

2023 McHenry Cobras General Tournament Rules

1. McHenry Cobras tournament management will make every effort to treat all teams with fairness. If questions or disputes arise about policies and procedures, coaches shall bring them to the attention of the Tournament Director to be dealt with. **Any interpretation and decision OR changes to these rules without notice from the onsite Cobras representative shall be final.**
2. Professional patched umpires have been assigned to each game when possible. In some cases at the discretion of the tournament directors non-patched but qualified umpires have been assigned to the younger divisions. Coaches should treat them with respect. With regard to on-field calls, the decision of the umpires shall be final. Protests of the Umpires call will not be allowed.
3. General rules, with the exception of those noted herein, will follow the USSSA General Rules.
4. **Age Cutoff: April 30th.** A player's age on April 30th, 2023 is the youngest age level he can play on until August 1, 2023. Teams will consist of no more than 15 players that meet the maximum age requirement in your age group.
5. The following base length and pitching distance will be used for each age group below*:
 - ● 8U – 40' mound/ 60' bases
 - ● 9U & 10U – 46' mound / 65' bases
 - ● 11U&12U– 50'mound/ 70'bases
 - ● 13U – 54' mound / 80' Bases
 - ● 14+ – 60'6" mound / 90' Bases

**In the event that a field with differing distance is only one available, best efforts will be made to achieve required distance.*
6. **Coin Flip:** In Pool Play/Round Robin games only, the home team is determined by a coin flip. Team travels furthest will call the coin flip. In bracket play the higher seed will always be the home team. The home team will be the official scorebook and should compare scores each inning with the opponent, scorekeeper, and umpire. Dugouts are occupied on a first come basis and are not assigned home & away.
7. **Scorecards:** Cobras onsite tournament directors will load scores into TourneyMachine at the conclusion of your games.
8. **Bat Restrictions: USSSA stamped or BBCOR bats.** Penalties for illegal bat use are described in the USSSA General Rules. Big barrel bats are allowed as long as they conform to USSSA standards (have the USSSA stamp). 13U must be no more than a drop 8. 14U/15U must be no more than a drop 5.
9. **Game balls:** are provided by the McHenry Cobras.
10. **Metal spikes:** allowed for 14U and up only. Coaches will be informed of any metal clean restriction for specific pads.
11. **Intentional walks:** No pitches need to be thrown. Notify the umpire.
12. **Dropped third strikes and infield fly rule** are in effect at all levels except 8U and 9U.
13. **Game time is forfeit time.** Please have your team ready to play, warmed up at the field thirty minutes prior to scheduled start time. Be prepared to play up to 30 minutes prior to posted game start time.
14. **Pool Play/Round Robin Play:** This is a 3 game guarantee tournament (see refund info below). Pool or round robin play will be 2 games, followed by bracket play. Advancing to the finals can change with each tournament based on the number of teams entered in each age group. Seeding from pool play will be done after 2 games. The Tournament Game Schedule will be posted on our TourneyMachine website for each tournament.
15. **Tie Breakers:** Seeding in pool play is determined by best record first, then head to head (only if all teams tied have played each other), then fewest runs allowed, then run differential with a +8/8 limit per game, & coin flip last. Tie breakers do not reset when a team advances out of the tie breaker.

- 16. Pitching restrictions:** There are no limits to the number of innings or pitches that a pitcher can throw during the tournament ... **We trust** that coaches will exercise proper judgment and refrain from overusing their pitchers and highly recommend following PitchSmart guidelines.

AGE	DAILY MAX (PITCHES IN GAME)	REQUIRED REST (PITCHES)					
		0 Days	1 Days	2 Days	3 Days	4 Days	5 Days
7-8	50	1-20	21-35	36-50	N/A	N/A	N/A
9-10	75	1-20	21-35	36-50	51-65	66+	N/A
11-12	85	1-20	21-35	36-50	51-65	66+	N/A
13-14	95	1-20	21-35	36-50	51-65	66+	N/A
15-16	95	1-30	31-45	46-60	61-75	76+	N/A
17-18	105	1-30	31-45	46-60	61-80	81+	N/A
19-22	120	1-30	31-45	46-60	61-80	81-105	106+

- 17. Manager visits;** A manager is allowed one visit per pitcher per inning. The pitcher must be removed on the second visit. Managers must ask and receive permission from the umpire before entering the field of play & making mound visits.
- 18. Game length:** All games 11u and younger will be 6 innings long. Time limit of 1 hr. and 40 minutes or mercy rule. All 12u and up games will be 7 innings. Time limit of 1 hr. and 40 minutes or mercy rule.

An inning can be finished, but a new inning cannot be started after the time limit. When the last out is completed determines the time limit. In the event that time limit has been reached AND Home Team is winning, the game is over, do not finish the inning. **Time limits may be changed by Tournament Director in order to get the Tournament concluded. No time limit for Championship game only.**

- 19. Mercy Rule:** 6 inning game will be: 12 runs after 3inn, 8 runs after 4inn. 7 inning games will be 12 runs after 4inn, 8 after 5 inn. If the home team is winning by mercy rule at the half inning or during the bottom half of the inning the game is over.
- 20. Game called** because of weather will be complete if:
 6 inning game = 4 innings or 3 1/2 if home team is ahead.
 7 inning game = 5 innings or 4 1/2 if home team is ahead.
 Games suspended will begin where it left off, if not an official game as described above.
- 21. Extra innings (only if time remains):** in the first extra inning and every 1/2 inning thereafter, each team will start with a runner on second base, 1 out and a 1 and 1 count on the batter. Each batter thereafter will start with a 1 and 1 count. The runner on second will be the last official batted out from the previous inning. **Extra innings are only allowed if the time limit has not been reached. In pool play there is a maximum of two tie breaker innings. If the game is still tied after the two extra innings the game is over and the tie score is recorded. No inning can start after the time limit has been reached and if the game is tied it will be entered as a tie. In Bracket play if the time limit has been reached, the inning has been completed and the game is tied, the extra inning tie**

breaker rules will be used until a winner is determined, regardless of what inning was being played when the time limit was reached. There will be no California rule in Championship games.

22. **Courtesy runners:** At any time the team at bat may use a courtesy runner for the pitcher or catcher for the UPCOMING inning on defense. Those players MUST complete at least one at bat as pitcher/catcher to start the upcoming inning. The courtesy runner may be the last batted out or a player not currently in the batting order, at the coach's discretion.
23. **Batting Order:** Teams 13U and younger must bat a continuous lineup of all players in uniform for Pool Play and Bracket Play. If a player is arriving late he must be inserted to the lineup at the start of the game.

Teams at 14U and older have three options for their batting order, which must be declared to the opposing coach and umpire in the pregame meeting and cannot be changed.

Straight Nine w or w/out DH: Nine (9) players in the batting order and listed on the lineup card. Teams may elect to use a designated hitter in which case 10 players are listed on the lineup card, but only 9 bat (DH bats for a designated position player). All other players are substitutes, subject to the NFHS substitution rules (starter can re-enter into his original spot once, etc.).

Extra Hitter: Ten (10) players in the batting order and listed on the lineup card. Teams may also use a DH for one player (meaning 11 will be on the card with 10 batting). Free substitution (defensive players) among the ten (10) players listed as batters. All other players are substitutes and subject to the NFHS substitution rules (starter can re-enter into his original spot once, etc.). Once declaring an EH, the team must bat 10 all game.

Combined with the free re-entry rule, this means that a manager can make defensive moves that include the EH, including swapping a defensive player for the EH, whereupon the defensive player that was just swapped out can become the new EH. In short, the manager can shuffle his ten players in the batting order (excluding the DH, of course, if also in the game) among the nine defensive positions. These are defensive swaps, not substitutions.

Continuous batting order: All players in uniform (unless injured) in the batting order and listed on the lineup card. If a late player arrives after the lineup cards are exchanged, then the player must be entered into the last spot in the batting order. Free defensive substitution for all players throughout the game.

24. **Reentry rule:** A pitcher may not reenter to pitch again in the same game at any age level.
25. **Slide rule** does apply and runners *should* slide or attempt to avoid contact on close plays where a tag may occur. A player only needs to slide if there is a "play" made. A collision between runner & fielder will be the umpire's decision on ejection, and umpire's ruling is final. A player ejection, based on the slide rule, is for the rest of the game and if the Umpire and Tournament Director determine it was intentional and flagrant they may impose additional game suspensions. No head first slides on bases where a play is made for 11U and younger with the exception of returning to a base occupied prior. A head first slide will result in the runner being called out.
26. **Fake Bunt / Slashing:** Faking a bunt and then pulling back and swinging (slashing) is not allowed at any level.
27. **Balks;** Balks will be called at all ages except 8u and 9u. One warning per pitcher will be issued at 10u and 11u and bases awarded thereafter. There will be no balk warnings for 12u and up age groups.
28. **Unsportsmanlike conduct will not be tolerated:** any player or coach ejected from a game for unsportsmanlike conduct will serve the remainder of that game, plus the next game. **Whether or not a player's or coach's conduct was unsportsmanlike will be determined by the umpire and Cobras onsite representative.** Managers and coaches are responsible for the behavior of the entire team, parents included. At the umpire and site supervisor's discretion, unruly fans will be warned once,

and then suspended from the ballpark for the remainder of the tournament.

29. **No postgame meetings in dugout/on field** To expedite the start of the next game and stay on schedule for all teams, please clear the dugout ASAP post game and hold team meetings outside the fenced area. This will allow us to start the next game within 5 minutes of the prior game ending.
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30. **Warmup:** Outfield warmup is allowed inside the fences only while the field is being prepared prior to your game. Game times will not be delayed to complete any warmups. **No infield warm ups are allowed at any level.** Prior to the game teams may use available open space to lightly warm up, however no soft toss into fences is allowed.

31. Age Specific Rules

8u Specific Rules:

8u will play with the following revised rules. No balks, no infield fly rule, no lead offs. Runners may advance on a passed ball, but may not advance home on a passed ball. A runner may only advance from 3rd on a batted ball or forced walk. Base runners may not leave any base until after the ball has crossed the plate. 1st infraction= a warning, 2nd infraction = an out. The warning applies to the TEAM not the runner. Each successive base runner after a warning that leaves early may be called out.

No runner shall advance to an additional base after the pitcher has control of the ball in the vicinity of the mound. The runner shall be able to advance to the base he/she is going to at their own risk if they are more than half way.

9u Specific Rules:

9u will play with the following revised rules. No balks, no infield fly rule, no drop third, no lead offs. Base runners may not leave any base until after the ball had crossed the plate. 1st infraction= a warning, 2nd= an out. The warning applies to the TEAM not the runner. Each successive base runner after a warning that leaves early may be called out.

32. **Refund Policy:** If an event is cancelled due to inclement weather or field conditions, refund credits will be issued as follows:

- ● 0 games played: Full refund
- ● 1 game played: 50% refund
- ● 2+ games played: No refunds

33. **Game Schedules:** The game schedule is final and no schedule change requests will be granted. Only rainouts are eligible to be rescheduled. Teams must be prepared to play in any of the time slots for the scheduled days of the tournament. Teams must be available to start 30 minutes prior to their assigned game time to ensure that the tournament stays on schedule and all time slots are efficiently used.