

2026 MAC League Coaches Meeting

Babe Ruth Division

April 15, 2026





LANCASTER
YOUTH BASEBALL AND SOFTBALL





Summer & Fall Seasons

- The MAC league is also hosting a Summer and Fall league for all divisions of play!
- The rules will be identical to that of our spring season. This should help avoid confusion for players with different rulesets in the different seasons.
- In Summer & Fall Season, towns outside of the core MAC towns are welcome to participate. This means some additional travel, but more opportunities for the kids to play ball.



Important Dates

- April 27 Games begin
- June 21st Final day of the regular season
Games must be completed by this date.
- June 22 - July 3 Single Elimination Playoffs

- There are 12 games scheduled over 6 weeks. There are 2 weeks between the end of scheduled games and the playoffs start. This extra time is to be allow for flexibility to move games.
- Weekday games remain at 5:45pm.



Important!

- This is NOT Central Mass Baseball.
- This is NOT Minuteman Baseball.
- This is NOT High School using Federation Rules.
- The MAC League is a REC league.

The rules are DIFFERENT. The process is DIFFERENT. Do not make assumptions. There are also differences from the Babe Ruth rulebook.

Make sure you understand the MAC rules before you arrive at a game.



MAC Rules

All coaches should be familiar with the all the rules our league uses.

- **MAC General Rules** - <https://www.macleague.org/coaching-resources/general-rules/67967>
- **MAC Juniors Rules** - <https://www.macleague.org/coaching-resources/juniors-rules/67968>
- **MAC Playoff Rules** - <https://www.macleague.org/coaching-resources/playoff-rules/10900>
- **Babe Ruth Rules** - <https://coacheducation.humankinetics.com/products/brl-2025-baseball-rules-and-regulations-pdf>
 - *MAC Rules take precedent over any conflicting Babe Ruth rule.*
- **Rule Clarifications** – during the season, if the MAC board feels that a rule needs to be changed or clarified, it will be announced in email to all coaches, and the rules pages will be updated. Rule clarifications are effective immediately.



2026 Rule Changes

- After the schedule is released, if a team is unable to play on a scheduled date, they can work with the coach of the opposite team on a proposed new date. In the event that the two coaches cannot reach an agreed upon date, the original date stands. If a team is unable to play on the original date, they would be required to forfeit the game.
- Towns are allowed and recommended to use a double safety bag at first base. This will be required for all towns in Spring of 2027.
 - This is now a requirement for High School programs across the country, and we want our players to be ready for the change.
- At the start of any extra innings a runner is now placed on second base. The runner will be the last recorded batter of the previous inning.
 - This is a new rule directly from Babe Ruth.
- Solid one-piece wood bats are permitted for use in all divisions and must conform to Babe Ruth Rule 1.10. No laminated or experimental bats shall be used in a game.
- There are significant rule changes to the playoffs this year. Please make sure you read through them on the website. (We will walk through this on the website walkthrough)



Protests

- There are no protests allowed in the MAC League.
- Whatever decision, good or bad, is made solely by the umpires and is final.
- **There is no calling League Officials from the fields.** Ask the umpire – respectfully - for a rule clarification. If the umpire is unsure, they will make a decision and that is how the game will be played. At the conclusion of the game, let your league coordinator know, and they will instruct the umpire in the correct rule for future games. There will be no adjustments made to the original game.



Player Participation & Call ups

- Teams need to field at least 8 players within 15 minutes after start time or else forfeit
- Forfeits are entered in MAC Site as 6-0 victory for the non-forfeiting team
- Seniors teams can call up players from Juniors teams, and Juniors teams can call up players from a Majors/Majors-A team. No team with callups can have more than 10 players. Cross division call-overs are not allowed.
- Call ups can pitch – *their pitch counts get counted against their original team.*
- Calls ups should be placed at the bottom of the order.
- Call ups must play the minimum 6 defensive outs but otherwise a rostered player should not be sitting while a call up is in the field.
- Call ups should not be used to “make your team better”. They are there to make it so that you can actually have games.



Games & Scoring

- No new inning can be started **two hours and thirty minutes** after the official start of the game as determined by the umpire (not the scheduled start time).
- Umpires in collaboration with the two head coaches make the call to stop play before time limit due to weather or darkness.
- Home team pays umpire **BEFORE** the game and provides at least two game balls. In playoffs **BOTH** teams pay half the umpire fee.
- In Babe Ruth, there is no per inning run limit.



Games & Scoring (continued)

- Babe Ruth Mercy Rule – a victory must be conceded to the winning team if:
 - At the end of the 4th inning, one team has a lead of fifteen (10) runs or more.
 - At the end of the 5th inning or the end of the top of the 5th inning if the home team is ahead, one team has a lead of ten (8) runs or more.
 - During the bottom of the 5th if the home team goes up by eight (8) runs the game is immediately conceded.
- *Score at time the mercy rule is applied*, is reported on MAC Site.
- Both teams reports game results on MAC Site within 24 hours of game.



Games Not Played

- Games should only be rescheduled due to weather, not lack of players or a coach's conflict.
- Rainouts should be rescheduled as close to the original date as possible using either team's field as needed.
- Home team is responsible for determining whether field is playable.
- Must contact opposing coach and umpire **no sooner than two hours prior to game time** if cancelled.
- A game is official after five innings (end of 5th) or 4 ½ (middle of 5th) if the home team is ahead.
- Games postponed before end of the first inning will be restarted.
- Games postponed after the first inning but not official will be resumed as of the stoppage of play. Everything picks up exactly where you left off. Players on base, outs, pitch count, etc.
- If lightning occurs play is stopped until no further lightning is observed for at least 15 minutes. If either of the head coaches or the umpire see lightning, any of the three can now put the game on the temporary hold. Additionally, any time that the game is delayed will be added to the max time limit for the game.



Pitching

- All Juniors level players are considered **13-years-old** for pitch count purposes.
- [MLB Pitch Smart Guidelines](#) dictate the max number of pitches per day and minimum days of rest before pitching again.

Ages	Daily Max	0 Days Rest	1 Days Rest	2 Days Rest	3 Days Rest	4 Days Rest
13-15	95	1-20	21-35	36-50	51-65	66+

- Example: Player throws 36 pitches Tuesday – they can't pitch again until Friday (Wednesday and Thursday are rest days).
- You cannot finish a batter and go into the next days rest category. If your pitcher is at 35 pitches in the middle of an at bat, pull them out, because if they go to 36, they now have two days rest instead of 1.
- Pitchers may finish a batter when hitting their maximum pitches for a day.
- **League Age** 16-Year-olds are not allowed to pitch in the Juniors Division.



Pitching (continued)

- Pitches can be tracked using a smartphone app or manual pitch counter. If there is a conflict, the coach using a smartphone app (i.e. GameChanger) will have their stats take precedent.
- During the pregame meeting with the umpire, coaches will disclose ineligible pitchers for their team.
- Coaches from both teams should track pitches for their own as well as opposing pitchers and reconcile counts between innings.
- Pitchers are allowed finish at bat if they reach daily limit during an at bat.
- Enter pitch counts on MAC Site within 24 hours after game.
- New pitchers get 6 warmups, returning pitchers get 4.
- If pitcher beans 4 players total in a game, they must be removed from pitching for the remainder of the game.
- Coaches are allowed one mound visit per inning. Second visit can only be to remove pitcher.



Batting

- On deck batters are allowed within the field limits, in the traditional on deck circle.
- 13 & 14 year old players are allowed (but not required) to use a USA Baseball bat, all other players are required to use a BBCOR bat. (no USSSA bats).
- If batter has contact with the ball with a foot outside the batter's box, they will be called out.
- Any player throwing a bat or helmet with malice will be given warning for first offence. Second offense will require ejection from game. An umpire can eject on the first offense if it is egregious enough in their opinion.



Baserunning

- No limit on how many bases runner may advance on error.
- No Contact Rule – The slide or avoid rule is in effect. It is mandatory that a base runner slides or avoids when there is an imminent play at second (2nd), third (3rd) base or home plate. The base runner, at the sole discretion and judgment of the umpire, should be called out for not sliding or avoiding or if contact is made.
- Headfirst sliding is allowed.
- Leading is allowed.
- On balks all pitchers will be given a single warning per game.
- If there are two outs a courtesy runner for a catcher should be used so they can get ready for the next inning.



Base Stealing

- The ball is always live.
- No limit on number of steals per inning.
- Stealing of home on pass balls is permitted.



Infield Fly Rule

- Applies with runners on first and second or bases loaded with less than two outs.
- If a flyball in the infield that can be caught with “ordinary effort”, the umpire will call “infield fly” and batter is out regardless whether ball is caught.
- Ball is still live, and runners can try to advance at their own peril.
- The umpire must call “infield fly” immediately while the ball is in the air. If it is not called, the play will run as normal. A play cannot be changed to an infield fly after the ball has been touched or hit the ground.



Dropped Third Strike

- Batter may try to reach first if the catchers drops the third strike, and first base is unoccupied.
- If first base is occupied with less than two outs batter is out and cannot advance to first.
- If first base occupied with two outs batter may advance to first. In this situation runners on first / first and second / first second and third would have to advance and can be tagged or forced out.
- **As soon as a player steps out of the dirt circle, they will be called out. Until they step into the grass, they can turn and run to first on a drop third strike.**



Umpires

- Umpires are to be scheduled by the home league.
- One patched umpire needed at Juniors level.
- Umpires are to be paid \$100 before the game starts.
- Remember to notify umpires of any schedule changes.
- **FOR PLAYOFFS** - The championship game and the semifinal games will require two patched umps at the same rate as the regular season, all other tournament games require one. **In the playoffs both coaches bring half the cost of the umpires to every game.**



Sportsmanship

- When any player, coach or spectator raises their voice/argues at/with an umpire, the umpire will call over both coaches, and have the coaches issue a warning to the offending person. If the behavior continues, the umpire will again call over both coaches, and the coaches will eject that person from the game. That person will then serve a minimum of a one-game suspension that will be enforced at the town level. If after being suspended once, that person is ejected again, it will be recommended to the town that they be suspended for the remainder of the season
- We expect and encourage that the kids chant and get loud cheering their teammates on during their teams at bats. These chants should never be negative towards anyone on the other team, and chanting/cheering is not the same as screaming. **The moment a pitcher starts his wind up; all noise must immediately stop.**
- Be patient with umpires!
- Umpire issues should be brought to the attention of your local MAC league representative who will handle the issue. If deemed necessary the local MAC league rep, will bring it up to the MAC board.



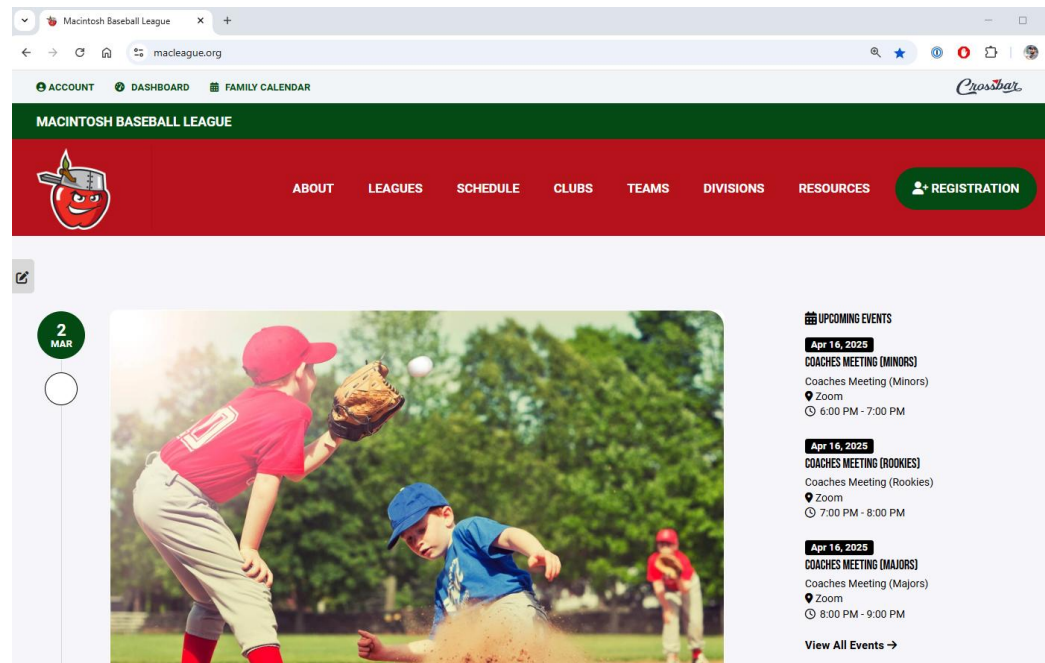
Field Information

- Make sure you understand the safety rules of the fields you are visiting. Their rules, regardless of the MAC or your local town rules take precedent.
- Most fields do not allow dogs to be brought to their fields.
- No fields allow smoking, vaping, chewing tobacco or drug use.
- No alcohol is to ever be brought to or consumed at any of our games.
- If any rule is suspected of being broken, the umpire will put the game on hold until the offending rule is rectified.
- Treat all fields as if they were your own. Make sure to cleanup your dugout and your spectator area before you and your families leave.



Website Walkthrough

- <https://www.macleague.org>





Questions?