

# 2009 BAPTIST ATHLETIC UNION

## SLOW PITCH SOFTBALL RULES AND BYLAWS

The following details the rules and bylaws for the Baptist Athletic Union (BAU). Those printed within this document and those contained in the current NSA Rulebook are the only rules and bylaws. The BAU Bylaws supersedes the NSA Rulebook.

### I. ORGANIZATION

#### *A. Board of Directors*

1. The BAU Board of Directors shall be composed of twelve at large voting members. Three members shall be Division Directors (Men, Women and Youth).
2. The members shall serve rotating four-year terms. Each year, three members will rotate off the Board and are not eligible for re-election until the next year.
3. The Board shall never have more than three members from the same Church.
4. Each Church active in the BAU League is expected to be included in leadership positions, and each Church active in the BAU League is expected to participate in leadership positions.
5. Board members must be members of Churches, which actively participate in the BAU softball program. Board members should be active members of their Church and players or coaches in the BAU softball league. A Church may be absent from participation in the BAU for one year and still be considered active. More than one year's absence would move a Church to inactive status and its members would have to resign any leadership positions.

#### *B. Officers*

1. The BAU Board shall have four officers: The Chairman, Vice Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer with the following exception.

**EXCEPTION: The Treasurer may be an outside source that volunteers his/her time to the duties of the treasurer. If the treasurer is an outside source, then the treasurer is not considered part of the Board of Directors.**

2. An individual may serve no more than two years as Chairman during a term. Preferably, an individual would serve as Chairman for one year, the Vice Chairman would then become Chairman the next year, and so on.
3. Each Division shall have a Director and an Assistant Director.

4. A Division Director can serve no more than three years consecutively.
5. The Assistant Director would assist the Division Director and be prepared to move into the Director's position.
6. Regardless of the positions/offices held, no one may serve in any capacity on the BAU Board longer than five years without being off the Board for at least one year.

### ***C. Officer's Duties***

#### **1. Chairman:**

- a) Call and preside over Board and Coaches meetings.
- b) Set agenda for Board and Coaches' meetings.
- c) Negotiate and sign leases and/or other arrangements.
- d) Arrange for/coordinate umpires/umpire coordinator.
- e) Arrange for/coordinate concession stands.
- f) Arrange for/coordinate information distribution to Coaches at all times.
- g) Appoint/ oversee all ad hoc organizations.
- h) Call all Saturday rain games and Friday games if no city games are scheduled.
- i) Accept appeals of Division Directors.
- j) Any other duties assigned by the Coaches/Board.

#### **2. Vice Chairman**

- a) Assist Chairman in any of his responsibilities as requested.
- b) Be prepared to assume Chairmanship when the Chairman rotates off or leaves for other reasons.
- c) Fulfill Chairman's duties in his absence as deemed necessary by the Chairman, Board or Coaches.

### 3. Secretary

- a) Receive rosters/roster change forms and verify completion and information as necessary.
- b) Inform BAU Chairman and appropriate Division Director of any problems or discrepancies.
- c) Print/ distribute Coaches roster to Coaches/Board.
- d) Handle voting for the Sportsmanship awards.
- e) Take notes or have a substitute at all Board and Coaches meetings. These notes shall be kept in a known, central location for access by Board members and Coaches.

### 4. Treasurer

- a) Receive all fees.
- b) Pay all appropriate BAU bills.
- c) Balance accounts.
- d) Present the statement of accounts at Board/Coaches meetings as necessary.
- e) Handle calls from umpires/umpire coordinator.
- f) Post league standings every other week.

### 5. Division Director

- a) Serve as liaison between Coaches and Board.
- b) Handle appeals concerning final roster deadline.
- c) Accept and rule on written protests.
- d) Determine date/time of "games to be completed".
- e) Accept complaints and file the appropriate reports.
- f) Notify Coaches, Umpires/Umpire Coordinator, and Concession Stand Operators of forfeits or schedule changes.

#### ***D. Board Selection/Election***

1. For normal Board/Division vacancies, the Board of Directors would nominate replacements after having allowed for nominations and suggestions by Churches active in the BAU. The nominees would be presented and voted upon at the last Coaches meeting (after the season) each year and their terms would begin immediately.
2. Should there be vacancies in midyear, the Board would be authorized to fill those vacancies to complete the year. Once the year is complete, the Board would nominate a member to complete the unexpired term, if there is one, by the normal vacancy procedure.

#### ***E. Coaches Meetings***

1. The BAU is a member run organization. The Board of Directors acts as a decision-making subunit of the Coaches and Member Churches. Amendments to the Bylaws are subject to be reviewed and overturned by a fully announced meeting of the Coaches.
2. Churches may have one voting representative per team involved in the current year's BAU program. Until the new season begins, votes per Church will be based on the previous year's participation. Each voting member or representative may cast only one vote.
3. All Coaches and Board meetings shall have minutes kept by the Secretary or his designee.

#### ***F. Quorum***

1. For Coaches meetings, a quorum shall consist of 40% of the eligible-voting members.
2. For Board of Directors and any other organization of the BAU program, a quorum shall consist of 50% +1 of the eligible voting members of the body, which is meeting.

## **II. DEADLINES AND COMPETITION**

#### ***A. Entry Fee Deadline***

1. All entry fees must be submitted to the BAU Treasurer by the deadline date/time. It is the responsibility of the member team to get the fee to the Treasurer by the deadline. Any monies received after the deadline will be returned and the teams will not be allowed to play that season. While no exceptions are anticipated, if a team believes an exception exists, the team must appeal to the Board at least one week prior to the deadline.
2. The entry fee will be set each year by the BAU Board with the approval of the Coaches.

3. Any team that request a refund of their entry fee prior to the entry fee deadline will be entitled to a full refund. After the deadline, all fees are non-refundable.

#### ***B. Initial Roster Deadline***

1. Two copies of the fully completed and signed roster sheets must be turned into the BAU Secretary by date/time on the initial roster deadline.
2. The appropriate Coach and a Ministerial Staff member, preferably the Pastor, must sign rosters.
3. Teams that do not turn in their roster by the Initial Roster Deadline date shall forfeit their first game. They shall forfeit subsequent games until their roster is delivered to the BAU Secretary.

#### ***C. Final Roster Deadline***

1. Roster alterations will be allowed until date/time on the final roster deadline date, after which team rosters are frozen.
2. Any exception must be appealed to the appropriate Division Director. The Director may confer with the BAU Chairman and/or the BAU Board before rendering a decision.
3. Any roster change must be documented on a fully completed roster change form. Two copies of the form must be delivered to the BAU Secretary before the player is considered eligible.

#### ***D. Competition***

1. The Board of Directors will form teams into leagues, in order to create as even a level of competition as possible. Therefore, each year a number of the top teams in each league may be moved up, if possible, and a number of the lower teams in each league may be dropped a League, if possible. New teams will normally be placed in the lowest league.
2. The strongest league shall be called A League; second strongest league shall be called B League, and so forth until all leagues have been named using this deduction method.

### **III. ROSTERS AND PENALTIES**

#### ***A. Rosters and Rules***

1. No one shall play on more than one team in the BAU Softball Program.  
EXCEPTION: Youth may play on a youth team and an adult team at their church's discretion. Age limits for playing on adult teams still apply.

2. Each player must sign his own name on the Roster form(s).
3. A maximum of 20 players may be on the adult roster. The youth roster has a maximum of 30 players, but every eligible player present must play in the game. During the Co-Ed season a maximum of 25 players may be on the roster.
4. Coaches are not allowed to agree to play illegal players.
5. No roster changes will be allowed for the play-offs.
6. In keeping with Baptist beliefs and traditions, each Church shall set its own membership standards for its Adult and Youth teams and will monitor its team's members to insure compliance. It is hoped that this trust will not be abused and that teams will generally consist of Church members, Sunday school members, participants in other Church sponsored programs and prospects. Therefore, at least 80% of the players listed on the team's roster must be members of a church. If a team is made up of more than one church, then the supplementing church(s)' pastor(s) must sign a membership confirmation sheet. This continues the BAU tradition of outreach, witnessing, and Christian fellowship through recreation with member Churches.

As a natural consequence of the above statement and other By-Law requirements, all teams, which participate in the BAU League, must represent a Church and carry the name of that Church.

In the event that a participating team's sponsoring church undergoes changes that should make it impossible for a team in otherwise good standing to participate then the team may request permission from the Board of Directors to participate for one season without carrying the name of a single church provided 1) the team makes it's request known to the Board of Directors prior to the conclusion of the coach's meeting; and 2) at the sole discretion of the Board of Directors, based on the team's prior participation and record of conduct, the team is deemed to be in good standing with the BAU and has represented the Christian attitude and spirit framed by the Bylaws; and 3) the team adheres to all other roster limitations and requirements; and 4) submits individually and collectively to the decisions of the Board of Directors including decisions to suspend players according to conduct rules. **In no event shall a team be allowed to participate in the BAU without carrying the name of a particular church for more than one season. All decisions by the Board of Directors in this matter will be final and there will be no appeals process.**

### ***B. Penalties***

1. Penalties apply to an individual in the role in which a violation occurred. For example, if a coach violates a rule and is suspended as a coach, he may participate in the BAU as a player. However, the suspension carries across leagues and sports. For example, if a player is suspended in a Men's Softball League, they may not play in a BAU sponsored Co-ed Softball League or any other sport that BAU might sponsor until the suspension expires. "Year" means a full calendar year.

2. Any player who signs roster forms for two teams will be suspended for one year.
3. Any coach signing a roster for a player will be suspended for one year.
4. Any player playing under an assumed name will be suspended for one year.
5. Any individual who plays without personally signing the Roster/Roster Change Form is considered an illegal player and will be suspended for as many games as he has played in that season. The team's coach will serve a one-year suspension and all games in which the player participated will be forfeited. This violation may be but does not have to be appealed by the opposing team(s).
6. Any coach who knowingly plays an illegal player will serve a one-year suspension.
7. It is the responsibility of the Board to attempt to insure compliance with all rules. Accordingly, except as noted elsewhere in the Bylaws, the BAU Board has the right and responsibility to enforce NSA/BAU rules in a sense of fairness, openness and Christian brotherhood. Board members and Officers, except as noted elsewhere in the Bylaws, have no authority. Should Board Members recognize a problem or violation, they should immediately contact the BAU Chairman who may investigate and take whatever actions are appropriate and legal under the Bylaws or a Board meeting may be called to discuss the issue and make a determination.

#### **IV. CONDUCT, PROTESTS, COMPLAINTS, SUSPENSIONS**

##### ***A. CONDUCT***

1. The purpose of the BAU Softball Program is, first and foremost, to glorify God. This is accomplished largely through our witness on and off the field, before, during and after the games. All teams are expected to cooperate with umpires, opposing teams and coaches, concessions personnel and fans at all times. The BAU Softball Program will not allow the following on any softball field; the penalty is immediate ejection and suspension for the team's next game. Rule III, Section B, Article 1 does not apply.
  - a) Drinking of alcoholic beverages or use of illegal drugs by anyone;
  - b) Profanity;
  - c) Fighting;
  - d) Coaches, players or fans to confront or threaten any umpire working their games;
  - e) The use of tobacco products on the playing field or in the dugouts;
  - f) Players, coaches or spectators to approach umpires in a negative manner;

g) Excessive/abusive arguing with umpires on a judgment call, or in any manner reflecting upon the integrity of the umpires.

## ***B. PROTESTS***

1. No protest will be considered if it is based solely on a decision involving the accuracy of judgment on the part on an umpire. Examples are:

- a) Balls and strikes, legal or illegal pitch;
- b) Safe and out;
- c) Batted ball fair or foul;
- d) Runner left too soon or missed base;
- e) Ball caught or trapped;
- f) Infield fly, interference or obstruction;
- g) Fitness of the field for play

2. Protests that will be considered concern the following:

- a) Misinterpretation of a playing rule;
- b) Failure of an umpire to apply the correct rule to a given situation;
- c) Failure of an umpire to impose the correct penalty for a given violation;
- d) Player eligibility.

3. The protest must be lodged before the next pitch. The team coach must notify the umpire that the game is being played under protest. The umpire in turn will notify the opposing coach and the official scorekeeper. All interested parties should take notice of the conditions surrounding the making of the decision, which will aid in the correct determination of the issue. **EXCEPTION:** player eligibility.

4. No protest can be filed once the game is completed and both teams have left the field. **EXCEPTION:** player eligibility.

5. The protest must be written and submitted to the appropriate Division Director by 9:00 PM on the next workday following the game in question. The written protest must contain the following information:

- a) Date, time and place of game;

- b) Teams involved;
  - c) The rule and section of the NSA or BAU Rules under which the protest is made;
  - d) The decision and conditions surrounding the decision;
  - e) All essential facts involved in the matter protested.
6. The Division Director shall rule on the protest.
  7. If the protest is ruled valid, the game will be replayed from the point of protest at a date/time determined by the Division Director. If the protest is ruled invalid, the game stands as completed.
  8. Any appeal of the protest ruling must be submitted in writing to the BAU Board Chairman within 2 working days of the ruling.
  9. The BAU Board of Directors will hear the appeal, and the Board's decision will be final.
  10. A protest concerning player eligibility shall be handled in the same manner but can be filed at any time during the course of the season.
  11. All reports of determinations as listed in this section must have a copy sent to all affected parties as well as the appropriate Division Director, the BAU Secretary and the BAU Chairman for record keeping.

### ***C. COMPLAINTS***

1. Any coach or umpire who feels he does not have a protest but would like to file a Letter of complaint stating causes and circumstances involving such incidents must do so to the appropriate Division Director within 72 hours after occurrence.
2. The Division Director will handle all complaints and see that an investigation is made concerning the complaints.
3. A report will be made within 7 days after the Division Director receives such complaint and completes the investigation. A copy of this report will be sent to all affected parties, as well as the BAU Secretary and BAU Chairman for record keeping. A letter should not be written because of personality differences. The Board of Directors may hold some complaints for a hearing.

## ***D. SUSPENSION POLICY***

### **1. Minor**

- a) If an umpire ejects a player/coach/fan from a game and submits a written report to the appropriate Division Director, he is suspended for his team's next two games. The appropriate Division Director will notify the player/coach.
- b) Suspensions occurring at or near the end of the regular season will carryover to the playoffs.
- c) A suspension occurring at or near the end of the playoffs will carryover to the next season.
- d) If a player receives a second conduct offense, the player is suspended for the remainder of the ball season.
- e) On minor offenses, the individual can appeal by notifying, in writing, the BAU Chairman within 48 hours of notification of the suspension. The Chairman's decision will be final.

### **2. Major**

- a) If a player has intentional contact with an umpire there is an automatic suspension for one year from the date of the suspension.
- b) If any player exhibits behavior the Board believes is a significant detriment to the Program, such player may be suspended for one year.
- c) On major offenses, the individual can appeal by notifying, in writing, the BAU Chairman within 48 hours of notification of the suspension. The appeal will be made to the Board of Directors and the decision of the Board will be final.

## **V. EXCEPTIONS AND CLARIFICATIONS TO NSA PLAYING RULES**

### ***A. Home Run Limit***

There shall be a limit of 5 over-the-fence home runs per team per game in all Divisions at all fields. All other over the fence home runs will be outs.

### ***B. Players and Substitutes***

- 1. Teams may begin play with nine players and an out will not be assessed for the tenth place in the line-up. Only nine players may be listed in the starting lineup and the “empty” spot must be in the tenth position.

2. In the event a team begins play with nine players, if and when a tenth player arrives, the player must enter the game and must enter at the 10th spot in the batting order and be added to the lineup card and scorebooks. If the late-arriving tenth-player is not listed as a substitute on the official lineup card, the player will not be allowed to enter the game.

3. Should a team lose a player for any reason, an eligible substitute must be utilized if one is available. If no eligible substitute exists, but players who have been previously substituted for are available, they may be used, with the last player removed being the first to re-enter, etc. **If no substitutes exist, a team starting with ten, or eleven players may play with one less player and take an out for that player. A team starting with twelve players may play with two less players and take two outs for the missing players.**

EXCEPTION: If the reason for the loss of player is player ejection and no eligible substitute is available, no special provision is available to the team. The team must take an out in the spot in the ejected players' place lineup.

4. Should a team lose more than one player for any reason with no substitutes or should a team be playing with nine and lose a member and have no substitutes, the game is forfeited.

**EXCEPTION: A team starting with twelve players may play with two less players. Should a third player become unavailable for any reason, the game is forfeited.**

***C. The NSA rule on shirts for all teams is followed with three exceptions:***

1. BAU does not regulate the size of the imprinted numbers.
2. Shirts must be of at least similar color. Teams are to use shades of the same color, i.e. light blue, not light blue and navy blue, or gray and white. These are not similar.
3. Youth are exempted from uniform rules. Teams should follow the adult guidelines if possible.

***D. Jewelry***

Flat band wedding rings may be worn.

***E. Post-game prayer***

After every game both teams are to meet at the pitcher's mound for prayer with the home team leading the prayer.

***F. League participation***

Participants in the BAU program may play in other leagues.

***G. Age Limits***

1. Youth--Ages 13 through Senior High School. If not in High School, they cannot turn 19 prior to June 1. If a youth turns 13 during the season, they may play once they turn thirteen, provided they are properly listed on the roster. Youth League is coed upon coaches and church's discretion.
2. Women-- Must be 16 on or before June 1. Appeals can be made to the BAU Board.
3. Men--Must be 16 on or before June 1.

#### ***H. Length of Game***

1. All Leagues
  - a) Regular Season Games--7 innings or 55 minutes or 10/20 run rules.
  - b) Play Off Games--Play 7 innings or 55 minutes or 10/20 run rules.  
EXCEPTION: Semi Finals and Finals will have no time limits.
  - c) Any game, which has completed 4 and ½ innings, if the home team is ahead, or 5 innings if the visiting team is ahead, will be considered a complete game.
2. Youth
  - a) The 10 run rule will not be in effect, but a 20 run rule after five innings will apply.
3. Adults
  - a) The 10 run rule will apply in all games of 4 ½ innings for the home team and 5 innings by the visiting team.
  - b) The 20 run rule will apply to all games after 3 complete innings.
4. Tie Games
  - a) Youth League games that end in a tie at the end of the time limit are ended and will remain as tied.
  - b) In Adult League games, regardless of the inning, if the game is tied at the end of the time limit, one and only one additional inning may be played. If the game is still tied at that point, the game is a tie.

#### ***I. Lineups***

1. LINE-UP CARDS MUST BE USED AT ALL TIMES.
2. Players must be listed in the scorebook and on the lineup card with 1st name or initial

and last name, position and number.

EXCEPTION: Youth teams - no number required.

3. In order to be eligible for play, all substitutes must be listed on the back of the lineup card or in the designated substitute player area of a lineup card.

4. Only players present and ready to play can be listed in the starting lineup. If a lineup is turned in with a player in the starting lineup that is not at the field and ready to play and the umpire declares Game Time, the player becomes an official player in the starting lineup and will be deemed temporarily unavailable for play. A legal substitute may be inserted for the player, if available. Otherwise an out must be taken in the player's position in the lineup provided there are at least nine (9) other players in the starting lineup. Otherwise, the game will be forfeited. The unavailable player will remain eligible to play and can be re-entered in the lineup at any time but must re-enter in the same position from which the player was originally substituted. This represents a re-entry since the unavailable player was originally in the official starting lineup.

**Note:** Arriving in the parking lot or sitting in a vehicle putting on clothes or cleats, etc. at game time are examples of a player NOT being at the field and ready to play.

#### ***J. Interrupted Games***

1. Interrupted games shall be resumed at the designated time with the same lineup or with legal substitutes.

2. The game will be resumed at the point of suspension.

a) Once a game is suspended, both coaches are to confer and agree on the game conditions (runners on base, ball/strike count, etc.) before they leave the field.

b) The coaches are required to secure the lineup cards from the umpire and list all legal substitutes for both teams for that night's game in their respective score books.

#### ***K. Courtesy runners***

1. Courtesy runners will be allowed. Use of a courtesy runner must adhere to the following guidelines:

a) Courtesy runners must be available substitutes who have not yet been in the game (this will not remove their eligibility for the game); or,

b) if there are no available substitutes, players who have been removed from the game previously; or

c) if there are no other options, the player currently in the lineup who made the last out (In the event that a team has hit around the lineup and the last out is due

to come up to bat then at the umpire's discretion another player may be used as a courtesy runner).

## **2. Courtesy runners are intended for injured players!!**

### ***L. Metal cleats***

No metal cleats of any type are allowed.

### ***M. Stealing***

The BAU will not allow stealing, leading off, running on passed balls or any other base running in normal dead-ball situations.

### ***N. Hitting back up the middle***

If a batter hits a line drive ball back up the middle, and the ball hits the pitcher or the pitcher's glove, ***regardless if the pitcher is trying to make a play on the ball or move out of the way of the ball***, then the batter will immediately be called out, and a dead ball situation is declared, with no chance for base runners to advance.

### ***O. Balls and Strikes***

1. In all divisions of play the batters start with no balls and no strikes.
2. In all adult divisions, no "grace foul" is allowed. If the third strike is a foul ball, the batter is out.
3. In the Youth division, one "grace foul" is allowed. If the third strike is a foul ball, the batter is not out. If the batter hits a second foul ball on the third strike the batter is out.

### ***P. Placing an illegal ball into play.***

1. A ball is deemed "in play" if it is pitched at least once to a batter.
2. All balls in the BAU must conform to BAU standards, have a clearly readable certification stamp and BAU stamp and be **COR .44, 375 lbs.** compression ball. If a ball bears no certification stamp or BAU stamp or one of the stamps is unreadable then it must be replaced immediately by a ball that is clearly stamped with the appropriate certification stamp. BAU-stamped balls can only be purchased at-cost from the BAU board of directors. Use of any other ball is deemed illegal. Each offense for placing an illegal ball in play will result in an out for the current batter.

## **VI. RAIN POLICY**

### ***A. Time limit***

A game that is started late due to rain will be considered as if it had started at the scheduled time. This will count as a completed game as long as the Home team gets last bat, if necessary. For example, if the 55-minute time limit for a new inning to begin has expired and only three innings have been completed, it is considered a complete game.

### ***B. Cancellation***

If a game cannot be started before the 30-minute rain delay expires, then that game is canceled.

### ***C. Remaining Games***

The umpire will remain at the field until expiration of the 55-minute time limit for that game. He will then make a decision concerning the next game. If conditions warrant cancellation of that game, then all remaining games for the night are canceled.

### ***D. Be prepared to play in the rain.***

## **VII. FORFEIT**

Game time is forfeit time. No umpire will be allowed to forfeit a game where player eligibility is in question. Forfeitures will be declared for:

1. Not having 9 players on the field ready to play by game time;
2. Not being able to continue to field the legal number of players once the game begins;
3. Any reason where umpire removes player(s) from the game and they refuse to leave the area (Must be "out of sight and sound" of the playing field);
4. Any time a team's behavior becomes detrimental to the normal progress and conclusion of the game;
5. Failing to submit the team's lineup card to the umpire at the home plate meeting.

## **VIII. UMPIRE NO SHOW**

### ***A. Reporting and assigning an umpire***

If an umpire doesn't arrive for the starting time of a game, the coaches must report this to the concession stand operator (who will contact the proper officials) and then agree on someone to umpire the game until an umpire arrives.

***B. The game counts!!***

These are official games. If you do not play the game it will be considered a double forfeit. Your game will be allotted 55 minutes from the scheduled starting time.

**IX. LEAGUE PLAYOFFS**

***A. Adult Leagues***

1. At the conclusion of the regular season, a double elimination tournament will be held for the Adult Divisions.
2. Any team that forfeits four or more games during the regular season will not be included in the playoffs.

***B. Youth League***

1. The youth tournament will be single elimination.
2. Any team that forfeits three or more games will not be included in the tournament.

**X. AWARDS**

***A. Performance Awards***

A team award may be given to the first and second place teams in each Division for both the regular season and the tournament.

***B. Sportsmanship awards***

A Sportsmanship Award will be given each year to one team in each Division. Each coach in the Division will cast one vote for the team, other than their own, which they believe best exemplified a Christ-like spirit on the field. The voting will be organized and handled each year by the BAU Secretary.