

2021 - Vernon Hills Cougars Baseball Tournament Rules

General Policies and Procedures

- The Tournament Directors reserve the right to change the game schedule, time limit, rules, and/or matchups if weather, time constraints, or pandemic events interfere with the established schedule or for the betterment of the tournament. All decisions and interpretations made by the Tournament Directors shall be final.
- All teams must submit a copy of their certificates of insurance to VHTournament@vhcbs.com a week prior to the start of the tournament.
- All teams must have a copy of their players birth certificates if requested to be provided by opposing teams and/or Tournament Directors. A team not complying with the age restrictions is subject to forfeit and removal/disqualification from the tournament.
- Any head coach that would like to formally challenge the eligibility of a player must make this known to a Tournament Director/s at least one (1) hour prior to the player's next game. A \$100 cash challenge deposit fee should be posted at the time of the challenge (the purpose of this fee is to minimize unsubstantiated challenges). If this process is followed, the Tournament Directors will review the request and if the player is ruled eligible the \$100 cash deposit will be forfeited. If the challenge is found to be valid, the \$100 cash deposit will be returned to the challenging head coach and the team that produced the ineligible player will be forced to forfeit their remaining games and will be removed from the tournament. A score of 7-0 will be applied to all forfeited games for tiebreaker purposes.
- All teams must submit their rosters to Tourney Machine a week prior to the start of the tournament.
- Immediately after each game, the winning team is required to send an email to VHTournament@vhcbs.com with the game score and pitching records (for example: Vernon Hills 8U – 10 & Mundelein 8U – 9, Vernon Hills Pitchers = #20 = 6 outs, #32 = 6 outs, Mundelein Pitchers = #45 = 5 outs, #23 = 3 outs, #42 = 4 outs)
- Teams will be allowed 13 playing members (*note: only 12 trophies will be awarded*). No additions to the roster will be allowed after the first game pitch is thrown. All rostered players who are not injured and are in attendance must be placed in the batting order.
- The birthday cutoff is May 1st.
- All players must be full time members of the team that have participated in at least 50% of the team's games (unless injured). **Score books must be made available for review.**
- All teams must be ready to play **20 minutes** prior to the scheduled start of their game. Teams unable to field the minimum number of players at game time may be subject to a forfeit. Teams must be present at the complex to advance.
- ***Batting practice with whiffle balls is allowed on the fields or in the designated grass areas if time and weather permits. Balls may not be hit into the fences. NO HARD BALL BATTING PRACTICE ALLOWED AT ANY TIME IN ANY AREA ON THE COMPLEX. Teams breaking these rules WILL be subject to game forfeiture. There will also be no infield warm-ups. If time and conditions allow, teams can warm-up in the outfield.***
- Bats may not be swung for any purpose outside of the playing field or designated warm-up areas. This is for the safety of the fans.
- A forfeited game shall be recorded as 7-0 for tie-breaker purposes. Any team forfeiting a game may be disqualified from participating in the remainder of the tournament.
- The dugout is limited to players, coaches, and one scorer.
- Coaches are responsible for the conduct of their team's players, parents, and fans. Use of foul language will not be tolerated. Removal from the game is at the discretion of the umpire or tournament directors. Anyone that is ejected is also disqualified for the remainder of the tournament and must leave the facility. If a parent or fan is ejected, the head coach may also be ejected.
- **REFUND POLICY FOR INCLEMENT WEATHER**

- 0 Games started full refund minus \$25 service fee
- 1 Game started \$200 refund
- 2 Games or more started no refund
- NOTE: If any team withdraws after registration has been confirmed and payment has been made no refunds will be given
- Shelled peanuts, sunflower seeds, & gum are prohibited from the dugout, bleachers, & playing field.
- No alcohol is allowed at the facility.
- No dogs are allowed at the facility.
- No noise makers are allowed at any ball fields.

General Game Play Rules

- All rules follow the Illinois High School Association rules except as noted in the tournament rules.
- No protests are allowed. All decisions of the umpire and/or Tournament Directors are final. Tournament director(s) reserve the right to modify rules in the best interest of the tournament and will rule on all matters not covered in these rules.
- Pool games have a “no new inning” time limit of 1 hour and 30 minutes. Pool play games can end in a tie. A pool game is over when either the time limit or inning limit is reached. Pool game extra innings will not be played.
- Bracket elimination games will be played until there is a winner, subject to a “no new inning” time limit of 1 hour and 40 minutes. Championship games will have a “no new inning” time limit of 2 hours. If a bracket elimination game is tied at the end of regulation play (i.e. either the time limit or the inning limit being reached), extra innings will be played using the rules below.
 - Each ½ inning will start with 1 out and the player that made the last batted out on second base.
 - All hitters will start with a 1-1 count.

Determining Elimination Seeds:

The following criteria will be used to determine seeds:

1. Overall Record
2. Head to Head Record
3. Least Runs Allowed
4. Runs Scored
5. Coin Flip

Note: It should be noted that the head to head tie breaker is completely ignored if all of the teams tied do not play each other an equal number of times. For example, if there are 3 teams tied and one team played the other two, but the other two did not play each other this tie breaker will be ignored (regardless of the outcome of the two games played by the first team)

- A minimum of eight (8) players are required to play a game.
- During pool play, a coin flip will determine the home team with the team that traveled the furthest calling the flip. During elimination games as well as championship game, the higher seed will be the home team. The home team is the official score keeper for the game. If the field has a scoreboard, the home team is responsible for providing adult operators. If the home team cannot or will not provide an adult operator, then the other team may become the home team and will provide an adult to operate the scoreboard.
- All teams will use a continuous batting order and will bat their entire roster. Players leaving the game early will not be called out when their turn in the order comes to bat. Once a player skips an at-bat for any reason, they are officially out of the game. Please note that after a batter receives his first pitch, if for any reason that batter cannot finish their at bat, the batter will be deemed out for that at bat. Then batter can then return to the lineup for a subsequent at bat in their place in the batting order.
- Once a player is removed as a pitcher, he cannot return as a pitcher for the remainder of the game.

- A team is allowed one visit to the mound per pitcher per inning. A second visit results in the removal of the pitcher.
- **Pitching limits:** are based on innings/consecutive outs as listed in the grid below. Please note that once a player enters a game and throws their first pitch, there is a 1 inning (3 out) minimum charged to that pitcher. This 1 inning (3 out) minimum applies even if this pitcher records no outs, 1 out, or 2 outs in the game. If this pitcher pitches for 3 outs or more, they are charged with the actual number of outs they recorded in the game.
- If a pitcher goes longer in a game than the consecutive out limit, the pitcher shall be removed from the game as soon as the error is discovered. The pitcher may continue to bat, but is not allowed to play a field position for the remainder of the game. Additionally, the offending team will start their next offensive inning with one out and the game shall proceed without any additional penalty. *Please track both team's pitching rotation so as to avoid any issues with this rule. It is for the safety of the pitcher's arms.*
- If the same pitcher hits three batters in one game, that pitcher must be removed from that game as pitcher. The player may continue to play any other positions in the field and may pitch in subsequent games.
- Headfirst slides are not allowed at any time (Exception – Only going back to base where they started i.e. pick off attempts or run downs.) **Base runners who slide headfirst will be called out.**
- A courtesy runner may be used for who is pitching or catching for the next inning at any time.
- Squaring to bunt and then taking a full swing is prohibited. The penalty for a fake bunt followed by a full swing is an automatic out, the player is removed from the game and an out recorded every time that position comes up to bat.
- The mercy rules are as follows for all games:
 - 12 runs after 3 innings, or 2 ½ innings if the home team is ahead.
 - 10 runs after 4 innings, or 3 ½ innings if the home team is ahead.
 - 8 runs after 5 innings, or 4 ½ innings if the home team is ahead.
- Players arriving after first pitch must be added to the bottom of the order. A late arriving player can be added at any time during the game (as long as the 8 player minimum has been met to start the game).
- Intentionally walking a batter can be done by telling the umpire.
- If an umpire believes a team is purposely delaying the game, that team will be given a warning. A second offense will result in an automatic out in that team's next at-bat. A third offense may result in game forfeiture.
- If weather or darkness halts a game, it will be considered a complete game if four 4 innings (3 ½ innings if the home team is ahead) have been played. If continued poor weather becomes a problem, games could be considered complete even if these inning minimums are not met in order to continue with the tournament.
- If a game has been started and a weather delay occurs the "no new inning" timeline clock continues to run.

Age Specific Rules

Rule	9U	10U	11U	12U	13U	14U
Innings	6	6	6	7	7	7
Bases Path Distances	60	65	70	70	80	90
Pitching Distances	44	46	48	50	54	60.6
Drop 3 rd Strike	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Lead Offs	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Stealing	Yes – After ball crosses plate	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Steal Home	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Infield Fly Rule	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Game Pitching Limits	2 innings (6 outs)		3 innings (9 outs)		4 innings (12 outs)	
Daily Pitching Limits	4 innings (12 outs)		5 innings (15 outs)		6 innings (18 outs)	
Tourney Pitching Limits	6 innings (18 outs)		8 innings (24 outs)		10 innings (30 outs)	
Balks	No	Yes – 1 Warning per pitcher			Yes – 1 Warning per team	

Breaking Balls	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
Metal Spikes	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
Bat Restrictions	Yes – Max drop of 12 and max barrel size of 2 3/4	Yes – Max drop of 12 and max barrel size of 2 3/4	Yes – Max drop of 12 and max barrel size of 2 3/4	Yes – Max drop of 12 and max barrel size of 2 3/4	Yes – Max drop of 8 and max barrel size of 2 3/4	Yes – Max drop of 5 and max barrel size of 2 3/4

Notes:

1. **For 9U ONLY:** Hard Wall at 3rd Base -- A player can only advance to home on a batted ball or walk. If the runner is off the base, it is at their own risk. If the runner on 3rd advances to home and crosses home plate on a play this not the result of a batted ball or walk, the runner will automatically be called out. A runner cannot score on a passed ball. Teams can score on batted ball in play if there are over throws.
2. **For 9U – 14U:** All bats must have either a BPF 1.15, BBCOR, or USA stamp. Any bat that does not have the stamp will be deemed illegal. Any batter that enters the batter's box with an illegal bat (i.e. does not comply with the Bat Rules) shall be called out immediately upon discovery (via appeal or umpire's call). The batter may also be called out after his / her time at bat is complete so long as the illegal bat is discovered prior to the first pitch of the following batter. In this case the defense has the option of taking the penalty (an out) or the result of the play. If the penalty is taken then all runners shall return to their original bases.
3. **For 9U – 14U:** If a game is suspended, once the game is restarted the pitcher's innings from that game will be counted first against the game pitching limits as well as the day totals if they pitch again when the game is restarted.
4. **For 12U ONLY:** For 12U games played on Field #1, a portable mound will be utilized for pitching. All pitchers must wear turf shoes or gym shoes while pitching on the mound during the game or they will not be allowed to pitch. **NO EXCEPTIONS**

VHCBs Baseball Return to Play Guidelines for Tournaments

Face Coverings

- Face coverings are required for **ALL** individuals (players, coaches, fans, etc.) who can medically tolerate one anywhere inside the Vernon Hills Athletic Complex (VHAC) and at all Vernon Hills Park District (VHPD) Fields for all events (games, practices, tournaments, etc.) at **ALL times** with two exceptions:
 - **Players only, while on the field of play or batting in the batting cage may remove their face coverings. Players must wear a face covering at all other times.**
 - Anyone who cannot medically tolerate a face covering must present official documentation to the VHCBs President or Tournament Director, and if approved, is subject to increased social distancing requirements.

Players/Coaches

- Arrive no more than 30 minutes before your schedule game time
- **Any individual who is running a temperature of 100.4 or higher, sick, or not feeling well, should STAY HOME.**
- **ALL coaches and players must wear appropriate face coverings at **ALL times*** within VHAC and VHPD**

facilities.

- ***Players only, may remove their face covering when on the field of play or batting in the batting cage.**
- Teams are encouraged to have their players spread out using both the dugout and the bleachers adjacent to the dugout, when applicable.
- No team huddles on the field during the game.
- All players must have their own water bottles (no sharing).
- Players should bring their own hand sanitizer (none will be provided).
- Players and coaches should NOT use the dugouts during practices in order to encourage proper spacing for players when accessing their equipment.
- Batting cage area: Will be prohibited during the tournament.

Teams

- Anyone not wearing a mask to and from the fields will be warned and will be subjected not to return to our facility if deemed accordingly by tournament director
- Teams are responsible for cleaning all trash from their dugout after each game.
- Teams should not enter the dugout until the other team completely exits.
- Teams are prohibited from handshakes/high fives (air high fives are recommended).
- No chewing gum, food, or sunflower seeds allowed in the dugout or on the bleachers.
- All post-game meetings should be held outside of the field area as to provide time for the teams for the next game to enter (social distancing guidelines should be followed).
- Benches and bleachers designated for dugout use are reserved for players & coaches only. Fans may NOT sit in the area directly behind the backstop and should spread out in all other available seating areas.

Pre-Game Meeting

- One coach is allowed from each team and must properly social distance.
- Each team's scorekeeper/coach should exchange line up cards electronically (text/email).

Post-Game

- Each team will line up along their respective foul line, then acknowledge the opposing team with a tip of the cap/round of applause then immediately clean and vacate dugout.
- All post-game meetings should be held outside of the field area as to provide time for the teams for the next game to enter (social distancing guidelines should be followed).

Fans

- **Any individual who is running a temperature of 100.4 or higher, sick, or not feeling well, should STAY HOME.**
- **ALL fans MUST wear an appropriate face covering at ALL times at VHAC and all VHPD fields.**
- Fans are encouraged to socially distance from other individuals outside of their immediate family.
- Fans should bring their own chairs and be seated along the foul lines, and in the outfield beyond any fencing or outfield boundaries. Families can sit together but all others must observe the 6-foot guideline or wear a mask.
- Fans are not allowed to sit in the gazebo.

- Fans will not be permitted in the areas directly behind home plate. These areas have been roped off. Fans may not sit in the bleachers. They must sit or stand along foul lines or outfield fences/boundaries if other areas are full.
 - We understand there is not a lot of shade
 - Canopy are allowed only down the foul line in the OF or behind the fence in the OF.
- Spectators should not be interacting with players near the dugout (even if they are family members). If a player requires something from a parent or fan, they should walk over to the spectator while wearing a mask. Coaches will be asked to enforce this rule.
- Spectators shall not enter the park until it is their team's time to play. This will allow the other teams to clear out and open up space for you to get in.
- Once your game has ended, we ask the parents to head to their vehicle and wait for players there. Parents are not permitted to wait by the field while their child packs up. This is to avoid large groups of people gathering. If yours is the last game of the day, this is not necessary.
- Please limit the number of fans along the sides of the field. There is plenty of space for 2 spectators per player along the sides of the field. If there is not enough space along the sides of the field to properly social distance, we ask larger groups to please sit in the outfield.
- Seating (or standing) is **NOT permitted** in the Gazebo or any of the walkways throughout VHAC.
- No dogs are allowed at the facility.**

Entry/Exit at VHAC

- Entry to VHAC fields (1-4) will be between fields 2 & 3. Please use the main walkway between fields 2 and 3 to get to your field. This is the ONLY entrance option at the facility.
- There are two options for exiting the facility. Please use one of these two options ONLY.
 - Please exit between fields 3 & 4 and continue around the outfield of field 3 to the parking lot.
 - Please exit between fields 1 & 2 and continue around the outfield of field 2 to the parking lot.

