

SJAA 8U MINORS

Rules and Regulations

Last Amended: Spring 2019

Introduction: The following rules apply to San Jose Athletic Association (“SJAA”) 8U 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 Fall and Spring season 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 at least 10 minutes 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 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 (5 and one half if the home team is ahead) and no new inning will begin after play has lasted seventy-five (75) minutes for a weeknight game and ninety (90) 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 runs have scored, whichever occurs first.

Coaching: A maximum of four defensive coaches are allowed on the field to give instruction to defensive players from the following locations:

- a) One in the left outfield area (beyond the clay) in FOUL territory
- b) One in the right outfield area (beyond the clay) in FOUL territory
- c) Two in the infield area along the fence not obstructing the field of play

Note, the defensive team may place an additional coach behind the catcher along the fence to help return pass balls to the pitcher in an effort to speed the game. If the defensive team does not place a coach along the fence behind the catcher, the offensive team may do so with one of its coaches, it being understood that the defensive team has the first option to do so.

A maximum of four offensive coaches are allowed on the field to give instruction to offensive players from the following locations:

- a) One in the first base coach's box
- b) One in the third base coach's box
- c) Two in the infield area along the fence not obstructing the field of play

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: SJAA uses a "closed bases" philosophy (aka no leadoffs). There is no stealing. A runner may advance to the next base if the ball is legally put in play, and the defense has not stopped the runner in the field of play.

Batting: Every player 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 reason, 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 come up to the plate and there shall be no penalty and the count returned to no balls no strikes. 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, and

shin guards. The catcher may crouch behind home plate or be positioned along the fence behind home plate. Catchers crouching directly behind home plate must also wear a protective cup.

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

Hitting: It is the offensive coach's responsibility to help position the batter to best hit the ball. The machine should be calibrated at the beginning of each game. For recreational games, the speed of the machine should be set to Level 9.

- a. There are no called balls or strikes. A batter shall be provided up to 5 hittable pitches thrown from the pitching machine. A foul ball on the 5th or succeeding pitches will not count as a strike-out.
- b. Hittable does not necessarily mean a strike. It will be in the opinion of the umpire. The umpire may determine that a pitch is "not hittable" and therefore that pitch does not count as one of the 5, even if it is the 5th pitch. An example of a non-hittable ball would be one that bounces on the plate or is over the head of the batter.

Advancing Bases: An offensive player hitting the ball in play may not advance past second on an overthrow to first base unless a) there is an attempt to get that baserunner out at second base, or b) there is an attempt to get another baserunner out at third or home. In the event of a non-qualified advancement, the umpire shall have the runner who put the ball in play go back to second base. There is no restriction on other baserunners who may already be on base at the time of an overthrow to first, and the runner who put the ball in play may advance past second if the defense tries to make a play on other such baserunners.

Bunting: Each team shall be allowed 3 bunts in fair territory per game. A fouled bunt with two strikes will be considered a strikeout, but it will not count towards the 3 bunt limit. Slash bunting (i.e. fake bunt then full swing) is not allowed, and any attempt at such will be considered an immediate out.

Sliding: There is no sliding headfirst at any base. A head first slide shall result in the runner being called out. There is no sliding into 1st base. A runner who slides into 1st base shall result in the runner being called out.

Machine/Coach Interference: A batted ball that FIRST strikes the pitching machine, sand bags on the

machine, or the coach operating the machine will be a declared a dead ball and the batter will be awarded first base. All other runners may only advance if forced. A kicked or thrown ball that hits the pitching machine, sand bags on the machine, or the coach operating the machine is considered a live-ball situation.

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.

Positions:

- a. Outfielders must play in the grass beyond the infield clay.
- b. Pitchers must start their position with both feet within clay of the pitchers circle.
- c. The pitcher may NOT start or advance past the front base of the pitching machine until the ball has crossed home plate.

Infield fly: There will be no infield fly rule.

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.