



23rd November, 2017

Clarification of pending changes to Bat Rules

With Christmas fast approaching it is appropriate that we pass on the advice that the Rules relating to Baseball Bats will change in 2018.

The purpose of this letter is to attempt to ensure that parents do not buy bats for Christmas that become 'illegal' next year and have players not be able to use them. Hills parents should not be buying bats for use in Representative Baseball. Hills will always supply bats for these teams.

The change flows from the Little League rule changes occurring in USA which become effective in the USA on 1st January. In order to be consistent across the current season Hills will delay any change until the start of the 2018/19 Season in September, 2018.

The changes in Rules will have the greatest effect on the Under 11 – Under 13 age group.

Generally, the new Rules will allow bats to be of 2 5/8" diameter which have a USA Bat licensing mark. At this time, I would not recommend buying 2 1/4". Some may be allowed next season with a USA bat licensing mark but these may not be available for some time.

Should you be purchasing a bat for a player age **10 to 13**, know that bats of 2 5/8" diameter cannot be used in Hills until September 2018. Conversely, if you are purchasing a 2 1/4" diameter bat, it is possible that the bat cannot be used after the current season. Having said that, next year we will be introducing a 'phasing in period' so as not to make all existing bats virtually illegal overnight. NOTE: The 2 1/4" diameter Softball bats are already illegal in Hills. This will **not** change

People wanting to purchase bats, especially 'on line', should purchase Metal bats (not composite bats), with **USA Bat Licence sticker**. They should purchase bats with a 'drop weight' (that is the difference between length and weight of the bat) that is no more than minus 11. A bat with a difference of 12 or greater, will be 'illegal'.

There is no plan to alter the Hills Rules in relation to the banning of 'high performance' bats including those manufactured using composite materials. Most 2 1/4" bats with composite materials are now banned in Little League play.

For Players playing in **Under 14 or Under 15 competitions**, any new bats should be 2 5/8" diameter and have a drop weight of no lighter than minus 8. Difference between length and weight of the bat must be no more than minus 8. **These bats must have a USA Bat licensing mark.**

For Under 17. The Rule changes again and the legal bats are to conform with BBCOR standard. It is unlikely that the present rules for Youth League will alter from wood or wood composite.

Bats for Tee Ball will remain 2 1/4" diameter. Bats in USA will have the USA Tee Ball Bat licensing mark.

I recognise this can be confusing and I am available to answer any questions that you may have.

J. Yard
Secretary