



MARYLAND STARS & STRIKES

BASEBALL TOURNAMENT

2023 Rules

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Major League Baseball Rules will apply except as modified or covered below.

Age Group	Bases Mound	Innings*	Metal Cleats	Bat Restrictions
8U	60' 40'	6	No	<u>No Double Wall</u> <u>No Barrel size restriction</u> Bats must be stamped with USSSA BPF 1.15 or USA Baseball
9U-10U	60' 46'	6	No	<u>No Double Wall</u> <u>No Barrel size restriction</u> Bats must be stamped with USSSA BPF 1.15 or USA Baseball
11U-12U	70' 50'	6	No	<u>No Double Wall</u> <u>No Barrel size restriction</u> Bats must be stamped with USSSA BPF 1.15 or USA Baseball
13U	90' 60' 6"	6	Yes	<u>No Double Wall</u> <u>No Barrel size restriction</u> Bats must be stamped with USSSA BPF 1.15 or USA Baseball
14U-19U	90' 60' 6"	7	Yes	2 5/8" barrel, -3 weight restriction BBCOR Certified.

*There are no extra inning games in pool play or preliminary seed round games

Pitching Restrictions

None – coaches are expected to use reasonable care to protect the health of their players.

8u-Machine Pitch Specific Rules

Base running

No leading. Runners may not steal bases. A player may not leave the base he occupies until the ball is struck by a batter. If an **umpire** rules that a base runner has left his base prematurely, the runner will be declared out and the pitched ball will be declared a dead ball immediately (no warnings). In this instance the results of the pitch do not count (i.e. no pitch)

Batting

Each batter will receive a maximum of five (5) pitches. If the ball has not been put into play after 5 pitches, the batter is out. A foul ball on the 5th pitch is considered a strike out. The umpire may declare a “no pitch” if the ball is not hittable *and* the batter does not swing, in which case that pitch will not count toward the batter’s 5 pitches.

Because we are using pitching machines, a batter will be allowed to move toward the pitcher or toward the catcher in such a manner that might otherwise cause the batter to be considered out of the batter’s box.

Bunting is not permitted in the 8U tournament. A dead ball will be called immediately and a pitch counted against the batter if in the opinion of the umpire, the batter squares to bunt. If the pitch is the 5th pitch, the batter will be called out.

No Intentional walks are allowed

Defense

No dropped third strikes.

No infield fly.

Player Alignment on Defense

Eleven (11) players may be placed on the field defensively, including an extra outfielder and extra infielder. The extra infielder may be placed anywhere in the infield, except pitcher. (i.e. 1 catcher, 1 pitcher, 4 outfielders, and 5 infielders)

Pitching Machine

The pitching machine will be placed 46 feet from home plate and will be set to approximately 40 m.p.h. Adjustments to the machine can be made before the start of an inning, or at any time if the machine has been hit by either a thrown ball, a batted ball, or any person, at the discretion of the umpire.

If a batted ball hits the pitching machine, hits the pitching machine operator, or comes to rest under the pitching machine, it is a dead ball situation, the batter will be awarded first base and all runners will advance one base. If a thrown ball hits the machine, it is a live ball and play continues. If, however, a thrown ball comes to rest under the pitching machine, a dead ball will be called. Any runner, that in the judgment of the umpire is more than halfway to a base, will be

awarded that base. Otherwise, the base runner(s) will be returned to the previous base.

The pitcher must be positioned behind the pitching machine wheel and within 9 feet of the machine prior to the pitch. The umpire will have the sole discretion to move the pitcher to a position behind the pitching machine wheel.

Time Out Rule

Any player, in possession and in control of the ball within the 60' base paths (and in fair territory) may call time out. If the umpire feels that the aforementioned requisites have been met, the umpire will grant time out immediately. Any runner, that in the judgment of the umpire is more than halfway to a base, will be awarded that base. Otherwise, the base runner will be returned to the previous base.

Time Limit for 8U Machine Pitch

The official game start time (determined by the umpire) should be noted in both scorebooks prior to the start of the game.

In Seeding rounds, No new inning may be started after One hour thirty minutes (1hr. 30 min.)

A new inning officially starts as soon as the third out is recorded in the preceding inning. Ties count as such in preliminary round play. If an elimination game (excluding the Championship game) is tied after the *one hour thirty minute no new inning limit* is reached, all subsequent innings begin with the last batter out in the preceding inning on second base (international tie breaker rule).

There is no time limit for the Championship game.

Intentional delays: The umpire and tournament directors reserve the right to eject any player, coach or fan for intentionally delaying a game and a forfeit may be enforced at the tournament director's discretion.

8U, 9U and 10U Specific Rules:

8U Specific Rule – No Leading or Stealing, otherwise all other rules below apply to 8u

No leading. 9U and 10U Runners may steal bases, but may not leave the base they occupy at the time of the pitch until the pitched ball crosses home plate or is hit by the batter. If an **umpire** rules that a runner has left his base prematurely, the runner will be declared out and the pitched ball will be declared a dead ball immediately (no warnings). In this instance the results of the pitch do not count (i.e. no pitch)

No balks.

No dropped third strike. Batter is out.

No infield Fly.

Ball 4, is a dead ball for the **batter only**. The batter cannot advance past firstbase on a walk. However, runners on base can advance as allowed on any other pitch.

11U and 12U Specific Rules:

Balks will be called. However, one (1) warning **per pitcher** will be issued each game.

General Rules (all age groups)

Uniforms

All players must wear team hats and numbered shirts/jerseys with shirts tucked in. No duplicate numbers.

Bat Restrictions

As noted earlier on the chart on page 2.

Line-ups

Our intent is to encourage coaches to play as many players as possible and provide each coach with options. The coach must determine **prior to the game** how many batters he wants in his starting line-up and this must be communicated to the umpire and the opposing coach/scorekeeper.

Line-ups (Continued)

Offense

Teams may bat nine (9), the entire roster or any number in-between. However, once the number of batters is established, it must remain the same throughout the game.

A **substitute** is defined as any player not placed in the original batting line-up to begin the game. As soon as a substitute bats or runs for another player, the substitute and the original starter are locked into that batting line-up slot and either one may bat or run at any time (in that line-up position only). If no substitutes are available, an out will be recorded each time that spot in the line-up is scheduled to bat with two exceptions:

Exception 1: A player may leave the game early if, before the first pitch of the game, the player's manager (or his scorekeeper) informs the opposing manager (or scorekeeper) and the official scorekeeper that the player must leave early, and of the appointed time the player must leave. Upon such notification, and upon penalty of forfeit, the player may not bat or play in the field after his appointed time of leaving. Conversely, should the player be removed from the game prior to his appointed time of leaving, for whatever reason, that player is considered an out during his next one scheduled plate appearance, unless Exception 2, below, applies. To prevent potential protest situations, please sign the official scorebook prior to the game with details of the player's departure.

Exception 2: A player who is injured on the field of play, and who is immediately and permanently removed from the game, will not be considered an out in subsequent plate scheduled appearances if he is unable to complete his next at-bat.

Injured: Exception 2 applies only to players who are injured during play, not to players who may become ill, or need to be removed from the game for any reason other than injury.

Immediately: A player is considered to have been removed immediately after injury only if he is removed from the game prior to the next pitch.

Permanently: A player is considered to have been permanently removed from the game if he does not, following removal from the game, play in any defensive or offensive capacity for the remainder of the game following his removal.

A team may play with 8 players.. A team with only 8 players must take an out each time the missing player(s) is/are scheduled to bat until the player arrives.

If an injury occurs to a base runner and no substitute is available, the last batted out may take his place on the bases.

Defense

Any player on the roster may assume any defensive position in the field at any time throughout the game with one exception. A player once removed from the pitcher position may not return to pitch later in the same game. Coaches/managers are responsible for tracking/policing the substitution rules.

Mound Visits

As per MLB rules, on a coach's second visit to the same pitcher in the same inning, the pitcher must be removed. A coach is prohibited from making a second visit while the same batter is up.

Home Team/Coin Flip and Dugouts

Coin flip prior to the game determines home and visiting team in preliminary round play. In elimination round play, the higher seeded team has its choice of home or visitor. Dugout selection is first come first served. Home team maintains the official scorebook.

Official Game

Four (4) innings shall constitute an official game or three and one half (3 1/2) innings if the home team is leading. However, in preliminary rounds, a game called due to the time limit is an official game regardless of the number of innings completed. If a game is in the middle of the inning with the home team at bat and losing and the game goes past the time limit because of a delay, the score of the completed game will revert back to the last completed inning. If an elimination round game is stopped for any reason (e.g. weather, lightning or darkness) before the game is official, the game is suspended and will be resumed from the point of curtailment.

Game delays

The game clock continues to run during any weather-related or other delay (injury, field condition, etc). The following are examples of situations that might be impacted by game delays.

Example 1 (delay does not last beyond time limit): If a game is delayed and play is able to be resumed with time remaining on the game clock, the game will be played until one of these occurs: a) The time limit is met.

- i. In preliminary rounds, the game would end regardless of the number of innings played as per the published rules on Official Games.
 - ii. In elimination rounds, the game would be played until it is at least an official game (4 complete innings, or 3 ½ innings with the home team leading).
- b) A full game is completed (6 or 7 innings, depending on the age group).
c) The mercy rule is enforced.

Example 2 (not an official game when time limit is met): If a game is in the bottom of the 2nd inning and there is a delay that lasts beyond the 1 hour & 50 minute time limit (no new inning after 1 hr & 50 mins), the following will occur:

- a) In preliminary rounds, the game would end regardless of the number of innings played as per the published rules on Official Games.
- b) In elimination rounds, the game would be played until it is at least an official game (4 completeinnings, or 3 ½ innings with the home team leading).

Example 3 (an official game after time limit is met): If the game is official (4 complete innings, or 3 ½ innings with the home team leading), and there is a delay that lasts beyond the time limit of the game, the game is over.

Time Limit (for 8U – Varsity) - See age specific rules for 8U Machine Pitch time limits.

The official game start time (determined by the umpire) should be noted in both scorebooks prior to the start of the game.

No new inning may be started after 1 hour & 50 minutes.

A new inning officially starts as soon as the third out is recorded in the preceding inning. Ties count as such in preliminary round play. If an elimination game (excluding the Championship game) is tied after the *two hour no new inning limit* is reached, all subsequent innings begin with the last batter out in the preceding inning on second base (international tie breaker rule).

All Seed and pool games can end in a tie at the end of a complete game (see page 2) . There are NO EXTRA INNING games in preliminary seed or pool play rounds

There is no time limit for the Championship game.

Intentional delays: The umpire and tournament directors reserve the right to eject any player, coach or fan for intentionally delaying a game and a forfeit may be enforced at the tournament director's discretion.

Mercy Rule

Fifteen (15) runs after 3 innings, ten (10) runs after 4 innings, eight (8) after 5 innings.

The home team does not bat if ahead by the mercy limit but does bat if the visiting team goes ahead by the mercy limit in the top of an inning.

Courtesy and Pinch Runners

Courtesy runners are defined as runners for the Pitcher or Catcher with 2 outs.

Pinch runners are defined as substitute for the specific purpose of replacing another player on base who is not the Pitcher or Catcher.

Courtesy runners are allowed for the pitcher and catcher with 2 outs. There are two scenarios to determine the appropriate player to be the courtesy runner:

- Scenario 1 - If you are batting the lineup then your courtesy runner will be the last batted out. If the last batted out was made by the pitcher or catcher, then the batter who made the next preceding out is the courtesy runner.
- Scenario 2 - If you are not batting the lineup (for example, you bat 9 and have 12 players) then your courtesy runner for pitcher and catcher with 2 outs would be any one of your 3 substitutes who have not entered the lineup. A few points of clarification:
 - A courtesy runner may “enter” the game at a later time as a batter or pinch runner for any of the other position players, but once that player enters, that player is “married” to the player they pinch hit or pinch run for.

- For example: Sub 1 courtesy runs for the pitcher or catcher in Inning 1. Sub 1 is NOT married to the pitcher or catcher. Sub 1 can then pinch hit or pinch run for another position player, we will use the team's first baseman as an example, at any point later in the game. However, Sub 1 is then married to the first baseman and may not be a courtesy runner moving forward.
- If you run out of subs (they've all entered the game and are married to a position player in the starting lineup) and you'd like to have a courtesy runner, it would then revert to last batted out as outlined above in Scenario 1.
- If a sub "enters" the game for the first baseman in the 2nd inning, for example, and that first baseman or the sub becomes a pitcher or catcher of record later in the game, only these "married" players may be a courtesy runner for the other.

Collision and Slide Rules

For ages 8U-12U there are no head first slides into a base, sliding is only allowed when going back to a base.

For 13U through Varsity, head first slides are allowed everywhere.

NCAA forced slide rule will be used.

- 1) On any force play, the runner MUST slide, and slide directly to the base. In addition, the runner cannot interfere with a fielder's ability to throw the ball in any way.
- 2) A runner is out when he does not slide and his not sliding causes illegal contact and/or illegally alters the actions of a fielder in the immediate act of making a play, or on a force play, does not slide in a direct line between the bases. This is true even when the runner did not intend to cause contact.
- 3) Any runner who, in the umpire's judgment, is involved in contact of a malicious manner is not only out but is immediately ejected from the game.

Protests

No protests are permitted on any umpire judgment calls. If there is a valid dispute over a rules issue, the decision of the tournament director (or designee) will be final. Resolve any disputed rule questions before play continues. Protest must be made within 30 minutes of the end of the game.

Player Eligibility

If a coach/manager questions the eligibility of a particular player or players, he may do so privately with the tournament director (or designee). He/she will investigate and resolve eligibility questions immediately. Player eligibility protests must be addressed during the game or immediately (within 15 minutes) following the game.

Age eligibility is determined as the players' age before May 1, 2023.

Additional Important Information

Pre-game Warm-ups

No batting practice or infield practice prior to the games. Teams are permitted to warm up in OF as time permits between the end of the game before and the start time of your scheduled game.

Reporting Game Results

On-Site Field Coordinators will provide Post Game Reports for each game. Immediately following the conclusion of each game, the **winning** team is responsible getting the form signed by both coaches and for turning in the Post Game Report to the On-Site Field Coordinator. Failure on the part of the winning team to communicate the game result to the Age Group Coordinator within one hour of the completion of a game will result in the game being declared a tie and the runs allowed by the team that won the game on the field will be increased to the same number of runs allowed by the losing team.

Tie Breakers

The following criteria will be used to seed the teams after preliminary pool play:

1. Winning percentage
2. Head-to-head (**ONLY** if 2 teams are tied and have played each other; if 3 or more teams are tied, move to #3 below)
3. Least number of total runs allowed
4. Lowest single game runs allowed
5. 2nd lowest single game runs allowed
6. Coin flip

Runs Scored does **NOT** affect seeding.

Playing Conditions

The tournament director (or his/her appointees) will make all decisions regarding playing conditions prior to each game. He/she will determine whether or not the field conditions are fit to play with the safety of the players first and foremost in mind at all times. Teams must check the tournament website for updates regarding field conditions and game postponements. After a game starts, the umpire is responsible for stops/starts. Any sound of thunder or sight of lightning in the area will immediately stop play for 20 minutes. Weather related make-ups/continuations will be re-scheduled by the tournament director.

Refund Policy

We make every effort to get as many games played for our participating teams as possible. Unfortunately, weather conditions beyond our control occasionally conspire against us. In the event that the tournament is abbreviated, the following refund policy will apply:

70% refund if all games are cancelled due to inclement weather; 20% refund if only one game is played; no refund if two or more games are played.

No refund will be given, under any circumstance, to a team that has been removed from the tournament due to a rules or sportsmanship violation.

Official Team Roster and Insurance

Every team must fully complete and maintain in their possession at all times a **Roster & Waiver and Release of Liability Form (Official Team Roster)** and a **Certificate of Insurance**. Elkridge Youth Organization should be listed as "Additional Insured" on the certificate. The Official Roster Form contains player birth date certification and will also serve as your team's **Official Team Roster**. Participating tournament teams are limited to a maximum of fifteen (15) players for ages

8U through 14U; and eighteen (18) players for 15/16U and 19U teams. A parent (or guardian) of each player must read and sign the document. The head coach/team manager is required to maintain in their possession a copy of the official team roster and a copy of each player's birth certificate in the event that an eligibility question arises. We would not expect that an ineligible player would ever be asked by a coach/manager to play. However, if that were to occur and it is discovered, the player and his head coach/manager will be disqualified for the remainder of the

tournament. A game underway will be forfeited immediately to the opposing team as would a game completed in which the ineligible player participated. The team (without its head coach/manager and the ineligible player) may continue to play in the remainder of the tournament.

Tournament Website

Follow the Maryland Stars & Strikes website for important news and updates leading up to and throughout the tournament. This will include weather related updates.

The website address is www.mdstarsandstrikes.com.

Scoring and schedules will be done through Tourney Machine. The tournament link is: [2023 Schedule](#)

Sportsmanship

We anticipate that tournament games will be emotionally charged and competitive. However, we also expect that every participant will conduct him/herself at all times in a manner that is appropriate for youth baseball. Accordingly, arguing with or complaining about umpire judgment calls (balls/strikes, out/safe or fair/foul) or any display of inappropriate behavior (to include foul language used) by coaches, managers, players, parents or spectators simply will not be tolerated. Anyone (except players) in violation of this sportsmanship rule will be asked to leave the premises immediately by either the umpire or On-Site Field Coordinator. If after five (5) minutes the offending person is not out of sight and sound of the field, the team will forfeit the game in progress.

An ejected player will be confined to the dugout. A player ejected from a game is suspended from participating at the next game. A coach or parent ejected from a game is suspended from participating or being a spectator for the remainder of the day. Team head coaches/managers are 100% responsible for the conduct of their assistant coaches, players, parents and any other related spectators. **If anyone other than the head coach/manager or assistant coach is ejected by an umpire, the team's head coach/manager will be automatically ejected from the game in progress and suspended for the next game as well.** Anyone who threatens a tournament official, umpire, opposing coach or player (either physically or verbally) will be asked to leave immediately and may not return for the duration of the tournament.

Team managers should make certain that everyone associated with their team is fully aware of the sportsmanship rules in advance of the tournament. The games should be fun for all involved, especially the **kids playing** in them.

The Tournament Director reserves the right to remove any manager, coach, player, or spectator from the ballpark for unsportsmanlike behavior.

MANAGERS/COACHES

Print a copy of this document and carry it with you. Read it carefully and share it with your assistants, players and parents (as appropriate) so that everyone is fully informed about the rules and other tournament matters.