

January 12, 2005

AGE DETERMINATION CUT-OFF DATE

USA Baseball, the governing body for amateur baseball, approved a motion to adopt an April 30 age cut-off date for youth baseball in the United States. The change will be implemented beginning in 2006.

Over the past three years, Babe Ruth League, Inc., in conjunction with USA Baseball and its affiliated members (such as Little League Baseball, Pony Baseball, Dixie Baseball, AABC, NABF and others) has been researching and studying the age determination cut-off date for youth baseball. A major issue facing our sport today is the loss of participation numbers and the seeming decline or drop-off in player participation after the 12-year-old age bracket.

The result of the research and study conducted with USA Baseball and its affiliated members positively showed that an initial step in reversing this trend would be to change the age determination cut-off date from August 1 to April 30. As such, our sport would benefit by keeping more players in programs longer; players being better prepared for the transition to conventional-sized fields; and there being no diminished eligibility for players.

Per the policy of Babe Ruth League, Inc., before proceeding to make any rule change, we surveyed and requested input from our leagues for approval of the change to the age determination cut-off date. We received a favorable response for the April 30 date.

Please remember this will go into effect for 2006. For the 2005 local league and tournament season, Cal Ripken Baseball and Babe Ruth Baseball, the age determination cut-off date will remain as August 1.

Babe Ruth League, Inc. would like to thank USA Baseball for their recognition and subsequent action to deal with the issues facing youth baseball today. No one really knows when a player will reach their full potential in the game of baseball. As a group, we feel the April 30 date will allow most players on a team to spend the majority of the regular season at the same chronological age as their league age and will provide a longer opportunity for a player to stay in the game.

As always, we appreciate the suggestions and recommendations submitted from our membership. Our goal has always been, and will continue to be, to keep as many players as possible in the great game of baseball and make it a fun and memorable experience for all.

Ron Tellefsen
President/CEO
Babe Ruth League, Inc.