

SJAA 12U
Rules and Regulations
Last Amended: Summer 2020

Introduction: The following rules apply to San Jose Athletic Association (“SJAA”) 12U recreational season play. All-Stars, Tournament play, and AB competition may have different rules. Cal Ripken / Babe Ruth baseball follows Major League Baseball rules with noted exceptions. Those exceptions are published by the Babe Ruth organization which covers permissible bats, field dimensions, and other aspects of Babe Ruth organizations. Individual associations are permitted to institute league rules at the discretion of the association. The rules contained in this document are specifically for recreational baseball at SJAA. No commissioner or coach may adopt or change these rules without specific permission from the SJAA Athletic Director. **It is the coach’s responsibility to understand all of the baseball rules for their age group.**

RULES

Official Game: All teams must start a game with a minimum of 8 rostered players. A roster showing team batting order must be provided to the opposing team manager prior to the game. Failure to be able to field 8 rostered players will result in a loss for the team without enough players, however, the game shall still be played “for fun” by allowing substitute players. A late arriving rostered player listed in the batting order will be considered an automatic out when his turn at bat comes up, unless the player arrives before his turn comes up. A team who fields a team with only 8 rostered players must take an automatic out when the 9th batting position comes up in the lineup. The opposing team shall provide a 9th player to be a defensive player in the outfield only. The offered player should be the player from the opposing team who made the last batted out of the prior half inning, or if at the beginning of a game, the last batter of the opposing team as designated on the batting order. Should the substitute player’s batting position come up during the inning, a substitute Defensive player may be swapped under the above rule.

Umpires: There will be one umpire assigned to each game. A coach from both teams will meet with the umpire prior to the game and review the agreed upon rules. Any dispute about such rules during the game should be discussed between the head coach and the umpire. The umpire will have the final ruling on all calls. Each coach is to provide the umpire with 1 new game ball at the start of each game.

Game length: The maximum game length is six innings (five and one half if the home team is ahead) and no new inning will begin after play has lasted seventy-five (90) minutes for a weeknight game and ninety (100) minutes for a Friday, Saturday, or Sunday game. A game shall be considered over if (a) the time limit has been reached and the home team is ahead, or (b) 3 ½ innings have been completed and the home team is ahead by ten (10) runs.

Inning Run Rule: A half-inning is complete after three (3) outs have been made or five (5) runs have scored, whichever occurs first.

Coaching: A maximum of four defensive coaches are allowed on the field to give instruction to defensive players, however, all should be located near the fence of their respective dugout not obstructing the field of play. A maximum of four offensive coaches are allowed on the field to give instruction to offensive players. A coach may NEVER touch a ball or assist in the play while the ball is in play. The offending coach’s team shall be either penalized an out (if they are on offense) or a base granted to all occupied bases (if they are on defense).

Benched Players: No player(s) shall sit on the bench more than one inning in a row. Further, no player shall sit on the bench twice during a game unless all other players have also sat on the bench that game. If a player is benched for illness, injury, or disciplinary reasons, the umpire and opposing coach shall be notified.

Base Running: 12U is open bases with lead-offs and steals. There is nothing wrong with being aggressive on the bases, but please be cognizant of the score when doing so, and adjust base running as needed. Stealing bases is part of the game, but coaches should manage the amount of stealing as needed based on good judgement. If the score is getting out of hand, there is no reason to humiliate the other team.

Batting: All players must bat and are required to wear approved batting helmets. A batter may be dropped from the lineup for illness, injury or disciplinary reasons. If a player is dropped for one of these reasons, their spot in the order shall not be counted as an out as long as there are still 9 active batters in the line-up. It shall be understood from SJAA coaches that a player shall not be removed in an attempt to keep a weaker player from making a plate appearance (a coach may face disciplinary action from the board if this is believed to have intentionally occurred). A player removed from the line-up may re-enter their same original spot as soon as possible.

- If an **out of order batter** has put the ball in play and is possessing a base before another pitch has occurred, the player shall be called out, and runners shall return to their previously occupied base. If the out of order batter has not yet put the ball in play, the correct batter should immediately come up to the plate and the count shall remain the same. If the opposing team notices an out of order batter, it should be brought to the umpire's attention immediately. (Do not intentionally wait until the ball is put in play in an effort to create an out for the batter - this would go against the spirit of the game in SJAA recreational play.)
- The Head Coach shall ensure that every bat being used is allowed by Babe Ruth / Cal Ripken. A list of prohibited bats may be found on the Babe Ruth website. If an **illegal bat** is used and the batter has put the ball in play and is possessing a base before another pitch has occurred, the player shall be called out, and runners shall return to their previously occupied base. If the batter has not yet put the ball in play, the batter shall be given a legal bat and there shall be no penalty. If the opposing team notices that the batter is using an illegal bat, it should be brought to the umpire's attention immediately. (Do not intentionally wait until the ball is put in play in an effort to create an out for the batter - this would go against the spirit of the game in SJAA recreational play.)

Equipment: Any player playing the catcher position must wear a mask, helmet, chest protector, protective cup, and shin guards.

Time out request: In accordance with the rules of baseball, time-out is requested by a coach/player, and then granted only by an umpire, at the umpire's discretion. Before a timeout shall be granted to the defensive team in a live ball situation, the defense must cause the offense to cease play in the umpire's discretion (e.g. force the base runner(s) into a non-advancing situation). There is no requirement to "get the ball in front of the lead runner", nor is there a "half-way" line. An outfielder may not request time-out.

Ejections: Ejections shall be for the remainder of the game. Additional punitive action may be imposed at the discretion of the SJAA Executive Board, depending on the nature of the infraction.

Suspended Games: If possible, suspended games will be rescheduled with such being communicated by the league commissioner. All suspended games will begin from the exact point at which play was stopped.

OFFENSE

Bunting: Bunting is permitted. There is no limit on number of bunts per game. Slash bunting (i.e. fake bunt then full swing) is not allowed, and any attempt at such will be considered an immediate out.

Sliding: Sliding into 1st base is permitted to avoid contact. Head first sliding is allowed in 12U.

DEFENSE

Number of Players: The defensive team may field 10 players including a standard infield and four outfielders. If a team lacks enough players to play three outfield positions, the opposing team shall loan the defensive team players to ensure the three standard outfield positions are covered each inning. The opposing team shall not provide a player for the fourth outfield position. Outfielders must play in the grass beyond the infield clay.

Pitching: A pitcher may pitch 3 innings maximum per game. One pitch in an inning shall be considered an inning toward the maximum of 3. Any pitcher may reenter the game as a pitcher at any point in the game. The standard Cal Ripken / Babe Ruth pitching limitations and rest requirements shall apply:

- **1-40 pitches - no rest day required**
- **41-65 pitches - 1 rest day required**
- **66-85 pitches - 2 rest days required**
- **Maximum pitches per day: 85**

Disciplinary action may be taken by the SJAA Board if violations of the pitching rules are discovered.

Infield fly: The infield fly rule applies in 12U.

Dropped 3rd Strike: The dropped third strike rule applies in 12U baseball and the batter can attempt to run to first as the MLB rule provides.

GAME PREPARATION

The Home Team is responsible for field preparation before the game AND clean-up after play has completed. Visiting team coaches are encouraged to participate in order to minimize the impact of the time spent on this activity.

CONDUCT

No team, player, coach, or fan may taunt, chant, yell, distract, or otherwise direct interference toward the opposing team. A team may cheer their team members but may not do so as to distract the opposing Offensive or Defensive player, respectively. This includes chants during a pitchers wind up and delivery

in order to distract the pitcher. A team who violates this during a game will receive a warning after consultation with the Head coaches and the umpire. A second warning will result in either a free base or a designated out. A third occurrence will result in the forfeiture of the game by the offending team. If a team parent(s), guests, or otherwise affiliated party displays this behavior, the team will still be penalized. Any non-sportsmanlike conduct should be immediately reported to the league commissioner, Athletic Director, and/or the Executive Board.

PLAYOFFS AND CHAMPIONSHIP GAMES

The above rules are to be kept for SJAA Playoff and Championship Games unless the commissioner determines modifications are in order and such are communicated to all the coaches. Any disagreements, interpretations, or other discussions about SJAA League or Babe Ruth / Cal Ripken rules may be elevated to the commissioner and/or Athletic Director as necessary. If he/she is unavailable, the umpire shall make the final decision.