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**BABE RUTH LEAGUE, INC. AND RIPKEN BASEBALL INC. TEAM WITH ASEP TO BRING COACHING EDUCATION TO YOUTH BASEBALL AND SOFTBALL COACHES**

**TRENTON, NJ** —Two of the country's premier youth baseball and softball organizations, **Babe Ruth League, Inc.** (BRL) and **Ripken Baseball Inc.** (RBI), have partnered with the **American Sport Education Program** (ASEP) to provide online training and certification for the organizations' nearly 200,000 baseball and softball coaches beginning December 2006.

As the exclusive coaching education provider to BRL and RBI, ASEP is designing customized online Coaching Youth Baseball and Coaching Youth Softball courses specifically for BRL and RBI. The courses will be made available through a dedicated BRL and RBI website—[www.BabeRuthCoaching.org](http://www.BabeRuthCoaching.org)—which will launch in coordination with the availability of the new courses. BRL and RBI are establishing a leadership role in youth baseball and softball by requiring all their coaches to successfully complete coaching education and certification by July 2008.

"This partnership will provide our managers and coaches the tools that go beyond teaching the rules and basics of the game," **Steven M. Tellefsen**, president and chief executive officer of Babe Ruth League Inc. said. "Every manager and coach has an obligation to their players to provide them with the best instruction and leadership of which their capable. This course is about coaching young people to become successful athletes on and off the field."



"I couldn't be more excited that Ripken Baseball is partnering with the Babe Ruth League and the American Sport Education Program to develop an online coaching education program for the nearly 200,000 volunteer coaches in all divisions of Babe Ruth Baseball and Softball," says **Cal Ripken**. "This partnership with the Babe Ruth League and ASEP will allow us to arm even more coaches with the resources that they need to make the game better for even more youth baseball players."



"We're delighted to be helping Babe Ruth League and Ripken Baseball provide a quality coaching education program, says **Rainer Martens**, PhD, president and founder of ASEP. "The opportunity to influence so many coaches to provide a safe and positive sport experience for millions of young athletes fulfills our mission at ASEP."



"It is a known fact that the managers and coaches are the ones who spend the most time interacting with our participants and the ones who can make a child's experience in youth sports fun and memorable," states Tellefsen. "Therefore, it is very important youth coaches be properly trained to focus on the child's baseball and softball experience and less on winning games."

Ripken agrees. "Volunteer coaches are the lifeblood of our sport," he says. "If a kid's first experience with the game of baseball is a positive one, the chances are much higher that he or she will fall in love with the game and stick with it. If we can educate more coaches about how to teach the game of baseball properly as well as how to make it fun, safe and exciting for the kids, we are going to have much more success increasing participation and retaining young athletes."

Babe Ruth League and Ripken Baseball coaches can visit [www.BabeRuthCoaching.org](http://www.BabeRuthCoaching.org) to pre-register for the course. Those who pre-register will receive an e-mail notification when the course becomes available.

Babe Ruth League, Inc. is a non-profit, educational organization dedicated to developing better citizens by providing properly supervised baseball and softball competition for players ages 4-18. Established in 1951, there are now over 8,400 leagues and 51,000 teams representing almost one million players in the United States and Canada. It is the fundamental belief of Babe Ruth League, Inc. that every child with a desire to play baseball or softball be afforded that opportunity.

Ripken Amateur Baseball, LLC is a division of Ripken Baseball, Inc. Ripken Baseball is a sales and marketing company based in Baltimore, MD that represents all business and philanthropic efforts of Cal Ripken, Jr. and Bill Ripken. Established in 2001, the mission of Ripken Baseball is to grow the game of baseball worldwide "The Ripken Way."

The American Sport Education Program is the leading provider of youth, high school, and elite-level sport education programs in the United States. With the most easy-to-use and the highest quality programs, ASEP has educated more than one million coaches, officials, administrators, parents, and athletes. ASEP's motto is "Athletes First, Winning Second," and for 25 years local state and national sport organizations have partnered with ASEP to make sport a safe, successful and enjoyable experience for all involved.

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