



Official Rules of
PAL Ball

Revised December, 2012



The Official Rules of PAL BALL

Rule 1 ... Field Layout & Equipment

1.01 Field Dimensions

Bases are set at 60'; Pitching distance is 36'. The wheel of the pitching machine will be placed so as to release the ball at a distance of 36' from the back tip of home plate. Traditional foul lines and out-of-play boundaries shall prevail.

1.02 Pitching Circle

An imaginary, eight foot (8') safety circle, hereinafter referred to as the "Pitching Circle", will surround the pitching machine. The machine shall be placed in the center of this circle, with the maw set at a distance of 36' from the rear tip of home plate. This area is out of play for all game participants other than the coach who is feeding the machine. Any batted or thrown ball that comes to rest inside this circle shall be declared a dead ball, with appropriate base awards (rule 4.03). Please ensure that your players know to give the pitching machine a wide berth when chasing after the ball. Coaches feeding the machine should be on their guard.

1.03 Pitching Machine Operation

The speed and elevation of the pitching machine will be set prior to the start of each contest by the game official(s). These settings may not be changed for any particular batter or batters. If it should become necessary to realign or otherwise adjust the speed or orientation of the machine during the contest, these changes will be made only by the direction and oversight of a game official. Only adults 21 years of age or older shall be permitted to operate the pitching machine.

1.04 Official Ball

The BAA PAL Ball program shall utilize a 9", leather-covered safety ball (soft center) for official games. The league shall provide these balls for each contest.

Rule 2 ... Eligibility

2.01 Age Divisions

Bridgeton Athletic Association's PAL Ball program is designed for 6 and 7 year old boys and girls. However, 8 year old girls are permitted to participate since no provision is currently made for them in the softball league. Younger children are given the option to play up and participate in PAL Ball, provided the coach and parents agree.

2.02 Rosters

Rosters for PAL Ball shall be kept by the commissioner. Managers are not required to have them in their possession at games. However, an umpire or park official may request identification of a player or players at any time in order to verify their presence on the official roster. Only those players with a paid PAL Ball registration shall be entered on an official roster and permitted to participate in the activity. No player or coach I.D. cards are necessary.

Rule 3 ... Game Parameters

3.01 Game Duration

Each PAL Ball game shall consist of seven (7) full innings of three outs each or one hour and ten minutes, whichever comes first. This time limit is "hard time", meaning that the game shall be declared over when 1:10 has elapsed, regardless of the score or the number of outs.

3.02 Balls, Strikes & Outs

Each batter will be fed a series of five (5) pitches. He may swing at any or all of them in order to put the ball in play. There are no walks or strikeouts per se. If the batter fails to put the ball in play after five pitches, he is simply declared out and the next batter comes to the plate, or the side is declared out, as the case may be.

3.03 Run Limit

A team shall not score more than five (5) runs in any one inning. As soon as the fifth run has crossed the plate, regardless of ongoing play, the inning shall be declared finished and the side is out.

3.04 Mercy Rule

Due to the run limit and the 1:10 time limit, there will be no mercy rule in BAA's PAL Ball program.

3.05 Player Minimum

Like T-Ball, PAL Ball is an instructional sport. As such, no minimum number of players are required for the contest. Teams may make adjustments, such as playing without an outfield, etc., in order to facilitate play.

Rule 4 ... Playing Rules

4.01 Defensive Placement

Each team is permitted to place ten (10) players on the field, corresponding to traditional baseball/softball positions. No more than five (5) players, including the pitcher, may occupy the infield area. The catcher should station himself, IN FULL CATCHER'S GEAR, in his proper position behind the batter and catch any pitches not struck by the batter.

The pitcher must stand behind or to either side, and completely outside of the Pitching Circle at all times. He may move forward to field a batted ball, but only after the ball has been put in play by the batter (no charging). AT NO TIME may he, or any other fielder, enter the pitching circle, even to retrieve a batted ball (see rule 1.02).

4.02 Coaches

The defensive team shall be permitted two (2) coaches on the field to instruct - not assist - his or her players, as well as a coach at the backstop to retrieve any passed balls. This coach will also return any unbatted balls to the coach feeding the pitching machine after each batter is retired or reaches base.

The offensive team shall be permitted a coach at first base and at third base to occupy the traditional coaches' boxes. They are not permitted to enter the field of play. The team on offense shall also provide an adult coach (rule# 1.03) to feed the pitching machine for his or her batters.

4.03 Ground Rule Single

Any batted ball which comes to rest inside the pitching circle shall be declared dead, the batter shall be awarded first base on a ground rule single and runners shall advance if forced.

4.04 Defensive Substitution

Free substitution shall govern play in BAA's PAL Ball program. Reasonable substitution of defensive players shall be allowed, though the umpire may, at his discretion, cause substitutions during an inning to cease in order to speed play. Each rostered child must play a defensive position for a minimum of six (6) outs in a five inning game, and three outs in a three inning game, assuming that child was present at the onset of play.

4.05 Batting Order

Each team shall submit a batting order to the opposing team and bat its full roster in the order provided.

4.06 Advancing on the Bases

Leadoffs and stealing are not permitted in PAL Ball. Runners must hold their bases until the ball is put in play. Runners may advance at their own risk on a fair batted ball. However, once the ball is thrown into the home plate area (umpire's judgment shall prevail), play will cease, the ball is dead, and the next batter shall be summoned to the plate. All runners must return to the last base safely touched prior to the ball being declared dead by the umpire.

4.07 Bunting

No bunting will be allowed. Players must make an attempt at a full swing, though fair balls which are struck with a checked-swing will be considered in play.