Manager's Handbook 2024

The FTBL is run entirely by volunteers to promote, develop, and supervise Youth Baseball and Softball programs. We have served the growing and diverse community of Franklin Township/Somerset since 1953 and provide organized youth sports programs for well over 500 children ranging in ages from 4 to 18. We are the longest running youth sports organization, serve the largest age group in town, and are a registered 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. The Franklin Township Baseball League complex, located at 51 DeKalb Street, consists of five fields: Tee Ball, Softball, Minors (lighted), Majors (lighted), Seniors, a small clubhouse, restrooms, equipment sheds, 4 batting cages, and a snack shack.

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1. Introduction

Welcome to the 2024 season at the FTBL. We've made changes in the off-season with the expressed intent of improving play in all divisions.

The Board continues to put more of a focus on Manager, Coach, and parental behavior during the 2024 season than in previous years. We expect all Managers, Coaches, and parents within FTBL to set a good example and act as a role model for our children. During registration, all parents reviewed a Parents Code of Ethics pledge that outlined the expectations of sportsmanship for all parents. We will stringently enforce that code throughout 2024.

The FTBL maintains a zero-tolerance policy for all players, Coaches, parents, and spectators to protect our children as well as to provide an environment that is competitive but at the same time safe and fun. Any display of unsportsmanlike behavior, cursing, arguing, or disruptive behavior while at the complex will result in immediate expulsion from the field. The FTBL Executive Board will then review the incident with disciplinary actions administered. These actions include, but are not limited to, game suspensions, ban from FTBL complex or expulsion from the league. As a manager, you are not only responsible for your behavior and your Coaches, but parents as well.

Being selected as a manager or a coach is a privilege and is not relative to tenure. The FTBL Board expects you to support the Code of Ethics and always display exemplary behavior both on the field and as a spectator. The *Manager's Handbook* is provided for the foundation of supporting this objective. It was developed to provide a reference tool to allow you to manage your team more effectively. Managing or coaching a team involves more than just playing baseball. It requires a commitment to your players to provide a safe, competitive, and fun environment.

The handbook has been designed to provide the information necessary to manage your team at your fingertips. It covers everything from Manager/Coach responsibilities to suggested reading material for helping with player development. It also includes procedures for handling administrative responsibilities such as reimbursement of work bonds, and parent inquiries.

***Please keep an electronic copy or a printout of this handbook ready at all games and practices*!**
If used properly it can save you time, effort and eliminate follow up phone calls.

Let's Play Ball!
Entering our 71st Year!

Alex Grosso
FTBL President

Bill Milligan
FTBL Vice President

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1.1 FTBL Board of Directors

FTBL is run entirely by volunteers to promote, develop, and supervise Youth Baseball program. As such, we are always looking for volunteers to join the Board of Directors and ensure the continuation of our 70-year history. The FTBL Board for the current year includes:

Executive Board	Name
President	*Alex Grosso*
Vice President	*Bill Milligan*
Treasurer	*Fred Winters*
Player Agent	*Harpreet Mouron*
Safety Officer	*Steve Ziegler*
Secretary	*Danielle Keens*
Softball Director	*Kathy Makowski*
Name	**Board Position(s)**;
Alex Grosso	Disciplinary; **Rules**; Photos; Tournament Director; Fund Raising; Umpires; Field Maintenance; Equipment; Scholarship Committee
Rob Rooney	Scheduling, **BR13-15 Liaison**
Fred Winters	Disciplinary; **Rules**; Licenses (501c3/Gaming/etc.); Concessions; Scholarship Committee
Harpreet Mouron	**Rules**; Web Master; Uniforms; Team Awards, All-Star Day; Scholarship Committee
Bill Milligan	**Majors Liaison**; **Rules**; Disciplinary; Licenses (501c3/Gaming/etc.)
Steve Ziegler	**Minors Liaison**, Safety Officer; **Rules**
Andrew Huber	**CP Liaison**; social media; Communications; Field Maintenance
Ken Kahora	Softball Operations
John Brewer	Spring Opening Day ceremonies
Bob DeVoe	Medical Officer; Grant Funding
Bill Brennan	**Tee-Ball Liaison**
Dave Hameier	Winter Clinics; Managers Training; Umpire Training, Field Maintenance
Pete Melillo	**BR 16-18 Liaison**
Lou Espinosa	Sponsorship Chair
Laurie Staub	Fall Ball Director, Fundraising committee; social media; communications
Eric Greninger	Assistant PA (web site, registrations, uniforms. equipment)
Kathy Makowski	**Rules**; Softball Director; Softball committee
Matt Zavatsky	Sponsors; Equipment Swap

Please contact us at ftblsomerset@gmail.com if you have an interest in learning more about becoming a board member or joining the board.

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1.2 What's New in 2024 in Cal Ripken/Babe Ruth Rules

Overall Changes: The International Board of Directors has approved the following rule changes beginning with the 2024 season. These changes will be in the 2024 Babe Ruth League, Inc. Rules and Regulations.

Rule Changes Beginning with the 2024 Season (Please note Division or Level of Play)

Cal Ripken Baseball, League Age 8, 9, 10, Tournament Regulations - Rule 11.05, Paragraph 4(a) – A pitcher shall not deliver more than 75 pitches in the same game or on the same day.

a. If a pitcher pitch 1-40 pitches in a game or day, no rest is required.
b. If a pitcher pitches 41-65 pitches in a game or day, 1 day rest required.
c. If a pitcher pitches 66 plus pitches in a game or day, 2 days rest required.

Cal Ripken Baseball Division, Babe Ruth Baseball Division, Babe Ruth Softball Division, Babe Ruth Buddy Ball Division - Jewelry is permitted in all divisions of Babe Ruth League Inc. Umpires have the authority to remove anything believed to distract or increase risk to player safety. "*Medical alert or religious bracelets or necklaces are not considered jewelry.*"

Cal Ripken Major 60 World Series (11/12-year-old players) - Due to the decline in player participation at the State Tournaments and Regional Tournaments, the Cal Ripken Major 60 World Series has been eliminated. Individual States and Regions are permitted to host a Cal Ripken Major 60 tournament if so desired.

Babe Ruth Softball Division - Rule 8.02 (The Pitcher)

(a) The pitch starts when one hand is off the ball, or the pitcher makes any motion that is part of the windup. In the act of delivering the ball, the pitcher shall not take more than one step which must be forward, toward the batter, and simultaneously with the delivery of the ball to the batter. Towards the batter is interpreted as within the twenty-four" length of the pitcher's plate.

(b) For a legal delivery: The pitcher is allowed to have their pivot foot remain in contact with the pitcher's plate, push off and drag away from the pitcher, or leap with both feet in the air simultaneously.

Note: Allowing the pitcher to have both feet in the air does not allow pitchers to crow-hop or re-plant. These two actions are illegal.

Babe Ruth Softball Division - Illegal Pitch, Rule 8.06 Penalty - Remove the penalty of advancing a runner one base on illegal pitch for 8.01 - 8.06. All other parts of the penalty remain the same.

Babe Ruth Softball Division - Courtesy Runner - Add to existing rule - After a team has used its eligible players for this rule, teams shall be allowed to use its last completed at bat to run for the pitcher or catcher.

1.3 Local Rules

- **School Night Curfew** is **2 hours and 15 minutes** from the **scheduled** start of the game.
  - For the Minors division, the scheduled Start time for weekday games will be is **6:00 PM** with a "drop dead" time of **8:15 PM**. For the Majors division it will be **6:15 PM start** and "drop dead" at **8:30 PM**.
  - No new inning after **1 hour 45 mins** from the scheduled start time.
  - The game will cease** at 2 hours and 15 minutes from the scheduled start time. Scores will revert to last completed inning if the home team is trailing, and the inning is not completed.
  - **** Exception**: If there is a batter at the plate with a count, that batter will be permitted to finish the at bat. But no new batters may take the field after that batter, regardless of number of outs.

- **Middle School Exception:**
  Should the Franklin Middle School select a player or the player's NJSIAA sanctioned school selects them to play baseball, this player shall be offered by FTBL the option to play rec league Seniors Division (60/90) 13U or Majors Division (50/70) 12U but not both. Once the player makes his/her choice, they will forfeit all rights to play with the remaining option for the entire rec league season. This choice will also allow the player the option to attend the tryout for the District/State Tournament team for the division that he/she had picked to play in. Should the player be selected or fail to be selected to the District/State Tournament team after tryouts they again will forfeit all rights to play with the unselected District/State Tournament team. This rule is restricted to player(s) that are FTBL league age 12.

1.4 Rec All-Star Selection and Team Groupings

Players selected for the All-Star games in the Coach Pitch and upper divisions will play on the All-Star day, Saturday May-25 (weather permitting). The number of players selected from each team and the team groupings will be based on the number of teams in each division (shown below). The seeding will be random, determined by the Player Agent and approved by the Executive Board by Sunday May 21.

Total Teams in a Division	Number of All-Stars from each Team	Team Groupings		For Odd Number of Teams
		Team A	Team B	
4	6	#1, #4	#2, #3	
5	5	#1, #4	#2, #3	3 players from #5 seed on Team A 2 players from #5 seed on Team B
6	4	#1, #4, #5	#2 ,#3, #6	
7	3	#1, #4, #5	#2 ,#3, #6	2 players from #7 seed on Team A 1 player from #7 seed on Team B
8	3	#1, #4, #5, #8	#2, #3, #6, #7	

2. Roles and Responsibilities

2.1 Managers and Coaches

Youth baseball Managers and Coaches must be leaders, but they also need to recognize that they hold a position of trust and responsibility in a program that deals with a sensitive and formative period of a child's development. It is required that Managers and Coaches have understanding, patience and the capacity to work with children. The Manager and Coach should be able to inspire respect. Above all else, Managers and Coaches must realize they are helping to shape the physical, mental, and emotional development of young people. Knowledge of the game is important, but it is not the main requirement for a youth baseball Manager or Coach. In 2024 the Board continues to make a concerted effort to ensure all Managers and Coaches realize the game is a vehicle of training and enjoyment, not an end. To that end, the FTBL Board is looking for the Manager and Coach to:

- Recognize that youth baseball players are children, not professional players, and need encouragement, not criticism.
- Applaud good plays; explain and correct errors.
- Instill a desire to win and improve while imparting as much baseball knowledge as possible.
- Be instrumental in shaping acceptable behavior patterns whether the team wins or loses – Congratulate the winner; encourage the loser.
- Gives each player an opportunity to play as many positions as they can play.
- Encourage a greater effort, initiative, and hustle.

FTBL Managers and Coaches have numerous responsibilities like team leadership, managing the game, field maintenance and administrative duties. In the Majors60 and Minors Divisions, each Manager is allowed a maximum of two (2) Coaches to assist with the management of the team, a scorekeeper, and a team parent. In Majors, Babe Ruth 13-15 and 16-18-year-old divisions, each Manager is allowed a maximum of two (2) Coaches and a scorekeeper. In Coach Pitch and T-Ball each Manager is allowed four (4) volunteers (Coaches and a team parent). Please see the individual Division sections for more information. Additionally, each Manager is encouraged to leverage their Team Parent for the completion of those responsibilities that are administrative in nature. Please be aware however, the Manager is ultimately responsible for all administrative tasks. Listed below are the requirements and responsibilities for each FTBL Manager and Coach.

1. All **Team Volunteers** must pass the background check.

2. All **Team Volunteers** must pass the online **Abuse Prevention Training** course.

3. **Managers and Coaches** should be RUTGERS SAFETY certified. This certification provides civil immunity to a coach, is good for life and could be used by the coach in other sports in the state of NJ.

4. All **Managers, Coaches and Board Members** must take the free online training course ***Concussion in Sports***. At the end of the course, save your completion certificate and email to your Division Liaison. The course must be completed by **March 31**, and can be found at https://nfhslearn.com/courses/concussion-in-sports-2

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PLEASE NOTE THESE ARE MANDATORY RESPONSIBILITIES AND ARE NOT SUBJECT TO MANAGER DISCRETION!!

Leadership

- Focus on development of ***all*** players.
- Foster teamwork, sportsmanship, and the rules of fair play.
- Ensure player safety and welfare.
- Promote healthy competition.
- Consider player ages.
- Remember baseball is fun!
- Lead by example by always displaying exemplary sportsmanship and respect for others.
- Attend Manager/Coaching clinics.

Playing the Game

- Follow all procedures as per the FTBL Managers Handbook and Babe Ruth League Rule Book.
- Enforce all rules.
- Handle all player problems and report any unresolved issues to liaison.
- Notify Director of the Day by 5:30pm or at *least 15 minutes* before game time if the player pool is needed to fill the roster for that day.
- Fill out game summary page and note pitchers and pitch counts, record rainouts.
- Ensure all players have the proper equipment while playing (i.e., protective cup, helmet, glove etc.)

Field Maintenance & Equipment

- ***Both teams*** will properly drag/rake fields after all games – filling in all holes.
- Inspect complex area for garbage and empty cans when necessary.
- Ensure all dugouts are clean and debris-free after every game.
- Do not alter equipment, i.e., paint helmets another color, etc.

Administrative

- Make parents aware of the rules, regulations, policies, and philosophy of FTBL.
- Advise parents of procedures for reimbursement of work bonds.
- Advise parents the only acceptable behavior is to be positive in any criticism of the program and are willing to volunteer to improve it.
- Record injuries, accidents, incidents, and file with Director of the Day.
- Inform parents of complaint procedures (if necessary).
- Support fundraising activities – Distribution, collections, delinquency.
- Communicate any decisions impacting your team to all players, Coaches, and parents.

2.2 Team Parent (Tee-Ball through Minors)

The role of the team parent is to provide administrative support to the Managers and Coaches by coordinating a variety of activities that are critical to the operation of each team as well as the overall operation of the league. Although these tasks are delegated to the team parent, it is the Manager's responsibility to ensure they are completed. These responsibilities are detailed below.

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Team Roster

- Always maintain a digital or hard copy with player info to use in case of emergency.

Uniform distribution

- Help distributing uniforms to players.
- Distribute to players according to sizes requested.
- Communicate any shortages to Division Liaison.

Team Communication

- General league information – meetings, bond cards, etc.
- Practices.
- Schedule changes/make ups.
- Photo Day information.
- Fundraiser information and procedures.

Pictures

- Coordinate team activity on photo day.

Fundraiser

- Be a team representative to any fundraising activity.
- Coordinate any additional fundraisers sponsored by FTBL.

2.3 Division Liaison Role

There is a liaison assigned to each division within the FTBL. The primary responsibility of the liaison is to ensure adherence to all league policies and to act as a contact point for Managers to communicate any league issues, concerns, or suggestions.

Specific Division Liaison responsibilities include:

- Assist draft/compilation of rosters for assigned Division.
- Follow all rules and procedures as outlined in manuals.
- Collect all "Concussion in Sports" course completion certificates and submit to Safety Director.
- Collect photocopies of Rutgers S.A.F.E.T.Y. course verification cards and submit to Safety Director.
- Handle any problems with assigned Division as per policy.
- Conduct Manager Meetings as needed.
- Communicate league information/updates to all Managers.
- Submit and distribute work bond money to Managers.
- Collect and submit any fundraiser money to the league.
- Document and maintain records of any Manager/Coach not adhering to league rules and policies.
- Review rules with Manager and Coaches.

Listed below are the liaisons for each Division.
Please direct all questions to the liaison assigned to your Division!

Division	Liaison	E-Mail
Babe Ruth 16-18	Pete Melillo	plmelillo@hotmail.com
Babe Ruth 13-15	Rob Rooney	rooneys2006@yahoo.com
Majors	Bill Milligan	milligans@comcast.net
Minors	Steve Ziegler	slziegler1@gmail.com
Coach Pitch	Andrew Huber	awhuber1975@yahoo.com
Tee-Ball	Bill Brennan	bpbrennan@comcast.net
Softball	Ken Kahora	spfsoftballken@gmail.com

2.4 Director of the Day

The Director of the Day (DOD) is the Board member on duty for a specific day. His or her role is to ensure all games are played that day and to settle any disputes outside the realm of the umpire. The DOD ensures all operations are running smoothly. Board members take turns being the DOD. Before the start of any game the DOD will introduce him or herself to each of the Managers. If there is a dispute or issue during the game the procedure is

1. Manager requests time out from the umpire and requests to have the DOD present.
2. Once the DOD arrives both Managers (and no one else from either team) and the umpire will confer regarding the issue or situation.
3. The DOD will render a decision.
4. The DOD must also be informed if a game is being played under protest.

2.5 Procedures for Reimbursement of Work Bond

The following are the procedures for reimbursement of the $110 work bond. Please inform all parents of this procedure, which will also be posted on the FTBL web site. There are only 4 or 5 bond positions available for teams. All other bond work must be completed through various Volunteer opportunities FTBL will post on the website.

1. Managers must submit the names of Coaches, Scorekeeper, and Team Parents who will serve in that capacity during the season.
    a. In Tee-Ball and Coach Pitch - the five (5) bond positions include a manager, coaches, and a Team Parent
    b. In Minors and Majors60 - the five (5) bond positions include a manager, three coaches, and a scorekeeper.
    c. Majors, Babe Ruth 13-15 and 16-18-year-old Divisions will have four coaches and **no** Team Parent position.
    d. For Softball, five (5) bonded positions for 8U, 9U, 10U, and four (4) bonded positions for 11U and above age groups.
2. People who do not work off their bonds through one of the team bond positions can work off their 10-hour bond working through the league in numerous ways like field maintenance, fund raising, special events, and more. Please have interested individuals speak to a Board Member if they have an interest in other bond work.

Please note that to receive a reimbursement check, all Managers, Coaches, Team Parents, and parent volunteers must not have open balances due to the league for registration or any other reason. Any outstanding balances will be deducted from the reimbursement and any remaining amount will be reimbursed. In addition, the Manager (excluding the Tee Ball division) must submit the player assessment to the Player Agent. This is mandatory before the $110 bond checks are issued to the team volunteers.

3 Rules

3.1 Franklin Township Baseball League Rules

The Franklin Township Baseball League rules are established by Babe Ruth/Cal Ripken Baseball of Trenton, NJ. <u>These rules are the baseline</u> for play within Franklin Township Baseball League. All Managers and Coaches must review the Rulebook and become familiar with its contents prior to the start of practice.

Babe Ruth/Cal Ripken Baseball allows for the tailoring of the rules according to the needs of each local club/league. These local rules for all Divisions are outlined on the following pages.

Rules may <u>NOT</u> be changed by agreement between Managers and/or Division Liaisons.

3.2 Protest Procedures – All Divisions

Official protests may be made only when a manager feels that a violation of the playing rules has occurred.
The following are the applicable guidelines:

- No protest can be made regarding an umpire's judgment. This rule includes, but is not limited to, calls such as fair, foul, safe, out, ball, strike, which are NOT subject to protest.
- If a Manager claims that a decision is in violation of the playing rules, a formal protest must be made to the umpire in chief, prior to any further play.
- The umpire in chief will immediately call a conference of the umpires working the game.
- If the problem cannot be resolved, the umpire(s) must consult the Director of the Day.
- The Director of the Day **may, but is not required to,** confer with other Directors who are not involved in the game.
- If the problem remains unsolved, the Director shall refer the matter to the protest committee, which will render a ruling at a later date.
- The game continues "Under Protest" as follows:
- If the protesting team wins the game, the protest will not be considered.
- If the protesting team loses the game and the protest is upheld by the protest committee, the game will be replayed from the exact point of protest.

Director of the Day authority relative to protests

- Under no circumstances shall the Director of the Day make or offer any ruling about the play of a game underway except:
  - As noted in the protest procedures or
  - As requested by the umpire in chief
- The Director of the Day may, however, take whatever action they deem necessary to eliminate unruly behavior by fans or remove unruly or abusive Managers and/or Coaches.

3.3 Player Participation Guidelines

In **ALL** Cal Ripken & Babe Ruth Divisions: **no player shall be on the bench defensively for a 3rd inning in a game until every other player present at the game has sat out, defensively, at least one inning**. The only exception to this would be the starting pitcher, while still pitching when otherwise would be required to sit for one inning, by this guideline. In that event, upon completing their pitching assignment, they must sit out defensively during the next full inning.

Rotate players to different defensive fielding positions. Ensure every player has an opportunity to learn and try every fielding position.

Repeated violations of these guidelines will be logged with the Executive Board and will be a MAJOR FACTOR in future decisions regarding a manager's or Coach's eligibility to continue in that role in upcoming seasons.

3.4 Pitching Rules

For the regular season and local playoffs only, the following local rules will apply:

- A pitcher in Cal Ripken may pitch no more than 6 innings in a calendar week. A pitcher in Babe Ruth (13-15 and 16-18) may pitch no more than 7 innings in a calendar week.
- A calendar week is defined as starting on Monday and ending on Sunday.
- FTBL will be continuing use of the MLB recommended pitching rules regarding rest. No longer will the number of innings determine days of rest, but the number of pitches will be the determining factor. Please see the chart on the next page to determine ***calendar days*** of rest and daily maximums by age. (A Calendar Day is **not** a 24-hour period from the end of the Pitching appearance. It must be a full calendar day between two pitching assignments.)
- A pitcher, once removed from the mound, may not return to play as a pitcher during a single game. Removal could be by a mound visit by the coach or between innings.
- All innings, including canceled or suspended games, in which a player throws a single pitch will be counted.
- Any player throwing 40 or more pitches in a game will not be eligible to catch in that game.
- Any player catching 4 innings in a game will not be eligible to pitch in that game.
- To ensure the safety of players pitching in the FTBL, the Safety Director will track pitchers pitch counts and subsequent days of rest. **This will require all managers to report all pitchers used and their pitch counts online within 24 hours of the end of the game.**
- Any violation of pitching rules will result in the immediate one (1) game suspension of the Manager or Coach in charge. A second violation will result in the removal of the Manager or Coach for the remainder of the season.

FTBL Pitchers Calendar Days of Rest/Daily Max Rules

AGE	DAILY MAX (PITCHES)	REQUIRED REST (PITCHES)				
		0 Days	1 Days	2 Days	3 Days	4 Days
7-8	50	1-20	21-35	36-50	N/A	N/A
9-10	75	1-20	21-35	36-50	51-65	66+
11-12	85	1-20	21-35	36-50	51-65	66+
13-14	95	1-20	21-35	36-50	51-65	66+
15-16	95	1-30	31-45	46-60	61-75	76+
17-18	105	1-30	31-45	46-60	61-75	76+

Pitch Count Verification

- To ensure the safety of players pitching in the FTBL, the Safety Director will track pitchers pitch counts and subsequent days of rest. This will require all managers to report all pitchers used and their pitch counts **online within 24 hours of the end of the game**.
- While failure to report within 24 hours does not relieve the manager of the responsibility to report, it will cause all pitchers used to serve the **maximum rest period for their age** before pitching again.
- Repeated failure to report Pitchers and Counts for a game may result in a one (1) game suspension of the Manager/Coach.

Intentional Walks

- The defensive team may issue an intentional walk before a pitch is delivered to the batter, **BUT NOT** in the middle of a count.
- If the defensive team issue an intentional walk, the 4 pitches will NOT be charged to the pitcher.
- Intentional Walk is **NOT** allowed in the CP and Minors division.

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3.5 Batting Rules

"It is the policy of Babe Ruth League, Inc. to assure the safety of all participants. Accordingly, Babe Ruth League, Inc. reserves the right to ban any equipment, including bats, at any time, including during the season, based upon a change of existing policy and/or upon new information made available to Babe Ruth League, Inc."

All Bat Restrictions can be found at www.ftblbaseball.org or at https://www.baberuthleague.org/bat-rules.aspx

PENALTY

- If the illegal bat is discovered prior to a batter completing his "at bat" the bat is simply removed from play and the "at bat" continues.
- A player who uses an illegal bat or non-conforming barrel dimension and hits a fair ball will be ruled out. No advancement on the bases will be allowed, and any outs during the play shall stand. This is an appeal play. The "at bat" will be considered legal once a pitch is thrown to the next batter.
- Any bat discovered prior to the game that does not conform to the above rule shall be directed to be removed immediately and not be allowed for use during the game.

Slash Bunting:

A player who squares to bunt may not subsequently make a swing attempt on that pitch. Doing so, called a slash bunt, will result in an automatic out.

3.6 Umpire Eligibility

Tee-Ball & Coach Pitch Divisions

- No Umpires in Tee-Ball or Coach Pitch.
- Coach Pitch will use a Youth Umpire or Board Member for Playoffs.

Minors & Majors60 Divisions

- Plate to be umpired by Federation or Federation Trained Umpires or Youth Trained
- Field may be umpired by Youth Trained

Majors Division

- Plate and Field Umpires are certified Federation or Federation Trained.

Babe Ruth Divisions

- Plate and Field Umpires are certified Federation or Federation Trained.

3.7 Time Limit Rules

- **Darkness**

- Tee-Ball [Start time 5:45 pm] – At least 4 innings or a **minimum** of 75 minutes should be played.
- Coach Pitch [Start time 5:45 pm] – 6 innings or a **maximum** of 2 hours from start time.
- Babe Ruth – Umpire discretion.
  - **School Night Curfew** is **2 hours and 15 minutes** from the **scheduled*** start of the game. No new inning will start after **1 hour 45 mins** from the scheduled start. The game will cease** at 2 hours and 15 minutes from the scheduled start time. Scores will revert to last completed inning if the home team is trailing and inning is not completed.
  - **Consecutive Games on the same day** – Applies to all Divisions except T-Ball and Coach Pitch: Any game being played on a field where consecutive games are scheduled will not start a new inning 1 hour 45 minutes (1:45) after the official scheduled starting time. Game will cease 2 hours and 15 minutes from the scheduled start time. **Last scheduled game on Saturday can play up to 6 Innings or 2.5 hours MAX (whichever comes first) in Minors and upper divisions only.**
  - **Completing Tie Games**- Applies to Minors, Majors, and all Babe Ruth Divisions: If an "official" game ends in a tie because of darkness, weather or the time rule, the game will be recorded as a "Tie" in the official standings. The game will be completed only if it is determined that the outcome will affect the final Division standings. If a tie game is not "official", it will be played only until it becomes "official", at the next meeting of the teams.
- *Example: A Senior game tied 3-3 at the end of 3 innings will be resumed and played until five innings (4 1/2 if home team takes the lead) are complete*.
  - *** Exception**: If the start of game was delayed by weather, field conditions, or other unavoidable circumstance, the official start time will be determined by the Director of the Day prior to start of game. However, the "**Drop Dead"** time remains in effect at all times for weekday games.
  - **** Exception**: If there is a batter at the plate with a count, that batter will be permitted to finish the at bat. But no new batters may take the field following, regardless of number of outs.

3.8 General Rules

- **Minimum Number of Players:** Regular season games may be played with 8 players (including pool players). Playoff games must have a minimum of 7 players – a 15-minute grace period from scheduled start will be allowed to have the players available. If not, the game will be forfeited. No pool players allowed for playoff games. **Regular Season games that are forfeited should still attempt to be played unofficially for the benefit of the players in attendance.**
- **Replaying Suspended/Cancelled Games:** Any game which is suspended or cancelled prior to completing one (1) full inning will be replayed from the beginning at a later date. If a game is suspended after one full inning, but before it is official, it will be resumed from that point at a later date. All pitching stats WILL COUNT including rest day requirements!

3.9 The Draft

- Effective Spring 2016, the Board of Directors adopted a full re-draft of players in all divisions (Minors through Babe Ruth 16-18) yearly. This will allow talent to be dispensed more evenly throughout all teams.

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Congratulate the winner; encourage the loser. After all, it's ONLY A GAME!

- If requested, siblings will usually be assigned to the same team. In the case that siblings register late (after rosters are initially set), they may not necessarily be placed on the same team. Other relatives and household members will be decided on a case-by-case basis.

3.10 Player Pool

This procedure covers the Babe Ruth 13-15, Majors, Majors60 and Minor Divisions for the **REGULAR SEASON ONLY** and is designed to:

- Ensure that a team can field 9 players, due to a lack of rostered team players being available,
- Provide a means for any player who wants to improve their skills in game situations to have more playing time.

Player Pool Procedures

- A player pool list will be made available upon request to the team managers in each division.
- Any player desiring to be called when a team needs players for a game will place their name and contact telephone number on the list.
- A Manager who knows in advance that they will not be able to field a team before game day may call pool players in advance for that day.
- If the Manager cannot fill out the roster using the player pool, the game should be played with the team **"lending"** players to the opposing team that is shorthanded.
- Replacement players must be placed in the outfield positions unless there are four (4) replacement players playing. If this occurs, one player may be played in an infield position. **No pool player shall be eligible for pitching or catching.**
- If a regular team player arrives late (less than 15 minutes prior to game starting time) or before the start of a game, and the replacement player is ready to play, the replacement player must start the game and play at least two (2) defensive innings (three (3) innings for Seniors) and one (1) "at bat."
- Replacement players shall be placed at the bottom of the batting order. After the replacement player had played their two (2) defensive innings (three (3) innings for Seniors) and one (1) at bat, the Manager must replace the pool player with their regular player in the same batting position. Once a replacement player leaves the game, they cannot re-enter the game unless an injury occurs, which forces the team to have less than nine (9) defensive players.

- NOTE: A *Manager must use the pool player in good faith. The Pool Player is provided to be used as a tool to avoid forfeit, not a means to gain an advantage. A manager consistently using the same superior pool player(s) will be considered in violation and may be referred to the disciplinary committee.*

3.11 Local Rules

3.11.1 Tee-Ball Division

Tee-Ball is a child's first experience playing baseball. Keep in mind that the goal is to teach the children the fundamentals of the game. Make it fun, educational, and interesting for the kids; leave the rest up to them. *Please remember, Tee-Ball is not structured to be competitive, and the focus should be on your ability to teach and interact with the kids, not how many runs are scored or how many outs are achieved!!*

ALL Tee-Ball Managers will adhere and abide by the Tee-Ball rules referenced in the Rulebook. Specific clarifications are as follows:

- Games will be at least 4 innings or at least 1 hour 15 minutes time limit. (Minimum)
- A maximum of 10 players will play defensive positions during an inning. 9 are preferred, but 10 are allowable if you have 13 or more players present. All attending players will be placed in the batting order (universal batting order). A team with less than 9 players may bat 9 per inning.
- **Batting**
  - **All** players will bat during each offensive inning.
  - No score will be kept.
  - During a team's offensive half of the inning, all players must remain in the dugout until it is their turn to bat. No on-deck batters.
  - All batters and base runners must wear a protective helmet (cage is optional).
- **Pitching**
  - The tee will be used at all times. There will be NO live pitching until 2 weeks prior to the end of the season. Players playing the pitcher position on defense ***must wear*** a protective helmet (cage optional).
- **Foul Line**
  - A ball will be considered foul if the ball fails to travel more than 15 ft. in front of home plate.
  - The home team may draw a chalk line, or mark in sand by measuring 15 ft. from home plate, foul line to foul line.
  - A measuring tape is located at the clubhouse which must be returned immediately after use.
- **Rainouts**
  - There will be no makeup games (rainout) played at the complex.
  - Rainouts can be made up at a site agreed on by both mangers.
- **Safety Clinics**
  - All Managers and their Coaches must take the Rutgers Safety Clinic and be certified before opening day or they will not be allowed to participate. Dates to be announced by your liaison.

3.11.2 Coach Pitch Division

Please remember that the goal of this Division is to teach the rules of the game and prepare the children for progression to the Minors and Majors divisions. To accomplish this, it is very important that all Managers and Coaches follow and enforce the same set of **RULES**.

Coach Pitch: When your team is at bat, offensive Manager/Coach shall pitch live, **throwing overhand (standing or sitting)** during the regular season. A pitching machine may be used if available.

- **Pitches**: A maximum of six (6) pitches will be thrown to each batter. If the batter fails to hit any of those pitches (whether he swings or not), the batter is out. The Tee will not be used. If the last pitch is a foul or foul tip, another pitch is allowed.
- **Players**: No more than 10 position players at any time. 4 outfielders are permitted.
- **Outs/Runs**: The five (5) run rule will be in effect for all games. The offensive half of an inning will end when there are three outs or when the fifth run crosses the plate. The five-run rule does not apply after the 5th inning has been completed.
- **Universal Batting Order**: All players who are present will be placed in the batting order. Additional arriving players will be placed at the bottom of the order. Players leaving the game for any reason will be removed from the batting order without penalty.
- **Substitution**: There will be open substitution.
- **Innings**: Every child will play **at least 2 innings**. No child should sit more than 2 innings in a row.
- **Game**: All games will be 6 innings or end according to **Section 3.7 Time Limit Rules**
- **Stealing/Leading:** NO stealing or leading will be allowed.
- **Sliding**: Feet first sliding is permitted.
- **Bunting**: NO bunting will be allowed. All batted balls hit within the foul lines are in play, even if they do not travel 15 feet.
- **Pitching Machine**: If the pitching machine is used, the pitching machine is in play. If a batted ball hits the machine or the bucket, the ball is in play and should be played as if it hits a player on the field.
- **Outfield Arc**: Outfielders must play at least ten feet behind the infield dirt. Players may run in to make a play.
- **Field:** The field is for the players. Anyone who is not playing, or coaching will not be permitted on the field or in the dugout.

We will follow Cal Ripken and Babe Ruth Baseball format.

- Shirts tucked in and caps on straight and hustling on the field and off the field.

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Managers/Coaches

- Each team must have One (1) Manager
- Each team may have **NO MORE** than Three (3) Coaches**.**
- Each team may have **NO MORE** than Five (5) Adult Official Team Volunteers at any time.
- **Coaching on the field as outlined below is allowed as long as at least One (1) Adult Official Team Volunteer is in the dugout with the remaining players at all times.**
- Defense:
    - Two (2) Coaches are permitted in fair territory in the outfield grass while the game is in progress.
    - **NO MORE** than Two (2) defensive Manager/Coaches permitted to Coach from outfield foul territory.
- Offense:
    - Only One (1) Coach is permitted to Pitch or Operate the Pitching Machine
    - **NO MORE** than Two (2) offensive Managers/Coaches are permitted to Coach from the "Coach's boxes". All other Manager/Coaches must remain in the dugout while the game is in progress.
    - At no time are players permitted to Coach on the bases.

- Home Plate:
    - It is **strongly recommended** and permissible for One (1) Coach from either Team to Coach from behind the Catcher in order to speed up Ball Return, Equipment Adjustments and ensure safety in the event of a play at the plate.

Batter/Runners

- All Batters/Runners must wear an approved "caged" helmet while at bat or on base paths. Jaw guard is not an alternative to caged/masked helmet.

Maximum Bases Allowed on Batted Balls

- If any batted ball contacts the ground before reaching the outfield grass, the batter/runner and any other runners will be permitted to advance no more than 1 base.
- If any batted ball contacts the outfield **grass on the fly**, the batter/runner and any other runner will be permitted to advance no more than 2 bases. However, it will be at the runner's risk, and the defensive team can make an out if the runner is trying to go for more than one base.
- While the ball is in play, defensive team can make an out at any base, regardless of the fact that the fly ball landed on the outfield grass. Therefore, advancing to the base is not automatic, must be earned and will be at the runner's risk.

3.11.3 Minors Division

The Minors Division will follow the Cal Ripken Baseball Rulebook with the following exceptions:

Selection of players

- Players with league age 7 or league age 11 will be allowed to play on a case-by-case basis with PA Approval.

Length of Inning

- Four (4) runs max per inning in the first 5 innings of play.
- The four (4) runs max rule **is suspended <u>only</u> in the 6th inning.**
- The offensive half of an inning will end when there are three (3) outs or when the fourth (4th) run crosses the home plate.
- The four (4) run rule does not apply during the playoffs. Unlimited runs per inning during playoffs.

Universal Batting Order

- All players who are present will be placed in the batting order.
- Additional arriving players must be placed at the bottom of the order.
- Players leaving the game for any reason will be removed from the batting order without penalty.

Batters/Runners

- All Batters/Runners must wear an approved caged helmet while at bat or on the base paths. Masked/Caged helmet is mandatory. A helmet without a cage is not acceptable and will not be allowed.

Pitching

- The strike zone for Minor Division play will be from the <u>batter's knee to the chin</u> and from the inside line of one batter's box to the inside line of the other batter's box. The umpires, at their discretion, may adjust the strike zone equally for both teams to preserve game flow.
- Managers and adult Coaches will be allowed to warm up pitchers before the game and between innings, however, they must wear catcher's masks.

Stealing

- A steal is defined as any successful advance by a player on any play other than a batted ball (i.e., wild pitch, passed ball). The ball must cross the plate before the runner can leave the base.
- There is a maximum of 5 steals per inning. Both Teams should keep track of number of steals.
- If 2 runners advance on the same pitch, it is counted as two (2) steals.
- There will be no stealing of home. A runner on third may advance to home only on a batted ball or forced by a walk or a hit batter, etc. when bases are loaded.

Infield Fly & Dropped 3rd Strike.

- The infield fly rule **WILL NOT BE** enforced.
- Dropped 3rd Strike **WILL NOT BE** enforced.

Base Coaches

- The offensive team may have two (2) adult base Coaches so long as at least one adult Manager/Coach remains in the dugout.
- At no time are players permitted to Coach on the bases.

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- All other Manager/Coaches must remain in their dugout while the game is in progress unless given permission to leave the dugout by an umpire.

Sliding

- If in the judgment of the umpire, a play is occurring at home plate, the runner must slide or avoid contact. Otherwise, the player will be called 'out'.
- No sliding at First base when running from home plate.
- A player can slide (headfirst only) to first base after rounding first base or trying to get back to first base on a play.

Mercy Rule

- The official Franklin Township Baseball League 10 run mercy rule will be enforced. This is in effect only after the game has become official (4 innings or 3 ½ innings if the Home Team is leading) and the losing team has had the same innings at bat as the winning team.
- **To make the post season more competitive, the following additional rule is in effect for the Playoffs:**
    - **The 4 Run max per inning Rule is suspended in all playoff games.**

3.11.4 Majors60 Division (Not applicable for 2024 season)

The Majors60 Division will follow the Cal Ripken Baseball Rulebook with the following exceptions:

Selection of players

- No player League age 12 will be allowed to play in the Majors60 Division without the majority approval of the FTBL Executive Board

Length of Inning

- Five (5) runs max per inning in the first 5 innings of play.
- The five (5) runs max rule **is suspended <u>only</u> in the 6th inning.**
- The offensive half of an inning will end when there are three (3) outs or when the fifth (5th) run crosses the home plate.
- The five (5) run rule does not apply during the playoffs. Unlimited runs per inning during playoffs.

Universal Batting Order

- All players who are present will be placed in the batting order.
- Additional arriving players will be placed at the bottom of the order.
- Players leaving the game for any reason will be removed from the batting order without penalty.

Batters/Runners

- All Batters/Runners must wear an approved (cage optional) helmet while at bat or on the base paths.

Pitching

- The strike zone for Majors60 Division play will be <u>from the batter's knee to the "letters" on the uniform shirt</u> and from the inside line of one batter's box to the inside line of the other batter's box.
- Managers and adult Coaches will be allowed to warm up pitchers before the game and between innings, however, they must wear catcher's masks.

Stealing

- There is no leading in the Majors 60 Division. The pitch must cross the home plate before the runner may leave the base.
- There is no restriction on number of steals or restriction on base-runner advancements.

Infield Fly

- The infield fly rule will be enforced.

Base Coaches

- The offensive team may have two (2) adult base Coaches so long as at least one adult Manager/Coach remains in the dugout.
- At no time are players permitted to Coach on the bases.
- All other Manager/Coaches must remain in their dugout while the game is in progress unless given permission to leave the dugout by an umpire.

Sliding

- If in the judgment of the umpire, a play is occurring at home plate, the runner must slide or avoid contact. Otherwise, the player will be called 'out'.
- No sliding at First base when running from home plate.
- A player can slide (head first only) to first base after rounding first base or trying to get back to first base on a play.

Mercy Rule

- The official Franklin Township Baseball League 10 run mercy rule will be enforced.
- This is in effect only after the game has become official (4 innings or 3 ½ innings if the Home Team is leading) and the losing team has had the same innings at bat as the winning team.
- **To make the post season more competitive, the following additional rule is in effect for the Playoffs:**
    - **The 5 Run per inning Rule is suspended in all playoff games**.

3.11.5 Majors Division

Play will be according to the Cal Ripken Baseball Rulebook with the following exceptions:

Universal Batting Order
- All players who are present will be placed in the batting order.
- Additional arriving players will be placed at the bottom of the order.
- Players leaving the game for any reason will be removed from the batting order without penalty.

Batters/Runners
- All Batters/Runners must wear an approved (cage optional) helmet while at bat or on the base paths.

Pitching
- The strike zone for Majors Division play will be from the batter's knee to the "letters" on the uniform shirt and from the inside line of one batter's box to the inside line of the other batter's box.
- Managers and adult Coaches will be allowed to warm up pitchers before the game and between innings, however, they must wear catcher's masks.
- **During the Rec season only: 1 balk warning per pitcher, per team will be allowed, and the runner on a base may not advance. No balk warning will be allowed during the playoffs!**

Base Coaches
- The offensive team may have two (2) adult base Coaches so long as at least one adult Manager/Coach remains in the dugout.
- At no time are players permitted to Coach on the bases.
- All other Manager/Coaches must remain in their dugout while the game is in progress unless given permission to leave the dugout by an umpire.

Sliding
- If in the judgment of the umpire, a play is occurring at home plate, the runner must slide or avoid contact. Otherwise, the player will be called 'out'.
- No sliding at First base when running from home plate.
- A player can slide (head first only) to first base after rounding first base or trying to get back to first base on a play.

Mercy Rule
- The official Franklin Township Baseball League 10 run mercy rule will be enforced.
- This is in effect only after the game has become official (4 innings or 3 ½ innings if the Home Team is leading) and the losing team has had the same innings at bat as the winning team.
- The ten (10) run rule **does not apply after the 5th inning** has been completed.

3.11.6 Babe Ruth 13-15 Division

Play will follow the Babe Ruth Baseball Rulebook with the following exceptions.

Selection of players

- *League age 16 players have the option to play in this division* if agreed upon by other towns in the intra-town games.
- The Franklin Township Baseball League rules that apply to the minimum number innings each player must play will be strictly enforced.

Universal Batting Order

- All players who are present will be placed in the batting order.
- Additional arriving players will be placed at the bottom of the order.
- Players leaving the game for any reason will be removed from the batting order without penalty.

Pitching

- A 16-year-old (in BR13-15) may pitch for a maximum of 2 innings per game and no more than 6 innings per week if the days of rest requirements are met.
- Managers and adult Coaches will be allowed to warm up pitchers before the game and between innings, however, they must wear catcher's masks.

Base Coaches

- The offensive team may have two (2) adult base Coaches so long as at least one adult Manager/Coach remains in the dugout.
- All other Manager/Coaches must remain in their dugout while the game is in progress unless given permission to leave the dugout by an umpire.
- A player may Coach the bases if they are wearing a helmet.

Mercy Rule

- The official Franklin Township Baseball League 10 run mercy rule will be enforced.
- This is in effect only after the game has become official (5 innings or 4 ½ innings if the Home Team is leading) and the losing team has had the same innings at bat as the winning team. .
- The ten-run rule does not apply after the 5th inning has been completed.
- **To make the post season more competitive, the following additional rule is in effect for the Playoffs:**
    - **The 10 Run Mercy Rule is suspended in all playoff games.**

3.11.7 Babe Ruth 16-18 Division

Play will follow the Babe Ruth Baseball Rulebook with the following exceptions.

Selection of players

- League age for 18-year-old players determined on January 1st of each year.
- 15-year-old players registered in town leagues can be used only as a replacement or substitute player and must be registered to play in the Babe Ruth 13-15 division.
- 15-year-old players may be used in postseason.
- Teams from the same town can borrow players from one another during the regular season as needed but they cannot pitch when playing for another team.

Universal Batting Order

- All players who are present will be placed in the batting order.
- Additional arriving players will be placed at the bottom of the order.
- Players leaving the game for any reason will be removed from the batting order without penalty.

Batters/Runners

- No slash bunting is allowed; a batter cannot show bunt and then swing away.

Pitching

- Managers and adult Coaches will be allowed to warm up pitchers before the game and between innings, however, they must wear catcher's masks.

Base Coaches

- The offensive team may have two (2) adult base Coaches so long as an adult Manager/Coach remains in the dugout.
- All other Manager/Coaches must remain in their dugout while the game is in progress unless given permission to leave the dugout by an umpire.
- A player may Coach the bases if they are wearing a helmet.

Sliding

- Runners who slide head-first at home plate are automatically out. Runners must avoid collisions at home plate.

Mercy Rule

- The official Franklin Township Baseball League 10 run mercy rule will be enforced.
- This is in effect only after the game has become official (5 innings or 4 ½ innings if the Home Team is leading) and the losing team has had the same innings at bat as the winning team.
- The 10-run rule does not apply after the 5th inning has been completed.

Playoffs

- Single elimination playoffs.

3.12 Field Behavior

For the purposes of applying the following local rules, the term “any person” includes, but is not limited to:

- Player
- Manager and Coach
- Umpire
- Director of the Day
- Scorekeeper
- Spectator

3.12.1 Dress Code

- All players will wear issued uniforms, including pants, shirts and hats. Shirts must be tucked in.
- Babe Ruth 13-15 players and 16-18-year-old Division players will be allowed to wear school or travel team uniforms on game days.
- Managers and Coaches will wear team shirts during all games.

3.12.2 Behavior

- Any person using profane, abusive, rude, derogatory, belittling language or gestures may be given a warning by the umpire or be ejected from the game and asked to leave the FTBL complex and will be subject to the procedures which may follow an ejection.
- Any person who either physically or verbally threatens another person will immediately be ejected from the game and asked to leave the FTBL complex. That person will then be subject to the procedures that may follow an ejection.
- Any person who intentionally causes physical harm to any person will immediately be ejected from the game. This person will be barred from participating in any sporting events sponsored by the FTBL subject to an investigation by the Rules Committee and FTBL President.
- Any incident, which causes a person to be ejected from a game, will be noted by the Director of the Day in a daily logbook which will be kept and maintained by the League President and Rules Committee. Both the Director of the Day as well as the game umpire must sign all incident reports.
- Any player ejected from a game will be escorted to the FTBL clubhouse where they will wait to be collected by a parent, guardian or someone designated by the parent/guardian or will stay in the clubhouse area until their game is concluded.
- Disciplinary action for ejection from a game:
    - A Manager or Coach ejected from a game will be suspended from his/her next game.
    - A player ejected from a game will be suspended from his/her next game and will be ineligible to play in any game until the suspension is served.
- Any player throwing equipment may be warned once by the umpire or ejected from game.
- Any Manager or Coach ejected from two games will be barred from further participation as a manager or coach for the remainder of the season and from tournament play.
- Any player ejected from two games will appear, with his/her parent(s) or guardian(s), before the President and Executive Board. If the player and parent(s) or guardian(s) do not appear, the player will be suspended for the remainder of the season and from tournament play.
- If in the judgment of any umpire, a Manager is intentionally speeding up or slowing down the game (including intentional strikeouts and walks), and thereby making a travesty of the game, that umpire shall warn the offender. If the offender continues, the game shall be a forfeit.
- If any Coach or Manager or adult team staff falsifies game information for the purposes of circumventing the participation rule or to cover up any rule violation, they will be suspended for the duration of the season

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3.13 Local Safety Rules

Any injuries that occur during a game must be entered in the Accident/Incident book and all procedures followed. Procedures are detailed in Section VII.

- While there is no rule requiring that a pitcher be removed (not ejected) if they hit a certain number of batters, a pitcher can be removed by the umpire, at any time, if the umpire feels there is a safety issue allowing the pitcher to continue.

3.13.1 Batting Cage Rules

- FTBL allows all Managers to utilize the 4 batting cages for practice. Batting cage can be booked online.
- All Managers are required to adhere to the following rules when using the batting cage. Violations of the safety rules will result in loss of privileges as well as potential disciplinary action.
    - **All batters must wear a batting helmet while in the cage.**
    - **Only one (1) batter at a time is allowed in the cage.**
    - **Players must stand at least 5' back from the outside cage screens to avoid injury.**
- Use your head to save a head.
- ***No soft toss is allowed anywhere in the complex except inside the batting cages.***

3.13.2 Safety Code & Violations

Franklin Township Baseball League Code

- Arrangements should be made in advance of all games and practices for emergency medical services.
- Managers, coaches, and umpires should have some training in basic first aid. First-Aid Kit should be available at all times.
- No games or practice should be held when weather or field conditions are not good, particularly when lighting is inadequate.
- Play area should be inspected frequently for holes, damage, glass, and other foreign objects.
- Only players, Managers, Coaches, Umpires, and adult volunteers are permitted on the playing field and in dugouts during play and practice sessions.
- Responsibility for keeping bats and loose equipment off the field of play and in designated areas of the dugout should be that of the players and adult Coaches.
- During practice sessions and games, all players should be alert and watching the batter on each pitch.
- During warm up drills, players should be spaced so that no one is endangered by errant throws.
- Pitching machines must be operated only by adult Managers and Coaches.
- Catchers must wear catcher's helmet (with face mask and throat guard), chest protector and shin guards. Male catchers must wear long-model chest protector, protective supporter and cup at all times.
- Equipment, specifically helmets and catcher's gear, should fit properly.
- Headfirst slides are NOT permitted; runner will be called out. Returning and diving back to a base headfirst IS permitted.
- At no time is "horse play" permitted on the playing field or in the dugout.
- Parents of players who wear glasses should be encouraged to provide "Safety Eyegear".

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- Players and Coaches must wear catcher's helmet, face mask and throat guard in warming up pitchers between innings, in warm-ups and in practices.
- Helmets should not be painted unless approved by the manufacturer.
- It is the responsibility of each Manager and Coach to know and follow the safety code.
- Any violations of the safety code will subject the offender to possibly disciplinary action by the Board of Directors, up to and including being barred from further participation for the remainder of the season and/or post season.

The following are violations of Franklin Township Baseball League safety regulations, and any infractions are subject to disciplinary measures as indicated in each rule:

3.13.2.1 Safety Violations – Pitching

- FTBL is re-establishing the MLB recommended Baseball Pitching Rules called Pitch Smart.
- Pitch Count Verification
    - To ensure the safety of players pitching in the FTBL, the Safety Director will track pitchers pitch counts and subsequent days of rest. This will require all managers to report all pitchers used and their pitch counts **online within 24 hours of the end of the game**.
    - While failure to report within 24 hours does not relieve the manager of the responsibility to report, it will cause all pitchers used to serve the **maximum rest period for their age** before pitching again.
    - Repeated failure to report Pitchers and Counts for a game may result in a one (1) game suspension of the Manager/Coach.
- A weekly limitation of 7 innings applies to Babe Ruth 13-15 and 16-18 year old Division pitchers.
- A week is defined as beginning on Monday and ending on Sunday.
- For the regular season the following local rules will apply:
- Daily maximum pitches allowed any pitcher are as follows: age 7 – 8, 50 pitches; age 9 – 10, 75 pitches; age 11 – 12, 85 pitches; age 13 – 16, 95 pitches.
- Any pitcher that pitches 40 or more pitches in a game cannot play the position of catcher in that game.
- Any player that plays the position of catcher for any part of 4 innings in a game cannot later become a pitcher in that game.
- A pitcher, once removed from the mound, may not return to play that position.
- **All innings, including suspended, replayed, or canceled games, in which a player throws a single pitch will be counted.**
- Any violation of this rule will result in the immediate one (1) game suspension of the Manager/Coach in charge.
- A second violation of either rule will result in the removal of the Manager/Coach for the remainder of the regular season and any post season or tournament play.
- While every effort must be made to avoid violations before they occur, any interested party can **report a pitching violation to the Safety Director for his consideration within 3 days of the occurrence**. 3 days include the day of the violation.

3.13.2.2 Safety Violations – Catchers

- Catchers must wear all protective gear specified in the manual, including protective supporter and cup during play. Catchers' masks must also be properly equipped with a throat guard. **Personal equipment must also have a throat guard!**
- **Minor Division and up must use a catcher's mitt!**
- The Manager is responsible for ensuring compliance for catcher's safety.
- Violation of this rule will result in an immediate one game suspension.

3.13.2.3 Safety Violations – Batting

- We will use the Cal Ripken and Babe Ruth approved bat listing.
    - http://www.baberuthleague.org/bat-rules.aspx
- When an illegal bat is discovered, it must be removed from the game. There is no further penalty.
- NO ON-DECK BATTERS ARE PERMITTED.

3.14 Fall Ball Rules

There is a possibility of playing against other local towns from Minor division up, this involves player travel!

FTBL provides the opportunity to play baseball during the fall season in a non-competitive environment. The object of Fall Ball is ***training and development***, not the winning of games.

- Remember, keep it ***fun and relaxed***. We are all competitors in the spring, but in the fall we should all be ***teachers***.

3.14.1 Fall Ball ages are for the following spring league age.

Divisions of Fall Ball will be comprised of – enrollment pending:

- Tee-Ball: Ages 4 – 5 (Instructional)
- Coach Pitch: Ages 6-7 (Instructional)
- Minors: Ages 7-10
- Majors: Ages 11-13*
    - 13-year-old players will be allowed if there are not enough players to form a 13-15 division.
- Babe Ruth: Ages 13-16

3.14.2 Franklin Township Baseball League rules will apply with the following exceptions:

- League age 12-year-olds can only pitch a combined 3 innings in a game. This is to ensure that Coaches will attempt to develop young pitchers.
- All players must play at least 3 defensive innings.
- **Babe Ruth 13-15: Ages 13-16**
    - *Spring rules will be in effect.

3.14.3 Umpires

- We will use official umpires if available, possibly youth umpires, otherwise Managers and Coaches will umpire their own game, or they can ask a parent or another person to help.

3.14.4 Practices

- Fielding Practices MAY be scheduled at the FTBL complex during regular season; however, this does not prevent a Coach from practicing at another site.
- Cost of lights is not included for Fall practices. Teams must pay separately for the use of lights.
- The batting cage may be scheduled for practice.
- Coaches can have games (makeup or rained out) scheduled during their regular practice days.
- BR13 and BR16 teams can use the fields for practice during the regular season.

3.14.5 Rainouts

- Rainouts may be rescheduled or be made up on Sundays or during the scheduled practice days.

3.14.6 Players

- If you know that you will not have enough players for a game, you can ask a FTBL registered child from the opposing team or any other registered FTBL team in the same Division to play. Remember, this is a training and development league.

FTBL Players are children, not professional players, and need encouragement, not criticism. Applaud good plays; explain & correct errors. Encourage a greater effort, initiative, and hustle. Congratulate the winner; encourage the loser. After all, it's ONLY A GAME!

4 District 9 Tournaments – Manager Selection

FTBL actively participates in a variety of post season play, including the Cal Ripken/Babe Ruth Baseball World Series tournament as well as independent tournaments sponsored by neighboring towns. The section covers the selection of Managers for the tournament teams and the tryout process for players who have an interest in participating in post season play.

4.1 Manager Selection

Individuals who wish to Coach or manage travel/tournament team(s) may submit an application to the League President ***no later than 2 weeks before the scheduled Tryouts*** via email. The Executive Committee and/or Division Liaison from the appropriate Division will determine who will be eligible to Coach or manage a district travel team for the given year and select a manager for each team from the eligibility pool.

The Executive committee will consider the following criteria during the application review process.

1. Length of time active in FTBL.
2. Length of time working with youth and/or youth sports.
3. Types of service to the league.
4. Applicant's history with FTBL.
5. Experience Coaching in a tournament.
6. Experience Coaching youth baseball and/or baseball in general.
7. Character and temperament of the individual.
8. Applicants must be currently active in FTBL as a Manager or Coach.

The Executive Committee will select/announce tournament Managers and/or eligible Coaches at the next Board meeting after the application deadline.

4.2 As of the 2016 Tournament Season

All teams must play in the fund raiser tournament unless

- There is a conflict with the District or State Babe Ruth/Cal Ripken tournament.
- Any Gold (formerly "B") or second Level team can, if they wish, opt out of the league offered fund raiser tournament, USABL or otherwise, as long as their level of play is not offered. In these cases, a suitable substitute tournament will be allowed.
- District players' families are required to volunteer during our hosted fundraising tournaments.

4.3 As of the 2017 Tournament Season

1. FTBL District Team Try Outs
    a. Try Outs will occur in the fall to coincide with spring registration.
    b. Second try out will occur in the spring for players that may of significant improved over the winter and any new players that join the league.
    c. Tryouts will be organized and held by the individual team manager.
    d. If there are sufficient players during try out for an age group, a 2nd (Gold) Team may be formed.
2. All interested players must be registered and paid for the following spring rec season.
3. Manager Selection
    a. Submission to be a manager must be received 2 weeks before the try outs.
    b. Executive Board will review and approve the manager.
4. Player selection
    a. Conducted by the manager of the team.
    b. Player selection will be reviewed and approved by the Player Agent to ensure a younger player is not pulled up when a comparable age-appropriate player is available.
5. All Star Work Bond
    a. **$60** work bond is due upon team selection.
    b. Every All-Star player's family are required to volunteer (2 to 3-hour minimum) during our hosted fundraising tournaments.
    c. Work bond will be returned if the parent volunteers (assigned shift) during the district tournaments and / or the fund raiser tournament.
6. Costs and Fees
    a. Uniforms for players ~$150 per player (approximate)
    b. Uniforms for coaches and manager ~$150 per person (approximate)
    c. **Player must do a 50/50 Raffle: $40 or another fund raiser chosen by the League.**
    d. 2 Summer Local, FTBL Fund Raiser and District tournament ~$125+ (approximate)
7. Summer Tournament Selection
    a. Team managers and coaches will "shop" for tournaments for their teams to play in.
    b. All teams must play in the fund raiser tournament unless
    - there is a conflict with the District or State Babe Ruth/Cal Ripken tournament.
    - Any Gold (formerly "B") or second Level team can, if they wish, opt out of the league offered fund raiser tournament, USABL or otherwise, as long as their level of play is not offered. In these cases, a suitable substitute tournament will be allowed.
    c. Managers have final decision on what tournaments they will participate in except the FTBL fund raiser tournament.
    d. This will hopefully have commitments from other towns to play in our fund-raising tournament and possible multi-team discount.
8. All other Tournaments and training costs is at the discretion of the team manager.

4.4 Tryout Process

The District 9 teams represent the Franklin Township Baseball League in the annual Cal Ripken/Babe Ruth World Series Tournament. The following are the procedures regarding player eligibility.

District 9 Cal Ripken/Babe Ruth eligible age groups are as follows:

- 8 year olds
- 9 year olds
- 10 year olds
- 11 year olds
- 12 year olds
- 13 year olds
- 14 year olds
- 14-16 year olds
- 16-18 year olds

4.5 Selection Criteria

- Members of the team must be registered regular spring season members of the Franklin Township Baseball League.
- A player who was unable to play during the regular season due to injury may participate in tournament play provided that player was registered and a member of a regular spring season team.
- The district tournament team should consist of the best possible players and coaches available. This determination is to be made by the team manager. The selection of players should be based on, but not limited to, personal experiences, recommendations from regular season Managers, tryout performances, and the ability of the player to conduct himself/herself in an acceptable manner both on and off the field.
- Eligible team members must be able to commit to practice sessions, practice games and tournament games, both home and away, day and night, for a period starting in June and extending possibly into August. The players and families should consider this possibility prior to tryouts. Players will need to agree to a player participation agreement prior to being selected for a tournament team.
- Eligible team members and their families must accept the fact that tournaments are played on a higher competitive level than regular season. **This increased competitive atmosphere includes the possibility that a player may not field his/her desired position, bat in his/her desired line up spot, and may not participate in a particular game situation.** The players and families should consider this possibility prior to tryouts.
- Eligible team members must be aware that fund raising activities are being planned to support the tournament teams. Participation in such fundraising activities will be mandatory. Because of increased costs to the league, there may also be an additional registration fee for tournament play. The players and families should consider this possibility prior to tryouts.
- No alternates are allowed on any post season team.
- A tryout will be conducted for the district tournament team. Tryout dates and announcements will be at the discretion of the Manager of the tournament team.
- The tryout announcements may consist of flyers mounted around the league clubhouse or via online communication. These flyers will disclose the time and place of the tryouts. Also, posted on our website www.ftblbaseball.org and social media.
- The purpose of the tryout is to provide an opportunity for any player to demonstrate his/her baseball skills to secure a position on the district tournament team.
- FTBL players are eligible to try out and eligible to be selected to any age group district tournament team for which they qualify by age. Players are permitted to “play up” only if there is no team available for their age group and the team manager for the higher age group chooses to select that player. Such player selections are at the sole discretion of the higher-age manager and should be based on the skill level of the player.
- Any roster selection that is deemed as inappropriate or judged to have been made for reasons other than skill level will be reviewed by the Executive Board and such Manager can be disciplined, including removal as the district/tournament team Manager.
- Every player will be allowed to try out for any team on which he or she is age eligible to play. But under no circumstances shall a player plan on or be on the roster for more than one tournament, traveling tournament or traveling all-star team.
- All players who have tried out will receive an email advising whether they have been chosen for a roster position on the district tournament team.

4.6 District Team Managers Named for 2024

District Team	Manager
8U	Mike Lindower
9U	- Open -
10U	Neil Patel
11U	- Open -
12U	Eric Sack
13U	- Open -
14U – 16U	Rob Rooney
16-18	Pete Melillo

4.7 Dispute Resolution

The district tournament team Manager has the final decision concerning all team related matters. If someone has reason to believe a district tournament team Manager's authority has been misused or abused, a written grievance must be filed with the Franklin Township Baseball League Board of Directors. The Executive Board will then determine what course of action, if any, shall be taken.

This section serves as a reference tool for the following:

- Complaint procedures
- Recommended reading.
- Quick reference

5 Fundraisers

In 2024 the FTBL has numerous fundraisers in place to help defray the costs of operating the league and keeping the registration fees as low as possible. These fundraisers include, but are not limited to:

Candy Sale

When: N/A for 2024
What: Sell candy with all proceeds going back to the FTBL

Dick's Sporting Goods

When: March
Where: 4999 Stelton Road in South Plainfield
What: 20% off the entire store!

Spirit Wear Sales

When: Any Time
Where: FTBL web site at www.ftblbaseball.org
What: Purchase Spirit Wear clothing and the vendor will give a percentage of sales back to the league.

Jersey Battle

When: July
Where: FTBL Complex at 51 Dekalb St. in Somerset (and surrounding towns)
What: Jersey Battle Tournament age groups 7U – 18U

If you have any additional Fundraising ideas or would like to volunteer your time on the Fundraising Committee, please contact the Fundraising Chair listed under the Board of Directors at the beginning of this Handbook.

The best way for FTBL to continue to improve and enhance our programs and facilities is with continued Fundraising efforts.

6 Reference

6.1 Complaint Procedures

Procedures are in place for the handling of parent complaints, concerns and/or inquiries. Examples of complaints include, but are not limited to:

- Question or dispute regarding league policies
- Manager/Coach issues
- Safety concerns
- Bond procedures

Parents who wish to communicate a concern to the Board of Directors should be advised of the complaint procedures.

- All complaints/inquiries must be submitted in writing to either the respective Division Liaison, FTBL President or Vice President.
- All written complaints/inquiries will be recorded and tracked by the league.
- Parents will be responded to via telephone or return email with 48-72 hours.

A written complaint must be submitted so that the league may record and track all complaint types. A telephone response is being used to provide a prompt response to a complaint/inquiry.

6.2 Recommended Reading

To assist Managers and Coaches with overall player and skill development, a recommended reading list has been compiled for your reference.

The books and articles listed below are available at your local library, bookstore or on the internet. All FTBL Managers and Coaches are encouraged to read the materials to improve the level of play and Coaching within the league.

Required List

- Cal Ripken/Babe Ruth Baseball Rulebook
- Managers/Coaches Handbook
- Concussion in Sports online training found here NFHS Learn Courses

Additional information can be found on the official web site of Babe Ruth Baseball at www.baberuthleague.org.

6.3 Quick Reference

During the course of the season, many questions arise about the basic operations of the league and where to go to get certain information. The matrix below is designed to be a quick reference tool to assist with responding to most frequently asked questions.

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7 Forms

7.1 Medical Release Forms

All players participating in the Franklin Township Baseball League are ***REQUIRED*** to have a medical release form on file. No child will be allowed to begin the season, inclusive of practice, without the completion of the release form. It is the responsibility of the team Manager to ensure every child has a form on file.

Procedures for completing and maintaining the medical release forms are as follows:

- Manager gets a digital extract for each player. If a player has not submitted one, the parent cannot leave a practice or game site.
- A copy is retained by FTBL in a master file.
- Another copy must be retained by a team Coach or team parent.
- Managers/Coaches must bring digital extract or hard copies to ALL games and practices.

7.2 Accident /Incident Forms

All Managers are required to complete an Accidents/Incident form which are available in the clubhouse or online at www.ftblbaseball.org for any injury or breach of FTBL's code of ethics. The original copy is to be filed at the clubhouse with the Manager's copy being retained in this book. All accidents occurring at the FTBL complex must be immediately reported to the Director of the Day and an accident form must be completed at that time. Accidents occurring at external FTBL sites (i.e., at practice) must be reported to the Division Liaison on the same day, with an accident form filed at the clubhouse within 48 hours. For reference purposes, the definitions for both Accidents and Incidents are outlined below:

11.2.1 Accident

Any event where an injury occurs regardless of the severity. Examples include:

- Any injury that draws blood
- Broken bones
- Head injuries
- Hospital evaluation

Please be aware that a parent may request the completion of an accident report at any time.

11.2.2 Incident

Any event that could potentially cause injury or that is an infraction of Cal Ripken/Babe Ruth or local rules. Incidents apply to all players as well as Managers and Coaches. Examples include:

- Any violation of FTBL's Code of Ethics
- Intent to injure – i.e., repeatedly not sliding, pitching at the head.
- Profane or abusive behavior
- Disrespect to umpires, Coaches, other players or spectators
- Unsportsmanlike behavior
- Ejection from the game

These are examples only and are not intended to limit the scope of either an accident or incident to these situations. ***Please utilize your best judgment at all times!!***

Please do not attempt to provide instruction to parents relative to the procedures for completing an Insurance claim. All questions regarding the filing of insurance claims should be directed to

Fred Winters at 732-246-2406

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