or access to home plate unless he has the ball in his possession and is waiting to make a tag on the runner. In no case shall the catcher initiate contact with the runner, nor a runner with the catcher. Violation of these rules will result in the run scoring or not scoring, depending on the situation, along with possible dismissal from the game if contact is initiated with malicious intent. Calls under this rule are considered judgment calls by the umpire and are not appealable.

E. Fielders shall not fake a tag on a runner. A fielder who fakes a tag is considered an obstruction and the runner shall be awarded the base attempted plus one (1) base.

F. There are no designated/pinch hitters allowed. A continuous batting order will be used.

G. A runner is out for failure to touch the base (advancing or returning) or failure to tag up after a fly ball out. This is a delayed penalty called by the umpire after all playing action has ended.

H. A substitute runner will be required in league play for the catcher when he is on base with two (2) outs. The substitute runner will be the player to make the last out.

I. The winning team will file the game report with the League **Coordinator** no later than 5:00 P.M. the day following the game.

J. There will be infield and/or outfield practice allowed (throwing the ball around while the pitcher is warming up) after the first inning. This rule will stay in effect unless it slows down the speed of the game.

K. All tournament team players must participate in 75% of their scheduled league games prior to July 1st to be eligible to play in any remaining tournament games. (Participate means a minimum of 4 innings in a 7 inning game).