

BETHEL BASEBALL ASSOCIATION (BBA)

2012 PONY LEAGUE RULES AND REGULATIONS

1) Player Eligibility

Player eligibility for BBA Pony 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 eleven (11) prior to May 1st of the current season; and, the player must not attain the age of thirteen (13) 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 Pony 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 Pony League or BBA Senior Little 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 Senior Little League call ups may participate in a Pony League game.
 - i) The calling up of Senior Little League players will be conducted in accordance with procedures established by the Senior Little League Commissioner.
 - ii) Senior Little League call ups must be 12-year-olds (age 12 on April 30th of the current year).
 - iii) A maximum of two players may be called up. The Pony 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 Pony League games.
 - vi) Called up players will bat last in the lineup.
- 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 3 defensive innings (unless the game is called early on account of weather or darkness, and qualifies as a complete game).
 - i) No player present at the beginning of a game shall sit out a second defensive inning until all players present at the beginning of the game have sat out one defensive inning.

- ii) All players present at the beginning of a game shall play a minimum of 2 innings at an infield position.
- g) 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.
- h) Player injuries that result in open wounds where bleeding is present require immediate removal of the player from the field of play. The player is only permitted to return once the bleeding has stopped and the wound is properly covered.
- i) Players must remove all jewelry before the game begins, must have their shirts tucked in at all times, and must wear their hats correctly (cocked, crooked, and backwards caps are prohibited).
 - i) Players violating this rule will be given a warning and must immediately comply.
 - ii) A subsequent violation will result in the ejection of the player. The ejected player may not return to the game and an out will be recorded each time his place in the order is due up.
- 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 Pony League games take precedent over affiliated league games. Any player or Manager who misses a BBA Pony League game to participate in an affiliated league game 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 violating (j) is suspended 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 permitted.
- d) Maximum bat barrel diameter is 2-5/8 inches. Maximum bat length is 35 inches. All bats must be Pony Baseball® approved.
- e) Regardless of whether they are Pony Baseball® approved, composite-barrel bats are strictly prohibited.
 - i) Hybrid design bats, in which the handle is composite and the barrel is metal, are permitted.
 - 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 Pony League contests shall be conducted and played according to the latest playing rules and regulations set forth in the Pony 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 5 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 5 times for the game to be complete.
- c) Extra innings (beyond 7) will not be played to break ties during the regular season.
- d) If either team is leading by 10 or more runs at the conclusion of the 5th or 6th inning, the game is final and complete. If the home team attains a lead of 10 or more runs in the bottom half of the 5th or 6th innings, the game is final and complete.
- e) The defensive team shall consist of not more than 9 and not less than 8 players. If at any time a team cannot field 8 or more players on defense, the game is forfeited.
- f) 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 7 innings in a single day.
 - (2) During any calendar week (Sunday through Saturday) a player may pitch no more than 10 total innings.
 - (3) Any pitcher who pitches 4 or more innings in a single day may not pitch again until 48 hours (2 days) have elapsed.
 - (a) The 48-hour period is computed from the start time of the last game pitched, so a pitcher who pitched 4 innings in a 6:00 PM game on Wednesday may pitch again after 6:00 PM on Friday, but not before.
 - (4) Any pitcher who pitches 7 innings in a single day may not pitch again until 72 hours (3 days) have elapsed.
 - (a) The 72-hour period is computed from the start time of the last game pitched, so a pitcher who pitched 7 innings in a 6:00 PM game on Wednesday may pitch again after 6:00 PM on Saturday, but not before.
- ii) Pitcher Removal: Once a pitcher is removed from the mound he may not pitch again in the same game.
 - (1) A pitcher hitting 3 batsmen in one inning or a total of 4 for the game 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) Intentional walks are permitted.
 - (4) Breaking balls are permitted.
- g) 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.
- h) 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.
- i) 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.
- j) 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.

- k) The Infield Fly Rule is in effect.
- l) The dropped third strike rule is in effect. If first base is unoccupied, or there are 2 outs, and the catcher does not catch and control the third strike pitch, without the ball touching the ground, the batter may try for first base. If first base is occupied with fewer than 2 outs, the batter is automatically out on strike three.

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 well being 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 Pony League are 54 feet from the back tip of home plate to the front of the pitcher's rubber; 80 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.
- 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 gametime.
 - ii) The visiting team has the field for 30 minutes beginning 30 minutes before gametime.

9) Championship Playoff Tournament

- a) All Pony 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 10 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) Mandatory rest periods (see 5.f.i.3 and 5.f.i.4) still apply, 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 13 on April 30th of the current season (13-year-olds), and one for players aged 14 on April 30th of the current season (14-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.