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# Bronco Baseball Rules – 2/28/25

## AGE REQUIREMENT

- Players must be **12 years of age or younger** as of **September 1** of the current year.

## GAME RULES

- **Bat Inspection:** Bats must be checked by the umpire before the game begins.
- **Pace of Play:**
  - After the **1st inning**, pitchers are allowed **5 warm-up pitches** (4 pitches and 5th pitch going down). **Play Ball!**
  - Umpires will enforce the pace of play throughout the game, including mound visits, stepping into the batter's box, and other delays.
  - After the **1st inning**, no warm-up balls are allowed for infield or outfield.
  - A **new pitcher** entering the game is allowed **10 warm-up pitches**.
  - After **2 outs**, a **courtesy runner** (last batted out) may be used for the catcher.
  - If a **coach warms up a pitcher**, those pitches count toward the limit, and the catcher must finish the remaining pitches or throw down when on the field if the pitcher has already thrown 4 or 5 warm-up pitches.

## Game Length & Tie-Breakers

- A game is **7 innings or 2 hours** (finish the current inning when time expires). \*If time expires between innings, the next inning will still be played. The top of a new inning officially begins immediately after the third out is recorded in the bottom of the previous inning.
- \*Game time will begin immediately after Coaches meeting
- If the game is tied after **7 innings** or the time limit + finished inning, the **tie-breaker rule** applies:
  - The inning starts with **no outs** and the **last batted out on 2nd base**.
  - Play under normal rules.
  - If no winner is determined after **2 extra innings**, the game ends in a tie.
- A game may start with **8 players**, but the team will take **1 out** each time the **9th batting position** is reached (unless both coaches agree not to take the out).

- **Run Rules:**
  - **15-run rule after 4 innings**
  - **10-run rule after 5 innings**
- The umpire has the authority to **call a game due to darkness** for player safety.

## Sportsmanship & Conduct

- **Positive team enthusiasm** is encouraged. Players may **only direct chatter toward their team and not the opponents**.

  - **Prohibited chants:** "Hey batter-batter swing," "Slaughter rule," "Yeap," etc.
  - If negative communication occurs, the **team Manager will be warned**. A second violation results in **game forfeiture** and League Director review.

- **All other rules follow Pony Baseball regulations.**

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## BASERUNNING

- **Play at the Plate:** The runner **must slide** or may be called **out** at the umpire's discretion.
- **Courtesy Runner:** Allowed **only for the catcher** with **2 outs** (but not required).

## HITTING

- **Batting Order:**
  - Teams may use a **continuous batting order** but must **finish the game that way** if started.
  - **Continuous batting** = all players present at the game must bat.
- **Defensive Substitutions:** Unlimited if using a **continuous batting order**.
- **Lineup Rules:**
  - If batting **less than full roster**, follow **Pony rules for substitutions**.
  - **Lineup cards** must be provided to the **opposing coach and umpire** before the game.
- **Illegal Bats:**
  - If used, the **player and coach are ejected**.
  - The **player's spot is an automatic out** unless a substitute is available.

## **Substitution Rules (Traditional Batting Order)**

- 1. Starters May Re-enter Once:**
  - Any player in the **starting lineup** may re-enter the game **one time** after being substituted out.
  - They must return to their **original spot** in the batting order.
- 2. Substitutes Cannot Re-enter:**
  - Once a substitute is removed from the game, they **cannot re-enter**.
- 3. Pitcher Substitution Rule:**
  - A pitcher **cannot return to pitch** once they are removed from the mound.
  - They may re-enter in a different defensive position if they were a starter.
- 4. Batting Order Must Be Maintained:**
  - A substitute entering the game must bat in the same spot as the player they replaced.
- 5. Injury Exception:**
  - If a player is injured and no legal substitute is available, the team may finish with 8 players, taking an out for the missing batting spot.
- 6. Courtesy Runner:**
  - A **courtesy runner** (last batted out) may be used for the catcher with **two outs** to speed up play.
  - **Exception:** If using a **continuous batting order**, the player is not removed.

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## **PITCHING RULES**

- **Pitching Distance: 50 feet.**
- **Maximum Pitches per Day: 85**
  
- **Pitch Limits Per Day:**
  - **1-20 pitches = 0 days rest**
  - **21-35 pitches = 1 day rest**
  - **36-50 pitches = 2 days rest**
  - **51-65 pitches = 3 days rest**
  - **66+ pitches = 4 days rest**
  - **All pitches pitched count** (Scheduled Tri County games, exhibition, or travel games count towards pitch count)

- A pitcher reaching their **max pitch count** may **finish the current batter** before being removed.
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- **Multiple Games in a Day:**
  - A pitcher can pitch **in more than one game** as long as they do **not exceed the daily pitch limit**.
- **Pitcher Removal:**
  - If a pitcher **reaches their max pitch count** while facing a batter, they may **finish that batter** before being removed.
  - Once a pitcher is removed, they **cannot re-enter** as a pitcher.
- **Additional Pitching Rules:**
  - **Drop 3rd strike** is in effect.
  - For an **intentional walk**, the pitcher may either **throw 4 balls** or the coach may signal **4 fingers** to the umpire for an automatic walk.
  - **Pitchers may not wear wristbands or batting gloves.**
  - If a pitcher **hits 2 batters in an inning or 3 batters total**, they must be removed from the mound.
- **Equipment Restrictions:**
  - **No wristbands or batting gloves, or arm sleeves** allowed for pitchers.

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## **FIELDING & DEFENSE**

- **Infield Fly Rule** is in effect (called at the umpire's discretion).
- **Fake Receives Are Illegal:** A defender **cannot fake receiving a ball** to trick the runner into sliding.
- **Player Re-Entry:** Players may **re-enter at different positions** but must remain in the **original batting order**.

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## **EQUIPMENT & BATS**

- **First Base Safety Base:**
  - Both sides of the base are **in play**.
  - If no safety base is in place before the first pitch, the **home team forfeits**.

- **Catcher's Equipment:**
  - Masks must be **hockey-style or have a throat protector.**
- **Bat Rules:**
  - **Legal Bats:**
    - Any **non-wood bat** with a **BBCOR label** (per NFHS baseball rule 1-3-2).
    - Any **USA Baseball logo bat, 30 inches or less**, with a **barrel diameter  $\leq$  2 5/8 inches**.
    - Any **wood bat** meeting **NFHS standards**.
    - Any bat **31 inches or longer** must be **BBCOR-certified**.
  - **Illegal Bats:**
    - All **2 1/4" barrel bats are illegal.**
    - Any bat with a **USSSA logo** is **illegal**.

#### Examples of Legal and Illegal Bats That Do Not Contain a USA Baseball Logo

Length	Weight	Barrel Diameter	Status
31	28	2-5/8"	Legal assuming BBCOR labeled
30	22	2-3/4"	Illegal—Maximum barrel diameter is 2-5/8". Additionally this bat will not contain the BBCOR label
30	20	2-1/4"	Illegal—No bat with a 2-1/4" barrel diameter is legal
29	18	2-1/4"	Illegal—No bat with a 2-1/4" barrel diameter is legal
31	20	2-1/4"	Illegal—No bat with a 2-1/4" barrel diameter is legal
28	19	2-1/4"	Illegal—No bat with a 2-1/4" barrel diameter is legal
31	28	2-3/4"	Illegal—Maximum barrel diameter is 2-5/8". Additionally this bat will not contain the BBCOR label.
29	26	2-5/8"	Legal assuming BBCOR labeled
30	27	2-5/8"	Legal assuming BBCOR labeled
32	22	2-1/4"	Illegal—No bat with a 2-1/4" barrel diameter is legal
31	25	2-1/4"	Illegal—No bat with a 2-1/4" barrel diameter is legal
30	27	2-1/2"	Legal assuming BBCOR labeled
30	18	2-1/4"	Illegal—No bat with a 2-1/4" barrel diameter is legal

#### Examples of Legal and Illegal Non-Wood Bats That Are Marked With a USA Baseball Logo

Length	Weight	Barrel Diameter	Status
30	20	2-5/8"	Legal assuming USA Baseball Logo is silk screened on bat
31	20	2-5/8"	Illegal—All bats 31" and over for use in IESA contests must meet NFHS guidelines including BBCOR label. It does not matter if this bat has a USA Baseball logo. A 31" bat has to be BBCOR labeled.
28	18	2-5/8"	Legal assuming USA Baseball Logo is silk screened on bat
29	18	2-1/4"	Illegal—No bat with a 2-1/4" barrel diameter is legal
31	21	2-5/8"	Illegal—All bats 31" and over for use in IESA contests must meet NFHS guidelines including BBCOR label. It does not matter if this bat has a USA Baseball logo. A 31" bat has to be BBCOR labeled.
27	15	2-5/8"	Legal assuming USA Baseball Logo is silk screened on bat
29	19	2-5/8"	Legal assuming USA Baseball Logo is silk screened on bat
30	18	2-5/8"	Legal assuming USA Baseball Logo is silk screened on bat
30	20	2-1/2"	Illegal—Any bat with a USA Baseball logo must have a 2-5/8" barrel diameter.
30	22	2-5/8"	Legal assuming USA Baseball Logo is silk screened on bat
30	25	2-5/8"	Legal assuming USA Baseball Logo is silk screened on bat

## UMPIRES

- **Tri-County recommends 2 umpires per game.**
- **Minimum umpire age:**
  - **16+ years old:** Must have **2 umpires** if under 18.
  - **18+ years old:** Only **1 umpire required.**

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## SCHEDULING & MAKE-UP GAMES

- A game is considered **complete** if:
  - **4 innings** are completed.
  - The **home team leads after 3+ innings.**
- **Suspended Games:**
  - If a game is called early, it resumes **from the point of suspension.**
  - If the visiting team **tied or took the lead** before the game was called, the game is **suspended.**
- **Absent Players in a Resumed Game:**
  - If a player from the original lineup is absent, their spot is an **automatic out.**
  - New players **can only replace missing players** from the original lineup.
- **Make-Up Games:**
  - The **home team** must reschedule ASAP.
  - If no agreement is reached, contact **Brad Male (815-274-8335).**

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## ROSTER RULES

- A **younger-aged player** may play at an **older level only if the team has 9 or fewer players.**
- Players **in the correct age group must play first** over younger call-ups.
- A younger player **cannot play more than 2 older-level games per week.**
- If a younger player plays **3 games at an older level**, they must **stay at that level for the season.**
- **Pitching restriction:** Younger players **cannot pitch** unless permanently moved up.

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**REMEMBER: DO NOT INJURE A PITCHER JUST TO WIN!**