

**NFC BABE RUTH LEAGUE
2023 SPRING RULES
REVISION 17
(4/27/2023)**

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SECTION I: INTRODUCTION

All Northern Fairfax County Babe Ruth League (NFCBRL) Spring Season (Fall Season is instructional so the rules are more relaxed) games shall be played according to the Babe Ruth League, Inc. Baseball Rules and Regulations & Official Playing Rules 1.00 through 9.05 with exceptions noted below.

Exceptions that exist in the Babe Ruth Baseball Rules and Regulations and some which have been adopted by the NFCBRL are included in this section and denoted as BR and NFCBRL, respectively.

Order of precedence for application of these rules to League games is as follows:

1. NFCBRL adopted rules
2. Babe Ruth League, Inc. Baseball Rules and Regulation & Official Playing Rules (current edition)

NOTE: All efforts have been made to minimize NFCBRL adopted rules to maintain consistency with Official Baseball Rules. Adopted rules primarily assure adherence to League policies covering Organization/Structure, Player Participation, Safety and Sportsmanship.

SECTION II: TEAM COMPOSITION

1. Each team roster shall consist of no less than eleven (11). Waiver to the minimum size of team may be granted by the League President (NFCBRL/BR).

2. Each Prep League team shall consist of 13-year-old players only. A Prep League team may borrow a Prep player or players (max of three (3) from another system (in the same League)) to fill the roster up to but no more than ten (10) players. The borrowed player may not pitch or catch unless a waiver is granted by the League President.

The game may begin with either or both teams having fewer than nine (9) players available to start the game. If either or both teams do not have nine (9) players available to start or continue the game, the team(s) that is short shall utilize players from the opposing team to fill any vacant defensive positions. At the beginning of the game the player(s) shall be the last player(s) in the batting order (excluding pitchers & catchers). In succeeding innings, the player(s) shall be the one(s) who made the last out in the preceding inning (excluding pitchers & catchers). (NFCBRL)

3. All 14- and 15-year-old players rostered on an Alliance or Babe Ruth/JV team that has a complete system may play at either the Babe Ruth/JV or the Alliance level within their team's system on a game-by-game basis. Exceptions to this rule must be approved by the League President on a case-by-case basis. If the Alliance team's system does not have a Babe Ruth team, the players may play on any Babe Ruth team on a game-by-game basis.

NOTE: *Permission from the borrowed player's team manager is required. In addition, the borrowed player is subject to the weekly participation limitation. The manager must inform the opposing team manager of any non-system players listed in the scorebook for that game. (NFCBRL)*

4. All 13-year-old players rostered on a Prep team may play on the Alliance as well as the Babe Ruth/JV team of their team's system on a game-by-game basis. If the Prep team's system does not have an Alliance team, the player may play on any Alliance team on a game-by-game basis. If the Prep team's system does not have a Babe Ruth/JV team, the player may play on any Babe Ruth/JV team on a game-by-game basis.

NOTE: *Permission from the borrowed player's team manager is required. In addition, the borrowed player is subject to the weekly participation limitation. (NFCBRL).*

Teams can only call a player up if the team has less than 10 Alliance or Babe Ruth/JV level players committed to playing in that game (including playoff games).

SECTION III: PLAYER PARTICIPATION

1. All 14- and 15-year-old players rostered on a Babe Ruth/JV team are eligible to play on that system's Alliance League. They may play any position and bat. No more than two players rostered on the Babe Ruth/JV team may be used in any one game. Once the Babe Ruth/JV season has started, 15-year-old players rostered on the Babe Ruth/JV team may not play

in any Alliance League games. Exceptions to this rule must be approved by the League President on a case-by-case basis. The maximum number of players allowed to participate in an Alliance game shall be the lesser of the roster size + 2 or fourteen (14). If additional players are required up to the maximum of fourteen (14) they shall be selected from their system's Prep team. Alliance League team Managers should seek to maximize the playing time of the Alliance team rostered players, if/when Babe Ruth/JV rostered players are used in an Alliance League game. (NFCBRL)

2. The maximum number pitches thrown in each Alliance League game by players rostered on a Babe Ruth/JV team shall follow the pitch count limits stated in SECTION V. (NFCBRL)

3. Non-compliance with participation rules above shall result in a forfeit of the game(s) in question and a one game suspension of the manager who committed the infraction. (NFCBRL)

4. Over the course of the season, it is strongly recommended that every rostered player participate in a minimum of 50 percent of the innings (regular scheduled games only) at which the player was available to play. (NFCBRL)

SECTION IV: PLAYER SUBSTITUTION

1. In the Babe Ruth/JV, Alliance and Prep Leagues, there shall be free substitution. All players shall be placed in the batting lineup. Non-rostered players and late players shall be inserted at the end of the batting lineup. Any player may be entered into any defensive position at any time, but no player may sit out for no more than two (2) consecutive defensive innings. However, the pitching rules in the following section and the player participation rules in the previous sections shall still apply. (NFCBRL)

NOTE: *Since all players are entered in the batting order there are no substitutions available. Should a player be removed from the batting order for any reason during the game the spot vacated in the order shall be skipped without penalty. There will not be an automatic out for the player removed. The player removed from the game may not return.*

2. A courtesy runner for the player who will play the catcher position the following defensive inning is permissible with 2 outs. The courtesy runner must be the most recent preceding batter that made out in the order available to run. If that player is the pitcher, the manager may use the next most recent preceding batter to make out. There must be a reasonable expectation of starting the next inning. (NFCBRL)

3. The starting pitcher is governed by the provisions of Official Baseball Rule 3.05 if withdrawn while on the mound pitching. Once a pitcher is withdrawn from the pitching position during the game, he/she may not re-enter as a pitcher. (NFCBRL). It is not advised that the same player pitch and catch in the same game. If it is necessary to play the same player to pitch and catch,

that player is subject to the pitch count as outlined in SECTION V. That player will also then be subject to the rest period as outlined in SECTION V.

4. The second trip in the same inning to the same pitcher shall automatically result in the removal of that pitcher from the game as a pitcher only. (BR)

SECTION V: PITCHING LIMITATIONS

To safely manage young arms NFCBR is adopting the 2017 Babe Ruth League, Inc. rule change regarding pitch counts to all NFCBRL games. Regardless of the number of innings pitched, the pitch count as outlined in the table below will determine the number of days a pitcher will be required to rest prior to pitching again. During the rest period the player may play any other position. It is strongly advised, but not required, that the player does not play catcher during the rest period. All managers must meet at the end of each game or inning, if desired, to verify total pitches thrown by each pitcher. If there is a discrepancy, the greater number will be recorded.

NOTE: *Within 24 hours of the conclusion of the game, each manager is **required** to submit a pitch count form for every player that pitched (or pitched and caught in the same game*). The League will send to all registered managers and coaches a spreadsheet on the official www.nfcbaberuth.com website of all pitchers with their pitch counts and their next available day to pitch. All players who pitch in other Leagues or games, must have their manager or parent report those pitch counts as well.*

Intentional Walk Rule – An intentional base on balls may be given by the defensive team by having its catcher or coach request the umpire to award the batter first base. This may be done before pitching to the batter or on any ball and strike count. The ball shall be declared dead before making the award.

Comment: *Pitches not thrown are not to be counted in the pitch count.*

* if a player pitches and catches in the same game, the number of pitches thrown to the player while catching is added to his/her pitch count for the outing.

PITCHING REST REQUIREMENTS

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Age	Daily Max (Pitches in Game Day)	Pitches/Rest Period		
13-15	95	1-45 = 0 Days	46 - 75 = 1 Day	76 + = 2 Days

No more than 95 pitches may be thrown, with the exception that the pitcher may finish the batter he/she is facing when the 95th pitch is thrown.

EXAMPLE:

** Pitcher throws 1-45 pitches on Tuesday may pitch again the following day, which is Wednesday.

** Pitcher throws 46-75 pitches on Tuesday must have at least 1 day of rest and would be eligible to pitch again on Thursday.

** Pitcher throws 76-95 pitches on Tuesday must have at least 2 days of rest and would be eligible to pitch again on Friday.

** Pitcher throws 45 pitches and catches 36 pitches on Tuesday would have a total of 81 pitches and would be required to have 2 days of rest and therefore would be eligible to pitch again on Friday.

Comment: *The player may play any position, except pitcher, the next day.*

** Pitcher throws 45 pitches that player is then only eligible to catch 50 pitches. As with the pitcher if the pitch count limit is reached the pitcher/catcher may finish the batter that is being faced when the total pitch count reaches 95.

Comment: *Manager should make sure the next catcher is ready to avoid a delay of play.*

PENALTIES

Games in which an ineligible pitcher has been used as specified in the above paragraphs:

1st OFFENCE – Warning to the Manager and the pitcher that was ineligible may not pitch or play catcher for 7 calendar days from the date of the offence to allow for proper rest. (NFCBRL)

2nd OFFENCE – The Manager is suspended for the next game and the player may not pitch or play catcher for 7 calendar days from the date of the offence to allow for proper rest. (NFCBRL)

3rd OFFENCE – The game in which the ineligible pitcher throws a pitch will be declared a forfeit, the manager will be suspended and subject to additional disciplinary actions as per the recommendation of the League President and the ineligible player may not pitch or play catcher for 7 calendar days from the date of the offence to allow for proper rest. (NFCBRL)

If it is discovered that an ineligible pitcher is about to be used, and the pitcher has not thrown a pitch in the game (warm-up pitches do not count), the manager may remove the pitcher without penalty. (NFCBRL)

For all games to be official the manager must exchange a lineup card and provide on the lineup card the players who are not available to pitch (or play catcher) to the opposing manager. All Pitch Counts shall be clearly recorded in each team's scorebook for each pitcher and Pitcher/Catcher and reported along with game scores by the winning manager using the online pitch count form. Scores should be also reported online. (NFCBRL)

SECTION VI: PROTESTS AND RULE INTERPRETATIONS

1. Protests are discouraged, however if a manager decides to protest the game - Notice that the game is being played under protest must be filed with the League President by the team manager as soon as possible, but no later than noon the following day. The manager must notify the other manager that a protest will be filed at the time of the disputed decision and before the next pitched ball to the batter or next play. A protest arising on a game ending play may be filed until noon of the following day to the League President. (NFCBRL)
2. A written report setting forth all the facts of the protest must be filed with the League President within forty-eight (48) hours of the date of the protest. (NFCBRL)
3. The League President shall appoint a minimum of three (3) members of the League (one of which is preferred to be a manager and one umpire) not connected with any of the teams and the NFCBRL President or his/her designate to serve on the Protest Committee. (NFCBRL)
4. Final decision of protest shall be decided by the NFCBRL Protest Committee.
5. No protest shall ever be permitted on judgment decisions by the umpire. Only when a manager claims that the umpire's decision or game action is in violation of the rules will a protest be recognized. (NFCBRL)

SECTION VII: SAFETY -- EQUIPMENT

1. Protective headgear shall be worn on deck, at bat, while a base runner, and by players in the coach's box during practice and at all games. Such headgear must cover the top of the head and have extended ear flaps that cover both ears and must properly fit the player wearing it.

Penalty: A player who refuses to wear headgear shall be removed from the game. (BR)

Any person under the age of 18 who is on the field as a base coach must wear protective headgear. (NFCBR)

Chrome Batting Helmets are not permitted. The chrome or mirror-like surface of the batting helmet is illegal due to its distracting nature and may be dangerous to other players. (BR)

2. Any player, manager or coach warming up a pitcher shall wear a mask at home plate. A throat protector is considered part of the mask. (BR)

In addition, a protective supporter cup and protective headgear must be worn by the catcher during practice and all games. Protective supporter cups are recommended for all other players. (NFCBRL/BR)

3. It is recommended that in all levels, protective headgear have a face guard. (Note: A C flap or half guard is acceptable.) (NFCBRL)

4. Jewelry is permitted in all divisions of Babe Ruth League Inc. Umpires have the authority to remove anything believed to distract or increase risk to player safety. Medical alert or religious bracelets or necklaces are not considered jewelry." (BR)

5. Sunglasses may be worn by all players, including the pitcher, but the pitcher may only wear non-reflective lenses. Pitchers must wear sunglasses as intended. (NFCBRL)

SECTION VIII: SAFETY -- BAT THROWING

Umpires shall deal with batters throwing a bat in the following manner: (NFCBRL)

1. Unintentionally: First occurrence in a game will result in the umpire advising the manager of the problem and the manager taking appropriate action. Second and succeeding occurrences in a game will result in the batter being called out, without base runners advancing.

2. Intentionally: The batter shall be called out, if not already, and shall be removed from the game if it is ruled by the umpire that the incident created an unsafe condition.

SECTION IX: SAFETY -- BASE RUNNING INTERFERENCE/OBSTRUCTION

1. Obstruction must be called on a catcher or any fielder who attempts to block (without possessing the baseball) any base including home plate. (NFCBRL/BR)

2. Interference must be called on a base runner advancing to any base who does not slide or attempts to avoid a collision when the defensive player is making a play on the ball or with the ball. (NFCBRL/BR)

CLARIFICATION: *The intent and purpose of these two rules is to eliminate collision plays at any base. The play at any base where the Base Runner attempts to cause the fielder to lose possession of the ball by colliding with him/her is deemed interference. The opposite play where the Fielder takes position without the ball between the base and the base runner is deemed obstruction. Both these plays are illegal plays in the NFCBRL resulting in the runner being called out if interference and being awarded the base if obstruction. Additionally, as in any other interference or obstruction call by the umpire, the player at any base who, in the umpire's judgment, initiates the illegal play shall be penalized for the infraction, including ejection, if the umpire judges the players action as flagrant or malicious.*

3. Sliding head-first to any base, including home plate is permitted. At any level, the base runner may return to a base by sliding head-first.

SECTION X; SPORTSMANSHIP (UNSPORTSMANLIKE BEHAVIOR)

1. Official Baseball Rule 4.06 covering unsportsmanlike conduct and appropriate umpire options will be strictly enforced. (BR)

CLARIFICATION: *Flagrant throwing of equipment, excessive abusive language, fighting etc. will not be tolerated and at the discretion of the umpire will result in ejection. The managers and coaches are to stress the importance of good sportsmanship and lead by example. Repeated violations will be brought to the attention of the League President who will take appropriate action as necessary up to and including suspension of players, coaches, or managers from the League. (NFCBRL)*

2. All managers, coaches, players, and parents MUST sign the NFCBRL Code of Conduct prior to participating in any League games. (NFCBRL)

3. Any manager, coach, or player ejected from a game for unsportsmanlike conduct will automatically be suspended for participation in the next League game. An exception to this rule can only be granted by the League President after review of written reports from the umpire and the ejected party. A second ejection may result in suspension for the remainder of the regular season. (NFCBRL)

4. The League President may at his discretion levy a harsher measure. (NFCBRL)

SECTION XI; GENERAL

1. All League non-playoff games (Babe Ruth/JV, Alliance, and Prep) are intended to go seven (7) innings, however, there will be a 2-hour no new inning time limit, a 2-hour 30-minute drop-dead time when the last game at the field and a 2-hour 15-minute drop-dead time when there is another game after. A game will be considered a regulation game if the two-hour limit expires and the inning in progress is completed or the drop-dead time is met (whichever occurs first). All games called because of bad weather or darkness (including light failure) are considered regulation game if playing time lasted for more than 1 hour. The final score reverts to the score at the end of the last complete inning, but the pitch count does not. If play is less than 1 hour, it shall be considered a "no game" and be replayed in its entirety unless the game has gone 4 ½ innings with the home team ahead, or 5 innings with the visiting club ahead or tied. If there are stoppages for weather related causes, e.g., lightning in the area, rain, where the Umpire halts the game then restarts, this time shall be included in playing time. (NFCBRL/BR)

2. Postponed games will be re-scheduled, as soon as possible, on the next available make-up day slot or at the discretion of the scheduler. (NFCBRL)

3. For all games (Babe Ruth/JV, Alliance, and Prep), no inning will start two (2) hours after the scheduled start time and play will continue to the end of that inning (NFCBRL).

The new inning starts immediately upon the last out of the previous inning.

FOR PLAYOFFS ONLY: *There is no time limit. The game will be a minimum of 7 innings, or the game will be terminated after 4 1/2 innings if the home team is ahead by 10 or more runs or after 5 innings if the visiting team is ahead by 10 or more runs.*

4. There are no run limits in any inning and there is no "mercy" rule. Games will be played to the time limit or 7 innings (or completion if there is a tie after 7 innings) - whichever occurs first. (NFCBRL)

5. League standings shall be determined as follows: (NFCBRL)

- a. If two teams are tied, the championship will be based on head-to-head competition (won/lost).
- b. If still tied, on their record within NFCBRL.
- c. If still tied; then a playoff game will be played unless time does not permit, in which case the championship will be a tie. A coin toss will be used to determine playoff seeding, if necessary.

NOTE: *Standings within a League shall be determined the same way as for the champion.*

6. All game scores must be reported by the winning manager within 24 hours of the completion of the game. As stated in SECTION V a pitching report in including pitchers first name, last

name, uniform number, and number of pitches pitched per player, shall be reported to the using the appropriate form by the manager, coach, or parent within 24 hours of the completion of the game. (NFCBRL)

7. Rescheduled games for reasons other than weather, must be approved by the NFCBRL President, or his designated representative. (NFCBRL)

8. The following Babe Ruth Rules and Regulations apply to all scheduled League games. (BR) Rules 0.00 through 0.04 in the Babe Ruth Division Rules and Regulations:

Requirements for Charter

Definition of League, Player, Sponsors, and Playing Rules

Jurisdiction

Birth Documents, Roster, Schedules, Scorebooks

9. Official Baseball Rule 6.10 does not apply. The designated hitter is not permitted. (BR)

10. The home team will occupy the first-base dugout, will serve as the official scorer, and will provide two (2) game balls. The visiting team will occupy the third-base dugout and will provide one (1) game ball. Both teams should have a supply of gently used game balls ready if necessary. (NFCBRL)