



WEST ALABAMA BASEBALL LEAGUE

Mission and Purpose

To enrich our community through exciting recreational and cultural opportunities.

Tuscaloosa County Park and Recreation Authority, PARA, will provide an opportunity for youth of Tuscaloosa County to participate in an organized league of baseball. This league will endeavor to teach the participants good sportsmanship, team work, and the fundamentals of baseball under the guidance of qualified adult leadership.

1. The name of this organization shall be West Alabama Baseball League, WABL. Its membership shall consist of players and teams registered by payment of their registration fee at PARA.
2. A Youth Baseball Advisory Committee shall be appointed to assist in coordination of all youth baseball activities. It is the duty of the respective Advisory Committee, in cooperation with PARA and the League Director(s), to supervise the program and enforce the rules, to divide teams in their league into divisions and to assist, advise, and/or handle protests and complaints, and to perform other acts that might arise or be needed.
3. League commissioners may be appointed for each of the leagues or age groups. The commissioners may be delegated responsibility from the Advisory Committee.
4. All local league and local tournament play is governed by these Local Rules, the Official Rules and Regulations of Dixie Youth Baseball, Inc. ("Dixie Youth Rules") and the Official Rules of Major League Baseball. When a conflict exists among these various rules, the Local Rules shall apply first then the Dixie Youth Rules and finally, the Major League Baseball Rules.
5. These Local Rules shall apply to all age groups, unless specifically limited to particular age groups herein.

Local Rules

1. **Playing Up:** Each player may play up one age with league approval. Players may not play up 2 or more ages. In no situation will a player be allowed to play down.
2. **Travel Ball:** Players registered to play in WABL may participate in both league play and travel ball. However, no coach or player shall miss a WABL practice and/or WABL game to participate in travel ball. If a player and/or coach misses a WABL practice and/or WABL game to participate in travel ball, the player and/or coach may be suspended two games for the first offense of this rule and the player and/or coach may be banned from the league for the remainder of the season for any subsequent offense of this rule.
3. **Selection of Coaches for League Play:** To be considered for a regular season head coach, an applicant must submit a coaching application to PARA no later than the scheduled coaches' meeting. The head coach and one assistant must submit to a background check, and concussion training per state law. Coaches and assistant coaches for each league will be chosen based upon a point system. Those coaches with more points will be given first priority to coach a team should there be more coaches than available teams. The points shall be as follows*:

- 3 points for head coach of All-Star team for WABL
- 2 points for being assistant coach of All-Star team for WABL
- 2 points for head coach during a spring season for WABL
- 1 point for being assistant coach during a spring season for WABL

Should there be a tie between two or more coaching candidates then the Advisory Board shall make the final decision as to which candidate shall be allowed to coach.

*Regardless of the number of points accumulated, the WABL Advisory Board may reject a coach's application if the Advisory Board determines, in its sole and absolute discretion, the coach is not fit and/or is no longer fit to coach.

If a head coach plans to designate an assistant coach, such designation shall be made before the start of evaluations.

Each coach will be required to sign a coaches' code of conduct and will be expected to abide by the guidelines in place for character and sportsmanship. Coaches will also have to sign for a copy of the rules at the coach's meeting or draft.

4. **Pick-Up Players:** Teams must field at least 8 players to start a game. If a team has less than 9 players for the start of a game, that team can pick up enough players to make 9 in all age groups (must field 6 players from team roster). Teams may not pick up more than 2 players each game. If these rules are violated, (more than 2 players are picked up, more than 9 players as a result of pick up players, less than 6 from original roster), then the game will be still be played but recorded as a forfeit for the team that violated the rule.

For ages 8 and under, the first pick-up player (to make 8) must play right field. The second pick-up player (to make 9) must play catcher. All pick-up players must bat last in the team's line-up.

For ages 9 and up, all pick-up players must play outfield and must bat last in the team's lineup. Pick-up players may not pitch or play infield.

Any team beginning a game with eight players that loses a player during the game due to injury or illness may finish the game with seven players.

During Local league regular season play, teams may pick up a player from the same age group or below to make 9.

No pick-up players will be allowed in tournament play.

5. **Draft Procedures:** Players not attending evaluations will be placed in a hat unless the player is protected or participated on an all-star team sanctioned by WABL during the previous season.

Selection of players placed in the hat: Instead of selecting a player from the draft board/sheet, a player's name can be pulled from the hat from the third round of the draft forward.

Only the head coach's child and one assistant's child may be protected. No more than two protected players per team. The head coach shall inform WABL and/or PARA at the time of evaluations which players will be protected. The term "child" includes step-children.

In order to protect players, head coaches must submit the protected player request form, and complete the required coach's paperwork prior to the draft.

Previous season All-Stars: All players who, in the previous season, participated on an all-star team sanctioned by WABL shall be available to be drafted regardless of whether he/she attends evaluations. The draft shall denote which all-star team each player played on during the previous season. In no event shall all-star players from the previous season be placed in a hat.

Selection process: Numbers will be drawn out of a hat to determine order of selection. The selections will reverse each round. Example: if there are six teams, first round selections go 1-6, second round selections will go 6-1. Order of selection will be re-drawn in every subsequent odd numbered round until all players are selected.

One minute will be given to each coach to make his/her decision in each round.

Siblings residing in the same household and age group must be drafted together. Only one set of siblings per team. The term “siblings” includes step-siblings.

Draft Manipulation: Any complaint of draft manipulation shall be brought before the Baseball Advisory Committee. Should the Baseball Advisory Committee find that attempted manipulation has occurred then the Baseball Advisory Committee shall take action it deems appropriate up to and including such player(s) name being placed in a hat for random selection.

6. **Player-Practice Rule:** the head coach has the authority to limit game playing time of any player on their team who continually misses practice without a valid excuse, or that may have caused disciplinary problems during a practice or a particular game. Players with valid medical or health related issues are exempt from this rule. The coach must document missed practices and notify the opposing coach, umpire, and the PARA staff before the game. Coach must also notify parent/guardian before playing time is limited.
7. **Scorer’s Book:** the official book shall be kept by the home team. It is expressly made clear by these local rules that the official score, number of outs, etc. shall be kept by the home team. The home team’s book will control regardless of the score or number of outs on the scoreboard. It is the responsibility of the head coach of the home team to ensure that his or her team keeps a book.

The visitor is strongly encouraged to keep a book as well to compare with the home team’s book and so the visitor can challenge or protest the score, number of outs, etc. A challenge or protest of the score, number of outs, etc. will not be considered if the visiting team does not keep a book.

8. **Conduct:** PARA and the West Alabama Baseball League have a zero tolerance policy on any and all acts of violence or assault, both verbal and/or physical. Any violation of this rule may lead to a hearing by the Advisory Board and/or PARA, arrest and/or further disciplinary action up to and including termination of privileges to participate in any and all PARA and/or West Alabama Baseball League activities, events programs and/or use of facilities.

Ejections – Any ejections of a player, coach, or spectator from any game results in an automatic two game suspension of the player, coach or spectator so ejected. A suspension may be longer than two games if ruled so by the Advisory Board.

The head coach of each team is responsible for the conduct of its players, coaches and spectators. Should a player, spectator, or coach, other than the head coach, be ejected for violations of this conduct policy then the head coach may also be subject to a two game suspension after review by the Advisory Board.

Umpires will make sure that ejected persons know they have been ejected from the game by immediately notifying PARA/WABL staff, the League Director, the League President or Age Group Commissioner and said player/coach/spectator. Ejected individuals must leave the park (playing field, complex, and parking lot) immediately without causing a disturbance.

9. **Post-Season Tournaments:**

At the end of regular season play, ages 5-6, a single elimination tournament will be scheduled.

At the end of regular season play, for ages 7-8, a double elimination tournament will be scheduled.

For ages 9 and up, a single elimination tournament will be scheduled at the end of regular season play. Also, for ages 9 and up, the final two teams remaining in any post-season tournament will play best two out of three series to determine the tournament champion.

Teams will be seeded by regular season record in all age groups.

Tie breakers for purposes of tournament seeding:

- **Two Teams**

1. Head to head results between tied teams (best won-lost-tied percentage in games played between two teams)
2. The team with the greater aggregated score in head to head results between tied teams.
3. Coin Flip

- **Two or More Teams**

Note: if two teams remain tied after the third or other teams are eliminated during any step, tie breaker reverts to step one of the two team format.

1. The team with the fewest total points allowed for the entire season.
2. Random draw.

10. **Length of Games:** A new inning will start as long as there is time remaining on the game clock. The game clock will start on the first swing of the game. Teams will be allowed to bat even if they are mathematically eliminated from the game only if time remains on the clock.

Games lengths for each age will be as followed;

5-6: 60 minutes or 6 innings

7-8: 60 minutes or 6 innings

9-10: 75 minutes or 6 innings

11-12: 80 minutes or 6 innings

All age groups: ties will not be broken during local league play. Extra innings shall be played to break ties only during league tournament play.

11. **Runs Per Inning:** For ages five through eight, a team can only score seven runs in any given inning. Thus, an inning will consist of seven runs or three outs.

For ages nine and up, a team can only score five runs in any given inning. Thus, an inning will consist of five runs or three outs.

12. **Playing Field:** In the 5-6 year olds age division, an outfield line shall be drawn at twenty feet beyond the base paths. The outfielders must line up beyond the outfield line.

In all other age groups and for all other situations, please see the Dixie Youth Rules for the playing field.

13. **Coaches on Playing Field:**

5-6 Year old: On defense, two coaches will be allowed on the playing field in the outfield area. During Dixie Youth Tournament play no defensive coaches will be on the field.

7-8 Year old: On defense, two coaches will be allowed on the playing field in the outfield area, behind the outfielders. During Dixie Youth Tournament play no defensive coaches will be on the field.

9 Years Old and Up: Please see the Dixie Youth Rules.

Reference Dixie Youth Rules for rules and positioning of offensive coaches in all age groups other than tee ball.

14. **Use of Tee in 5-6 Year Old Age Group:** The batter will be allowed three strikes or five pitches. If a batter hits a foul ball with two strikes, they will be allowed to continue the at-bat. A tee is not allowed in any age groups.

15. **No Bunting:** Bunting will not be allowed in any coach pitch age groups. Half swings as judged by the umpire will be called a bunt. PENALTY: A strike will be called on the batter.

16. **Catcher in 5-6 Year Old Age Group or A Division:** The player in the catcher position must wear a protective helmet with facemask but may also choose not to wear the full catcher's outfit. **If the catcher chooses not to wear the full outfit they must stand near the backstop and will not be able to make a play on the ball hit from the bat.** The player in the catcher's position is encouraged to wear complete catcher's gear so that the catcher can play a larger part in the game. This rule only applies to the 5-6 year old age group. Please see Dixie Youth Rules for all other age groups.

Player pitcher in coach pitch leagues must wear a batting helmet with facemask.

17. **Overthrows to First Base in 5-6 Year Old Age Group or A Division:** If there is an overthrow on a play at first base, all runners will only be rewarded one base. An overthrow at any other base is a free ball. This rule applies only in the 5-6 year old age groups. This does not apply in Dixie Youth Tournament games.

18. **Rolling the Baseball Prohibited:** No rolling of the ball intentionally will be allowed. No outs will be allowed by rolling the ball. Runners will automatically be safe if the defensive team rolls the ball.

19. **Age Groups:** There shall be age groups for 5- 6 year old, 7- 8 year old for the league play and the post-season tournament. All-Stars will be selected per Dixie Youth Rules i.e. 5-6 year olds or A Division, 7-8 year olds or AA Division. If double franchising is required, there shall still be separate age groups with each age group playing each other across the franchises in league play and post-season tournament play.

20. **Selection of All-Star Coaches & Players:** The regular season champion coach will swerve as each divisions All Star Head Coach. The post-season tournament champion will serve as the first assistant. The remaining assistants will be selected by the Head Coach, from league rostered coaches.

An All-Star team shall consist of 12 players from the sanctioned age group. The selection of these 12 players will be made by a vote of the leagues sanctioned head coaches.

21. **Bats:** (ALL AGE GROUPS)

The barrel of all aluminum, metal alloy, composite, multi piece wood bats or single piece wood bats shall not exceed 2 5/8” inches in diameter, nor exceed 33” inches in length.

All Non-Wood bats and Multi Piece Wood bats must be stamped with the USA Baseball mark signifying that the bat meets the bat performance standards established by USA Baseball. (USA Baseball is the governing body of amateur baseball in the United States.)

Solid Wood Bats made from a single piece of wood, do not require the USA Baseball mark, but must meet all other bat requirements in size and length, as listed above.

2 5/8 inch Bats that are **-3 BBCOR** (Batted ball coefficient of restitution) certified bats that meet the BBCOR standard, which do not weigh, numerically, more than 3 ounces less than the length of the bat (i.e., 33 inch bat cannot be less than 30 ounces) can be used in regular season and tournament play.

Bats stamped “BPF 1.15” are not legal in any age division. PARENTS SHOULD CAREFULLY CONSIDER THIS RULE BEFORE PURCHASING NEW BATS FOR THEIR PLAYERS FOR THE CURRENT SEASON.

5 & 6 year age groups: Tee-Ball bats cannot be used in a game situation where the ball is tossed/pitched to a batter.

22. **Player Evaluations:** Evaluations will be held for all age groups except Tee Ball. The scope of the evaluations will be set from year-to-year by the WABL Board.
23. **Assistant Coaches:** Absent a medical issue, assistant coaches shall not miss more than four games in the regular season. If an assistant coach misses more than four games, the *head coach* is subject to suspension and/or other disciplinary action by the WABL Board. The head coach shall notify WABL and/or PARA at the time of evaluations who will be his or her assistant coach.
24. **Addition of Local Rules:** The WABL Board may, in its discretion and as the need arises, make changes and/or additions to the Local Rules from time-to-time, including but not limited to, during the season.

25. **Fall league Play**

1. West Alabama Baseball league (WABL) will offer fall league play for ages 5-12.
2. All rules previously listed are in force, unless changed/amended in this section
3. The season will consist of 8 games.
4. No fall championship tournament will be played. (PARA reserves the right to form and host an invitational tournament if interest exist).
5. NO ALL-STARS will be selected.
6. Coaches may protect 6 players that are properly registered with PARA. The coach, as well as a parent/guardian, must submit such request in writing, before the fall league draft. Players not protected will be part of the open draft. There will NOT be a player evaluation phase.
7. Players participating in multiple PARA fall sports SHALL NOT be punished for missing a scheduled practice.