



## VBA 10U/9U Spring Fireball Tournament Rules 2022

### General Rules:

- For any and all rules not addressed in the VBA rules and regulations, the Official Babe Ruth League Rules and Regulations will regulate play.
- Teams must begin a game with a minimum of 8 players. Failure to field 8 players to begin a game will result in that team forfeiting. There is no 'match' rule on defense (a team can field a full defense of up to 9 players regardless if the opposing team fields only 8).
- There will be a 10-minute grace period to begin a game if no other game is scheduled on the same field immediately after that game. If another game is scheduled on the same field immediately following any game, there is no grace period. Such games must start at their scheduled start time.
- If lightning is detected, all players shall be removed from the field to a sheltered area and a 20 minute waiting period must be observed before a game can be resumed. This 20 minute period will be observed after every instance lightning is detected, i.e. the clock resets with every lightning sighting.
- **Pool play games may end in a tie. Elimination games may not end a tie and additional full innings shall be played until the tie is broken.**

### Conduct and Sportsmanship

- Each head coach is also responsible for the conduct of their players and assistant coaches. Unsportsmanlike conduct should result in the removal from that game of any player, coach, fan or any other person connected with that team.
- The use of profanity in and around the playing field is cause for immediate ejection.
- The use of intoxicating beverages or illicit drugs on or around the playing fields by anyone is prohibited. A report of such incident shall be made immediately to a park official, which may contact local authorities.
- The use of tobacco in any form is prohibited within any fenced area of a playing field and/or dugout/ bullpen area.
- Badgering or verbal harassment by anyone associated with a team towards any umpire, league official, or any team personnel will not be tolerated. The umpire may warn the offending person once or not at all, and if the behavior continues will be ejected from the game at their discretion

- Sportsmanship starts in the stands. Head coaches are responsible for their fans' behavior. Only positive comments are appropriate from fans during games. Be courteous to opposing team's players, coaches, the umpires and fans. Fans that are unable to abide by this rule will be asked to leave the ball field area.
- An ejected person must leave the entire park grounds and not return while the game they were ejected from is in progress and all game participants, including game officials, have vacated the playing field and surrounding areas.

### Playing Field

- Distance between bases is 60 feet.
- Pitcher's rubber is 46 feet from home plate.
- Batter's box is 3 feet wide and 6 feet long.
- For elimination play, home team will be higher ranked seed.
- Home team dugout is labeled

### Game play

- Coin Flip to Determine Home and Away during Pool Play
- No new inning will be started after one hour and forty (1:40) minutes.
  - Exception: Championship game shall not have a time limit.
- Each half inning consists of 7 runs or 3 outs, whichever comes first. Play shall be considered dead once the 7<sup>th</sup> run is scored. *Exception: There is no 7-run maximum rule in the championship game.*
- **Speed up Rules-Pitcher and Catcher of record with 2 outs**
- A regulation game will be whichever comes first:
  - 6 innings, or 5 ½ if home team is ahead
    - In the event of play suspended due to weather, a game is considered 'official' after four innings of play if the visiting team is ahead; 3 ½ innings if the home team is ahead.
  - **10 Run Rule- Game is terminated immediately if one team is ahead by 10 or more runs after 3.5 or 4 innings the former if home team is ahead**
  - **15 Run Rule- Game is terminated immediately if one team is ahead by 15 or more runs after 2.5 or 3 innings the former if home team is ahead**
  - **8 Run rule-Game is terminated immediately if one team is ahead by 8 or more runs after 4.5 or 5 innings the former if home team is ahead**

### Playing Offense

- The offensive team may have a 1<sup>st</sup> base coach, a 3<sup>rd</sup> base coach on the field only, other coaches in their team's dugout. All coaches on the field must have an up-to-date coach's badge as required by their local park rules.
- If an offensive coach intentionally touches a ball in play or egregiously obstructs the play, the batter will be called out and all base runners return to the base previously occupied. This is at the umpire's discretion.
- Throwing the bat will result in the batter being given a warning. A batter who throws the bat after having already received a warning will be called out and all base runners return to the base previously occupied.
- Bunting is allowed. Once a batter squares to bunt, the batter may not take a full swing on the same pitch (no slashing).

- The entire roster of a team may be entered into the batting order (continuous batting order).
- If a player batting out of order is discovered in the middle of an at bat, the proper batter shall take his place and assume the existing count. If batting out of order is discovered after an improper at bat, Official Babe Ruth Rules will apply.
- If a player is unable to take his at-bat due to injury during a game or warm-ups, that player's spot in the batting order will be skipped without penalty. If an injured player is able to resume play later in the game, he or she may re-enter the game provided he occupies the same batting position as he occupied when starting the game. Abuses by managers of this rule will not be tolerated and may result in forfeiture of the game.

### **Playing Defense**

- There are 9 defensive positions: 4 regular infielders, a pitcher, a catcher and 3 outfielders.
- Players shall be positioned as follows:
  - Outfielders must start play in the outfield grass
  - The catcher must be positioned behind the batter's box as to not interfere with the batter. If, in the act of swinging at a pitched ball, the batter's bat hits the catcher, the ball shall be ruled dead and the batter is awarded 1<sup>st</sup> base.
  - No infielder may start play closer to the batter than ten feet in front of the first to second or second to third baseline.
- Play is stopped when the umpire calls 'time' at his or her discretion according to Babe Ruth baseball rules. Between the call of 'time' and 'play', the ball is dead.
- A foul ball caught by a catcher must be over the batter's head to be counted as an out. Exception: A foul ball caught by a catcher on the third strike will be counted as an out.
- There is no dropped 3<sup>rd</sup> strike rule.
- Defensive Interference
  - Base runners are generally permitted to run from base to base without being physically blocked or hindered by a fielder.
  - The only time that a fielder is not obligated to "get out of the way" of a base runner is when the fielder is fielding, in the act of fielding, or in possession of the ball.
  - No defensive player may intentionally or unintentionally occupy a base or base path with the intent to deceive or prevent a runner from continuing to the next unoccupied base.
  - At the umpire's discretion, the interfered base runner shall be awarded the next unoccupied base.
- There is no infield fly rule.
- All other normal rules of baseball apply.

### **Pitching**

- Pitchers may not wear jewelry. Medical alerts are not considered jewelry. Arm sleeves or similar accessories not part of an undershirt are considered jewelry.
- Trips to the mound – Babe Ruth baseball rules apply. A trip to the mound is granted once a coach steps past the foul line at the umpire's discretion.
  - A second trip in the same inning to the same pitcher shall automatically result in the removal of that pitcher from the game as the pitcher only.
- There are no balks in pool play or elimination games.

- Pitcher eligibility will be based on the number of pitches thrown. Pitches will be tracked for each game and will be included on the final scorecard, which must be signed by each coach after the game is completed.

Age	0 Days Required Rest	1 Day Required Rest	2 Days Required Rest
7/8	1-20	21-35	36-50
9/10	1-40	41-65	66-75

- 7 & 8 year old pitchers can pitch a maximum of 50 pitches. 9 & 10 year olds can pitch a maximum of 75 pitches.
- Pitchers may not throw three days in a row

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### Base Running

- Runners will not lead off. When a pitcher is in contact with the pitcher's plate and in possession of the ball and the catcher is in the catcher's box ready to receive delivery of the ball, base runners shall not leave their bases until the ball has been delivered and has reaches home plate. The violation of one runner shall affect all other runners.
  - When a base runner leaves the base before the pitched ball reaches home and the batter does not hit the ball, play continues. If the runner, in the due course of the play (thrown out stealing for example), the out stands. If the runner reaches safely, ALL runners must return to the base occupied before the pitch was made.
  - When base runner leaves the base before the pitched ball reaches home and the batter hits it, play continues. If the runner, in the due course of the play (thrown out on force for example), the out stands. If the runner reaches safely, runners must return to the original base occupied before the pitch was made or to the unoccupied base nearest the one left. Kids can't advance due to error. Umpire makes judgment on base value of ball hit.
    - If bases are loaded and the hitter reaches base safely, no run shall be allowed to score. Each runner shall advance to the base beyond the one they occupied at the start of the play based on the base value of the ball hit at the umpire's discretion. The runners who are forced home in this situation shall be removed from the base without a run being scored.
- Overthrows are live and base runners advance at their own risk until the defensive team stops play at the umpire's discretion. If the ball leaves the field of play, hits any equipment, enters the dugout or hits any player or coach out of the dugout, play is dead and base runners will be awarded one base at the umpire's discretion.
- For safety, players must leave helmets on until they are in the dugout.
- A coach physically aiding a runner is prohibited. If a base coach touches a runner, play is halted and the runner is out. All base runners will return to previously occupied base.
- If a base runner runs outside a baseline (three feet on each side of a direct line between the bases) to avoid a tag, the base runner is out.
- Offensive Obstruction – If a base runner, intentionally or unintentionally, obstructs a defensive player attempting to field the ball, that base runner is out. If a defensive player is about to receive a thrown ball and if the ball is in flight directly toward and near enough to the fielder so he must occupy his position to receive the ball he may be considered "in the act of fielding a ball." It is entirely up to the judgment of the umpire as to whether a fielder is in the act of fielding a ball. After

a fielder has made an attempt to field a ball and missed, he can no longer be in the "act of fielding" the ball.

### **Time Outs**

- Before a time out will be granted to a defensive team by an umpire, the defense must stop play, as defined above.
- At any coach's discretion, play may be stopped if in their judgment there is an injury to a player or any other unsafe condition. The umpire would then award runners/batters bases accordingly and to the best of their judgment.
- Each team (offensively and defensively) is allowed two time outs per inning. Injury time outs do not count as team time outs. A second trip in the same inning to the same pitcher shall automatically result in the removal of that pitcher from the game as the pitcher only.

### **Equipment**

- Approved Babe Ruth Diamond DBR/equivalent baseballs will be used.
- All players are required to wear approved batting helmets while batting and when occupying a base.
- No metal cleats.
- Catcher must wear a catcher's mask, chest protector and shin guards. Catcher's masks must cover ears and include throat protection (hockey style mask or dangling protector).
- Players must wear cups.
- USSSA bats may be used