

# Souderton Area Baseball and Softball League, Inc.

## League Rules



March 13, 2021

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## 1 Revision History

Amended	Sections	Change and Justification
23-Feb-2006	All	This is the first issuance of this document.
2-Dec-2006	All	Pitching rules and Minor draft rules updated.
03-Jan-2008	All	T-Ball and Pony ages; Stealing rules updated.
11-Feb-2009	Multiple	Pitching rules, drafts, call-ups, coach conduct changes. Numerous small changes.
25-Mar-2010	Multiple	Legal bats, Draft updates, Majors rules to be based on Cal Ripken rules, Pitch count violation penalty.
04-Feb-2011	Multiple	Various clarifications for girls and boys.
06-Mar-2012	Multiple	Softball updates and various general updates
16-Jan-2013	Multiple	Pony 1 & 2 pitching updates, Rules change process
2-Apr-2014	Multiple	Cherub league updates, U10 update
25-Feb-2015	3.2	Schedules
25-Feb-2015	3.4	Girls equipment
25-Feb-2015	3.7	Girls time frame for games
25-Feb-2015	3.9.5	Field layouts
25-Feb-2015	5.1.1 & 5.1.3	7 <sup>th</sup> batter for Pony 1 and 2, end of play for Pony 2
25-Feb-2015	8	Cherub pitching dimension, 7 <sup>th</sup> batter and end of play, defensive face guards
25-Feb-2015	10u	Pitching rules, defensive face guards
25-Feb-2015	12u, Junior & Senior	Defensive face guards
25-Feb-2015	Girls	ASA Non-Approved Bats list update
07-May-2016	Multiple	Clarifications on face masks, runner advance (Cherub), fake bunts, and courtesy runners.
23-March-2019	Multiple	Removal of T-Ball references, USA Quickball section, replacement of references to Boys/Girls Vice President to Baseball/Softball Vice President, multiple grammatical and syntax error correction changes, title page and logo change, table of content updates, document header modification, document spacing changes.
3-Feb-2021	Multiple	2.4 Uniform/Equipment section additions -Catcher's helmets are available in the team equipment bag or in field storage sheds. -All baseball will use regulation balls. -Softball 8U and 10U divisions will use 11 inch softballs. 12U and older will use 12 inch softballs. Game Start Times -All weeknight games played at non-lighted fields will

Amended	Sections	Change and Justification
		<p>start at 6 p.m.</p> <p>2.5 Night Games at the VFW Field and American Legion Field section addition -In pony and minor divisions games, no new inning will start after 105 minutes (1 hour 45 minutes)</p> <p>2.6 GENERAL RULES - ALL LEAGUES section addition -Paragraph L Commissioner Ruling Any protests must be made to the division commissioner within 24 hours.</p> <p>4. Pony League Rules addition -The first half of the game will be kid pitch; the second half will be machine pitch.</p> <p>4.1.1. Pony Specific Rules changes -Paragraph 3. After the third walk of an inning, the hitting team's coach will complete the at bat after 4 balls are thrown. -Paragraph 5. No stealing first two weeks of season, during kid pitch innings only thereafter. -Paragraph 6. Four runs per half inning maximum.</p> <p>4.1.2- Pony Pitching Rules changes -A player may pitch a maximum of one inning per game. There will be no minimum rest period.</p> <p>5.3 Minor Specific Rules additions -Paragraph 9. A 5 run limit per half inning will end an inning except in the 6th inning</p> <p>6.2 Pitchers. Change to daily pitch count and required rest days.</p> <p>6.3 Major Specific Rules -2h. Mercy Rule- If one team is ahead by 12 runs after 4 innings (3 &amp; ½ innings if the home team is ahead), the game will end.</p>

## **1.1 Rules Change Process**

These rules are intended to provide the best experience for players, parents, and coaches. These rules also enhance player safety and development.

### **1. Mid-Season Rule Change Process**

A proposed rule change must have approval from the relevant league commissioner, a majority of the affected coaches, and the relevant division vice president. Additionally, a successful majority vote of the Board of Directors is needed for the proposed rule change to go into effect. Communication of any approved mid-season rule changes will be communicated to the affected players/parents by email and the changes will be posted on the [www.SABL.org](http://www.SABL.org) website.

### **2. Off-Season Rule Change Process**

After each season, a rules committee is formed as part of a SABL General Meeting. The committee consists of volunteer league general members and board members. The committee discusses potential changes with the intent to improve any existing rules as necessary. The committee presents proposed changes to the Board of Directors for review and decision.

## **2 SABL Rules**

### **2.1 Code of Conduct**

All coaches are expected to set a proper example to encourage civil behavior amongst their team's players, parents and fans. If any parent, coach or fan physically or verbally abuses an umpire, the automatic ejection of that person(s) will occur. Furthermore, coaches and their assistants must refrain from any behavior intended to influence or challenge the authority of the umpire. During all games, the umpire has final authority, and may warn or eject coaches, assistant coaches, or players as necessary.

If an incident occurs where it is apparent and verified that the offenders are from one team, the Board of Directors has decided that the game may be forfeited to the opposing team, after reviewing the situation. If the action of abuse is severe enough, possible expulsion as a member of the league may occur, with all rights and privileges being revoked. If an umpire feels their authority is being challenged, or if any type of equipment is thrown, a warning will be issued to both teams at the time. A second violation will cause the automatic ejection of the offender no matter what team the offender may be on.

### **2.2 Schedules**

The published league schedule will dictate the time and the place for all games. Games may not be rescheduled at the whim of the coaches, at their convenience, or at the convenience of a few players. If there is a genuine conflict, such as school or community events, which would leave both teams with insufficient players, you may request a game change through your commissioner. The commissioner will in turn notify the umpire-in-chief and the vice-president of the league involved. The baseball/softball vice president will in turn notify the umpire and the league vice president.

### **2.3 Inclement weather**

Inclement weather or unplayable fields are the only other legitimate reasons for rescheduling of games. If, after consulting the visiting team, the game is postponed, the home team coach will call the league commissioner and the umpire-in chief. These people will reschedule the game and umpires through the appropriate league vice-president. There are no exceptions. The game should be made up as soon as team schedules and field availability allow.

The coaches of both teams shall agree on the fitness of the playing field before the game starts. In the event that the two coaches cannot agree, the league

commissioner, vice-president of the league involved, president or a duly delegated representative shall make the determination.

The umpire shall be the sole judge as to whether and when play shall be suspended during a game because of unsuitable weather conditions or the unfit condition of the playing field; as to whether and when play shall be resumed after such suspension; as to whether and when a game shall be terminated after such suspension. Said umpire shall not call the game until at least thirty (30) minutes after play has been suspended. The umpire may continue the suspension as long as there is any chance to resume play.

## **2.4 Uniforms / Equipment**

In baseball, players must wear full uniforms including a cap. Boys must wear a cup. All players must wear batting helmets at all times when batting or running. The catcher will wear full equipment and will wear approved gloves or catcher's mitts only, as provided by the respective division rules. Catchers/players warming up a pitcher will wear a catcher's helmet at all times. Catcher's helmets are available in the team equipment bag provided to each team or in the pony, minor, and major field's storage sheds.

Equipment for all baseball leagues must be approved for Babe Ruth / Cal Ripken League use, and should be stamped with this wording where appropriate (i.e., bats, balls). Baseball bats must abide by the USA bat standard. All divisions of baseball will use regulation baseballs.

For softball, players playing on the field must have a softball fielder's mask. Batters and runners must wear helmets that include cage and chin strap. The 8U and 10U divisions will use 11 inch regulation softballs and 12U and older will use 12 inch regulation softballs. The coaches should have the players in full uniform, to include socks, etc., as applicable, at all times.

In Quickball, baseball and softball, there is no wearing of metal spikes or jewelry of any kind, to include watches or earrings.

### **Game Start Times**

All weeknight games played at non-lighted fields will start at 6pm, the home team may practice until 5:45pm and the visiting team may practice until 6pm. Both coaches should meet prior to 6:00 p.m. to exchange line-ups and discuss ground rules with the umpire. Games should start as close to 6:00 p.m. as possible.



If a team has insufficient players to start on time, a 15-minute delay will occur. A team must play with 8 players or may borrow one or more of the opposing team's players, only as offered by the opposing coach. If by the end of the 15-minute delay the team still has less than 8 players, that team will forfeit the game.

The home team will sit on the 1st base side for all SABL fields used except for the Legion field that is located by the SABL clubhouse. At the Legion field, the home team will sit on the 3rd base side to allow use of the score board.

## **2.5 Night Games at the VFW Field and American Legion Field**

For games at the VFW and the American Legion Field during the school year, no inning may begin after 10:00 p.m. on school nights. For 6:00 p.m. games, no inning may begin after 8:00 p.m. if a second game has been scheduled. A new inning "officially" begins immediately after the third out of the previous inning. Regardless, lights must be out by 11:00 p.m. on any night unless authorized by the president or their designee. Friday and Saturday are considered non-school nights.

In pony and minor divisions games, no new inning will start after 105 minutes (1 hour 45 minutes).

In softball, no new inning will start after 90 minutes from start and games will end after 100 minutes, unless a different time limit is in effect for a specific league we are participating in.

## **2.6 GENERAL RULES - ALL LEAGUES**

For baseball divisions, standard Cal Ripken rules apply unless otherwise stated in this document.

Connie Mack rules are not addressed in this document.

### **A. Rules of Conduct**

Head or Assistant Coach Rules of Good Conduct violations include:

1. Loud and/or persistent objection to an umpire's decision.
2. Abusive language.
3. Smoking in the dugout or in the area of the playing field.
4. Loud and/or persistent argument between the head coach or assistant coaches.
5. Drinking alcoholic beverages in front of the team or having the smell of alcohol on breath before, during or after any league activity.

6. Willfully disregarding procedures related to any fund-raising activity.
7. Any other action deemed detrimental to the league as determined by the Board of Directors.

Violation penalties:

- a. First Offense: One game suspension in writing from the Board of Directors (BOD).
- b. Second Offense: Two game suspension in writing from the BOD.
- c. Third Offense - Dismissal in writing from the BOD.

NOTE: The league has the right to remove any coach at any time during the season if conduct is deemed inappropriate and warrants dismissal.

### **B. Playing Age Determination for Baseball Divisions**

A baseball player's age as of May 1 of the current year/season determines their division grouping placement.

<b><u>Division</u></b>	<b><u>Age</u></b>
Quickball	4-6
Pony	7-8
Minors	9-10
Majors	11-12

### **C. Playing Age Determination for Softball Divisions**

A softball player's as of January 1 of the current year/season determines their division grouping placement.

<b><u>Division</u></b>	<b><u>Age</u></b>
Quickball	4-6
8u	7-8
10u	9-10
12u	11-12
15u	13-15
18(9)u	16-18(9)

### **D. Field Layouts**

<b><u>Division</u></b>	<b><u>Base Distance</u></b>	<b><u>Pitching Distance</u></b>
Quickball	35' bases	N/A
Pony / Minors baseball	60' bases	45' 6" pitcher's rubber
Majors baseball	70' bases	50' pitcher's rubber
8U /10U softball	60' bases	35' pitcher's rubber
12U softball	60' bases	40' pitcher's rubber
15U/18U softball	60' bases	43' pitcher's rubber

### **E. Tie Games**

Tie games halted due to weather, curfew or light failure shall be resumed from the exact point at which they were halted in the original game. The tie game may be completed preceding the next scheduled game between the same teams. A pitcher may pitch in both games on the same day subject to normal pitching limitations. The line-up and batting order of both teams shall be the same as at the moment the game was halted, subject to the rules governing substitution.

Games halted in the playoffs will be made up from that point as soon as possible.

### **F. Post Season Play**

In baseball divisions with playoffs (Minors and Majors), playoffs will be determined by league standings.

### **G. Division Standings**

There are no division standings for Quickball, 8U softball and Pony baseball divisions.

There will be standings for the Minor and Major baseball, as well as the softball 10U, 12U, 15U and 18U. Playoff seedings will be based on standings.

### **H. Tie Breakers**

Unless otherwise determined, final standings will be determined as follows:

- 1 - Overall record (evaluate wins only first, if any teams have the same number of wins, factor in tie games next)

- 2 – Head-to-head record
- 3 - The team with least runs given up over the season
- 4 – Least runs scored head to head
- 5 – Coin flip

## **I. Playing Time**

For the Quickball, Pony, 8U and 10U divisions, no player will sit for a second inning (from the playing field) until every player has sat for one inning. Exceptions can be made for disciplinary or health reasons at the coach's discretion. No player will sit a third inning until every player has sat for two innings, etc. The league recognizes the need to develop pitchers and catchers, so this rule excludes starting pitchers and catchers. However, once removed from their starting role of pitcher or catcher, they will then become part of this rotation. For divisions with playoffs, the league recognizes the purpose of the playoffs, and so, teams may revert to playing times listed in their respective division rules on the following pages.

## **J. Replay of Games**

Any game in need of rescheduling because of circumstances beyond the league's control must be made up. The time and field location will be determined by the league commissioner in consultation with both coaches.

1. No team will be forced to play two games in one day
2. No team will be forced to play four games in one week
3. Games not made up by the end of the regular season will result in a loss for all games not played. Any dispute in the rescheduling of a game will be reviewed by the baseball or softball VP, league VP or league President.
4. In the event of extreme weather conditions that prevent a team from playing a complete number of scheduled games by seasons end, the highest ranking impartial executive board member will determine which games could not possibly be rescheduled. Any games determined not able to be played will not count as a loss in the league standings.

## **K. Regulation Game**

A regulation game consists of 6 innings, unless extended because of a tie score. If a game is called due to inclement weather or other circumstances, and (4) innings have been completed or (3 1/2) if the home team is leading, the game shall be considered a regulation game. All incomplete games must be replayed. All playoff games will be no less than 6 innings and will resume at the point they

were suspended. A player, who pitched and was replaced by another pitcher in the game, can not pitch again in the same game. All other pitching rules apply.

#### **L. Commissioner Ruling**

Any protests must be made to the division commissioner within 24 hours. If there is no commissioner then the protest should be lodged with the baseball or softball VP. Coaches who are doubling as commissioners shall not adjudicate protests involving their own teams. All protests involving a commissioner's team shall be handled by the baseball or softball VP.

#### **M. Scorebook Ruling**

Coaches should keep an accurate scorebook that includes first initial, last name, number and position of each player. Line-ups are to be exchanged with the opposing coach before the game.

#### **N. Sliding Ruling**

On all plays at second, third, and home, a runner must avoid contact with a defensive player by sliding. If contact is made the runner is out (unless a proper slide was made). Further, an improperly positioned fielder must remove himself from the path of the runner if he is not in possession of the ball; otherwise standard baseball or softball interference rules apply and the runner is safe at the next base. Sliding is encouraged for safety. In all divisions, there will be no head first sliding permitted (except for sliding back to a base to avoid a pick-off in the Majors). The penalty for unwarranted head-first slides is the automatic out of the runner committing the offense. **If a player does not slide and no contact is made, no infraction has occurred.**

#### **O. Fake Bunts**

A player may not show that they are going to bunt, pull the bat back and then take a full swing. A batter who attempts to hit a ball after a fake bunt is automatically out. The ball is dead and the runners will return to their bases. In softball, fake bunts are permitted in the 15U and 18U divisions.

**P. Bat Throwing**

Batters will not throw the bat after hitting a pitched ball. The first offense (per player) will be a warning. The second offense (per player) will be an out with all runners returning to the base they occupied prior to the at bat. The batter will be removed from the batting order for the remainder of the game and that batting order place will remain vacant for the remainder of the game. However; the player may remain in the game defensively.

**Q. Discipline Ruling**

Discipline of players for in-game violations is at the umpire's discretion. Ejection shall be automatic for abusive language or gestures. The Board of Directors will review all such cases to decide if further disciplinary action is needed.

A player may be kept out of the game for disciplinary reasons.

Keep all players on the bench, except the next batter who will be the only other player with a bat in their hands. This player will be away from the pitcher and behind the screen.

No trophies or plaques may be awarded to a team or individual unless authorized by the Board of Directors.

### **3. QUICKBALL DIVISION RULES**

The Quickball Division is designed to be an instructional league only. The following provisions have been made:

1. No score or standings will be kept.
2. The playing ages for the Quickball league will be 4 years of age through 6 years of age. Players that are 6 years old may move up to the Pony division if they have played Quickball for two years.

### **4. PONY LEAGUE RULES**

Pony division ball players are seven and eight years old. The first half of the game will be kid pitch; the second half will be machine pitch. The hitting team's coach or representative will be behind the pitcher's mound to call balls and strikes and step in to pitch as described below.

#### **4.1.1- Pony Specific Rules**

1. Games start at 6pm and are played for 6 innings or dark (the two head coaches consult and decide to cease play early for darkness or inclement weather). No new inning will start after 105 minutes (1 hour 45 minutes).
2. Scores may be kept for individual games; however, team and season standings will not be kept or allowed under any circumstances.
3. After the third walk of an inning, the hitting team's coach will complete the at bat after 4 balls are thrown. The hitter's strikes in the count will remain, for example if there are 2 strikes there will only need to be one more strike by the coach for the batter to be out. There will be no walks by the pitching machine.
4. Leads are prohibited. A runner may not leave the base until the ball crosses the plate.
5. Stealing will not be allowed during the first 2 weeks of the season. Beginning the 3rd week, stealing will be allowed during the 2 inning's of kid pitch only.
6. There will be a maximum of 4 runs scored per half inning, when the third run scores, the offensive half inning concludes.
7. Hitters should run their true hit out, whether it is a single, double, triple or home run. However, if there is an error in the outfield, play will stop when the ball, coming from the outfield, hits the infield area. A runner may not advance past the base he is going to once the ball hits the infield dirt or reaches an infielder.
8. The infield fly rule is not in effect.
9. Defensive substitutions can take place between innings. Each player must play at least three innings in the field.
10. Substitutions for injury may take place at any time.
11. A player once removed may return any time between innings as long as each player is in the field for at least three innings.

12. Any player who cannot continue to play will be removed from the batting order and all other batters will move up one spot.
13. All boys must use and wear athletic supporter with metal, fiber, or plastic cup. Catchers must wear a catcher's helmet, chest protector, shin guards, mask and throat protector during all practices, games and warm-ups. A catcher's mitt will be issued and encouraged to be used; however, due to the size of hands, if a regular mitt is needed it may be done at the discretion of the coach only.
14. Rotation of players through all positions is expected to give them knowledge of all positions. For safety reasons, 1<sup>st</sup> base and the catcher's position are exceptions to this rule. However, it is not mandatory that players change positions every inning.
15. From game to game the batting order is to be rotated so each player can experience leading off, batting clean up, etc.
16. The batting order may not change during the game. However, any player arriving late may be added to the end of the lineup.
17. The catcher must assume a normal position behind the plate.
18. No bunting is permitted.
19. There will be no advancement to the next base on any overthrown balls.
20. Play will stop when the ball, coming from the outfield, hits the infield area. Player may not advance past the base he is going to once the ball hits infield dirt or reaches an infielder.
21. The batting order will be made up of all players present and each player will bat in their turn even if the player is not in the game defensively at the time.
22. Any addition or subtraction to the order must be made know to the opposing coach immediately.
23. Ten players will play defensively
24. At the start of each play, the 4 outfielders will play at in the grass area of the outfield.
25. The 4 infielders will play at the infield position assigned to them, along with an assigned pitcher and catcher.

#### **4.1.2- Pony Pitching Rules**

1. A player may pitch a maximum of one inning per game. There will be no minimum rest period. While coaches are pitching via machine, the defensive team will place a player next to the pitcher to play that position defensively. The defensive player playing the pitcher's position should be positioned no closer than the pitcher's rubber and preferably even with it and not more than three feet to either side.
2. The coach pitcher will not catch a hit ball or interfere with the defensive player's ability to play the ball. The coach pitcher must make an attempt to get out of the way of a hit ball or a defensive player but should stay in the general vicinity of the



mound while the ball is in play.

3. Should a batted or thrown ball hit the pitcher/coach, or if he interferes with a defensive player while making an honest attempt to get out of the way, there will be no penalty. In this case, he would be considered as an umpire, part of the field of play.

## **5. MINORS DIVISION RULES**

### **5.1. Players**

1. All players must play at least 3 innings (9 outs) in the field. Substitution defensively can take place between innings.
2. Substitution for injury may take place at any time.
3. A player once removed from the game may return any time between innings as long as each player is in the field for 3 innings.
4. The batting order will be made up of all the players present. Each player will bat in their turn even if the player is not in the game defensively at the time.
5. The batting order may not change during the entire game.
6. Any player who cannot continue to play for any reason will be removed from the order with everyone moving up one spot.
7. Any player arriving late may be placed in the batting order but must be added to the order as the last batter.
8. Any addition or subtraction to the order must be made known to the opposing coach immediately.

### **5.2. Pitchers**

Pitchers in all divisions will have specific limits for each game. The number of pitches thrown determines the amount of rest the player must have before pitching again.

For pitcher safety, no curve balls or breaking pitches are permitted.

The number of pitches allowable under the new regulation is based on the pitcher's level. Specific rest periods are in place when a pitcher reaches a higher threshold of pitches delivered in a day.

**For minors, the maximum pitches allowed per day is 75.**

Pitchers must adhere to the following rest requirements:

- If a player pitches 61 or more pitches in a day, 2 calendar days of rest must be observed.

- If a player pitches 41 - 60 pitches in a day, 1 calendar days of rest must be observed.
- If a player pitches 21 - 40 pitches in a day, 0 calendar day of rest must be observed.
- If a player pitches 1-20 pitches in a day, no calendar day of rest is required before pitching again.

When a pitcher reaches the maximum allowed pitches per day, the pitcher may complete pitching to that current batter. The actual number of pitches will be recorded and rest requirements must be adhered to as above.

However, if for example, a coach intends to take a pitcher out after 20 pitches (so he is eligible to pitch again the next day), the coach must take him out after the 20<sup>th</sup> pitch. In this case, the coach cannot allow him to finish pitching to the current batter (past 20 pitches), unless he chooses to make him ineligible to pitch the next day.

The opposing team should also be keeping the pitch count; teams will communicate about the pitch count at the conclusion of each half inning to avoid accidentally pitching beyond the pitch count. If there is a pitch count discrepancy, the coaches must work resolve the discrepancy and continue play. Pitch counts should be exchanged between innings. If an honest mistake is made, no resetting of the batter count or game play (runs/outs etc.) will occur.

Pitch counts for each player should be accurately recorded in the score book for each game. The game records must also be accurately and unambiguously dated. These pitching records will be available for inspection by opposing coaches or the Commissioner upon request. In the playoffs, a more detailed log sheet will be kept, signed off by both coaches.

A pitcher once removed as a pitcher or is relieved by another pitcher may not pitch again in the same game but may be used in any other position.

Pitchers may not use gloves with any white markings or any size besides a regulation fielding glove.

The penalty for not following the pitch count rule is as follows: If a willful disregard of the rule is determined during a game, the pitcher in question must be removed from pitching immediately. The game is forfeited giving a loss to the offending team and a win to opposing team. Note: it is recommended that a formal announcement to players not be made regarding the forfeit. Instead, allow the kids to continue playing the game to its normal conclusion. After the game it should be made clear that the offending team is recorded with the loss and the opposing team is recorded with the win.

- First Offense: As an additional penalty, the offending team receives an additional recorded loss.
- Second Offense: In addition to the first offense penalty, the head coach is suspended for the next 2 scheduled games.
- Third Offense: In addition to the first offense penalty, the head coaching will be relieved of head coaching responsibilities.

### **5.3. Minors Specific Rules**

1. Games will be 6 innings.
2. Stealing of all bases, including home, is permitted at all times while the ball is declared live.
3. Tagging up is permitted on all caught fly balls.
4. The infield fly rule is not enforced.
5. Bunting is permitted.
6. A runner may not leave the base until the ball has been hit or passes the batter. Leaving early will result in a warning to the player and that player's team. Each additional offense will result in the runner being called out. The thrown pitch will count against the batter.
7. Play is stopped on a batted ball when the ball is in possession of a player on the pitcher's mound area (where the field begins to raise above the rest of the infield). All runners who are not already in the process of attempting to obtain the next base must stay at the base they are at or return to the previous base, unless a play is made on runner.
8. There will be standings kept during the regular season. Playoff seeding will be based on the standings. Playoffs will be determined before the season as to what format (single or double elimination) will be used.
9. A 5 run limit per half inning will end an inning except in the 6<sup>th</sup> inning (or last inning determined by the 105 minute time limit), where the inning will not end until a third out is established. The 5 run limit will continue to be enforced during playoffs.
10. A farm system will be instituted as described in major division rule 6.
11. Tie games in the playoffs must be completed or made up.
12. With 2 outs, a courtesy runner may be used only for the catcher. The courtesy runner will be the player who recorded the last batted out.

## **6. MAJOR DIVISION RULES**

### **6.1. Players**

1. All players must play at least 3 innings (9 outs) in the field. In the playoffs this reverts to a two-inning rule.

2. Substitution for an injured player may take place at any time. If that injured player cannot take their next at bat, it will be considered an out unless he is permanently removed from the game.
3. A player once removed from the game may return at any time between innings provided each player is in the field for 3 innings by game's end.
4. The batting order will be made up of all the players present. Each player will bat in their turn even if they are not in the game defensively.
5. The batting order may not change during the entire game.
6. Any player who cannot continue to play for any reason will be removed from the order with everyone moving up one spot.
7. Any player arriving late may be placed in the batting order but must be added to the order as the last batter.
8. Any addition or subtraction to the order must be made known to the opposing coach immediately.

## **6.2. Pitchers**

Pitchers in all divisions of SABL will have specific limits for each game, based on their age. The number of pitches delivered in a game will determine the amount of rest the player must have before pitching again.

The number of pitches allowable under the new regulation is based on the pitcher's age. Specific rest periods are in place when a pitcher reaches a higher threshold of pitches delivered in a day.

**For Majors, the maximum pitches allowed per day is 85.**

Pitchers must adhere to the following rest requirements:

- If a player pitches 66+ pitches in a day, 2 calendar days of rest must be observed.
- If a player pitches 41-65 pitches in a day, 1 calendar day of rest must be observed.
- If a player pitches 1-40 pitches in a day, no calendar day of rest is required before pitching again.

When a pitcher reaches the max pitches he is permitted in a day, he may complete pitching to that current batter. The actual number of pitches will be recorded.

However, if for example, a coach intends to take a pitcher out after 20 pitches (so he is eligible to pitch again the next day), the coach must take him out after the 20<sup>th</sup> pitch. In this case, the coach cannot allow him to finish pitching to the current batter (past 20 pitches), unless he chooses to make him ineligible to pitch the next day.

The opposing team should also be keeping the pitch count; teams will communicate about the pitch count at the conclusion of each half inning to avoid accidentally

pitching beyond the pitch count. If there is a discrepancy, the coaches must work it out in a civil manner and continue play. Pitch counts should be exchanged between innings. If an honest mistake is made, no resetting of the batter count or game play (runs/outs etc.) will occur.

A pitcher once removed as a pitcher or is relieved by another pitcher may not pitch again the same game but may be used in any other position.

Pitchers may not use gloves with any white markings or any size besides a regulation fielding glove.

The penalty for not following the pitch count rule is as follows: If a willful disregard of the rule is determined during a game, at that time the pitcher in question must be removed from pitching immediately. The game is forfeited giving a loss to the offending team and a win to opposing team. Note: it is recommended that a formal announcement to players not be made regarding the forfeit. Instead, allow the kids to continue playing the game to its normal conclusion. After the game it should be made clear that the offending team is recorded with the loss and the opposing team is recorded with the win.

- First Offense: As an additional penalty, the offending team receives an additional recorded loss.
- Second Offense: In addition to the first offense penalty, the head coach is suspended for the next 2 scheduled games.
- Third Offense: In addition to the first offense penalty, the head coaching will be relieved of head coaching responsibilities.

### **6.3. Majors Specific Rules**

1. Cal Ripken 11u Tournament Rules will be followed for the Majors. Any exceptions to Cal Ripken rules will be noted in this section of the SABL rules.
2. Cal Ripken rules reference Major League Baseball (MLB) for its general rules with the following clarifications (some are exceptions to MLB rules):
  - 2a. Base Path Distance = 70'
  - 2b. Pitching Distance = 50'
  - 2c. Game Length = 6 innings
  - 2d. Leads are legal.
  - 2e. Stealing is legal.
  - 2f. Stealing home is legal.
  - 2g. On an uncaught third strike with no runner on first base (or with 2 outs, regardless of whether there is a runner on first), the batter immediately becomes a runner.
  - 2h. Mercy Rule- If one team is ahead by 12 runs after 4 innings (3 & ½ innings if the home team is ahead), the game will end.

- 2i. Balks will be called. One warning will be given per pitcher. During the play the warning occurred, a dead ball situation occurs. No runners can advance. In the event of a balk (after a warning for that pitcher), there is an immediate dead ball situation. All runners will advance one base.
  - 2j. Bats must meet the USA bat standard.
  - 2k. No metal cleats may be worn.
  - 2l. Bunting is permitted. Showing bunt, then swinging is not permitted. The show bunt then swing penalty is that the batter is ruled out/dead ball. Runners do not advance.
  - 2m. The infield fly rule is in effect. (When runners are on 1st and 2nd, or 1st, 2nd and 3rd with less than two outs).
  - 2n. Runners must attempt to avoid contact on plays at a base. If intentional contact is made (as per umpire judgment), the player is declared out and a dead ball situation occurs immediately. This means base runners can not advance to the next base even if they were running and close to the base at the time of the intentional contact occurred.
  - 2o. All players will bat in the batting order. There are no designated hitters.  
\*SABL rule 2o differs from Cal Ripken tournament rules.
  - 2p. Rosters: If a player arrives late, the late player will be added to the bottom of the batting order. \*SABL rule 2p differs from Cal Ripken tournament rules.
  - 2q. If a pitcher is removed from the mound and goes to another defensive position, he may not return as a pitcher in that game. In general, players can enter and leave the game without restriction. \*SABL rule 2q differs from Cal Ripken tournament rules.
  - 2r. There is a courtesy runner rule for catchers. You may elect to have a substitute runner replace a catcher who is on base when there are two outs. The substitute runner will be the player who made the last batted out.
  - 2s. All on-deck batters must stay in their own dugout area with a helmet on.
  - 2t. A pitcher must be removed on any coach's second mound visit in the same inning.
  - 2u. The pitcher must throw to a hitter during an intentional walk situation.
  - 2v. If a player, head coach, coach, scorekeeper, parent, or fan is ejected from a game, they may be suspended for the next game. All ejections must be reported to the Baseball Vice President who will make the final determination regarding future game eligibility. If a player is ejected from a game, their spot in the lineup will be skipped with no further penalty.
  - 2w. If a player is injured and no substitute is available, that spot in the lineup will be skipped with no penalty.
3. After a dead ball or time out, the ball is declared "in-play" by the home plate umpire. At times, players may unknowingly attempt leads, steals, or pick-offs before the ball is declared "in-play." In these cases, the umpire returns all runners to the appropriate base according to the dead-ball situation. Most

- umpires will point to the pitcher to indicate the ball is back “in-play.” In play, time out/dead-ball situations are determined by the umpire.
4. All boys must use and wear athletic supporter with metal, fiber, or plastic cup. Catcher must wear a catcher’s helmet, chest protector, shin guards, catcher’s mitt, mask and throat protector during all practices, games and warm-ups.
  5. Both teams will exchange lineups with players present. Each team must give the players name and uniform number. The position number will be left up to the discretion of the coach. This exchange must be made prior to the first pitch and cannot be changed except to add late players to the bottom of the batting order as they arrive.
  6. A farm system will be instituted providing a major league coach the ability to “call up” a minor league player from a designated minor league team; when the assigned major league team anticipates a shortage of players for a particular game. Each minor league team will be assigned a major league team decided by a random lottery drawing. Once assigned, there can be no exchanging or switching of players or teams. **Players may be called up from the corresponding minor league team only.** If more major league teams than minor league teams are formed in a season, a minor league team may be shared between no more than two (2) major league teams.

If there are more minor league teams, all efforts should be made by the Baseball VP or other league official to adjust the major league rosters by either of the following methods, based on their best judgment:

- a) Create a new major team by reducing the roster size of each existing team to no less than ten (10) players.
- b) By lottery, assign the unmatched minor league teams to a major league team until all minor league teams have been paired with a major league team. If another major league team is created after the lottery, the newly created team would receive the first pick of the lottery from the existing minor league teams. If major league teams are added, continue to the next remaining minor league team in the lottery.
  - i. If the two teams facing one another share the same minor league player(s) the team with the “greater need” is awarded the player.
  - ii. Example: team “A” has 7 players and team “B” has 10. Team “A” has the greater need.
  - iii. In all other cases the away team is awarded first option.
- c) All minor league players must be at least 10 years of age (playing age) to qualify for call-ups. The minor coach shall provide a list to the major division partner of eligible players. The two coaches (minor and major)

should decide which players could best benefit by the experience of “playing up”.

- d) The minor team player’s coach and the division commissioner must approve all call-ups. A minor player’s team games will, in all cases, take precedence over his/her assigned major league team games.
- e) If called up to play a major division game, the minor player must play at least two (2) innings defensively. However, no called up minor player shall play more innings than any major league player on the roster.
- f) In the playoffs, no minor call-up can play in the field, or bat, if it would in any way diminish the playing time or number of at-bats of any major player present. In other words, a minor call-up may only play in the game if there are less than 9 major division players present at any given time.
- g) Any player called up from the minors may not pitch.

## **7. SOFTBALL RULES**

### **7.1. 8U DIVISION RULES**

- 1. Rules governing the 8U division will be according to the Official Amateur Softball Association (ASA) rules with special provisions.
- 2. The pitcher’s rubber will be placed at a distance 35’ from the plate. Base length will be 60’.
- 3. Games will be a maximum of six innings.
- 4. Ten players will play the field defensively. However, if a team does not have 10 players, they can play with the number of available players. Rotation of players through all positions is expected to give them knowledge of all positions. For safety reasons, 1<sup>st</sup> base and the catcher’s position are exceptions to this rule. However, it is not mandatory that players change positions every inning.
- 5. If a player arrives late to a game, she can be inserted immediately on defense and added to the bottom of the batting order.
- 6. The batting order will be continuous.
- 7. An inning will end after either 3 outs (including strikeouts) or after 7 batters. When a 7th batter bats, the inning will end at the conclusion of the play.
- 8. A coach or a coach’s designated choice can pitch (no kid pitching). Each team will designate a coach or parent to pitch to their respective team.
- 9. Each batter will receive 5 pitches to hit the ball.
- 10. There are no walks or stealing.
- 11. At the start of each play, the outfielders will play in the grass area.



12. The infield fly rule is not in effect
13. The 4 infielders will play at the traditional infield positions along with an assigned pitcher and catcher, no exceptions.
14. Runners can only advance to 2<sup>nd</sup> base on balls hit to the outfield.
15. At an attempt by an outfielder to throw a batted ball, runners will stop at the last base obtained per the coach's discretion.
16. Sliding Ruling: On all plays at second, third and home a runner must avoid contact with a defensive player in proper position by sliding. She should avoid an improperly set-up defensive player by stepping around or otherwise avoiding her. No contact means no foul. If contact is made, the runner is out unless a proper slide was made. Sliding is encouraged for safety. You must teach players how to slide properly during practice.
17. Softball fielder's masks are mandatory for all defensive players during all practices and games.

## **7.2. 10U DIVISION**

### **7.2.1- Players**

1. Defensive substitutions occur between innings. Substitutions due to injury may take place at any time.
2. Any player arriving late may be placed in the batting order, but must be added as the last batter in the order.
3. Any addition or deletion to the batting order must be made known to the opposing coach immediately.

### **7.2.2- Pitchers**

1. Pitchers will pitch from 35'.
2. Fast pitch is in order and in accordance with the rules of the Official ASA rulebook.
3. Pitchers must start with both feet on the rubber.
4. Pitchers can issue 2 walks per inning before coach comes in to pitch to the batter. The number of strikes is retained. (That is, if there are 2 strikes on the batter when the coach steps in, just one more strike will be needed before the batter is out.)
5. Pitcher limit - 3 innings per game. Pitcher may re-enter to pitch only once. One pitch in an inning constitutes a full inning. In any said inning a pitcher cannot enter/reenter in the same inning. Pitchers may pitch unlimited innings per week.
6. In lieu of a homeplate umpire, balls and strikes will be called by a coach from the batting team, while positioned behind the rubber, in the rear of the pitching circle.

### **7.2.3- 10U General Rules**

1. Bunting is allowed.
2. The infield fly rule is not in effect.
3. Running on dropped third strike is not permitted.
4. Runners may leave the base when the ball is released from the pitcher's hand. Only stealing of 3rd base is permitted. Leaving the base is at the risk of the runner. Advancement on an overthrow by the catcher of a non-batted ball is not permitted; regardless of what action the defensive team takes.
5. All play will stop when ball is returned to the pitcher in the 8' circle. Base runner can attempt to advance to next base only if past halfway mark between bases when pitcher receives ball. Coaches should encourage players to attempt to make play.
6. An overthrow on a batted ball that goes out of play results in all base runners advancing one base. The in-play/out-of-play boundary line extends from the end of the first baseline fence. Balls thrown past this extended line will be considered out of bounds.
7. Catchers must wear helmet, mask and protective gear, including throat protector.
8. Softball fielder's masks are mandatory for all defensive players during all practices and games.
9. Batting helmets with face shields are required at bat and on the bases.
10. All bats must be appropriate softball bats, i.e. they will have the word "softball" on them.
11. All games will be six innings; the last inning must have three (3) outs (except in the case of a "walk-off" win by the home team).
12. Games start at 6:00 p.m. The home team warms up from 5:30 p.m. to 5:45 p.m. The away team warms up from 5:45 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. No inning shall start after 90 minutes when playing on a field with lights if another game follows the 6:00 p.m. game.
13. Coaches, calling balls and strikes from behind the pitcher, should allow a "large" strike zone, i.e. from the armpit to a little below the knee.
14. Base lengths will be 60 feet.
15. The batting order includes all players present; each girl will bat in her turn even if she is not in the game defensively at the time.
16. The 10 batter per inning rule is in effect. However, if the 10th batter is not the third out, any runners crossing home plate during the play will count as runs scored.
17. Batters will not throw the bat after hitting a pitched ball. The first offense (per player) will be a warning. The second offense will be an out.
18. Defensively the 4 outfielders must be on the grass prior to the ball being pitched.
19. On all plays at second, third, and home, a runner must avoid contact with a

defensive player by sliding. If contact is made the runner is out (unless a proper slide was made). Further, an improperly positioned fielder must remove herself from the path of the runner if he is not in possession of the ball; otherwise standard softball interference rules apply and the runner is safe at the next base. Sliding is encouraged for safety. No head first sliding is permitted (except for sliding back to a base to avoid a pick-off. The penalty for unwarranted head-first slides is the automatic out of the runner committing the offense. **If a player does not slide and no contact is made, no infraction has occurred.**

20. Coaches are not permitted on the field during the game, except for the coach calling balls and strikes from behind the mound.

## **8. 12U, 15U, and 18U DIVISION RULES**

1. 12U, 15U, and 18U divisions will follow the Valley Inter-Community Girls' Softball (VIGS) and Inter-Community Girls' Softball League (ICGSL) rules.
2. The 12U, 15U, and 18U divisions will abide by the American Softball Association rules and the VIGS/ICGSL rules. Softball fielder's masks are mandatory by all defensive players

## **9. APPENDICES**

Enter details pertaining to the appendices & the attachments included in the table below:

<b>App #</b>	<b>Appendix Title</b>	<b>Appendix Contents</b>
N/A	N/A	N/A

For Official Amateur Softball Association Rules and Regulations for 2012, the ASA Code Book can be found at "[www.asasoftball.com/about/asa\\_code.asp](http://www.asasoftball.com/about/asa_code.asp)"

The official Link to the VIGS League (Valley Intercommunity Girl's Softball League) can be found at [www.a2pwebdesign.com](http://www.a2pwebdesign.com)