



Lake Zurich Baseball and Softball Association

13/14U Bear Claw Tournament

The Lake Zurich Baseball and Softball Association PONY LEAGUE is to instruct and provide guidance to 13 and 14 year old participants in good baseball concepts and fundamentals. The Lake Zurich Baseball & Softball Association Pony Bear Claw Tournament is played under the National Federation of High School Association Official Baseball Rules, with the exceptions and additions given in these Tournament Rules and Regulations.

TOURNAMENT ADDENDUM TO PONY LEAGUE RULES:

- A. No Full-Time Travel Teams are allowed!!! Team rosters must be composed entirely of players that participated on "in-house" teams during the season, and were chosen for part-time travel or post-season play.
- B. For tournament purposes, game scores and team records will be kept to select the teams advancing to the championship round. The top 4 teams or the winner of each bracket, plus Wild Card team(s) -- totaling 4 teams only -- will advance to the medal round. The seeding will be determined by 1) record; 2) head to head competition; 3) least amount of runs allowed; 4) pool play run differential; and 5) coin flip.
- C. Rosters and insurance certificates shall be on-hand with the Team Manager at all times. These documents shall be submitted and checked prior to the first game.
- D. Players may not be 15 years old prior to May 1, 2018. Each team is required to have copies of all birth certificates at each game they play. Birth certificates will only be checked if there is a challenge regarding a player's age. If there is a challenge and a team is unable to produce a birth certificate, then that player will be declared illegal and the games he played in will be forfeited.
- E. Dugouts are first come, first served.

1.0 MANAGER, COACH, PLAYER AND PARENT RESPONSIBILITIES

- A. Managers, coaches, players and parents shall exhibit good sportsmanship at all times. Any action to taunt, intimidate or degrade opposing managers, coaches, players, parents or umpires will not be tolerated.
- B. Players will not throw bats, helmets or any other equipment to display anger, frustration or displeasure. Violators may be removed from the game, at the discretion of the umpire, for flagrant violations.
- C. Swearing by managers, coaches, players or parents, on and off the field, during games or practices, will be strictly prohibited. Violations during a game will result in immediate ejection.
- D. Influencing the umpires, for example, yelling "safe" or "out" before the umpire makes a call or openly questioning or complaining about the umpire's call, will not be tolerated.
- E. Arguing with umpires will not be tolerated and, if violated, managers, coaches, players or parents may be ejected and subject to disciplinary action.
- F. All managers will be responsible for their teams, including coaches, players and parents, as outlined in the manager's agreement.



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- G. A manager, coach, or player who is ejected from a game must leave the park until the conclusion of the game. A second ejection of a coach or manager will be cause for dismissal of the team from the tournament. A second ejection of a player will be cause for the player to be disqualified from the remainder of the tournament. There will be no refunds issued in this case.
- H. No tobacco is allowed in the playing area, including the dugouts. No alcohol is allowed in any of the parks or parking lots.
- I. Forfeits are not allowed due to enough players.
- J. There is no batting practice allowed prior to games.
- K. Once the tournament has begun all rosters are final unless approved by the tournament director.
- L. All other rules will be governed by the National Federation of High School Association Official Baseball Rules.

1.01 PONY TEAM STRUCTURE

- A. Each team will be comprised of a maximum of fifteen (15) players, and in no case will a team have less than eight (8) players.

1.02 PLAYING FIELD

- A. 80 foot bases
- B. 54 foot pitcher's mound
- C. There are to be no batting cages, batting apparatuses, or swinging of bats outside the field confines before, during, or after the game. This includes hitting sticks and soft toss into the fence. This is for safety reasons as the parks will be heavily congested with players, coaches, families, and fans. Failure to comply with this rule may result in forfeiture and possible disqualification.

1.03 EQUIPMENT

- A. All players will need a full uniform in order to play. Metal spikes, gym shoes or rubber spikes are allowed. No jewelry may be worn on the playing field, unless it is medical alert jewelry.
- B. Only Pony League issued baseballs will be used in league games. Baseballs for games will be supplied before the game by the League.
- C. Bat restrictions are a maximum of 2-5/8" barrel. All bats must have the USSSA stamp and BPF 1.15 rating or a USA stamp. Max drop weight is -8. BBCOR (-3) IHSA approved bats are also eligible. No bats with a 2-3/4" barrel are allowed.
- D. All players must wear a cup.
- E. All catchers warming pitchers or catching in the game must wear full catchers' equipment, including throat protector and protective cup. This includes warm-up.



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1.04 GAME RULES

- A. The Home team is determined by a coin toss prior to the game except during the semi-finals, consolation and championship games. During playoffs, there will be no coin flip; the highest seed will always be the home team. Should teams have equal records or seeding, the home team will be resolved by: 1) head to head competition 2) least total runs allowed 3) most runs scored. If still equal a coin flip will be used.
- B. Home team will maintain the official scorebook. It is the responsibility of both Scorebook Keepers to check periodically with each other to be certain that the game score is correctly recorded by both parties at all times.

1.05 ALL PLAY RULE – CONTINUOUS BATTING ORDER – INFIELD PARTICIPATION

- A. All attending players must play a minimum of two (2) complete innings in the field. Tournament staff will not monitor this.
- B. The batting shall be continuous, including all rostered players in attendance. There is free substitution in the field, except once a pitcher is removed from pitching, he may not return to that position.

1.06 GAME AND LAST INNING TIME LIMITS

- A. There will be a time limit on all games except for the Consolation and Championship games.
- B. Seven (7) innings will constitute a complete game. No inning shall start after 1:45 minutes from the first pitch. The umpire will determine the time. Once an inning has begun it will be completed. The exception is as stated under ENDING A GAME (Rule #4) in the High School Rule Book.
- C. Before each game, the managers and umpires will agree on the official starting time.
- D. Line-ups must be turned in 15 minutes prior to the start of the game.
- E. All games must end by sunset/dusk.
- F. If the Home team is ahead and at bat when the time 1:45 hour time limit is reached the game is over.
- F. Pool games can end in a tie, if the inning concludes and the time limit has been reached.
Darkness and/or weather can also end a game in a tie.
- G. If an elimination game is tied after the time limit, any new innings will be played under California tie breaker rules:
- The player who made the last out from the prior inning starts the inning on second base.
 - The inning will start with 1 out.
 - The inning shall be played out normally from that point.
- H. No semi-final, consolation or championship game will end in a tie.



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1.07 TIE RESOLUTION FOR PLAYOFFS

- Once pool play is concluded, if teams have equal records, the following tie breaking procedure applies:
 - 1) Head to Head competition.
 - 2) Least amount of total runs allowed during pool play
 - 3) Run differential = total runs scored (-) total runs allowed in pool play games
 - *To discourage teams from running up the score, the run differential maximum for any 1 pool game is capped at 10.*
 - 4) Coin flip

- For seeding and/or elimination, if there is a 2, 3 or 4-way tie among teams, tie breaker steps will progress, in order, through the coin flip stage, if necessary. The tie breaker process is concluded at whichever step produces a result that separates the competing teams.

Example: 3 teams have 1 loss and have beaten each other in pool play. Two (2) teams will make the playoffs and also need to be seeded.

 - Head to Head:
 - Team 1 beat Team 2; Team 2 beat Team 3, Team 3 beat Team 1
 - All teams move to next tie breaker step
 - Least amount of runs allowed:
 - Team 1 allows a total of 13 runs
 - Team 2 allows 13 runs
 - Team 3 allows 17 runs (team three is eliminated from the playoff contention)
 - Both team 1 & Team 2 will make the playoffs
 - As team 1 & 2 have the same # of runs allowed, they proceed to the next tie breaker step; Run Differential to decide playoff seeding
 - Run Differential:
 - Team 1 scores 19 runs – 13 allowed = 6 run differential
 - Team 2 scores 22 runs – 13 allowed = 9 run differential
 - Team 2 will be seeded higher in the playoffs

- **For Championship & 3rd Place Games:** The higher seed will be the Home team. If the teams are the same seed (e.g.; two #1 seeds; two #2 seeds; etc.) a coin flip will be used to determine the Home team.



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1.08 RAINOUTS AND LIGHTNING

- A. The Umpire will determine if the field is playable for games, or in calling of a game already in play when rain is falling.
- B. When lightning is sighted, the game will be immediately suspended. Players and coaches will immediately retreat to safety (e.g. car/building). After 20 minutes, play can resume. If lightning is sighted again (after the 20-minute period), the game shall be called.
 - Five (5) innings (or 4 ½ innings if the Home team is ahead) constitutes a complete game when shortened due to rain, lightening, etc.
 - If inclement weather becomes a factor during the tournament, interrupted games may be shortened and considered completed in an effort to keep the tournament moving forward to ensure we complete on time.

1.09 SLAUGHTER RULE (15 after 3, 12 after 4, 10 after 5)

- A. The mercy/slaughter rule ends a game when there is a fifteen (15) run differential after 2 ½ innings if the Home team is ahead or 3 full innings if the Visitors lead. Likewise, if there is a twelve (12) run differential after 4 innings (3 ½ if home is leading) or 10 runs after 5 innings (4 ½ if Home team is leading). This includes playoff and championship games.

1.10 BASERUNNING

- A. Infield fly rule will be in effect.
- B. For safety purposes, NO head first slides, except when returning to a base. If a player slides head first he can be called out (umpire's discretion)
- C. Drop 3rd strike will be in effect.

1.11 SLIDING ON CLOSE PLAY – NO CONTACT RULE

- A. All players must avoid contact at all times. Base runners will be required to slide on all close plays. Defensive players cannot prevent the runner from getting to the base by obstructing the base path or the base.
- B. Base runners (and his team) not complying with the rule will receive one warning and on the second occurrence will result in an automatic out. Defensive players (and his team) not complying with the rule will receive one warning and the base runner is safe. A second offense by the same player will result in automatic ejection of that player.
- C. Base coaches may not use physical contact to assist runners.



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1.12 COURTESY RUNNER FOR CATCHER

- A. A courtesy runner must be used for the catcher when the catcher is on base with two outs. The courtesy runner will be the player which made the last out of the inning.

1.13 PITCHING

- A. A pitcher can pitch four (4) consecutive innings in a game.
- B. One (1) pitch constitutes one (1) inning.
- C. Pitcher may not re-enter the game as a pitcher.
- D. Sixteen (16) innings total per pitcher for the tournament.
- E. Pitcher must be removed after hitting two (2) batters in one (1) inning or three (3) hitters in a game.
- F. A pitcher may intentionally walk a batter by simply notifying the umpire.

1.14 SAFETY RULES

- A. If a player is not wearing proper shoes (see equipment rules), he may not play in the game.
- B. A batter must wear a batting helmet when batting or when on the base as a runner.
- C. All players must remain on the bench if they are not playing in the field or taking their turn at bat. They should be paying attention to the game and not running around. The only other people on the bench are coaching staff.
- D. No fake tags are allowed. The first offense will be a warning. The second offense will be cause for ejection of the player involved.
- E. Faking a bunt and then pulling back to swing is illegal. The batter is out and the runners are returned to their positions prior to the incident. A second offense is cause for ejection from the game.
- F. NO head first slides, except when returning to a base. If a player slides head first he is out.
- F. There are to be no batting cages, batting apparatuses, or swinging of bats outside the field confines before, during, or after the game. This includes hitting sticks and soft toss into the fence. This is for safety reasons as the parks will be heavily congested with players, coaches, families, and fans. Failure to comply with this rule may result in forfeiture and possible disqualification.



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1.15 UMPIRES

- A. The League will supply the umpire for the game.
- B. The Umpire's judgment is final!
- C. There are no protests.
- D. Time-outs are granted at the umpire's discretion, as requested by a player, coach, or manager, or if in the umpire's judgment a time-out is needed.

1.16 COACHES

- A. Two coaches may be on the field during the offensive innings of games (one coach at 1st base, one at 3rd base). They may not cross the foul line except in the case of injury.

1.17 SPORTSMANSHIP

- A. Sportsmanship is emphasized in the tournament.
- B. Back up the umpires! Do not argue with the umpire regardless of the decision or call. If you strongly disagree, discuss it with the umpire after the inning is over and discretely point out where you feel the umpire was in error.
- C. Stress sportsmanship and fair play with your players.
- D. Have fun and enjoy the tournament! Make it a pleasurable experience for the players, managers, coaches, umpires and the parents.

1.18 Rainouts

All reasonable efforts will be made for the handling of inclement weather conditions. Rainouts will be rescheduled as soon as possible for teams to complete the tournament. In the event that games cannot be rescheduled, fees will be returned as follows:

- 0 games played due to rain outs and poor field conditions - 100% refund
- 1 game played - No refund (No Trophies)
- 2 games played - No refund (No Trophies)
- 3 game played - No refund