

BETHEL BASEBALL ASSOCIATION (BBA)

JUNIOR LITTLE LEAGUE RULES AND REGULATIONS 2019

1) Player Eligibility

Player eligibility for BBA Junior Little League is determined as follows:

- a) The player must be a resident of the Municipality of Bethel Park; or, the player's legal guardian(s) must pay taxes to the Bethel Park School District at the beginning of the regular season.
- b) The player must complete an official registration form prior to the deadline for player registration; registrations received after the deadline may be rejected by the BBA Board of Directors (Board).
- c) The player must attain the age of nine (9) prior to May 1st of the current season; and, the player must not attain the age of eleven (11) prior to May 1st of the current season.
- d) The player must not be a member of any other recreational, community-based, non-affiliated baseball league.

2) Player Draft and Official Team Rosters

- a) Roster Size and Number of Teams. Prior to the player draft, the Junior Little League Commissioner (Commissioner) will set the number of teams so as to have a minimum of 11 and a maximum of 13 players on each team. The Board will appoint a Manager to each team.
- b) Annual Player Draft. Prior to each season, the Commissioner will conduct a player draft. Managers will select players for their team according to the draft format established by the Commissioner. All players will be drafted each season. Second-year players will not remain with their previous-year team. The draft format shall be designed to result in evenly competitive teams.
 - i) Every player who played BBA Junior Little League or BBA Minor League baseball the previous year received an end-of-year evaluation from his/her manager. Summary information from the manager evaluations will be made available to selecting Managers to aid in the draft process. Live pre-season "tryouts" or evaluation sessions will not be held. Players who did not play in the BBA the previous year will not be evaluated.
 - ii) The child or children of a Manager must be selected by the Manager in draft rounds commensurate with the draft format.
 - (1) Any Manager who does not wish to have his child on his team must make this known to the Commissioner in advance of the draft; and the Commissioner must inform the other Managers that this child is eligible to be selected by any team.
 - (2) Unless condition (1), immediately above, applies, the child of a Manager may not be selected by any other Manager.
 - iii) Siblings will be drafted together. Any team that selects a player with an eligible sibling(s), immediately and automatically uses subsequent picks to select the sibling(s). The Commissioner shall ensure that groups of siblings are selected prior to the final draft round to avoid roster size imbalances.
 - (1) If the parents or guardians of siblings wish for the players to be on different teams, they must make this known to the Commissioner prior to the draft, in which case the siblings will be drafted separately.

c) Official Team Rosters

- i) Teams established per the annual draft become Official Team Rosters. Managers are not permitted to trade players or make any other changes to Official Team Rosters.
- ii) No Manager or coach may dismiss a player. Managers who have difficulty with a player related to behavior or lack of attendance must inform the Commissioner.
- iii) Changes to Official Team Rosters may only be made by the Commissioner, with written approval by the Board. Any such change to an Official Team Roster, and an explanation for why the change was made, shall be made known to all other Managers in the league.
- iv) Any Manager who becomes aware of a player on his team who is for any reason ineligible (see Section 1) must immediately inform the Commissioner. Failure to do so will result in forfeiture of all games played with the ineligible player.

3) Player Participation

- a) Only officially rostered players and qualifying Minors call ups may participate in a Junior Little League game.
 - i) The calling up of Minor players will be conducted in accordance with procedures established by the Minors League Commissioner.
 - ii) Minors League call ups must be 8-year-olds (age 8 on April 30th of the current year).
 - iii) A maximum of two players may be called up. The Junior Little League team must have at least 7 of its regular players present.
 - iv) Regardless of whether additional regular team players show up and are eligible to play, called up players must play a minimum of 3 defensive innings.
 - v) Called up players may not pitch in Junior Little League games.
 - vi) Called up players will bat last in the lineup.
 - vii) Call ups are not permitted during the league playoffs.
- b) A game may not be started unless both teams have at least 8 players present.
- c) Late arriving players must be present prior to the conclusion of the 3rd inning in order to play. They must be inserted at the end of the batting order; and they must play at least 1 defensive inning.
- d) All players present and eligible will bat in a continuous order for the entire game.
- e) Players may be freely substituted on defense.
- f) Players present at the beginning of a game must play a minimum of 4 defensive innings (unless the game is called early on account of weather or darkness, and qualifies as a complete game).
- g) No player may be kept on the bench for a second defensive inning until all players have spent one defensive inning on the bench.
- h) All players must play a minimum of two defensive innings in the infield, and one defensive inning in the outfield.
- i) Players may not change defensive positions during an inning, unless:

- i) There is an injury that requires removal of a player from the field.
 - ii) There is a pitching change.
- j) BBA permits participation by league players in affiliated, non-recreational spring leagues such as the West Penn league and the Pittsburgh Metro Baseball league. However, BBA Junior Little League games take precedent over affiliated league games. Any player or Manager who misses a BBA Junior Little League game to participate in an affiliated league game *or practice* is subject to the following penalties.
- i) Managers: Any Manager violating (j) is ineligible to manage a Travel team for the current year, and ineligible to manage any BBA team the following year.
 - ii) Players: Any player who plays in less than 50% of the BBA games is in violation of (j) resulting in a suspension from the affiliated team for the remainder of the season, is ineligible to play BBA Travel baseball in the current year, and is ineligible for an affiliated spring team the following year.

4) Equipment

- a) Catchers must wear shin guards, chest protector, protective cup, a catcher's mitt, and a helmet-mask with throat protector.
- b) Batters and baserunners must wear batting helmets at all times.
- c) Metal-cleated shoes are prohibited.
- d) Beginning January 1st, 2018 the BBA has adopted the USA bat standard. The new standard is designed to reduce the overall velocity and distance of a batted baseball (reducing the "trampoline effect").
- e) Maximum bat barrel diameter - 2-1/4" and 2-5/8" barrels are permitted.
- e) All USA Baseball stamped bats, including composite, hybrid, or alloy, and regardless of size or weight, are now approved and accepted for all ages of BBA recreational baseball.
 - ii) Wood bats and full-metal bats are permitted.
- f) A player and the player's Manager are deemed to be in violation of the composite-barrel bat rule (iv) if the player steps into the batting box with a composite-barrel bat. Whenever a violation occurs, both Managers must notify the Commissioner within 24 hours. Penalties for violation of the composite-barrel bat rule are as follows. Second and third violations are for violations occurring during the same season as the first violation.
 - i) Penalties against the Manager:
 - (1) First Violation: A warning will be issued to the Manager. [However, there will be no Manager violation if the offending player's Manager identifies the violation during the player's at bat.]
 - (2) Second Violation: The Manager will be ejected from the current game and will receive an additional 1-game suspension. The second violation need not be committed by the same player that committed the first violation.
 - (3) Third Violation: The Manager will be ejected from the current game and will receive an additional 3-game suspension. The Manager will be ineligible for any BBA managerial position for the remainder of the current year and the entirety of the following year.

(4) If a violation occurs during a game in which the Manager is not present, it shall count as a violation nonetheless.

ii) Penalties against the Player:

(1) First Violation: Batter is out and ejected from the current game and receives an additional 1-game suspension.

(2) Second Violation: Batter is out and ejected from the current game and receives an additional 3-game suspension. The player is furthermore ineligible for Playoffs and Travel Baseball during the year in which the second violation occurred, and is ineligible for any BBA-affiliated non-recreational teams, such as West Penn or Metro teams, the following year.

(3) Third Violation: Batter is out and ejected from the current game and receives a suspension for the remainder of the current year and the entirety of the following year. The suspension applies to any and all BBA or BBA-affiliated teams.

5) Playing Rules and Regulations

All Junior Little League contests shall be conducted and played according to the latest playing rules and regulations set forth in the Little League Baseball Rule Book, except as follows.

- a) No player is permitted in the coaching boxes. Occupants of the coaching boxes must be coaches or non-player representatives designated by the manager.
- b) Games suspended for weather or darkness after the losing team has batted at least 4 times are complete, and the final score is the score at the completion of the last fully played inning (top and bottom). In the event of a tie, both teams must have batted at least 4 times for the game to be complete.
- c) Extra innings (beyond 6) will not be played to break ties during the regular season.
- d) If either team is leading by 15 or more runs at the conclusion of the 4th or 5th inning, the game is final and complete. If the home team attains a lead of 15 or more runs in the bottom half of the 4th or 5th innings, the game is final and complete.
- e) There is a 5 run rule per inning. Once 5 runs have scored, the inning is over. No continuation rule. In the final inning of play there is no Run Rule in place.
- f) The defensive team shall consist of not more than 10 and not less than 8 players. If at any time a team cannot field 8 or more players on defense, the game is forfeited.
 - i) When 10 fielders are available, 4 shall be outfielders.
 - ii) At no time is a rover permitted. A rover is an outfielder who plays behind and within 30 feet of 2nd base.
- g) Pitching Rules: One pitch thrown constitutes one inning pitched. Unless otherwise noted, violation of the pitching rules will result in forfeiture of any game in which the violation occurs.
 - i) Pitching Limitations:
 - (1) No player may pitch more than 2 innings in a single game.
 - (2) Over any two-day period, no player may pitch more than 3 innings, regardless of the number of games played in the period.

(3) No player may pitch on three consecutive days.

(4) During any calendar week (Sunday through Saturday) no player may pitch more than 6 total innings.

(5) A nine-year-old, defined as a player who does not attain the age of 10 prior to May 1st of the current season, must pitch and achieve 3 outs, or pitch to 6 consecutive batters, prior to the conclusion of the 4th inning.

ii) Pitcher Removal: Once a pitcher is removed from the mound he may not pitch again in the same game.

(1) A pitcher hitting two batsmen in one inning shall be removed from the mound.

(2) A coach may make one visit to the mound per inning, per pitcher, to talk to the pitcher. Crossing the baseline constitutes a trip to the mound. A second visit to the same pitcher in an inning requires removal of the pitcher.

iii) Pitching General:

(1) A pitcher may take up to 8 warm-up pitches from the mound prior to the start of any inning or appearance.

(2) Pitchers may not wear wristbands, white fielding gloves, any sort of glove on the throwing hand, or sunglasses, whether on the face or the bill of the hat.

(3) No balks will be called against the pitcher.

(4) Intentional walks are not permitted.

iv) Breaking Balls:

(1) Pitchers may not throw any pitch that involves the rolling of the hand or fingers over the top, outside, or inside of the ball, or any similar twisting of the forearm or wrist, for the purpose of imparting spin that would cause the ball to break in a downward or lateral direction. Such pitches are commonly known as curveballs, sliders, and screwballs.

(a) Off-speed pitches that do not meet the criteria in (1) are permitted.

(b) Pitchers may alter their grip and arm angle at will.

(2) The home plate umpire will determine if breaking balls are being thrown. The penalty for violation of the Breaking Ball rule (1) is:

(a) For the first offense, the umpire will call "no pitch, dead ball," award the batter first base, and warn the pitcher and Manager.

(b) For any subsequent offense by the same pitcher in the same game, the umpire will proceed as in (a), after which the pitcher must be removed from the mound.

h) Bunting is permitted. However, in attempting a bunt, the batter must visibly separate his hands on the bat. Bunts attempted with the hands together or with partial swings will result in an immediate dead ball and the batter being ruled out by the umpire.

i) Pinch runners are permitted for injured baserunners or for catchers. The pinch runner shall be the last player to make an out. Any catcher for whom a pinch runner was used must catch the next inning, except in cases of injury.

j) Base Stealing:

i) Leading off from a base is not permitted. From the time a pitcher toes the rubber in possession of the ball, baserunners must return to and remain on base until the ball is put in play by the batter or reaches the front of home plate.

(1) If a runner is judged to have left early, the base umpire shall immediately call "dead ball, no pitch," the runner shall be returned to the base, and a warning will be issued to the offending team.

(2) For any subsequent occurrence of leaving base early by the same team, the base umpire shall immediately call "dead ball, no pitch, runner is out."

ii) Players may steal 2nd and 3rd base after a pitched ball has passed the front of home plate.

iii) Players may not steal home. There are two ways to score a run in Junior Little League:

(1) On continuation of a play resulting from a batted ball.

(2) Being forced home on a bases-loaded base-on-balls, hit batsman, or catcher's interference call.

iv) Clarification 1: A runner on 1st may steal 2nd in accordance with these rules. On the same play, he may continue and attempt to steal 3rd base, if unoccupied. He may not, however, continue to home. If he attempts home on a steal, he may be put out by the defensive team any time before returning to 3rd base.

v) Clarification 2: The ball is put in play by the batter and there is a play at the plate. Another runner advances to third during the play. After attempting the putout at home, the catcher returns the ball to the pitcher, who receives it near the mound. Before the pitcher returns to the rubber, the runner on 3rd breaks for home. This is permitted by the rules. It is not a steal; it is a continuation of the play begun by the batter. The ball is live and the play continues until the ball is declared dead or out of play, an umpire calls time out, or the pitcher toes the rubber with the ball.

k) For plays at any base, runners must slide or otherwise avoid contact with a fielder attempting a putout on a runner. Contact is permitted as long as the runner slides prior to contact; sliding is not required if the runner successfully avoids contact. Failure to slide or avoid contact will result in the runner being called out.

l) Head first slides are not permitted when advancing to a base; runners sliding head first to an advanced base will be called out. Runners returning to a base may slide head first.

m) Runners who have left the base and make contact with a fielder attempting a play on a batted ball are guilty of interference and will be called out.

n) Runners have an unobstructed right to the base paths and the bases. Any fielder not in possession of the ball or making a play on a batted ball who stands in the path of a runner or blocks access to a base is guilty of obstruction. In such cases the umpire will call obstruction and the runner is awarded the base he is attempting plus any other bases the umpire judges he would have attained had the obstruction not occurred.

o) The Infield Fly Rule is not in effect.

p) There is no dropped third strike rule. Batters are out on strike three, whether the catcher fields the pitch cleanly or not.

6) Treatment of Umpires

- a) During any game in which an objection to an umpire's decision arises, only the team manager shall discuss the issue with the umpire. Any violation of this rule will result in the ejection of the offending person.
- b) Any Manager, coach, or player who is ejected by an umpire during a game will sit out the next game. The incident surrounding the ejection must be reviewed by the Grievance Committee. The Grievance Committee will make a recommendation to the full Board concerning any action taken. Further disciplinary action will be at the Board's discretion.
- c) A minimum of a one-year suspension is required for contact made with an umpire. Additionally, the suspended person must petition the Board for reinstatement after the suspension is completed.
- d) The limited tolerance rule will be in effect. Umpires are instructed to apply the limited tolerance rule to players, managers, coaches, and parents as follows.
 - i) Any verbal abuse, undue argument, or harassment will result in a warning to the offending player, manager, coach, or spectator.
 - ii) If the abuse, arguing, or harassment continues, the player, manager, coach, or spectator will be ejected from the field. The ejected person must leave the premises.
 - iii) If the ejected person refuses to leave or continues to abuse, argue, or harass the umpire, the ejected person's team will forfeit the game.

7) Grievances

- a) From time to time incidents may occur wherein disputes within the Association will require resolution to restore harmony and wellbeing to the organization. Accordingly, the Board of Directors has established "Grievance Committees" that will bear the responsibility of resolving disputes pertaining to players, managers, coaches, umpires, and parents, that, in the opinion of the Commissioner, warrant committee action.
- b) Grievances shall be submitted in writing, within 72 hours of the event causing the grievance, to the Commissioner, who will take the grievance to the Grievance Committee.

8) Ground Rules

- a) Field dimensions for Junior Little League are 46 feet from the back tip of home plate to the front of the pitcher's rubber; 60 feet between bases.
- b) A fair ball bouncing over, going under, or sticking in the outfield fence is a ground rule double. Outfielders must indicate that a ball has stuck in the fence by raising their arms. If they retrieve the ball, it remains live.
 - i) Where no fence is present, a fair ball leaving the field and entering an unmaintained area is out of play, and is ruled a ground rule double, whether a player retrieves the ball or not.
- c) A fair fly ball over the fence is a home run, whether or not touched by an outfielder.
- d) Overthrown balls that remain in the playing area are live and must be played.
- e) Overthrown balls that go out of play result in the award of any base that runners are advancing towards plus one additional base.

- i) The exception is that home may not be awarded on a steal play.
- f) No spectators or players may view the game from behind the backstop.
- g) Only Manager, coaches, and players are permitted on the bench, in the dugout, and in the batter warm-up areas.
- h) Pre-game warm-ups:
 - i) The home team has the field for 30 minutes beginning one hour before game time.
 - ii) The visiting team has the field for 30 minutes beginning 30 minutes before game time.

9) Championship Playoff Tournament

- a) All Junior Little League teams are eligible to participate in the Championship Playoff Tournament following the regular season.
- b) The format of the Championship Playoff Tournament will be determined by the Commissioner, who will submit the plan to the Board for approval prior to the end of the regular season. The format must be communicated to the league Managers upon approval.
 - i) Within the approved format, seeding will be determined by the final regular season standings.
 - ii) To break ties in season standings, the following tiebreakers will be applied:
 - (1) Head-to-head record.
 - (2) Division record.
 - (3) Most total runs scored in head-to-head contests.
 - (4) Fewest runs allowed in head-to-head contests.
 - (5) Coin flip.
- c) All regular season pitching rules apply to post-season playoff games, with the following exceptions and stipulations.
 - i) The maximum number of innings that may be pitched by a player is 6 for the entire playoff tournament, regardless of the duration of the tournament.
 - ii) The playoff tournament will initiate a new week for pitching eligibility, regardless of the day that the tournament begins.
 - (1) All pitchers start the tournament with 0 innings pitched.
 - (2) Limitations on pitching on consecutive days still apply (see 5.f.i.2 and 5.f.i.3) with no distinction between regular season games and playoff games.
 - iii) For suspended games that are continued on a later date, the pitching eligibility that was in effect on the date that the game was started will remain in effect for the continuation of the game.
 - iv) For rained out games, pitching eligibility will be determined by the date of the makeup game.
- d) Extra innings will be used to decide tie games, weather and light permitting.

e) A determination of how suspended playoff games will be decided must be part of the Championship Playoff Tournament format that is approved and communicated to the managers prior to the end of the regular season. The determination must address:

- i) Whether or not the complete game criteria used for regular season games applies to playoff games. This may change according to playoff round, e.g., quarterfinals, semifinals, etc.
- ii) The specific procedures for suspension and continuation of playoff games.

10) Intra-League All-Star Games

- a) Two All-Star Games will be conducted; one for players aged 9 on April 30th of the current season (9-year-olds), and one for players aged 10 on April 30th of the current season (10-year-olds).
- b) The specific structure and format of the All-Star games will be determined by the Commissioner, who will submit a plan to the Board for approval.
- c) Players representing their teams will be selected by a vote of their teammates.
 - i) Managers will prepare ballots and distribute them to the team.
 - ii) The team Business Manager will collect the ballots and tally them.
 - iii) The Manager will observe the tallying of ballots by the Business Manager.
 - iv) The Manager will break any ties.
 - v) The Business Manager will report the results to the Commissioner.
- d) All-Star team managers will be designated by the Commissioner. Traditionally, these will be the managers of the teams leading in the season standings as of a predetermined date shortly before the All-Star game. Other Managers may serve as coaches at the pleasure of the All-Star team Manager.
- e) All-Star team participants must play at least 4 defensive innings.
- f) Pitchers may pitch a maximum of 1 inning. All other pitching rules apply.

11) Awards

The following awards will be provided to qualifying participants.

- a) Trophies to all players elected to an All-Star team.
- b) Trophies to regular season division champions.
- c) Trophies to the runner-up team in the Championship Playoff Tournament.
- d) Trophies to the winner of the Championship Playoff Tournament.