8-AND-UNDER (8U) MACHINE-PITCH SOFTBALL RULES
Virginia State Tournament Rules

CREDENTIAL BOOKS: After being checked and approved by the Tournament Director, are to be returned to each team's manager.

PROTEST COMMITTEE: Each tournament game must be played in the presence of the Tournament Director and Protest Committee (composed of at least three members, of which none are umpires at that tournament). No tournament game shall start play in the absence of said director and committee.

SPRING-LOADED PORTABLE PITCHING MACHINE: The machine is placed 35 feet from home plate with a speed of 32 mph, which is established when the ball crosses the plate. The front two legs (or front base plate) of the pitching machine are placed in front of the pitching rubber. Coaches are not allowed to check the machine before their team bats. Only umpires may decide if adjustments to the machine should be made.

The player who assumes the pitcher’s position must remain within the 8-foot-radius circle, behind the machine, and on one side or the other, until the ball is hit. If the pitcher violates any of these requirements, then (1) the play will stand, even if the pitcher is involved in the play, and (2) the umpire(s) will warn the violating pitcher’s manager that if the same pitcher violates one or both requirements again, he or she will have to be removed from the pitcher’s position. The player can assume another position but cannot re-enter as a pitcher in that game. The player may not be ejected from the game for this infraction.

NOTE: The pitcher’s position is only a REFERENCE TO A “fielder’s” position (does not deliver a pitch). Therefore, there is NO “Number of Pitches Delivered” rule for the player in the position. A Courtesy Runner is NOT ALLOWED for the pitcher.

PLAYERS: 10 players in the batting order [11 if the Extra Player (EP) option is used].

An EXTRA PLAYER (EP) can be used to increase the batting order to 11 batters. If a team elects this option, it must start with the EP and end with the EP or forfeit the game. (Both teams in a game are not required to use this option.)

There will be four outfielders. ALL outfielders must remain in the grass area of the outfield (cannot be positioned in the infield at any time).

SOFTBALLS: A Rawlings or Worth 11” official Babe Ruth Softball properly stamped “Official Babe Ruth Softball” shall be used for all postseason tournament competitions.

GAME LENGTH: 6 innings. Each batter receives a maximum of five (5) pitches. If the batter strikes out, or if the ball has not been hit into play after five (5) pitches, the batter is out.

If the batter fouls the fifth pitch, the batter will receive pitches as long as the batter continues to foul pitches. (Note: Any fouled bunt after two strikes is an out.)

Updated 11 June 2019
INFIELD FLY RULE: There is NO INFIELD FLY RULE.

15-RUN RULE: Any Babe Ruth Softball 12U and younger Division tournament game must be terminated immediately if one team is ahead by fifteen (15) or more runs after two and one half (2 ½) or three (3) innings and has had equal times at bat.

10-RUN RULE: Any Babe Ruth Softball 12U and younger Division tournament game must be terminated immediately once becoming regulation (3 ½ or 4 innings) if one team is ahead by 10 or more runs and the teams have had equal times at bat or the home team is leading by 10 or more runs.

FIELD DIMENSIONS: Standard Babe Ruth 12U Softball Division base length of 60 feet.

UMPIRES: Two umpires will be on the field at all times (one on the field and one at home plate behind the batter).

One umpire will feed the machine. The machine should be checked prior to batting. Only the umpire may make adjustments to the machine during play.

The catcher takes the catcher’s normal position in full gear.

The umpire(s) is(are) allowed to declare “no pitch” if the umpire judges that it is not reasonably hittable. This is a “judgment call” and thus not subject to protest.

DEAD BALL: The ball will be declared dead when the defensive team stops the lead runner or the runner abandons the effort to advance. Once play has been stopped, no other runners may advance beyond the last base tagged.

The ball will be declared dead when a player is injured and in the umpire’s judgment is unable to continue the play.

If a batted fair ball hits any part of the pitching machine without touching any defensive player, the ball is immediately dead. The batter is awarded first base. The other runners return to the base that they last occupied before the ball was hit, unless forced to advance as a result of the batter being awarded first base. If a batted fair ball is first touched by a defensive player and then hits any part of the pitching machine, it is a live ball.

If a batted fair ball touches an umpire on fair territory before it touches an infielder including the pitcher, or touches an umpire before it has passed an infielder other than the pitcher, the ball is dead and the batter is awarded first base. All other runners return to the base that they occupied before the ball was hit unless forced to advance as a result of the batter being awarded first base. If a thrown ball hits any part of the pitching machine, it is a live ball.

BUNTING: Bunting is allowed. However, NO FAKE BUNTING IS ALLOWED. If the batter offers to bunt, then the batter must bunt the ball or pull the bat back to take the pitch. If the batter offers to bunt, pulls back the bat, and then swings at the pitch, the batter will automatically be declared out by the umpire.
COURTESY RUNNER: The catcher may have a courtesy runner for them every time that they are up to bat. Each courtesy runner used must be a player who is not in the game at the time. Each courtesy runner may be a courtesy runner only once per inning.

BASE STEALING: Base stealing is not permitted. Runners may not leave their bases(s) before the batter hits the ball or before the ball reaches the plate (Rule 11.07 -8U (j)). The penalty (Rule 7.13) is that the runner will be called out. The batter will remain at bat or return to bat with the count that existed before the runner was called out.

APPEALS: Appeals on a base runner that misses a base in accordance with rule 7.09 includes the following exception: An appeal can be made when the ball is a dead ball.

BABE RUTH SOFTBALL PATCHES: Babe Ruth Softball shoulder emblems must be displayed as specified in the current Rule Book.

BABE RUTH SOFTBALL RULE CHANGE – FACE MASKS: Face masks are required for the infield positions – First, Third, and Pitcher.

BABE RUTH SOFTBALL BATS (CLARIFICATION): Softball bats with an adjustable knob are allowed, provided the knob is permanently fastened by the manufacturer. Any devises, attachments, or wrappings that cause the knob to become flush with the handle are also permitted.

DIAMOND KINETICS: The Diamond Kinetics “swing tracker” sensor that is attached to the bottom of a softball bat can be used during live, in-game at bats.