



# STRETCH<sup>®</sup>



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BOB WILSON STATE COMMISSIONER  
PAUL UNRAU RIPKEN STATE COMMISSIONER

## Babe Ruth Volunteers are the BEST

Kansas Babe Ruth experienced another great year in 2017. The chief reason for our achievements is the volunteers who work tirelessly to insure that the Babe Ruth program remains the BEST youth program in the state. The purpose of this article is to recognize and thank the many volunteers who continue to make things happen in our program. Our volunteers are the BEST.

In our state, there are many areas that are untapped by Babe Ruth/Cal Ripken baseball, and it is the duty of each of us to seek contacts in those areas and show our program and its many benefits and advantages over the other programs. The northern half of the state remains the most fertile area for growth. If you know of leagues that are not affiliated or play independent programs, please provide your District Commissioner or other board members with those contacts. Then, we can approach them and inform them about Kansas Babe Ruth/Cal Ripken baseball.

All of the Tournament Directors of the 2017 tournaments worked hard

to make sure their tournaments were first class events that will be remembered for years to come by all who participated in them. Tournament Directors work diligently, devoting many hours before their tournament starts. Once their tournament begins, they meet the high standards we have come to know and experience in the Kansas tournament trail. State Tournament Directors for the 2017 season were: **Chris Craig and Ron Metzen**, Wellington (16-18), **Jared Rutti**, Garden City (9, 11 & 12-70), **Wade Beal**, Harper (10), **Michael Hopkins**, Galena (11 & 12-60), **Brandon Johnson**, Frontenac (13), **Dustin Wilson**, Larned (14) and **Jonathan Richstatter** of Peabody(13-15). Regional Tournament Directors were **Chris Ratzlaff**, Pittsburg (11-60), **Jared Rutti**, Garden City (12-60), **Denver Kell**, Junction City (13-15 and **Dottie Kell**, Junction City (16-18). Many thanks to all for outstanding efforts.

Experience has shown that if volunteers know what the expectations are, as far as tournament events and

pageantry, they generally exceed those expectations. It is always remarkable how the smaller towns pull together and make our tournaments "community events". So many memories were created that will last a lifetime, and so many new friends were made that will result in long-lasting relationships. It bears repeating that the Babe Ruth Program is one big family which grows and gets better each year. Our volunteers are dedicated and rarely receive the recognition they deserve. But, they don't do it for the recognition—they do it because they love the game of baseball and the young people who participate in it, and they believe in the Babe Ruth Baseball concept. Our District Commissioners and Assistant State Commissioners also work very hard and log in many hours during the entire year to make our program the best it can be. THANKS to all of our volunteers for making Kansas Babe Ruth Baseball special.

**YOU ARE THE GREATEST!!**

## Gene Buie Retires after serving for 50 years in Kansas Babe Ruth

After a distinctive and honorable fifty-year career serving in many capacities for Kansas Babe Ruth Leagues, Gene Buie has retired. Gene's Babe Ruth career began as a coach of the 13-15 year-old team in the Sunflower League of northeastern Kansas. Later he coached the 16-18 team. Much of his involvement revolved around umpiring. The highlight of his umpiring career came when he was selected to work the eight-state regional tournament in 1980 in Ottumwa, Iowa and by a vote of the managers, Gene was selected to work the plate in the championship game. Gene was known to offer advice to umpires during the tournaments at which he was officiating and on occasion provide mini-clinics if he felt they were warranted. Gene spent 35 years serving as the 16-18 Division Assistant State Commissioner and became known to many players and coaches as a firm, knowledgeable, yet very approachable Official. Many came to love Gene for his great sense of humor and his easy-going personality. In his final year, many leagues honored Gene as he ran his last tournaments. In Wellington at the 16-18 year-old State Tournament, and in Junction City at the 16-18 year-old Regional Tournament, Gene was honored during respective Opening Ceremonies and so many players, coaches and fans expressed their praise and appreciation to him for his great volunteerism.

Gene plans to stay in contact with his Babe Ruth family, but wants to spend more time watching his grandchildren grow and partaking of their athletic careers. He will be greatly missed by so many. CONGRATULATIONS, GENE, AND WISHING YOU THE BEST IN YOUR RETIREMENT!



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Players, coaches and fans experienced the hospitality and friendly citizens of Council Grove when they arrived on Saturday, August 12 to participate in the 19th annual Classic, showcasing outstanding 15 year-olds from all over the state. After two hours of practice, the participants and families enjoyed a barbeque picnic and swimming at the Aquatic Center. Sunday's events began with a photo session, followed by a ceremony honoring each player and coach who received special plaques commemorating this prestigious and special event.

Kerwin Spencer, Assistant State Commissioner-14 Year-

old Division, managed the Blue team with help from coaches Judd Liebau of Chapman and Charlie Black from Rose Hill. Managing the Red team was Assistant State Commissioner - 10 Year-Old Division, Mark Brooks. His coaching staff included Chad Saporito from Columbus and Darrin Ashmore of Chanute.

The Red Team won the first game by a score of 6-3 and the second game by an 18-11 margin. Players on both teams had a great time and were afforded the opportunity to meet players from other teams and parts of the state during the two days.

Players are selected at their respective district tournaments

based on their playing ability and sportsmanship. Coaches are nominated by their District Commissioners, and the managers are on a rotational basis of Kansas Babe Ruth League, Inc. Board of Directors.

A special thanks to Mark Brooks for organizing this prestigious event, Justin Carlson, Council Grove Recreation Director, who served as Tournament Director and maintained the fields during the event, the Council Grove City Commissioners, the citizens of Council Grove, the Rotary Club and the community of Council Grove for all of their hard work and support in making Classic IXX a special and memorable event for all participants.



Use the link below to access *D w n n / R g* instructive publication of Babe Ruth League.

<http://www.baberuthleague.org/league-resources/bullpen-archive.aspx>

Age Division	Location	Champion	Sportsmanship Award
13's	Frontenac	Southwest	Frontenac
14's	Larned	Girard	Garden City
13-15's	Peabody	Columbus	Wellington
16-18's	Wellington	Liberal	Junction City

Age Division	Location	Champion	Sportsmanship Award
9's	Garden City	Pittsburg	Council Grove
10's	Harper	Pittsburg	Liberal
11(60)	Galena	Frontenac	Independence
11(70)	Garden City	Garden City	Newton
12(60')	Galena	Galena	Western Kansas
12(70')	Garden City	Liberal	Girard

## Midwest Plains Regional Tournaments

Kansas hosted four Midwest Plains Regional tournaments in 2017. Pittsburg hosted the 11(60) Division, Garden City hosted the 12(60) Division and Junction City hosted both the 13-15 and 16-18 Divisions.

The tournaments showcased some outstanding teams and spectacular plays as well as demonstration of good sports-

manship by many teams and players alike. Winners of the tournaments were, with winners of Norm and Colleen Travis Sportsmanship in parenthesis:

- 11(60) - Pittsburg, KS (Baxter, MN)
- 11(70) - Galena, KS, (Western Kansas)
- 13-15- Bismarck, ND

(Columbus, KS)  
16-18- Charleston, MO, (Buckley Bombers, CO)

In 2018, Garden City will host the 10 Year-Old Regional Tournament and Junction City will host the 13-15 Midwest Plains Regional Tournament. Plan to attend one or both of these great tournaments to observe the talents of our mid-western athletes.

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Rob Manfred, Commissioner of Baseball

If you have a smartphone, you can download a free barcode reader app, and scan the QR code below to access the *D w n n / r* archives.



# —by Cal Ripken Commissioner Paul Unrau

### Sportsmanhip Builds Character

Over the past several years we have featured articles in the 7<sup>th</sup> Inning Stretch/Cal Zone on the topic of sportsmanship. Babe Ruth and Cal Ripken League has been emphasizing sportsmanship since its inception and has the Sportsmanship Code of Babe Ruth League as its player development statement.

Overseeing tournaments in the past we have observed varying degrees of knowledge and awareness of the Sportsmanship Code and its meaning. I believe Kansas teams have done quite a commendable job, as a whole, but the off-field sportsmanship is more of a concern. Last off season I decided that we should look at additional ways to emphasize the sportsmanship element of our League.

During the 12U (60') regional tournament held this past July in Garden City, all players were challenged to spend some of their off-field time during their tournament stay in the study and memorization of the Code. The challenge given: memorize the Code, share it with the presiding commissioner and talk about its meaning and application. In the end, 52% of the participating players memorized the Code and discussed its meaning! Although knowing the words doesn't always translate into actions, it does mean that the words are "in their heads" and hopefully ready for personal action.

Great play was demonstrated by Galena on the field and off the field, and I'd have to say that their desire to be good sportsmen played a big part in their success.

I'd like to challenge each coach and league official to put more emphasis on the actions of sportsmanship. This will continue to develop strong character as well.

For those of you who would enjoy a positive outlook on how to coach and "run" a youth baseball program, read the book: "Matheny Manifesto; A Young Managers Old School Views on Success in Sports and Life". I hope you would agree with Mike Matheny that sportsmanship and character is the way to go.



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	District Ending Date	State Tournament	MWP Region Tournament	World Series (includes travel)
Rookie		None	TBA	
9 Year-Olds	July 9	TBA July 12-16	Colorado July 20-24	NONE
10 Year-Olds	July 9	Harper July 12-16	Garden City, KS July 20-24	Vincennes, IN August 2-11
11(60')	July 9	Frontenac July 12-16	Minnesota July 20-24	NONE
11(70')	July 9	Wellington July 12-16	Boonville, MO July 20-24	NONE
12(60')	July 9	Frontenac July 12-16	Minnesota July 20-24	TBD July 31-August 9
12(70')	July 9	Wellington July 12-16	Iowa July 20-24	Branson, MO August 2-11
13 Year-Olds	July 16	Columbus July 19-23	Chadron, NE July 27-31	Mountain Home, AR Aug. 7-16
14 Year-Olds	July 16	Frontenac July 19-23	Lamar, CO July 27-31	Eagle Pass, TX August 7-16
13-15 Year-Olds	July 16	Garden City July 19-23	Junction City, KS July 27-31	Longview, WA August 7-16
16-18 Year-Olds	July 9	Liberal July 12-16	Bismarck, ND July 20-24	Jamestown, NY August 2-11

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8U	TBA	TBA	TBA	Jensen Beach/ Stuart, FL July 28-Aug. 4
10U	TBA	TBA	TBA	Jensen Beach/ Stuart, FL July 28-Aug. 4
12U	TBA	TBA	TBA	Jensen Beach/ Stuart, FL July 28-Aug. 4
14U	TBA	TBA	TBA	Jensen Beach/ Stuart, FL July 19-26
16U	TBA	TBA	TBA	Jensen Beach/ Stuart, FL July 19-26



The Help Desk at Babe Ruth online is designed to help with any problems you may encounter when chartering your league, purchasing insurance or entering roster information. HQ has additional staff to help leagues get their data online.

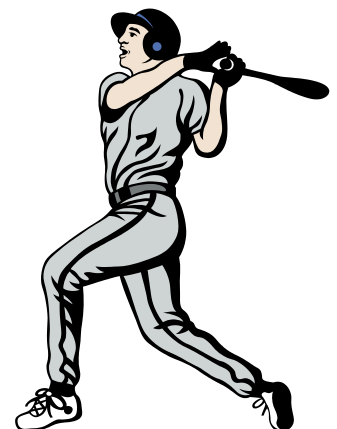
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<http://www.baberuthleague.org/getting-started.aspx>

## Charter Early-Avoid the Rush

Leagues may charter online beginning in January 2018. League officers should have received previous correspondence about the chartering process for the upcoming year, and the Chartering and Insurance Brochures will be emailed to League Presidents this month. The chartering process sets into action many activities to prepare you for the new season. Obviously, most leagues do not know their numbers by then,

but you can charter based on last year's numbers and adjust those numbers when your league has their sign-ups. Also, if you have insurance through Babe Ruth, the coverage expires January 31, so you will want to charter before then to continue your coverage. If you have any problems getting online or entering your data, contact the Help Desk at headquarters. They are trained to help you or walk you through

the process. The goal at headquarters is to help league officials as much as possible to get their charters and rosters completed online as early as possible. Then each league can concentrate on administering their program, playing their games and doing everything else that is required to run their program. Waiting until the last minute often causes undue confusion and headaches for all parties.



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"It is the policy of Babe Ruth League, Inc. to assure the safety of all participants. Accordingly, Babe Ruth League, Inc. reserves the right to ban any equipment, including bats, at any time, including during the season, based upon a change of existing policy and/or upon new information made available to Babe Ruth League, Inc."

### Babe Ruth League Bat Rules

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To learn more about the USA Bat Standard, go to the following website:  
<https://www.baberuthleague.org/batter-up/articles/new-bat-specification-testing.aspx>

For information about the bat sticker program, go to the following website:  
<https://www.baberuthleague.org/media/301774/USABat%20Tee%20Ball%20Sticker%20Program%20Overview.pdf>

@ is the official newsletter of Kansas Babe Ruth Leagues, Inc. and is published three times a year (Spring, Summer and Fall), for all leagues and any party interested in Kansas Babe Ruth Baseball. Your input and comments are welcome and appreciated



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We are on facebook. You can access the data center, help desk and Babe Ruth League through facebook.

You can also access Kansas Babe Ruth Leagues on facebook. Here you will be able to learn about happenings in Kansas and tournament scores will be posted during the tournament trail.