

**LAKE NORMAN SPORTS
IREDELL COUNTY
BABE RUTH**

**CAL RIPKEN
BASEBALL**

2009

**COACH'S HANDBOOK
and
LOCAL RULE BOOK**

7 Rookie League

8 Rookie League

9 & 10 Cal Ripken Minor League

11 & 12 Cal Ripken Major League

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1. Playing Rules (Babe Ruth Rule Book Section)

This rule book is provided by the North Piedmont/Iredell County Babe Ruth-Cal Ripken League and the Iredell County Recreation Department as the Official Rule Book 2009 Cal Ripken, Rookie, Minor and Major Leagues. All local rules override the Official Babe Ruth Rules. Any rule(s) not covered in this book may be found in the Official Babe Ruth Rule Book. The Executive Board of the Lake Norman Sports/Iredell County Babe Ruth League has the right to modify any rule herein if they feel it is for the betterment of the league. Proper notification will be given in this event.

1.1. Batter

1.1.1. Batter Box

The batter should remain in the batter's box once he/she has taken his position. The umpire may only call time for the batter before the pitcher has begun the pitching motion. The umpire should not be lenient in calling time at the batter's request unless there is a legitimate reason. If a batter does not get in the box after the request from the umpire, the umpire shall command the pitcher to pitch and the pitch shall be called a strike. The batter is out if he/she hits the ball while any foot is completely out of the batter's box. The batter is out if he steps on the plate while hitting.

1.1.2. Illegal Bat

A batter using an illegal bat maybe called out only after he/she has reached base but before the next batter has taken a pitch. See ICRD rule Sec. 10.1 or Babe Ruth 1.10.

1.1.3. Throwing Bat (Local Rule)

A batter maybe called out for throwing a bat only after his/her team has had a warning by the umpire. The ball is dead, and runners may not advance.

1.1.4. Batter Interference and Catcher Interference

A batter maybe called out for interfering with the catcher or any defensive player attempting to make a play. This does not include "catcher's interference" for the catcher's glove hitting the batter's bat on a swing (not a back-swing). In this case the play continues if the batter hits the ball fair. No interference is called if the batter reaches first base and no out was made on the play. If an out was made or if the batter did not get to first base, then the umpire calls catcher's interference, and the batter is awarded first base and any runners forced are advanced. (BR 6.0)

1.1.5. Batting Out of Turn

If a batter bats out of turn and the mistake is questioned by the defensive team while the batter is still at the plate, then the proper batter simply takes the batting spot with the count on the wrong batter becoming the count on the proper batter. If the defensive team appeals after the batter reaches base and before another pitch is thrown to the next batter, the proper batter is called out and the wrong batter is taken off the base. Runners who advanced on the play are also returned. The next proper batter is the batter listed on the batting order directly after the proper batter who was called out. If one pitch is thrown to the next batter in the line up, after the improper batter reaches base, the batter is considered to have batted properly and the correct batting order is established after his name in the scorebook. *Example: Baker bats in Abel position and hits a double. (A)The defensive team appeals before the next pitch: Abel is out, Baker is the proper batter. (B)The defense team appeals after a pitch is thrown: Baker is safe on second and Charles is the proper batter. (BR 6.07)*

1.2. Pitcher (Local Rules for regular season and local tournament only)

1.2.1. Innings pitched (local rule)

Our local Cal Ripken rules only allow three (3) innings per game for a pitcher. A starting pitcher properly removed on a single visit or between innings may return to the pitching position one time during the game. All other pitchers may not return as a pitcher once removed, even if between innings. Coaches are responsible for keeping up with the innings pitched. Remind them one pitch to a batter is considered an inning pitched. (Note substitution rule)

1.2.2. Coach's Visits

A pitcher must be removed from pitching on a coach's second visit in an inning to the mound; he may stay in the game at another position. (If a coach goes over the white line during a time out or the coach goes to any player and has them go to the pitcher, it is considered a visit.) A coach cannot visit a pitcher twice while the same batter is at bat. Once the manager leaves the mound from their first visit, the pitcher must finish pitching to that batter before the manager may go to the mound again. (BR 8.06)

1.2.3. Pitcher's equipment on the mound

The pitcher may not have anything sticking out of his back pockets, batting gloves on, a fielding glove with the color white or grey on it, or white undergarments showing while pitching. The pitcher's glove should be uniform in color. (BR 1.15)

1.2.4. Balks

There are no penalties for “balks” in Cal Ripken minor league, but the defensive team should not be allowed to gain an advantage because of a balk.

Balks will be called in the Cal Ripken major league. (*[Local rule] The Board hopes that umpires work with the pitchers, especially early in the year. As the season goes on, umpire's calling of balks will tighten up. Coaches, remember this is a learning year for the pitchers. Umpires will be instructed to be lenient on calling balks early but not allow a team to gain an advantage because of balks. Umpires and coaches should talk before the game as to their wishes on how tight this rule should be called. The bottom line on calling it is with the umpires.*) A balk is usually considered an attempt by the pitcher to deceive a base runner.

The rule book says: "After assuming set position, any natural motion associated with his delivery of the ball to the batter commits him to the pitch without alteration or interruption." Any alteration or interruption of this motion or conceived attempt by the pitcher to deceive the runner will be considered a balk. Please read the section on league pitching positions and balks in the Babe Ruth Rule Book. (BR 8.01 to 8.05)

Some of the basic and most common causes of a balk call are:

- The pitcher delivers the pitch from the set position without coming to a complete stop.
- The pitcher, while on the rubber, makes any motion naturally associated with his pitch and fails to make the throw. (RH Pitcher's front foot moves, while right foot on rubber, and pitcher does not make throw home)
- The pitcher, while on the rubber, feints a throw to first base and does not complete the throw. (Turns shoulder or moves foot toward first)
- The pitcher, while on the rubber, fails to step directly toward a base before throwing to the base. (Pitcher may fake a throw to second or third, but not first)
- The pitcher makes any motion naturally associated with his pitch while not touching the rubber.
- The pitcher without the ball stands on or astride the rubber.
- The pitcher, after coming to a legal pitching position, removes his hand from the baseball without throwing it.

1.2.5. Dropped Third Strike in Major League

In Cal Ripken Major League only, the batter may attempt to advance to first base on a dropped third strike (swung at or called) with first base open no matter the outs, or with two outs and first base occupied. The catcher may tag the batter/runner out, or throw the ball to force an out at first, or other forced base, or tag home with bases loaded. A player is considered out by abandonment when in the umpire's judgment the batter has left the batting area to return to their dugout (Local interpretation).

1.2.6. Maximum Runs per Inning

In the Major League the maximum number of runs that a team may score in an inning is 10. In Minor League the maximum number of runs that a team may score in an inning is 7 for the 10 year olds and 5 for the 9 year olds. Even if a hit by the last batter scores more runs than the maximum number of runs only maximum number of runs for that league will be scored.

1.2.7. Foul Ball While Bunting on Third Strike

A fouled bunt attempt on a third strike will result in a strikeout.

1.2.8. Caught Foul Tip

A caught foul tip (below the batters head) is considered a strike for all situations. A player may steal on a caught foul tip; a batter may strike out on a caught foul tip etc....

1.3. Base Runners

1.3.1. Baseline

Base runners must run in the baseline and not vary more than three (3) feet from the baseline to avoid a tag. The runner sets the baseline after rounding a bag. It is considered a straight line to first and from the runner's rounding point to the next base at the other bases. All running attempts straight from one base to the next are considered straight lines. A base runner that varies more than 3 feet to avoid a tag shall be called out. A batter-runner may not run to the field side (left) of the first baseline with the intent to interfere with a throw to first base. In this case if in the umpires judgment there was interference by either the thrown ball hitting the runner or forcing a wild throw to first base the umpire may call interference and the runner would be out. (BR 7.8)

1.3.2. Interference (BR 7.09)

a. Runner hit by batted ball

A base runner is out if a batted ball (in which a defensive player other than the pitcher has not yet had the opportunity to make a play on) contacts the runner while off the base and in fair territory. The ball is dead.

b. Runner interferes with a fielder attempting to field a batted ball

A runner who is judged to have interfered with a fielder who is attempting to make a play on a batted ball is out whether intentional or not. For interference the runner is out and the ball is dead. Runners may not advance, except the batter who goes to first.(BR 7.9)

c. Batted ball contacts batter (or bat) in fair territory

The batter/runner is out and the ball is dead if he/she contacts a batted ball in fair territory before a defensive player other than the pitcher has had the opportunity to make a play on it. This includes hitting the ball with the bat a second time. If the ball rolls into a dropped bat in fair territory or the head of a broken bat hits the ball and in the umpire's judgment there was no intention to interfere the ball is live.

d. Player/coach interference

If in the umpire's judgment another offense player (other than standing on a base) or coach interferes in anyway with a defensive player attempting to make a defensive play, the batter/runner in jeopardy is out and the ball is dead. The base coach has the responsibility to try to move out of a fielder way, failure to do so in the umpire's judgment can be called interference. If a thrown ball hits a coach or player who is not officially in the field of play area, or passes through an open gate, which should be closed, the ball is dead and all umpire judgments and ruling should be in favor of the other team.

e. Breaking up a double play

If in the umpire's judgment a base runner willfully interferes with a fielder with the intent to break up a double play, both base runners are out, the ball is dead, and other runners may not advance. (BR 7.09g/h)

f. Base Coach Interference

If in the umpire's judgment a base coach assists a base runner by touching him/her (this includes catching, pushing, helping up or holding a runner), the runner is out and the ball is dead. (BR 7.09i) If the base coach leaves his coaching box area in any manner (runner along with the runner) that could be considered to be an attempt to draw a throw, the umpire may call interference, call runner out, and declare a dead ball. (BR 7.09j)

1.3.3. Obstruction

If a defensive player obstructs an advancing or returning runner, the umpire will declare obstruction. If there is no play on the obstructed runner, play continues. After the stoppage of play, the umpire shall call time and allow the advancement of the obstructed runner to the base. In the umpire's judgment, the runner could have safely advanced to if there was no obstruction. If the obstruction accrues on a base runner while the defensive team is making a play on the runner, the umpire shall call time and award the next base to the obstructed runner. (In a pickle, for example) Runners in front of the affected runner maybe forced to advance. A

catcher, or any defensive player without the ball, has no right to occupy the baseline and may be called for obstruction. (BR 7.6)

1.3.4. Free advancement of runners (BR 7.05)

The follow is a list of just a few of the common free advancement situations for base runners. There may be more situations than these.

Situation	Awarded
If a defensive player deliberately touches a batted fair ball with any part of his uniform, cap, mask or thrown glove.	3 bases
If a defensive player deliberately touches a thrown ball with any part of his uniform, cap, mask or thrown glove.	2 bases
If a batted ball that goes through, under, or bounces over the outfield fence.	2 bases
For a ball thrown by a defensive player (other than the pitcher on the mound) that goes out of play over under or through the fence or into the dugout area.	2 bases
For a throw from the mound that goes out of play.	1 base
A pitched ball gets stuck in the backstop.	1 base
A player catching a pop fly (fair or foul) falls into a dugout or over a fence.	1 base

1.3.5. Over-running first base

A batter/runner may not be tagged out for over-running first base if he immediately returns to the base without making an attempt toward second. (A runner may turn either right or left to return; a left turn in itself does not indicate an attempt toward second.) (BR 7.08)

1.3.6. Two runners on the same base or passing a runner

When two runners are touching the same base, the trailing runner is out when the defensive player with the ball touches the base. The runner is out if he/she passes the runner in front of him/her before the preceding runner is put out. (BR 7.08)

1.3.7. Runner leaving early for Minor League (Local rule)

Local Cal Ripken rules make it an out for the base runner to leave the base he/she is legally occupying after the pitcher has taken the pitching rubber and before the pitched ball has crossed the front edge of the plate. (This is generally a field umpire's call, but sometimes the plate umpire will see the movement, especially at second base, and may make the call.) As soon as the runner leaves the base early, the umpire is to call time. The ball is dead at that point, even if put in play by the batter. For Rookie League see 11.7.

1.3.8. Missed base (Local rule)

The umpire makes an automatic delayed call on a missed base once the play is over. Once the runner has touched the next base or left the playing field after missing home, he/she is out and may not return to touch the base missed. If it was the third out, all runs scored after the players missed the base do not count.

1.3.9. Out by abandoning effort

A runner is said to be out if he/she abandons his/her effort to remain on base or advance and begins to return to the dugout, even though they are not out. The exception to this is that a runner may return to touch home plate at any time before he/she steps out of the playing field into the dugout area. It is a judgment call by the umpire as to when a runner has abandoned his/her effort. A player does not have to leave the playing field to be considered abandoning their effort.

1.4. *Intentional walks (Local rule)*

A defensive coach may intentionally walk a batter by notifying the umpire of his intention. The umpire shall then direct the batter to first base.

1.5. *Regulation game (Local rule)*

Regular season Cal Ripken Minor League games are limited to 6 innings with no new inning beginning after 1 hour and 20 minutes from the actual start time of the game minus any lost time due to weather stoppage. If an inning begins with the visiting team leading and batting and the 1 hour 30 minute time limit is reached, the game will end and the official score will revert to the previous inning. If the visiting team takes the lead during the last inning, the inning must be finished, allowing the home team to bat.

In the Cal Ripken Major League no new inning should start after 1 hour 35 minutes. If an inning begins with the visiting team leading and batting and the 1 hour 45 minute time limit is reached, the game will end and the official score will revert to the previous inning. If in the last inning the visiting team takes the lead, the inning must be finished allowing the home team to bat. (Note: For all leagues, if a new inning is started with the visiting team behind, the ½ inning must be finished unless they are behind by more than the maximum runs allowed in an inning for that league and age.) All Cal Ripken games are official after the time limit or after the losing team has batted 4 times and is behind by 10 or more runs. (Slaughter rule). Regular season games may end in a tie. Also note that a team may not score more than maximum number of runs per inning as specified in section 1.2.6. The umpires are in charge of time keeping, and their rulings are official. (See Section 12.1 for Rookie League time limits)

1.6. Infield fly

The infield fly rule is in effect for all Cal Ripken minor and major league play as written in the Babe Ruth Rule Book (BR 2.00). An infield fly is a fair fly ball (not including a line drive or attempted bunt) which can be caught by an infielder (or another player in the infield area) with ordinary effect, with first and second or first, second and third occupied before there are two outs. The umpire must call the "infield fly." The batter is out; therefore, there is no force on for any base. Runners may advance at their own risk. They must be tagged to be put out since there is no force.

1.7. Sliding

.Base runners must slide feet first into any base (except on a return to a base). A runner who slides head first in an attempt to advance to the next base shall be called out. If a runner intentionally and maliciously runs in to a defensive player in possession of the ball, the player shall be called out and ejected from the game. A defensive player in the baseline without the ball will be called for interference.

2. Players

2.1. Uniforms (local rule)

All players are expected to be in uniform. They should have matching hats. Umpires should not disqualify players because of this, but teams that continuously field improperly dressed players may be warned and disqualified by the local director if efforts to fix the problem are not satisfactory. (Local rule) In other words, we expect our teams to look like ball teams. Players and base coach's shirt tails must be in. Similar hats are required.

2.2. Jewelry

Players may not wear any jewelry (rings, visible necklaces, earrings, etc.) of any type. When any player is seen with jewelry, the umpire shall warn both teams. From that point on any player getting in the batters box with jewelry on will called out by the home plate umpire.

2.3. Picking up a player (local rule)

Teams may pick up an eighth player to begin a game with eight. He/she must be on a league roster of another team from the Stumpy Creek League in the same age group and in a different uniform. The picked up players can only play outfield and must bat last. He/she may stay in the game if another player shows up. Teams may pick up only one player and may not pick up a ninth player. If only batting eight players, the ninth batting position is NOT an out.

2.4. Lineup (local rule)

All minor league and rookie teams are required to have all players in the batting line up (bat-around rule). Players must play at least every other inning on defense. Major league teams may use the bat around rule, the EH (extra hitter), or bat nine. All players must have at least one at bat and play in the field two innings (one if the team plays three or less defensive innings). Failure of a coach to use the bat around rule to have all his/her players meet the minimum play rule will result in a forfeit. The southern division uses the bat-around rule for all age groups, including major league, for the regular season.

3. Dugout area

The dugout area is for players and coaches only. Players in uniform, three coaches, a bat-boy/girl and a scorekeeper (local rule) are allowed in the dugout area. No parents or other children are allowed in the dugout area. No swinging of bats is allowed in the dugout area. No soft toss or the use of batting sticks is allowed in the dugout area during the game. No players or coaches are allowed out of the dugout area except the two base coaches when the team is batting. A coach wanting time should step just out of the dugout to get the umpire's attention to call time. Anyone retrieving bats under 16 years old must wear an approved batting helmet. Anyone under 16 warming up a pitcher (on or off field) in a squatting position must have an approved catcher mask on. The head coach is responsible for his/her team keeping the dug out area clean. No tobacco products are allowed in the dug out area. This includes coaches and parents. On an out-of-the-park home run, the players and coaches in the dugout may go out of the dug out toward home plate to greet the batter. They may not touch the batter/base runner until they have touched home plate. They must return to the dugout in a timely manner.

4. Actions of coaches, players or fans

4.1. Coach

A coach should be an ambassador of sportsmanship. He/she has the right to question umpire interpretation of rules but not judgment calls. Unsportsmanlike conduct of a coach may result in discipline from the umpire and/or the league director. An umpire has two basic discipline options in dealing with an unruly coach. First, he may confine the coach to the dugout and warn him any other problem will result in ejection. This is suggested when a coach oversteps his rights to be on the field. (Example: A base coach goes in fair territory during live play, etc...). Secondly a coach maybe ejected from the game and at this time he must leave the playing area or, at the umpire's discretion, he may have to leave the entire park. Once ejected, the coach is suspended for the next two games. If a coach is ejected and refuses to leave as told by the umpire, the umpire has the right to forfeit the game and/or call the proper law enforcement to remove the coach. Once a coach is told to leave and refuses, he/she maybe charged with trespassing. The umpires are in control of the field and have this legal right. Unsportsmanlike conduct of a coach may be directed

at players, spectators, or other coaches as well as umpires. The umpires shall not allow a coach to belittle, over punish, or mistreat any players on or around the field area that they are in control of. Base coaches are expected to stay in the coach's box. (The umpire will usually give a coach a warning before removing him/her.) Only one of the three official coaches of the team is allowed on the field to talk to his/her players at a time.

4.2. Player

A player may be warned, confined to the dugout, or ejected for unsportsmanlike behavior. This is a judgment call by the umpire and should be based on his opinion of the situation and what is in the best interest of the player, not whose chances of winning a game it helps.

A player who has committed an unsportsmanlike act deemed to warrant ejection from the game should be removed from the game and confined to the dugout under the control of the coach. A player ejected for unsportsmanlike reasons is also suspended for the next two games. A player may be confined to the dugout for the rest of a game for unsportsmanlike behavior not deemed to be serious enough for ejection. This is an umpire's judgment call. Throwing equipment, taunting, cussing, and other acts deemed to be detrimental to the spirit of game are considered unsportsmanlike conduct.

4.3. Spectator/Fan/Parent

Spectators/Fans/Parents are expected to act in a proper, sportsman-like manner. Any fan using inappropriate language, smoking in the dugout area, drinking alcoholic beverages, or being disrespectful of players, other fans, or umpires maybe ejected from the field area or from the entire park at the discretion of the umpire. If it is clear to which team the fan is pulling for, then the umpire may ask that team's coach to take care of the situation. The coach is responsible for the behavior of his/her team's fans. If the situation continues to the point the umpire wishes to eject the fan, he/she should inform the coach that he/she has two minutes to have the fan removed or the game will be called a forfeit and be over. If the coach cannot control his fan, the umpire will not hesitate to call law enforcement to remove the fan. Be sure to get the fan's name as he/she will be suspended for at least two games and possibly the season. If it is not clear as to which team the fan is from, then the umpire will deal directly with the fan. Fans will not be allowed to belittle opposing players. (Calling them names, easy out, he's scared, etc.) Parents are not allowed on the field of play unless called for by the umpire in the case of injury.

5. Calling Time

Only the umpire may call time. Players, including the batter or coach may ask for time, but only the umpire can call time. The ball is alive until the umpire calls time. Coaches are not allowed to go into fair territory until time is called by the umpire.

6. The Scorebook (Local rules)

6.1. Official book

For regular league play the home team scorebook is official, unless at any point the umpire feels the home scorekeeper is not doing the job properly, at which time the umpire may assign the visiting team scorebook as the official scorebook. The umpire will announce this change to both coaches. It is the visiting coach's responsibility to have their scorekeeper to keep a check on the official book and bring any discrepancies to the attention of the umpires as soon as they are noticed. If a team is playing with only eight players, the ninth batting position is not considered an out. If a team using the bat-around rule has a player leave, for any reason, his position in the batting order is skipped with no penalty. A team not using the bat-around rule must have a legal substitute for the vacated spot in the batting order, unless caused by an injury, or the vacated spot will be called out at its time to bat. If caused by injury, any player left on the bench may replace the injured player in the lineup. If no other player is available, the position in the batting order will be skipped with no penalty.

6.2. Lineups for scorebook

The coach or scorekeeper must present their lineup to the opposing coach before 10 minutes of the scheduled starting time. Names and numbers should be correct. Players arriving late are to be added to the bottom of the lineup when they arrive. If a coach has a no show listed in his official batting order turned in to the other scorekeeper, the no-show will be called out if he/she has not arrived when it is his/her time to bat. (In other words, if a player is not physically, there don't put them in the line-up.) If a team is batting all its players and a player leaves early or can no longer play, his/her position will be skipped in the batting order without being called out. If the team is batting only 9 or 10 (EH), they may substitute any players not currently in the line up. If a team is out of players, the position will be skipped without an out being called. (Regular season and county tournament only)

6.3. Substitutions

A substitute is considered to have entered the game when:

- a. He/she is announced to the opposing scorekeeper or home plate umpire.
- b. If a pitcher, when he/she takes his/her position on the pitcher's rubber.
- c. If a batter, when he/she takes his/her place in the batter box.
- d. If a fielder, when he/she reaches the usual position occupied by the fielder he/she is replacing.

Note: The substitute pitcher must pitch to one batter.

7. Weather Conditions/Darkness

7.1. Stoppage of play

At the field the umpires are in charge of delaying, stopping, resuming, or calling off any games due to weather conditions or darkness (including light failure). The umpire should always make safety the main priority, not playing the game. Coaches have the right not to put their players on the field if they feel it is a dangerous situation but not to delay or call the game. Teams should not leave the park until the umpire has officially cancelled the game; doing so will constitute a forfeit if conditions improve to the point the game could be played. The area director or field director may cancel or delay games but cannot overrule the umpire in forcing a game to be played. At the first sign of lighting in the area, players and fans should be gotten off the field and to their cars. A mandatory 15 minute wait is required after the last lighting or thunder.

7.2. Complete game (local rule)

A game is considered complete if one of the following is fulfilled: (local rules)

- a. The losing team has batted 3 times no matter the time.
- b. You have played over 45 minutes and both teams have batted 2 times.
- c. At the end of the last complete inning one team is 10 or more runs ahead.

If the game is not complete, both scorekeepers should mark at the exact point of the stoppage and note all situations (men on base, count, innings pitched, etc.). If it a conference game we will try to complete it at a later date; most non-conference games will not be made up. Make-up is at the discretion of the local director.

8. Protests

8.1. Protests

A protest may only be filed in a case that a manager/coach feels the umpire made a decision in violation of the official rules of the league. It should be remembered that local rules do override the "official rule book." Protests may never be based on an umpire's judgment call. The notification of protest must be made to the umpire in charge before the next pitch to a live batter is made. The umpire shall have both score keepers to note the situation at that time. The umpire (if he wishes) may call the league director for clarification of the rule at that time, or the game may continue under protest. If the game is finished, the protesting coach has 24 hours to file a written protest with a \$50 check, made to Iredell County Babe Ruth, with the league director or a county Babe Ruth board member. The league director will convene a protest committee as set forth by Iredell County Babe Ruth rules. Ruling of this committee are final. If the protest is approved by the committee, the protest fee will be returned, and if the protesting team's chance of winning the game were (in the director's opinion) adversely affected, then the game will be played over from the point of protest. If the protest is not approved, the protest fee will go to the local Babe Ruth League. Protests for game suspensions of players/coaches/spectators must be filed within 24 hours of the ejection with the same procedure.

8.2. Protest committee

The protest committee will be made up of the two area directors and chaired by the league President. If any committee member is unavailable or has a conflict of interest in the protest, the League President will appoint one of the two alternates to take his place.

9. Leagues, Teams, and Players

9.1. Leagues (local rules)

Each division, North and South, of the North Piedmont/Iredell County Babe Ruth League will organize by age groups as to best serve their area. Cal Ripken will offer 7-8 machine pitch, 9-10 minor, and 11-12 major. If there are enough players, single year age groups may be used. Leagues must have at least 4 teams and no more than 10 teams. The following age groups may be offered: combined 7 and 8 machine pitch, (or a 7 year old Rookie (machine pitch) and 8 year old Advanced Rookie (machine pitch), a combined 9-10 year old minor league (or a 9 year old minor and 10 year old minor, and a combined 11-12 major league (or a 11 year old major and a 12 year old major).

9.2. Teams (local rules)

Each local organization has the responsibility to select their teams. A fair and balanced team selection draft is required. A skills day is recommended. All players wishing to play in the regular season league must be allowed the opportunity to play. Players who cannot afford the cost of registration must be allowed to play. (ICRD and ICBR will help with this situation) Teams or organizations that intentionally "stack" teams maybe disqualified from the league. A fair and balanced draft must be held. Local organizations should not allow teams to carry over from one age group to the next (in other words from 7-8 to 9-10 to 11-12). Babe Ruth/Cal Ripken only recognizes 3 official coaches per team, and that should be the maximum that should be allowed for draft purposes.

9.3. District of Players (local rules)

All Iredell County Babe Ruth League teams are based on elementary school district lines. A player must attend or live in the district of the elementary school that he/she is considered to be eligible for. Some local organizations serve more than one elementary school. These multiple-district organizations must be approved by ICRD and ICBR. Players living within Iredell County may request a waiver to play for another area for legitimate reasons. All players playing out of district must have a release from their "home school" area director and be approved by ICRD and the Iredell County Babe Ruth Board. No out of county players are allowed to be registered under Official Babe Ruth Rules unless an additional area is assigned to Iredell County by the national or state associations.

9.4. *Players age (local rules)*

All Cal Ripken and Babe Ruth player's ages are based on the player's age on April 30 of the season year. Please see the Babe Ruth Rule Book for an age chart. Local rules allow a player to play up one year, with permission of the parent, the coach and the league director. Playing up is not recommend unless the player's level of ability is truly at a level that his/her development would be better in the older age group. All Cal Ripken league players must play all stars and challenge at their proper age level.

10. Equipment

10.1. *Bat*

The Cal Ripken bat must be no more than 33 inches in length nor have a bat barrel in excess of 2 1/4 inches. (BR 1.10)

10.2. *Gloves*

First baseman mitts are only allowed to be worn by player playing first. The catcher may wear a regular glove in the minor league. Pitcher's mitts must be uniform in color and may not be grey or white. Pitchers may not wear batting gloves under their mitt (nor have one showing from his/her pocket). (BR 1.12-1.15)

10.3. *Cleats*

Shoes with metal cleats or sharp spikes are not allowed in the Cal Ripken league. (BR 1.11)

10.4. *Protective gear*

All offensive players in the playing area must wear a double ear flap batting helmet. This includes the batter on deck. The catcher must wear an approved catcher's mask with throat protector. This includes anyone warming up the pitcher from a squad position. Catchers must also wear a cup. Bat boys/girls (under 16) must wear an approved batting helmet when in the playing area. (BR 1.16)

10.5. *Baseballs*

The Cal Ripken Major, Minor, and Rookie Leagues shall use regular official baseball approved by the Babe Ruth/Cal Ripken. The Rookie League shall use RIF 5 baseballs when players are throwing the ball to each other during warm ups.

11. Field Dimensions

11.1. Major League

The field dimensions for Major League games will be 70 ft bases and 50 ft pitching mound. The distance of the pitching mound should be measured from the apex of home plate to the front edge of the pitching rubber.

11.2. Minor League

The field dimensions for Minor League games will be 60 ft bases and 46 ft pitching mound. The distance of the pitching mound should be measured from the apex of home plate to the front edge of the pitching rubber.

11.3. Rookie League

The field dimensions for Rookie League games will be 60 ft bases and 46 ft pitching distance. The distance of the pitching machine should be measured from the apex of home plate to the front edge of the pitching machine.

12. Special rules for the 7/8 age Rookie League(s)

Regular Cal Ripken minor league rules will be used for the Rookie League except for the following list of rule modifications.

12.1. Time limit

Regular season Cal Ripken Rookie League games are limited to 4 innings with no new inning beginning after 1 hour and 10 minutes from the actual start time of the game minus any lost time due to weather stoppage. If an inning begins with the visiting team leading and batting and the 1 hour 15 minute time limit is reached, the game will end and the official score will revert to the previous inning. If the visiting team takes the lead during the last inning, the inning must be finished, allowing the home team to bat. The umpire is responsible for keeping time. Slaughter rule is 15 runs after 4 innings or 20 runs after all players have batted.

12.2. Maximum Batters per Inning

In the Rookie League the maximum number of batters that can bat in an inning is 10.

12.3. Umpires

If using a two man crew the plate ump should stand behind the catcher to the right for a right hand batter and to the left for a left hand batter. The field ump will play in the normal position. When using only one umpire, he/she will be in the plate umpire position, due to having to call all fouls balls.

12.4. Pitching

A. For the Rookie League the ball will be pitched by the "Ultimate Pitching Machine" from a distance of 46 feet at a speed of approximately 34 miles per hour. (Advanced Rookie League 8 year old league is 38 MPH at 46 feet). A coach from the offensive team will operate the machine. For consistency, one ball should be used.

B. The "Ultimate Pitching Machine" will be used to deliver pitches. The machine settings are shown in the table below.

Adjustments for 7 Year Olds	Setting
Distance from the back of Home Plate to back of Machine	46 feet
Power Level	6
Release Block	4
Micro_Adjust	3
Adjustments for 8 Year Olds	Setting
Distance from the back of Home Plate to the front of the machine	46 feet
Power Level	8
Release Block	4
Micro_Adjust	3

Note: The screw for the Micro adjuster is on the sling and can be adjusted accordingly by the pitching coach during the game to regulate the height of the pitch for different batters. Batters can also move up and back in the batter's box to adjust to the height of the pitch.

C. The machine should be set by the head umpire and the two head coaches before the game. Once all are in agreement, the machine may be changed only with the permission and oversight of the head umpire. Only the coach or designated adult of the batting team may operate the machine. The machine pivot maybe moved right or left by the pitcher/coach. The batter will have 5 good pitches to hit. A fouled ball on the last allowed pitch will allow another pitch. This may continue as long as the batter continues to foul balls. There are no strike outs, walks, or hit batters going to first in the Rookie league. Only the umpire may rule a pitch a "no pitch" because of an erratic pitch as long as the batter does not swing. If a batted ball hits the machine or pitcher/coach, the ball is dead and the batter awarded first base, and all runners advance one base.

D. If a thrown ball hits the pitcher/coach manning the pitching machine, and in the umpire's judgment the coach did not make a valid attempt to vacate, the play is dead and the batter/runner is out and all base runners return to their previous

base. If a thrown ball hits the pitcher/coach, and in the umpire's judgment the pitcher /coach tried to avoid being hit, the ball is dead and all runners are safe to the base there are forced to. Unforced runners must stay on the base they are currently occupying. If a thrown ball hits the pitching machine it is considered live and play continues.

12.5. Defense positions

The defense uses 10 players. Four must be in the outfield. The outfield is considered to be 12 feet behind the baselines. The defensive pitcher must have one foot in the pitching circle and be completely behind the pitching machine when the ball is pitched. He may be to the right or left. In the Rookie League the defensive team may have two coaches in the outfield. The coaches may not in anyway physically help the defensive player, move into the infield area, interfere with the ball or offensive player, argue with the umpire, or be disruptive in anyway (including yelling that intimidates players, either team).

The umpire should give each team one warning for any problems with the outfield coaches and then take them off the field for any other problems. Once a coach is removed, he/she may not be replaced. Exception: An outfield coach that intentionally interferes with a batted ball, interferes verbally or physically with an offensive runner, or argues with an umpire should be removed without a warning and that coach should be restricted to the dugout for the remainder of the game. Any other problem with the offending coach warrants an ejection.

12.6. Calling Time

12.6.1. Rookie League

When an infielder has possession of the ball inside the baseline, the umpire may call time if the player holds the ball up or calls time. Time should not be called if the defensive player is trying to make a play on a base runner. When time is called, runners halfway to the next base may continue; runners not yet halfway must go back. This is a judgment call and not to be argued by the coach. Umpires should NOT make or allow coaches to make lines in the dirt halfway between bases. This is strictly an umpire's judgment call.

12.6.2. Advanced Rookie League for 8 year olds only

Play will be stopped and time called only after the offensive team has as stopped advancing runners. This may be either by the offensive team's runners abandoning the effort to advance or because the defensive team has gotten the ball in front of the lead runner and forced the offensive team to stop advancing runners. When advancement has stopped is an umpire's judgment call.

12.7. Over throws

Over throws at first or third that hit the fence or go out of play are considered dead balls, and all runners get one additional base (even on the 10th batter). The half way rule does not apply here. Runners must have the base occupied to advance to the next base as the ball is dead at the time it hits the fence or goes out of play. Overthrows at home are considered live balls.

12.8. Leaving base early/no base stealing

No base stealing is allowed even on balls that go by the catcher. Runners should not leave the base until the ball is hit or the ball crosses the plate. The umpire is to warn each team once per game about leaving early; on the teams second offence the base runner should be called out. (Umpires should be consistent on this.)

12.9. Slides

Runners must slide to avoid a collision at any base as long as the defensive player is on the base and not up the baseline. An intentional collision of a runner with a defensive player in possession of the ball results in the runner being out and warned. A defensive player without the ball should not block the baseline and should be called for obstruction. Umpires should explain this to the players after the incident. A runner who slides head first into any base (except on a return to a base) shall be called out.

12.10. Bunting

Bunting is not allowed. Any ball intentionally bunted is call an out, and no base runners may advance. A “swinging bunt” is not considered a bunt.

Advanced Rookie League for only 8 year olds may allow one fair bunt (out or safe) per team per innings. A batter that fakes a bunt (showing a bunt and swinging away) is an out, the ball is dead, and no runners may advance. A foul bunt on a fifth pitch is considered a foul ball and a sixth pitch is offered.

12.11. Ending an inning

An inning at bat is over after 3 outs or 10 batters. When the 10th batter is batting in an inning, there will automatically be 2 outs. This means only one out has to be committed for the inning to end. When the tenth (10) batter hits the ball and runners are on base, play will not stop until the batter is thrown out, the lead runner is put out or run back to a base so other runners cannot advance, or the batter is thrown out. The ball may be thrown home for the catcher to hold until runners stop. Do not allow a collision at the plate. If the catcher has the ball call time before the runner gets to home.