2027

Tar Heel Leagues, Inc.

BASEBALL
8U ☆ 10U
12U ☆ 15U

SOFTBALL
8U
10U ☆ 12U
16U

www.tarheelleagues.com



POINTS OF EMPHASIS

1. The only fee to participate in Tar Heel Leagues, Inc. (THL) competition is a sanction fee of $50.00 per team. All sanction fees are due by May 15 of the current season.

2. Tar Heel Leagues, Inc. has adopted the USA Baseball bat standard for all baseball divisions. For 8U, 10U, 12U and 15U, all non-wooden bats must be USA Baseball approved and carry the USA Baseball stamp or must be NFHS approved and carry the BBCOR stamp (High School) for use in Tar Heel Leagues. Bats may not exceed 2-5/8 inches in diameter nor 36 inches in length. There is no rule regarding weight/length ratio.

3. Tar Heel Leagues, Inc. recognizes and utilizes USA Softball's certification process. For a bat to be legal for use in a Tar Heel Leagues, Inc. sanctioned contest it must be marked with the ASA 2000, 2004, or the USA Softball All-Games Certification mark. All bats that are approved by USA Softball, formerly known as ASA, for use in fast pitch play shall bear one of these certification markings. Additionally, any bats with one of these certification marks must not appear on the list of the USA Softball Non-Approved Bats with Certification Marks list. This list was created to alert players and coaches that a bat that was once approved for use has now been deemed no longer approved for use. Non-Approved Bat List with Certification Marks: http://usa.softball.com/e/BB1P2000.asp

4. The mandatory play requirement rule for all softball and baseball age divisions is as follows: Each player listed on the lineup card and present for the game must have one (1) at-bat and three (3) defensive outs in the field. PENALTY: Forfeit, unless the game is shortened by the run rule. Once the mandatory play rule is met, if a player is injured or sick and there are no available substitutes, the team may use an expended player to assume the position in the lineup. If a team is using a continuous batting order, the player making the last out will assume the position in the lineup. Mandatory play rule applies to District and State Tournament play only.

5. State Tournament Inclement Weather Policy: THL Board of Directors and the Host Community will work to ensure all State Tournaments are held as scheduled. THL Board of Directors and the Host Community reserve the right to continue a tournament through Monday following the scheduled tournament. THL Board of Directors and the Host Community reserve the right to cancel Opening Ceremonies if needed. In the event that predicted weather is eminent prior to the start of the tournament and the tournament will not be able to begin prior to the scheduled Saturday, THL Board of Directors and the Host Community reserve the right to make the tournament a single elimination event. In the event the tournament cannot be started due to inclement weather, THL Board of Directors and the Host Community will reschedule the Tournament at the next available date for the Host Community. All efforts will be made to schedule a double elimination tournament. THL Board of Directors and the Host Community will work collaboratively in the decision process regarding the postponement of the Tournament or games due to occurring or predicted inclement weather. Player and spectator safety will be the top priority when making these decisions. THL will utilize the website and other social media platforms for the disbursement of any information regarding postponements.

6. District Tournament Games: A Two (2) hour time limit will be implemented for all ages in *baseball and softball. Any inning started prior to the 2-hour mark will be completed. ***A two and a half (2 ½) hour time limit will be used for 15U baseball only. Mandatory play rule will not be in effect for a game that is shortened by time limit.**

7. District Tournament Games: In the event of extra innings prior to exceeding the time limit or a tied game at the end of the time limit, THL Inc. will use the international tie breaking procedure by allowing the last batter in the previous inning to start at 2nd base (with no outs) in each team's at-bat during extra innings.

8. For District and State Tournaments: 8U baseball and softball as well as 10U softball, ten (10) players are required to start a game. 10U, 12U, 15U, baseball and 12U, 16U softball, nine (9) players are required to start a game. A team may finish the game with one less than the required number to start game.

9. Intentionally missing State Tournament opening ceremonies will carry a $500 fine and forfeiture of 1st tournament game. A minimum of 7 players is required to attend opening ceremonies.

10. Any rule not specifically covered in this book will be covered by National Federation High Schools rulebook.

11. State Tournaments – Affidavits and birth certificate verification will begin at 11:30am, coaches meeting at 12:00pm, opening ceremonies at 2:00pm and first games beginning at 4:00pm.

12. State Tournaments- Coaches meeting – **Only Head Coach or designee** to attend meeting. This is to reduce the number of people attending the meeting and the space required.

13. In the District and State tournament championship games only, the undefeated team shall have the option of Home or Visitor.

14. Host Teams for State Tournaments are defined as a representative team from the city where the State Tournament will be hosted. A host team may participate in the District Tournament without penalty of not qualifying. If the host team wins the District Tournament, that team will be noted as District Champions and the 2nd place team will be noted as host team on State Tournament schedule.

15. Double First base (safety base) will be required for District and State Tournaments starting in 2027.

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Tar Heel Leagues, Inc.



Invites All North Carolina Youth Leagues
to Affiliate With Us

For more Information

Visit our website:
www.tarheelleagues.com

Call:
828-358-7714

Or Email:
tarheeladmin@gmail.com

TAR HEEL LEAGUES, INC.
DISTRICTS

District 1

Alexander	Cherokee	Haywood	McDowell
Buncombe	Clay	Henderson	Polk
Burke	Cleveland	Jackson	Rutherford
Caldwell	Gaston	Lincoln	Swain
Catawba	Graham	Macon	Transylvania

District 2

Alleghany	Davidson	Mitchell	Wilkes
Ashe	Forsyth	Rowan	Yadkin
Avery	Iredell	Stokes	Yancey
Cabarrus	Madison	Surry	
Davie	Mecklenburg	Watauga	

District 3

Alamance	Guilford	Montgomery	Robeson
Anson	Union	Moore	Rockingham
Caswell	Harnett	Orange	Scotland
Chatham	Hoke	Randolph	Stanley
Cumberland	Lee	Richmond	

District 4

Franklin	Durham	Vance	Wake
Granville	Nash	Person	Warren

District 5

Bladen	Duplin	Onslow	Wayne
Brunswick	Johnston	Pender	Wilson
Columbus	New Hanover	Sampson	

District 6

Beaufort	Greene	Jones	Pitt
Carteret	Edgecomb	Martin	
Craven	Lenoir	Pamlico	

District 7

Bertie	Dare	Hyde	Tyrrell
Camden	Gates	Northampton	Washington
Chowan	Halifax	Pasquotank	
Currituck	Hertford	Perquimans	

D1
D2
D3
D4
D5
D6
D7
Cherokee
Clay
Graham
Macon
Swain
Jackson
Haywood
Transylvania
Henderson
Buncombe
McDowell
Polk
Rutherford
Cleveland
Gaston
Lincoln
Catawba
Burke
Caldwell
Alexander
Madison
Yancey
Mitchell
Avery
Watauga
Ashe
Alleghany
Wilkes
Yadkin
Surry
Stokes
Forsyth
Davie
Iredell
Rowan
Davidson
Cabarrus
Mecklenburg
Union
Anson
Stanly
Richmond
Montgomery
Rockingham
Caswell
Guilford
Randolph
Alamance
Orange
Chatham
Moore
Lee
Harnett
Scotland
Hoke
Robeson
Cumberland
Person
Granville
Vance
Warren
Durham
Wake
Franklin
Nash
Halifax
Northampton
Hertford
Gates
Bertie
Chowan
Perquimans
Pasquotank
Camden
Currituck
Tyrrell
Dare
Hyde
Washington
Johnston
Wilson
Wayne
Sampson
Duplin
Bladen
Columbus
Brunswick
New Hanover
Pender
Onslow
Jones
Craven
Pamlico
Carteret
Greene
Lenoir
Pitt
Edgecombe
Martin
Beaufort

PREFACE

In each recreator's heart is the professional desire to provide the youth of our land with wholesome opportunities for personal satisfaction, pleasures, and joys coupled with the development of recreative skills and appreciation. This desire is not limited merely to the individual or the group; it is founded upon the urge formaximum participation by a maximum number of individuals.

The Tar Heel Leagues, Inc. is dedicated to partially fulfill the recreator's desires. Its organizational boundaries have been conditioned to satisfy the needs and desires of local communities.It provides the opportunity for maximum participation at the local level for youths from six to fifteen years of age. Mediocrity of skill is no handicap to a local youngster; nor does mediocrity destroy the opportunities for an exceptional participant. Through its local league's controls, near equivalent teams are acquired which provide participation opportunities for all youngsters. This same organization guarantees to the exceptional youth the opportunity for participation in tournament play.

Adult volunteer leadership is a prerequisite to a sound program. Motivation objectives centered around youth benefits are assured. Quality of operation and supervision provide for safety and healthful practices by the participant. Community pride and sense of worthy accomplishment is a product of Tar Heel Leagues, Inc.

To the youngster, the parent, the neighborhood, and the community, Tar Heel Leagues, Inc. is an instrument of service; to the recreator, it is a program designed with professional principal and control. To all parties concerned, it is another step in the accomplishment of the art of living.



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David Fisher
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PAST PRESIDENTS

1956	**Bill White**	Greensboro
1957-1958	**Jimmy Chambers**	Raleigh
1959	**Oka Hester**	Greensboro
1960	**Jesse Taylor**	High Point
1961	**Tracy Hart**	Kinston
1962-1964	**Dr. Frank Barnes**	Smithfield
1965	**J. Harold Moses**	Raleigh
1966-1967	**Sam Howard**	Hickory
1968-1969	**Tracy Hart**	Kinston
1970-1972	**Rex Byrd**	Jacksonville
1973-1976	**Bill Britt**	Greensboro
1977-1984	**Jimmy Gaines**	Sanford
1985-1988	**Bob Carrier**	Hickory
1989-1990	**Bill Davis**	Sanford
1991-2013	**Jimmy Gaines**	Erwin
2014-2022	**Gary "Cousy" Johnson**	Smithfield
2023-present	**Mack McLeod**	Hickory

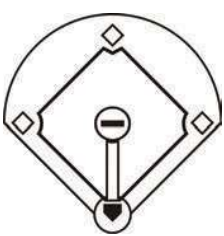
Tar Heel Leagues, Inc. Field Dimensions

Baseball Age Group	Pitching Distance	Base Distance	Pitching Circle Radius	Batter's Box	Recommended Fence
8U	40'	60'	8'	6' X 3'	180'
10U	46'	60'	N/A	6' X 3'	200'
12U	50'	70'	N/A	6' X 4'	225'
15U	60' 6"	90'	N/A	6' X 4'	300"

Softball Age Group	Pitching Distance	Base Distance	Pitching Circle	Batter's Box	Recommended Fence
8U	35'	60'	8'	6' X 3'	180'
10U	35'	60'	8'	7' X 3'	200'
12U	40'	60'	8'	7' X 3'	200'
15U	43'	60'	8'	7' X 3'	200"

NOTE: In the 8U Baseball and 8U Softball Divisions, a (3') hash will be drawn with chalk or paint halfway between first and second base and a 3' hash will be drawn 60' behind first and third bases. A half-circle (8' radius) may be used instead of a full pitching circle.

NOTE: Baseball pitching mounds will be a minimum of 6" and a maximum of 10" in a height.



2026 STATE CHAMPIONS

Softball

8U – Alexander County

10U – Shelby

12U – Ahoskie

15U – Cashie

Baseball

8U – Wendell

10U – Williamston

12U – Johnston County

15U – Jamesville

Tar Heel Leagues, Inc.



8U ☆ 10U ☆ 12U ☆ 15U

Local League

GENERAL RULES

I - THE LEAGUE



A - It is strongly recommended that the league shall be the only unit of organization. However, if all the managing personnel of the leagues agree, there may be multiple organizations.

B - The league shall be a community project and as such, all those active in the project may make up the managing personnel.The personnel may include player representatives, scorers, coaches, umpires, managers, grounds keepers and all elected officers.

C - Each league must be composed of at least (2) teams. The boundary limits shall be established by local league office and will not infringe upon another community, town, or city attempting to establish a league in the Tar Heel Leagues, Inc. program. There shall be no population restrictions. Leagues with more than ten (10) teams will have two (2) All-Star teams. State President has sole authority to grant a waiver for one (1) team leagues. Waiver must be received by May 15th.

D - Several small nearby towns or communities may combine to form a league provided they meet the conditions of rule C.

E - Sanction fees for all Tar Heel Leagues, Inc. regular season leagues will be $50.00 per team. This fee covers district and state tournament competition.

F - Each league must apply for sanction annually with application forms issued by the office of the Tar Heel Leagues, Inc. State President, and must be filed or post-marked no later than May 15 of the current year.

II – BASEBALL

DIVISIONS/ ELIGIBLE PLAYERS

A. - **8U** - Any player whose ninth (9) birthday falls on or after May 1 of current year is eligible to compete in 8U play. Minimum playing age must be six (6).

B. - **10U** - Any player whose eleventh (11) birthday falls on or after May 1 of current year is eligible to compete in 10U play. Minimum playing age must be eight (8).

C. - **12U** - Any player whose thirteenth (13) birthday falls on or after May 1 of current year is eligible to compete in 12U play. Minimum playing age must be nine (9).

D. - **15U** - Any player whose sixteenth (16) birthday falls on or after May 1 of current year is eligible to compete in 15U play. Minimum playing age must be twelve (12).

E. - Dates of birth of players shall be certified by an original registration of birth, an official government photo ID, or a copy of the original registration of birth.

When such documents are not available, the League President shall forward to the Tar Heel Leagues, Inc. District Director as much documentary evidence as possible. If the District Director determines that such evidence is satisfactory, a statement to that effect will be sent to the League President which shall be acceptable in lieu of other records.

F.- Any player who wishes to change leagues from one season to another must file a “Release Form” to the League President. If approved by the League President, the form must be forwarded to the District Director and if approved by all parties, forwarded to the State President.“Release Forms” may be obtained from the State President, District Director, or from the THL website. All forms must be signed and approved by each League President as well as each District Director(s). All paperwork must be completed prior to a player participating in any game. The State President has authority to rule in all disputes.

III - BOUNDARIES

A. - The managing personnel of each league, in consultation with the District Director, shall determine the actual boundaries from which it will select players.

B. - When two or more leagues operate within a certain locale, each must have its own boundaries. Boundaries for Girls' Softball 8U, 10U, 12U, and 16U need not be the same.

C. - When making application for franchise, a map with league boundaries must be included. When a franchise is granted, boundaries for each league will be protected for that calendar year. When changes occur, a new map must be forwarded to the State President's office.

D. - In the event a player's residence changes during the playing season, the league which said player started the season with reserves the right to continue to use said player's service for the remainder of the current season only or said player may request release from the original League President & District Director.

IV- LEAGUE SCHEDULES

A. - The managing personnel of each league shall prepare the regular season schedule. This schedule shall provide for a minimum of 8 games.

V- THE PLAYING FIELD

A. - **8U** - The distance between all bases must be 60 feet. The distance from the point of home plate to the front of the pitching rubber must be 40 feet. A pitching mound is not necessary.

B. -**10U** - The distance between all bases must be 60 feet. The distance from the point of home plate to the front of the pitching rubber must be 46 feet. Playing field must have a pitching mound.

C. -**12U** - The distance between all bases must be 70 feet. The distance from the point of home plate to the front of the pitching rubber must be 50 feet. Playing field must have a pitching mound.

D. -**15U** - The distance between all bases must be 90 feet. The distance from the point of home plate to the front of the pitching rubber must be 60 feet, 6 inches. Playing field must have a pitching mound.

E - For all leagues, the home plate, the pitching rubber, bases and coach's box shall be the official size used in regulation baseball.

VI- OFFICIAL EQUIPMENT

A - All players must be in baseball uniforms. Uniforms shall consist of cap, shirt, pants, shoes and socks. No identification may be worn to identify any youth baseball organization other than Tar Heel Leagues, Inc. **Penalty** - Forfeiture of game.

B.- **8U and 10U:** The bat shall be round and made of wood or any other approved material and shall not exceed 36 inches in length or 2-5/8 inches in diameter. Bats must be USA Baseball approved and carry the USA Baseball stamp or must be NFHS approved and carry the BBCOR stamp (High School) for use in Tar Heel Leagues. There is no rule regarding weight/length ratio. Only non-wood bats must meet specifications.

C. **-12U and 15U:** The bat shall be round and made of wood or any other approved material and shall not exceed 36 inches in length or 2-5/8 inches in diameter. Bats must be USA Baseball approved and carry the USA Baseball stamp or must be NFHS approved and carry the BBCOR stamp (High School) for use in Tar Heel Leagues. There is no rule regarding weight/length ratio. Only non-wood bats must meet specifications.

D. - **8U, 10U, 12U, and 15U:** The ball shall be NFHS approved.

E - Tennis shoes or shoes with molded rubber cleats are permitted in all Tar Heel Leagues, Inc. play. Metal cleats are only permitted in 15U baseball and 16U softball.

F. - A protective helmet bearing the NOCSAE standards stamp must be worn by all batters and must be a helmet that gives protection of temples, ears, and base of skull. Turtle shape style helmets without the ear protectors will not be approved for Tar Heel Leagues, Inc. Helmets must be worn by all base runners in local league and tournament play.

G.- Catchers must wear a mask bearing the NOCSAE standards stamp (to include hockey style), shin guards, chest protector, athletic supporter (with protective cup) and full catcher's helmets in local league and tournament play. Use of a detachable throat protector is optional.

H. - The use of radar guns is prohibited at ALL games.

VII - FORFEITURE

A. - Playing ineligible players shall result in forfeiture of games in which players participated illegally.

VIII - PROTEST

A. - A protest based on a play which involves umpire's judgement is not permitted. The umpire's decision shall be final.

B. - The only legal protest is one which involves a misapplication or misinterpretation of playing rules, or the use of an ineligible player, and is protested at time of infraction.

C. - The protesting coach must immediately notify the umpire that he/she is protesting before the next legal/illegal pitch. The umpire shall announce that the game is being played under protest.

D. - In local league play, a protest shall be considered only if it is placed in writing and submitted to the League President within 48 hours after the rule infraction occurs.

IX - SPONSORS

Teams in local leagues shall be sponsored only by those organizations or business firms whose activities or products are not detrimental to the welfare of the community youth.

X - COACHES

A. - Adult coaches (18 years of age and older) will be allowed to coach at first and third base. All coaches must be dressed neat, in like manner, and must wear closed-toe shoes. Only adults listed on team roster will be allowed in dugout. Players must wear protective helmet if coaching bases.

B. - An offensive coach may call time only once per inning for the purpose of giving instructions. On the second time out, the batter on whom the violation occurred shall be removed and a pinch hitter inserted in his/her place.

C. - All team personnel shall refrain from calling opposing players by name; they may not commit any act of unsportsmanlike conduct, or they will be removed.

D. - No person will be allowed the use of tobacco or e-cigarette products inside the fences during play of game.

E. - A defensive coach may request one (1) charged conference per inning. On the second and any subsequent requested charged conference, the pitcher must be removed from the mound. This rule does not include a conference when the pitcher is removed.

F.- The only exceptions to B & E rules are in case of injury, or time is called by opposing coach or umpire.

G. - One (1) coach is allowed outside of dugout (10U-15U) for purpose of coaching defense. The coach is restricted to within 3 feet of dugout opening and shall have nothing in their possession.

XI - PITCHING

A. - In local league play, 10U and 12U shall not pitch in more than six (6) innings in one (1) day, nor more than six (6) innings in a week. The week will run from Monday-Sunday. Pitchers throwing the last day of the week must have the allotted rest period. Pitchers must have one (1) calendar day of rest after pitching in three (3) or more innings.

B. - In local league play, 15U pitchers shall not pitch in more than seven (7) innings in one day, nor more than ten (10) innings in a week. The week will run from Monday-Sunday. Pitchers throwing the last day of the week must have the allotted rest. Pitchers must have one calendar day rest after pitching in four (4) or more innings.



XII - LIGHTNING POLICY

Tar Heel Leagues, Inc. will follow the NFHS rule book for its lightning policy. www.nfhs.org

PROACTIVE PLANNING

1. Assign staff to monitor local weather conditions before and during practices and contests.

2. Develop an evacuation plan, including identification of appropriate nearby safe areas and determine the amount of time needed to get everyone to a designated safe area.

3. Develop criteria for suspension and resumption of play.

A. When thunder is heard or lightning is seen*, the leading edge of the thunderstorm is close enough to strike your location with lightning. Suspend play for at least 30 minutes and vacate the outdoor activity to the previously designated safe location immediately.

B. 30-Minute Rule: Once play has been suspended, wait at least 30 minutes after the last thunder is heard or lightning iswitnessed* prior to resuming play.

C. Any subsequent thunder or lightning* after the beginning ofthe 30-minute count will reset the clock and another 30-minute count should begin.

D. When lightning-detection devices or mobile phone apps are available, this technology could be used to assist in deciding to suspend play if a lightning strike is noted to be within 10 miles of the event location. However, you should never depend on the reliability of these devices, and thus, hearing thunder or seeing lightning should always take precedence over information from a mobile app or lightning-detection device.

** - At night, under certain atmospheric conditions, lightning flashes may be seen from distant storms. In these cases, it may be safe to continue an event. If no thunder can be heard and the flashes are low on the horizon, the storm may not pose a threat. Independently verified lightning detection information would help any uncertainty.*

Review the lightning safety policy annually with all administrators. coaches, and game personnel, and train all personnel.

4. Inform athletes and their parents of the lightning policy at the start of the season.

XIII Suspended Play

District and State Tournaments - If a game is called for any reason, i.e. weather, field lighting, it will be treated as a suspended game. Upon the decision of the next available date and time to play the game will continue from the point of interruption. All pitching and substitution rules will apply.



8U - Baseball
Official Rules - Tournament Play

Playing Field -

A. There shall be a chalked hash line 1/2 the distance (30 feet) between first and second base. This line shall determine whether a player may advance to the next base or return to the previous base at the time of dead ball.

B. Pitching rubber shall be in the center of an 8' radius circle or half-circle.

Teams - There will be sixteen (16) 8U teams allowed in the state tournament based on district sanctioning. No district will be allowed to have more than three (3) teams.

Coaches - Coaching rules will allow only 4 adults in dugout at any time during the game.

A. Offense: One coach at third base, one coach at first base, one coach pitching, and one coach in dugout for player control.

B. Defense: There may be a defensive coach on the right field line and the left field line, provided they stay in foul territory. The defensive coach cannot come within 60 feet of the base during a live ball. A hash line will be marked on the foul line indicating the required distance.



PLAYING RULES

1. Coach must submit a batting order consisting of first name, last name, and uniform number to umpire and scorer before the game begins. All players must be included in a fixed batting order that will remain the same for the entire game, and every player must bat in that order. If a player is injured (as verified by the umpire), the scorer must be notified, and that player will be removed from the game for the remainder of play without any penalty to the batting order.

2. No player shall sit in the dugout two (2) consecutive innings. Penalty: When discovered the adult pitcher of the offending team will be restricted to the dugout. Subsequent discoveries in same game will result in each adult pitcher being restricted to the dugout.

3. A maximum of five (5) runs or three (3) outs will constitute an offensive inning. Six (6) innings will constitute a game.

4. Once a team becomes mathematically eliminated, the game shall end.

5. No team shall play more than four (4) games per day in one (1) tournament.

6. No intentional bunting is allowed. No walks are allowed. Attempted bunting will constitute a strike.

7. An eight (8) foot radius circle or half-circle is to be drawn around the pitching plate. Defensive pitcher, with both feet in the circle or half-circle, must remain inside the circle or half-circle, even with or behind the pitching rubber, until the batter contacts the ball.

8. All outfielders must be positioned at a similar radius.

9. Each batter will be allowed five (5) pitches or three (3) swings per at-bat in 8U. There is no limit on the number of foul balls on 5th pitch or 3rd swing.

10. There is no infield fly rule.

11. No base stealing is allowed. A runner may leave the base once the ball reaches the plate. A runner leaving his/her base before the ball reaches the plate will result in a delayed dead ball being called by the umpire, with the runner removed and called out.

12. Base runners that miss touching a base, or leave a base early, shall be called out by the umpire upon completion of the play. A delayed dead ball shall be called by the umpire.

13. Adult Pitcher must deliver pitch in a standing position. Pitcher must deliver pitch in an overhand motion.

14. A team may have a courtesy runner for the catcher at any time. The courtesy runner will be the player that made the last out.

15. The umpire's judgement will rule on the runner's position at the point time is called by either umpire. Time is called once the front runner Is contained.

16. Catcher must be in a squatted catcher's position and not standing.

17. The coach who is pitching must stay in contact with the pitching rubber until the ball is released. Once the coach releases the ball, he/she cannot be involved in coaching until time is called as there are basecoaches to direct runners. Coach may not deceive defensive players to get the ball thrown before time is called. **Penalty:** The ball is dead, the batter is declared out, all runners return to the base occupied before the pitch, and the lead runner is declared out. The adult pitcher should only communicate with the batter before the ball is put in play.

18. If a batted ball hits the coach who is pitching before the defensive player touches the ball, the ball is dead, with all runners advancing one (1) base if forced. If the coach who is pitching intentionally interferes, the ball is dead, the batter is declared out, and all runners return to the base occupied before the pitch except the lead runner, who is also declared out.

19. When possible, the coach who is pitching **MUST** leave the field, from either the first or third baseline, when the batted ball is put in play.

20. Batters will not be walked, nor can they advance to first base by Hit-By-Pitch (HBP).

21. A team must have ten (10) players to start a game and may finish with nine (9) players. A disqualified/ejected player will result in an out each time that position comes to. bat

22. Between pitches, if ball is not put into play, the coach must remain within the pitching circle.

23. If a player throws a bat, the team will receive a warning. On the second offense, the ball is declared dead, the batter is out, and all runners are returned to the previous base.

24. Each team is allowed one offensive and one defensive time out per inning.

10U - Baseball
Official Rules - Tournament Play
1.0 - PLAYING RULES

A.- Any of the starting players may be withdrawn and re-entered once, provided such player occupies the same batting position.

B.- Optional continuous batting order: Teams may elect to use a continuous batting order. They may bat as many players as they choose (9,10,11,12,13). A player that is in the line-up may substitute freely, defensively, as they choose (pitching rules still apply).

A player not in the line-up will be considered a SUBSTITUTE and will be allowed to enter the game one time. A starter that comes out of the game for a substitute will be allowed to re-enter one time (in the same place in the line-up for the same person that replaced him per substitution rules).

C.- If a player is injured and unable to continue, and the team has no available substitutes, the player will be ruled out on his/her next scheduled at-bat. For all following turns in the batting order, that player's spot will be simply skipped with no further penalty.

D.- Once a player misses his/her turn to bat due to injury, that player will not be allowed to return in that game.

E.- If a player is ejected and the team does not have a substitute, he/she will be ruled out each time he/she is due to bat.

F.- If a team is using a continuous batting order and does not have any substitutes, the player making the last out will be the courtesy runner for the pitcher and/or catcher.

G.- The catcher does not have to catch the third strike. The batter is automatically out, and the ball remains in play. The base runner may advance at his/her own risk.

H. - Once a pitcher starts his/her motion toward home plate, the pitcher must deliver the ball. If the pitcher stops his/her motion, a balk will be called. There will be no penalty with no runners on base.

I.- When a pitcher is in contact with the rubber with the ball in his/her hand, the catcher is in the catcher's box ready to receive the ball and

the batter is in the batter's box, no base runners shall leave the base until the pitched ball reaches the plate.

J.- A runner leaving his/her base before the ball reaches the plate will result in a delayed dead ball being called by the umpire, with the runner removed and called out.

K.- A baserunner missing a base or failing to tag-up after a catch will be handled as an appeal play.

L.- Mandatory play rule for **ALL** ages. Each eligible player listed on the lineup card, and present at the game, must have one (1) at-bat **and** three (3) defensive outs in the field. **Penalty:** Forfeit, unless the game is shortened by the run rule. Once the mandatory play rule is met, if a player is injured or sick and there are no available substitutes, the team may use an expended player to assume the position in the lineup. If a team is using a continuous batting order, the player making the last out will assume the position in the lineup. This rule does not apply to ejections.

M.- If a player throws a bat, the team will receive a warning. On the second offense, the ball is declared dead, the batter is out, and all runners are returned to the previous base.

N.- All lineup cards presented at the pre-game conference with the umpires must include the player's first name, last name, and uniform number.

2.00 - REGULATION GAME

A.- 10U games shall be six (6) innings unless shortened or lengthened legally. If score is tied at end of six (6) innings, it shall be continued until a verdict is reached. **(See points of emphasis for District Tournament games)**

B.- Run Rule - 12 runs after three (3) innings,10 runs after four (4) innings. The losing team must have an equal number of at-bats. Coaches may agree to end a contest prior to reaching the required number of innings played.

C.- If a game is called before it becomes a regulation game it must be replayed from the exact point of interruption with the same ball and strike count on the batter and the same lineup as near as possible.

D.- All tournament games must be completed: six (6) innings unless home team is ahead in 5-1/2 innings or game is called because of run rule. **(See points of emphasis for District Tournament games.)**

3.00 - PITCHING RULES

A. - Any member of a team may pitch; however, all pitchers are subject to all pitching rules.

B. - A pitcher removed from the mound, or the game, may not return to the mound in the same game.

C. - As soon as a pitcher delivers one (1) pitch to a batter he/she shall be considered as having pitched one (1) inning.

D. - No 10U pitcher will be allowed to pitch more than twelve (12) innings in each level of tournament play, but no more than six (6) innings in one day.

E. - A pitcher shall be considered ineligible if he/she makes one (1) legal/illegal pitch after reaching the pitching limitations.

F. - A team that uses an ineligible pitcher must remove the player from the mound, with the head coach being ejected from the game, and innings counted toward the pitching record.

G. - Pitchers must have at least one (1) calendar day rest after pitching in three (3) or more innings on the same calendar day. **This rule applies to both local league and tournament play and may not be waived.**

H. - A defensive coach may request one (1) charged conference per inning. On the second and any subsequent request, the pitcher must be removed from the mound. This rule does not apply on a conference when the pitcher is removed.

12U & 15U - Baseball
Official Rules - Tournament Play
1.00 - PLAYING RULES

A. - Any of the starting players may be withdrawn and re-entered once, provided such player occupies the same batting position, including tournaments.

B. - Optional continuous batting order: Teams may elect to use a continuous batting order. They may bat as many as they choose (9,10,11,12,13). A player that is in the line-up may substitute freely defensively as they choose (pitching rules still apply).

A player not in the line-up will be considered a SUBSTITUTE and will be allowed to enter the game one time. A starter that comes out of the game for a substitute will be allowed to re-enter one time (in the same place in the line-up for the same person that replaced him per substitution rules).

C. - If a player is injured to the extent that he/she cannot continue, and his/her team does not have a substitute, he/she will be ruled out at his/her next turn at bat. At his/her second and subsequent turns at bat (after he/she comes out of the game), his/her spot in the batting order will be skipped each time he/she is due to bat.

D. - Once a player misses his/her turn at bat due to injury, that player will not be allowed to return in that game.

E. - If a player is ejected and the team does not have a substitute, he/she will be ruled out each time he/she is due to bat.

F. - If a team uses a continuous batting order and does not have any substitutes, the player making the last out will be the courtesy runner for the pitcher and/or catcher.

G.- A player failing to touch a base during a live ball situation will be handled as an appeal play.

H.- Mandatory play rule for ALL ages. Each player listed on lineup card and present at the game must have one (1) at-bat **and** three (3) defensive outs in the field. **Penalty:** Forfeit, unless the game is shortened by the run rule. Once the mandatory play rule is met, if a player is injured or sick and there are no available substitutes, the team may use an expended player to assume the position in the lineup. If a team is using a continuous batting order, the player making the last out will assume the position in the lineup. This rule does not apply to ejections.

I.- If a player throws a bat, the team will receive a warning. On the second offense, the ball is declared dead, the batter is out, and all runners are returned to the previous base.

2.00 REGULATION GAME

A. - 12U games shall be six (6) innings unless shortened or lengthened legally. 15U games shall be seven (7) innings unless shortened or lengthened legally. **(See points of emphasis for District Tournament games.)**

B. - **Run Rule for 12U:** 12 runs after three (3) innings, or 10 runs after four (4) innings. **Run Rule for 15U:** 15 runs after three (3) innings, 12 runs after four (4) innings, or 10 runs after five (5) innings. The losing team must have an equal number of at-bats. Coaches may agree to end a contest prior to reaching the required number of innings played.

C. - If a game is called before it becomes a regulation game, it must be replayed from the exact point of interruption with the same ball and strike count on the batter and the same lineup as near as possible.

D. - All tournament games must be completed – six (6) innings for 12U and seven (7) innings for 15U unless the home team is ahead in the bottom of the 6th inning for 12U or the bottom of the 7th inning for 15U, or the game is called because of the run rule. **(See points of emphasis for District Tournament games.)**

3.00 - PITCHING RULES

A. - Any member of a team may pitch; however, all pitchers are subject to all pitching rules.

B. - A pitcher removed from the mound, or the game, may not return to the mound in the same game.

C. - As soon as a pitcher delivers one (1) pitch to a batter he/she shall be considered as having pitched one (1) inning.

D. - 12U pitchers will be allowed to pitch 12 innings in each level of tournament play but will not be allowed to pitch more than six (6) innings in one calendar day. 15U pitchers will be allowed to pitch 14 innings in each level of tournament play but will not be allowed to pitch more than seven (7) innings in one calendar day.

E. - 12U must have at least (1) one calendar day rest after pitching three (3) or more innings on the same calendar day. 15U pitchers must have at least one (1) calendar day rest after pitching four (4) or more innings on the same calendar day. **This rule applies to both Local League and Tournament play and may not be waived.**

F. - A pitcher shall be considered ineligible if he/she makes one (1) legal/illegal pitch after reaching the pitching limitations.

G. - A team that uses an ineligible pitcher must remove the player from the mound, with the head coach being ejected fromthe game and the innings counted towards the pitching record.

H. - A defensive coach may request one (1) charged conferenceper inning. On the second and any subsequent request, the pitcher must be removed from mound. This does not apply to a conference when the pitcher is removed.

TOURNAMENT REGULATIONS

1. To be eligible to enter Tar Heel Leagues, Inc tournament play,each league must have been granted a franchise and indicated their desire to participate. The Tar Heel Leagues, Inc. reserves the right to revoke, at any time during the tournament program, the privilege of a sanctioned league to participate when evidence shows that the league has violated the pledge to abide by rules for local leagues or tournament rules.

2. Leagues wishing to enter tournament competition must continue to play until eliminated. There shall be only three levels of tournament play - AREA, DISTRICT, AND STATE. Any team that is eligible for district or state tournaments and fails to appear will be fined. The sponsoring local league will pay a $100.00 fine before teams can participate in district or state tournaments the following year.

3. All Tar Heel Leagues, Inc. teams that have been sanctioned shall be eligible to enter a tournament team. Where two or more leagues operate under the same top management, each is eligible to enter a team. Under no condition may players from one Tar Heel Leagues, Inc. sanctioned league play on a team representing another Tar Heel Leagues, Inc. sanctioned league.

4. Tournament teams may be selected from all the teams in the league and shall consist of not more than thirteen (13) players.

5. No player may play in more than one (1) Tar Heel Leagues, Inc. league nor on more than one (1) All-Star team and, must play on the All-Star team in the age group in which he/she plays in the regular season. If a player plays up in 50% or more of their league's regular season games, then said player must play up for All-Star play.

6. Birth certificates and team affidavits must be approved by the tournament director (district tournament play) and the Tar Heel Leagues, Inc. Board (state tournament play) one (1) hour before the team's first game. Birth certificates will stay with team and must be available for tournament directors at each game.

7. Each pitcher's tournament pitching record (baseball only) must be approved by the head coach no later than 15 minutes following completed game. Failure to approve results in the tournament pitching record does not prevent the results from becoming official for the game.

8. Any player is eligible for the tournament team provided he/she has played in at least one-half of prior regularly scheduled games.

9. After the tournament teams have been selected, and the names of the players have been recorded on the eligibility affidavit, no change can be made on the playing roster for any reason, except illness or injury. Any replacement for illness or injury must be accompanied by the new player's birth certificate. The district director having authority will, if he/she approves the change, sign said statement and attach it to the manager's copy of the eligibilityaffidavit.

10. If a coach shall decide that an umpire's decision is in violation of the tournament playing rules, he/she shall make a protest to the umpire-in-chief before the next legal/illegal pitch. The chief shall immediately call a conference of the Tournament Director and Protest Committee and a decision shall be reached before play is resumed. The decision shall be final providing it does not violate any official rules. Protests not made at the time of infraction of the rule shall not be considered.

11. ALL coaches must be dressed neat, in like fashion, and must wear closed toe shoes.

12. It is mandatory for a coach from each team to be present at the state tournament coach's meeting. Teams who do not attend will be assessed a $100 fine.

13. It is mandatory for all teams, dressed in playing jerseys, to be present for the state tournament's opening ceremonies. Teams intentionally missing State Tournament opening ceremonies will carry a $500 fine and forfeiture of 1st tournament game. A minimum of 7 players is required to attend opening ceremonies.

14. Only 13 tournament players, four (4) adults and one (1) bat person shall occupy the team bench or dugout during the game. Only the State President can grant a waiver to exceed the maximum number of thirteen (13) players. Only persons named on the tournament team affidavit will be allowed in dugout area. If a team uses a bat person, said person must wear protective headgear. The bat person shall not exceed the age of twelve (12).

15. The home and visiting teams in each tournament game, prior to the championship game, shall be determined by a toss of the coin. The coin toss will be conducted by the umpires at each pre-game

conference. In District and State Tournament Championship Games only, the undefeated team shall have the option of Home or Visitor.

16. All tournament games halted before a winner is determined shall be resumed from the exact point play was ceased with the same players in the game as near as possible.

17. There shall be an official scorer appointed by tournament director for District and State Tournament. The official scorer following each game shall enter proper data on the reverse side of each team's eligibility affidavit.

18. Any coach, player, or spectator ejected from a game due to unsportsmanlike conduct shall not be eligible to participate in the next game of play to include next level, unless the situation warrants further suspension. Post-game ejections will carry a minimum of a two (2) game suspension. Coach and spectator must vacate the playing site.

19. Tar Heel Leagues, Inc. Board of Directors will serve as Protest Committee at all State Tournaments.

20. All tournament play in area, district and state will be double elimination format unless approved by the State Board of Directors.

21. No baseball team, except for 8U, may be scheduled for more than two (2) games per day. 8U teams will be allowed to play a maximum of four (4) games per day.

- During District and State Tournaments, if a game reaches regulation status (6 inning game reaching 3.5 innings and 7 inning game reaching 4.5 innings) and is halted due to inclement weather then a team may finish that game and play 2 more games on the next playing day.

22. Courtesy runners for catcher or pitcher are allowed at any time. The courtesy runner cannot be active in the lineup. Expended players are eligible as courtesy runners. If a team has nine (9) or fewer players, the player making the last out is eligible as a courtesy runner for the catcher only with two (2) outs. Teams using a continuous batting order will use the last player to make an out as the courtesy runner.

23. Top team listed on the tournament bracket will be in the 1st base dugout and the bottom team on the tournament bracket will be in the 3rd base dugout.

24. Tar Heel Leagues, Inc. will follow the NFHS rule book for our lightning policy (pg. 18).

25. No amplified music or artificial noisemakers are allowed to be played or used by players, coaches, or spectators.

26. Mandatory play requirement for **ALL** age divisions: Each player listed on the lineup card and present at the game must have one (1) at-bat and three (3) defensive outs in the field. **Penalty:** Forfeit, unless the game is shortened by the run rule. Once the mandatory play rule is met, if a player is injured or sick and there are no available substitutes, the team may use an expended player to assume the position in the lineup. If a team is using a continuous batting order, the player making the last out will assume the position in the lineup. This rule does not apply to ejections.

27. **Teams must be on-site and ready to play a minimum of 30 minutes before their scheduled game time.**

28. **A maximum of 30 minutes rest period for back-to-back games at the District and State Tournaments.**

29. **State Tournament Only:** A short devotion will be held on Sunday morning no earlier than one (1) hour prior to the start of championship games.

30. Beginning with the 2026 season, the admission fee for all District and State Tournaments will be $10.00 for adults and $5.00 for children (ages 6-16) Under 6 - free

31. Standardized Times for Thursday of State Tournament Competition:

11:30am – Tournament Affidavits and Birth Certificates Verified;

12:00pm – Coaches Meeting

2:00pm – Opening Ceremonies

4:00pm – First Games Begin

UMPIRES

A. - It Is recommended that two (2) umpires work each game in local leagues.

B. - It is recommended that three (3) umpires work all district and state tournament baseball games, except for 8U Baseball. It is recommended that three (3) umpires work all district and state tournament softball games, except for 8U Softball. All umpires that work district and state tournaments must be dressed in navy blue, light blue, or black shirts, gray pants and must be 18 years of age.

C. - Any umpire selected to work district or state tournaments must register with Tar Heel Leagues, Inc.

D. - Umpires will be selected by the State Umpire-In-Chief, at the annual June meeting of the Tar Heel Leagues, Inc. Board of Directors for the purpose of officiating state tournament games.

E. - Umpire-In-Chief will assign all umpires per game at each state tournament site.

F.- Umpires will not be allowed to officiate any game when a family member is involved in the game or umpire has any affiliation with participating teams. This rule also applies to district and state tournaments.

G. - The rate of pay for each umpire at all state tournaments is as follows:

8U Baseball and Softball - $40.00 per game
All Girls' Softball - $55.00 per game
10U Baseball - $55.00 per game
12U Baseball - $65.00 per game
15U Baseball - $70.00 per game

H. - The use of a Tar Heel Leagues, Inc. training video to certify umpires will be allowed, provided it is approved by the District Director and supervised by a local league representative.

TAR HEEL LEAGUES, INC. HALL OF HONOR

Tar Heel Leagues, Inc. and its Board of Directors will be taking nominations for its own Hall of Honor.

There are four (4) categories:

Player/Coach - Any coach or player who has participated inTar Heel Leagues, Inc. in a satisfactory manner. Players must be a minimum of 21 years of age. Coaches must have given outstanding and unselfishness of time and knowledge for a minimum of five (5) years to a local program.

Umpire - Any umpire must have served Tar Heel Leagues, Inc. in an outstanding manner.

Administrator - This category is open to anyone who may have served on a local level or state level in any capacity such as league president or on the Tar Heel Leagues, Inc. Board of Directors. The individual does not have to be retired.

Contributor - Any individual or organization that has been exceptional in support of Tar Heel Leagues, Inc. by finances or services.

All nominations must be in office of State President by May 15 of the current year.

Tar Heel Leagues, Inc. accepts all responsibility of news media and presentations at State Tournaments.

For further information, call or write to:

Mack McLeod
PO Box 159
Zebulon NC 27597

828-358-7714

HALL OF HONOR INDUCTEES

Administrator

Name	***Home***	***Year***
Bob Carrier	Hickory	1994
Jimmy Gaines	Dunn	1994
Harold “Red” Lambeth	Dunn	1994
L.R. Ray	Wilmington	1994
A.M. “Buster” Bush	North Wilkesboro	1995
Rex Byrd	Wilson	1995
W.H. “Bill” Joyner	Plymouth	1996
Wade Norris	Coats	1997
Harold Phelps	Plymouth	1998
E.A. Tutor	Raleigh	2000
Don Gainey	Smithfield	2004
Bobby Brown	Plymouth	2006
Doug Stevens	Coats	2007
Mack McLeod	Hickory	2008
Gary Johnson	Smithfield	2011
David Fisher	Shelby	2013
Steve Barnes	Williamston	2015
Chuck Klaren	Spring Lake	2016
Charlie Holtzclaw	Shelby	2018
Greg Johnson	Zebulon	2019
Joe Carter	Selma	2019
Ronnie Parrish	Zebulon	2021
John Moore	Smithfield	2022
Bob Chester	Lenoir	2022
Stephen Poulos	Boone	2022
Kelly Connolly	Wendell	2023
Doug Hull	Shelby	2024
Kevin Anderson	North Wilkesboro	2025
Seth Barnes	Williamston	2026
Hank Tice	Williamston	2026
Jerry Ange	Williamston	2026
Larry Speller	Williamston	2026

HALL OF HONOR INDUCTEES

Player/Coach

Name	***Home***	***Year***
Doug Johnson	Sanford	1994
Rex McLeod	Sanford	1994
Gary Taylor	Raleigh	1995
Wallace High	Sanford	1996
Mack Spivey	Sanford	1996
Benny Swift	Williamston	1996
Bob Hales	Sanford	1997
Harold Lail	Dunn	1997
William “Sap” Taylor	Sanford	1997
Chuck Gragg	Hickory	1998
Bob Nichols	Hickory	1998
Larry Goins	Sanford	1998
Bob Brafford	Sanford	2000
Melvin Pollock	Sanford	2004
Mike Vanlandingham	Williamston	2006
P.D. Fowler	Connelly Springs	2007
Scott Neighbors	Bunnlevel	2013
Tommy “Lasorda” Womack	Sanford	2014
Greg Johnson	Williamston	2021
Matt Barkley	Hickory	2024

HALL OF HONOR INDUCTEES
Umpire

Name	***Home***	***Year***
Cecil Lovick	Sanford	1994
Bill Smith	Sanford	1998
Odus Smith	Sanford	1998
Oscar Pace Jr.	Broadway	1999
Jimmy Stone	Sanford	2001
Joe Edwards	Dunn	2009
Harold Gaines	Sanford	2009
Gordon Hampton	Lenoir	2009
Cephus Clark	Shelby	2011
Eddie Driver	Emit	2014
Don Loftis	Shelby	2014
Donald Alford	Benson	2018
Randy Bain	Smithfield	2019
Lee Marsh	Lillington	2021
Roger Wood	Selma	2022
Jimmie Massingill	Four Oaks	2023
Perry James	Williamston	2023
Jerry Howell	Williamston	2023
Greg Jones	Shelby	2023
Ronnie Glover	Shelby	2024
Walter Mason	Dunn	2025
Tommy Fallin	Sanford	2026

HALL OF HONOR INDUCTEES
Contributor

Name	***Home***	***Year***
Donnie Oldham	Sanford	2005
Fat Gaines	Sanford	2005
Aaron Gaines	Sanford	2005
Adam Gaines	Sanford	2005
Jan Ashley	Smithfield	2024



CRITERIA FOR ALL SCHOLARSHIPS

1. Applicants must have been involved in Tar Heel Leagues, Inc. either as a player, coach, or as the child of a parent who is/was a coach, umpire, or administrator.

2. Applicants must be a High School Senior with a minimum 2.0 GPA, and eligible for graduation in June of the current year. Applicants can also be in the first year of college with a minimum 2.0 GPA with plans to attend college the following year.

3. Submit application with a current grade transcript by May 15th.

4. Submit a minimum 250-word essay on "What Youth Sports Have Meant to Me".

5. Submit a list of extracurricular activities and/or interests, i.e., clubs, sports, church, scouts, or other experiences or accomplishments.

6. Write a short paragraph detailing the school you plan to attend and your plans after graduation.

7. Submit two (2) letters of character reference from someone other than a family member. One (1) letter must be from a school faculty/staff member and one (1) letter from a community leader.

8. Failure to provide all required documentation will result in the scholarship application not being accepted for consideration.

9. Scholarship namesakes and past winners are located on our website at www.tarheelleagues.com

This page dedicated in memory of

GARY TAYLOR



The lives of so many people were touched by this man. Little League players wanted to play for him, as he constantly taught fundamentals of the game and the fairness in play. Parents respected him for the care he showed to all children. Coaches watched closely as they tried to learn from him. Spectators applauded him as he coached with love. Tar Heel Leagues, Inc. was blessed by the presence of Gary Taylor as a member of its Board of Directors. His decisions were made with seriousthought and consideration of goodness to all. The love Gary Taylor had for his family and God were certainly an example for all to follow.

To his wife, Ruth, his children, Martha, Nathan and Jeremy,we share in your loss. May God forever bless the memories we share of Gary Taylor.

October 2, 1994

This page dedicated to the memory of

Bob Hales



What an example of life Bob Hales has shown to all who knew him. Being in a wheelchair was not a handicap to him, but a different angle to approach all that needed to be done.

By giving so much of his time, knowledge and energy, he helped many youngsters realize that dreams will come true by being the best you can be and never say, "I quit." In 1998, Bob was presented the coveted Jefferson Award for his volunteer services to our communities. By giving all he did, we have a better place to live, work and play.

Bob joined an elite group of people that we call coaches as he took every youngster as an individual, worked with them in youth sports and did the extra things that help to make better individuals.

To his wife Gerri, and his sons Greg and Stan, we all share in your loss of Bob. We thank you all for showing us a deeper meaning of *Love* and *Family*. We also thank you for sharing Bob with so many of us through the years.

May God forever bless the memories we share of Bob Hales.

November 28, 2000

In Memory Harold "Buck" Gaines
May 3, 1947 - March 2, 2010



We can use Buck Gaines as an example of life that we all cherish. He was a terrific family man and he showed that with the affection he showed to Alyce, Amy, Rodney, and Abby. He loved his grandchildren to no end and was extremely proud. Buck took his love for life outside his home as he was constantly helping others and especially helping young umpires to strive to do their best. He was such an asset to Tar Heel Leagues, Inc. not only as an umpire but also serving as a Director of District 3. He kept everything in order and surely helped our Board of Directors enjoy the game of golf more and more.

There was always laughter when he was around, and you could usually hear him before you saw him as he was joking or seeking improvement.

Alyce, Rodney, Amy, and Abby we share in your loss and want to thank you for sharing him with us all these years. Tar Heel Leagues, Inc. is a better organization because he was a part of it.

May God bless all our memories.

Ben Stafford

August 23, 2003 - April 14, 2016



In his twelve years, he touched so many lives. He was often said to be an old soul at heart because he was wise beyond his years. Everyone who knew him loved him for one reason or another, whether it be his smile, his slow country accent, or his humor. Ben loved all things outdoors and was forever being a typical country boy. We will always love and miss him. Until we meet again. We love you!!!

SOFTBALL

DIVISIONS/ELIGIBLE PLAYERS

A. **8U** - Any player whose ninth (9) birthday falls on or after January 1 of the current year is eligible to compete in 8U play. Minimum playing age must be six (6).

B. **10U** - Any player whose eleventh (11) birthday falls on or after January 1 of the current year is eligible to compete in 10U play. Minimum playing age must be eight (8).

C. **12U** - Any player whose thirteenth (13) birthday falls on or after January 1 of the current year is eligible to compete in 12U play. Minimum playing age must be nine (9).

D. **16U** - Any player whose seventeenth (17) birthday falls on or after January 1 of the current year is eligible to compete in 16U play. Minimum playing age must be twelve (12).

E. Dates of birth of players shall be certified by an original registration of birth, an official government photo ID, or a copy of the original registration of birth.

F. When such documents are not available, the League President shall forward to the Tar Heel Leagues, Inc. District Director as much documentary evidence as possible. If the District Director determines that such evidence is satisfactory, a statement to that effect will be sent to the League President, which shall be acceptable in lieu of other records.

G. Any player who wishes to change leagues from one season to another must sign a “Release Form” to the League President. If approved by the League President, the release form must be forwarded to the District Director and, if approved by all parties, then forwarded to the State President. “Release Forms” may be obtained from the State President, District Director, or from the Tar Heel Leagues, Inc. website. All forms must be signed and approved by each League President, as well as each District Director. All paperwork must be completed prior to the player(s) participating in any games. The State President has the authority to rule in all disputes.

8U - Softball
Official Rules - Tournament Play

1. Playing Field Dimensions
Bases: 60',
Pitching Rubber: 35',
Pitcher's Circle: 8' Radius

A. There shall be a chalked hash line 1/2 the distance (30ft)between first and second base. This line shall determine whether a player may advance to the next base or return to the previous base at the time of dead ball.

B. The pitching rubber shall be in the center of an 8' radius circle or half-circle.

Teams - There will be sixteen (16) 8U teams allowed in the state tournament based on district sanctioning. No district will be allowed to have more than three (3) teams.

Coaches - Coaching rules allow only four (4) adults in dugout at any time during the game.

Offense: One coach at third base, one coach at first base, one coach pitching, and one coach in the dugout for player control.

Defense: There may be a defensive coach on the right field line and the left field line, provided they stay in foul territory. The defensive coach cannot come within 60 feet of the base during a live ball. A hash line shall be marked on the foul line indicating the required distance.

PLAYING RULES

1. Coach must submit a batting order consisting of first name, last name, and uniform number to umpire and scorer before game. All players must be listed in a batting order that will not change during said game. All players must bat in order for the entire game. In the event a player is injured (umpire will justify), scorer will be notified and said player will sit out for remainder of said game with no penalty in batting order.

2. No player shall sit in dugout two (2) consecutive innings. Penalty: When discovered the adult pitcher of the offending team will be

restricted to the dugout. Subsequent discoveries in same game will result in each adult pitcher being restricted to the dugout.

3. A maximum of five (5) runs, or three (3) outs will constitute an offensive inning. Six (6) innings will constitute a game.

4. Once a team becomes mathematically eliminated, the game shall end.

5. No team shall play more than four (4) games per day in one (1) tournament.

6. No intentional bunting is allowed. No walks are allowed. Attempted bunting will constitute a strike.

7. An eight (8) foot radius circle or half-circle is to be drawn around the pitching plate. Defensive pitcher, with both feet in the circle or half-circle, must remain inside the circle or half-circle, even with or behind the pitching rubber, until the batter contacts the ball.

8. All outfielders must be positioned at a similar radius.

9. Each batter will be allowed five (5) pitches or three (3) swings per at-bat in 8U. There is no limit on the number of foul balls on 5th pitch or 3rd swing.

10. There is no infield fly rule

11. No base stealing is allowed. A runner may leave the base once the ball reaches the plate. A runner leaving his/her base before the ball reaches the plate will result in a delayed dead ball being called by the umpire, with the runner removed and called out.

12. Base runners that miss touching a base, or leave a base early, shall be called out by the umpire upon completion of the play. A delayed dead ball shall be called by the umpire.

13. Adult Pitcher must deliver pitch in a standing position. Pitcher must deliver pitch in an underhand motion.

14. A team may have a courtesy runner for the catcher at any time. The courtesy runner will be the player that made the last out.

15. The umpire's judgement will rule on the runner's position at the point time is called by either umpire. Time is called once the front runner is contained.

16. Catcher must be in a squatted catcher's position and not standing.

17. The coach who is pitching must stay in contact with the pitching rubber until the ball is released. Once the coach releases the ball, he/she cannot be involved in coaching until time is called as there are base coaches to direct runners. Coach may not deceive defensive players to get the ball thrown before time is called. **Penalty:** The ball is dead, the batter is declared out, all runners return to the base occupied before the pitch, and the lead runner is declared out. The adult pitcher should only communicate with the batter before the ball is put in play.

18. If a batted ball hits the coach who is pitching before the defensive player touches the ball, the ball is dead, with all runners advancing one (1) base if forced. If the coach who is pitching intentionally interferes, the ball is dead, the batter is declared out, and all runners return to the base occupied before the pitch except the lead runner, who is also declared out.

19. When possible, the coach who is pitching **MUST** leave the field, from either the first or third baseline, when the batted ball is put in play.

20. Batters will not be walked, nor can they advance to first base by Hit-By-Pitch (HBP).

21. A team must have ten (10) players to start a game and may finish with nine (9) players. A disqualified/ejected player will result in an out each time that position comes to bat.

22. Between pitches, if ball is not put into play, the coach must remain within the pitching circle.

23. If a player throws a bat, the team will receive a warning. On the second offense, the ball is declared dead, the batter is out and all runners are returned to the previous base.

24. Each team is allowed one offensive and one defensive time out per inning.

10U - Softball
Official Rules - Tournament Play

1. Playing Field Dimensions
Bases: 60'
Pitching Rubber: 35'
Pitcher's Circle: 8' Radius

2. Players may steal when the ball reaches home plate with player pitching.

3. Batter **may not** advance to first base on a dropped third strike. The ball is not dead - Base runners **MAY** advance at their own risk.

4. A team has the option of choosing to turn in a lineup card to the home plate official with ten (10) to thirteen (13) players in the batting order with all players listed. As long as a player is on the lineup card, the coach can play that person on defense at any time, unless it is in violation of the pitching rules. If a player is a substitute, she is governed by the rule book. If a player is unable to complete her turn at bat, except for a noticeable injury or sickness, then an out will be called in the continuous lineup. This decision will solely be the decision of the officiating crew.

5. Six (6) innings will constitute a complete game unless one team is ahead by twelve (12) runs after three (3) innings or ten (10) runs after four (4) innings. Coaches may agree to end a contest prior to reaching the required number of innings played. **(See points of emphasis for District Tournament games.)**

6. Batter cannot be walked in this program.

7. Batter may bunt with player pitching but cannot bunt with coach pitching. Any attempted bunt is a strike on the batter.

8. Base runners are not allowed to steal home at any time.

9. Base runners are not allowed to steal with coach pitching. Base runners may steal with 10U girl pitching.

10. Base runners are allowed to only steal/advance one base at a time per pitch with player pitching. Once the baserunner reaches the stolen base safely, the ball becomes dead. Base runners may advance as many bases as possible on a base hit.

11. The player pitcher will pitch to the batter until the batter becomes a runner, is called out on strikes, is put out by a play or receives ball four (4) as **called by the plate official.** Upon the batter receiving ball four (4), offensive coach will enter to pitch to the batter. If the batter has four (4) balls and no strikes count, the coach will only have three (3) pitches. If the batter has four (4) balls and one (1) strike count, the coach will only have two (2) pitches. If the batter has four (4) balls and two (2) strikes, the coach will only have one (1) pitch. If after the above has been completed and the batter is still at home plate, she shall be called out.

12. An eight (8) foot radius circle is to be drawn around the pitching plate. With the coach pitching, the defensive pitcher, with both feet in the circle, must remain inside the circle, even or behind the pitching plate, until the batter contacts the ball.

13. The coach who is pitching must stay in contact with the pitching rubber until the ball is released. Once the coach releases the ball, he/she cannot be involved with coaching until time is called as there are base coaches to direct runners. The coach may not deceive defensive players to get the ball thrown before time is called. Penalty: The ball is dead, the batter is declared out and all runners are returned to the base occupied before the pitch, with the lead runner also declared out. The adult, who is pitching, should only communicate with the batter before the ball is put into play.

14. On the third strike or last pitch, the batter may remain at bat if the ball is ruled a foul.

15. A player missing a base or leaving a base too soon will result in a delayed dead ball call by the umpire and will be ruled on when all playing action is over. There are no appeals from the defense in the 10U program.

16. In the 10U program the pitching rules will follow the NFHS Softball rule book. With the coach pitching there will be no illegal pitch called.

17. This program will use an eleven (11) inch softball.

18. The infield fly rule is in effect.

19. No metal cleats allowed.

20. A player hit by a pitch will be awarded first base when the player is pitching on the defensive team but is not awarded first base when the coach is pitching.

21. When possible, the adult coach who is pitching **MUST** leave the field, either from the first or third base line, when the batted ball is put into play.

22. The adult pitcher must deliver the pitch in a standing position. Pitcher may not kneel on one knee. Pitch must be delivered in an underhand motion.

12U - Softball
Official Rules - Tournament Play

1. Playing Field Dimensions
Bases: 60'
Pitching Rubber: 40'
Pitcher's Circle: 8' Radius

2. Players may steal when the ball leaves the pitchers hand per the NFHS Softball rule book.

3. Batter **MAY** advance to first base on a dropped third strike per the NFHS Softball rule book.

4. Teams will play nine (9) fielders defensively but may bat thirteen (13) players. The thirteen (13) batters must be on the original lineup card given to the plate official.

5. Six (6) innings will constitute a complete game unless one team is ahead twelve (12) runs after three (3) innings or ten (10) runs after four (4) innings. The losing team must have an equal number of at-bats. Coaches may agree to end a contest prior to reaching the required number of innings played. **(See points of emphasis for District Tournament games.)**

6. This program will use a twelve (12) inch softball.

7. In the 12U program the pitching rules will follow the NFHS Softball rule.

8. The infield fly rule is in effect.

9. A player missing a base or leaving too soon when tagging up on a fly ball will result in a delayed dead ball call by the umpire and will be ruled on when all playing action is over. There are no appeals from the defense in the 12U program.

10. No metal cleats are allowed.

16U - Softball
Official Rules - Tournament Play

1. Playing Field Dimensions
Bases: 60'
Pitching Rubber: 43'
Pitching Circle: 8' Radius

2. Players may steal when the ball leaves the pitcher's hand per the NFHS Softball rule book.

3. Batter **MAY** advance to first base on a dropped third strike per the NFHS Softball rule book.

4. Teams will play nine (9) fielders defensively but may bat thirteen (13) players. The thirteen (13) batters must be on the original lineup card given to the plate official.

5. Seven (7) innings will constitute a complete game, unless one team is ahead by fifteen (15) runs after three (3) innings, twelve (12) runs after four (4) innings or ten (10) runs after five (5) innings. The losing team must have equal number of at-bats. Coaches may agree to end a contest prior to reaching the required number of innings played. **(See points of emphasis for District Tournament games.)**

6. A player missing a base or leaving too soon when tagging up on a fly ball is an appeal play by the defense and must be properly appealed to the proper official per the NFHS Softball rule book.

7. This program will use a twelve (12) inch softball.

8. Metal cleats are allowed in 16U.

Softball - All Ages

1. Batting helmets with face guards are required for all batters.

2. No teams, except for 8U, will play more than 3 games per day. 8U will be allowed to play a maximum of four (4) games per day.

3. The pitcher and catcher may have a courtesy runner at any time. The courtesy runner may be any player not in active line-up. If team has nine (9) or fewer players, the courtesy runner will be the player making the last out and it can only be for the catcher with two (2) outs. **The catcher must be the catcher of record.** If no outs have been recorded in the current inning, the correct courtesy runner is the last completed batter from the previous inning.

4. If a game is called before it becomes a regulation game, it must be played from the exact point of interruption with the same ball and strike count on the batter and the same lineup as near as possible.

5. No amplified music or artificial noisemakers are allowed to be played or used by players, coaches, and spectators.

6. There must be a minimum of four (4) Districts represented in an age division in order to play a state tournament. After the tournament brackets have been established, a team will be charged a $100.00 withdrawal fee.

7. Mandatory play rule for **ALL** ages. Each player listed on the lineup card and is present at the game, must have at least one (1) at-bat and three (3) defensive outs in the field. **Penalty:** Forfeit, unless game is shortened by the run rule. Once the mandatory play rule is met, if a player is injured or sick and there are no available substitutes, the team may use an expended player to assume the position in the lineup. If a team is using a continuous batting order, the player making the last out will assume the position in the lineup. This rule does not apply to ejections. Mandatory play rule applies to District and State Tournament play only.

8. Three (3) defensive charged timeouts per game and one (1) offensive charged timeout per inning are allowed without the player being removed or replaced. An injury timeout for an injured player does not count as a defensive or offensive timeout.

9. If a player throws a bat, the team will receive a warning. On the second offense, the ball is declared dead, the batter is out, and all the runners are returned to the previous base.

10. Tar Heel Leagues, Inc. recognizes and utilizes USA Softball's certification process. For a bat to be legal for use in a Tar Heel League's Inc. sanctioned contest, it must be marked with the ASA 2000, 2004, or the USA Softball All-Games Certification Mark. All bats that are approved by USA Softball, formerly ASA, for use in fast pitch play shall bear one of these markings. Additionally, any bat with one of these certification marks must not appear on the list of the USA Softball Non-Approved Bats with Certification Marks list. This list was created to alert players and coaches that a bat that was once approved for use has now been deemed no longer approved for use.

NON-Approved Bat List with Certification marks:
https:usa.asasoftball.com/e/BB1P2000.asp



IMPORTANT DATES TO REMEMBER



January 1
All Softball Birthdays

May 1
All Baseball Birthdays

May 15
Deadline for Leagues to Franchise with THL.
Deadline for one-team league waivers.
Hall of Honor Nominations.
Deadline for Umpire Registration.
Deadline for Scholarship Applications.

July 15-18, 2027
Softball State Tournament – Benson/Meadows

July 22-25, 2027
Baseball State Tournament – Shelby

General Tar Heel Leagues, Inc. Meetings:

1. The second Saturday in January
2. The second Saturday in June
3. The last Saturday in August

SAFETY

Any player wearing a protective cast or medical device will be required to submit a form signed by a Physician, the player's Parent or Guardian and the player's Head Coach. This form must be filled out, signed by all required parties and made available before any child will be allowed to participate. The form is available for download from the North Carolina High School Athletic Association web site. The link to the form is listed below.

Prescribed Appliance Form
Prescribed Appliance Form - NCHSAA

Any forms that appear on the NCHSAA web site are acceptable for use with Tar Heel Leagues, Inc. and are available on the NCHSAA Forms page listed below.

http://www.nchsaa.org/

Notes


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