

Master Document 2026

Baseball and Softball Turf Classic Tournaments

Structures:

4-Team Round Robin

- Each team plays **each of the other three teams once**.
- A total of **6 games** are played in the tournament.
- The team with the best overall record is declared the **tournament champion**.
- Tiebreakers (if needed) are determined based on the official seeding rules found in the tournament rulebook (see “Tiebreaker & Seeding” section).
- Example:

Saturday, 00/00/00	8:00 AM	Team 1 Vs. Team 2
	10:00 AM	Team 3 Vs. Team 4
	12:00 PM	Team 3 Vs. Team 1
	2:00 PM	Team 4 Vs. Team 2
	4:00 PM	Team 1 vs Team 4
	6:00 PM	Team 2 Vs. Team 3

8-Team Pool Play + Single Elimination

- Teams are divided into **two pools of four** (Pool A and Pool B).

- Each team plays **2 pool play games**, scheduled to ensure balanced matchups and timing.
- After pool play, all teams are **seeded 1–8** based on performance using the official seeding criteria from the tournament rulebook.
 - The 7th and 8th seeds do not move on to the single-elimination bracket
 - They play a final game to hit their 3 game minimum versus each other (typically on Saturday so they do not have to come back and play one game on Sunday)
- The top 6 seeds advance to the **single-elimination championship bracket**
- Remaining teams may be scheduled for consolation games (Seed 7 and Seed 8)
- Example:

Friday, 00/00/00	4:30 PM	Team 1 vs. Team 2
1 Hour 30 no new	6:15 PM	Team 3 Vs. Team 4
1 hour 40 hard cut off*	8:00 PM	Team 5 Vs. Team 6
Saturday, 00/00005	8:00 AM	Team 3 Vs. Team 1
	10:00 AM	Team 6 Vs. Team 7
	12:00 PM	Team 5 Vs. Team 8
	2:00 PM	Team 4 vs. Team 2
	4:00 PM	Team 8 Vs. Team 7
	6:00 PM	Seed 7 Vs. Seed 8 (No chance to continue in tournament)
		Matchup
Date	Time	
Sunday 00/00/00	8:00 AM	Quarterfinal Game 1: Seed 3 vs. Seed 6
	10:00 AM	Quarterfinal Game 2: Seed 4 vs. Seed 5
	12:00 PM	Semifinal 1: Seed 1 vs. Winner of Quarterfinal 2
	2:00 PM	Semifinal 2: Seed 2 vs. Winner of Quarterfinal 1
	4:00 PM	Championship Game: Winner of Semifinal 1 vs. Winner of Semifinal 2

Rules

2026 Turf Usage Rules

All players MUST use molded cleats or turf shoes.

No chewing gum or sunflower seeds are allowed anywhere on the playing surface.

- **This includes on the turf, on the outfield grass, and dugouts.**

No alcohol of any kind allowed on field. It must be sold and distributed by the Mallards. There are no carry-ins allowed other than water and/or gatorade for the players. A full concession stand will be open during the tournament.

After the game:

Dugout cleanliness - Leave the dugouts how you found them or better.

General Rules

Coaches Conduct/rules

New in 2025 coaches may not cross the foul lines while interacting with officials.

- 1st offense – Warning
- 2nd offense – Confined to dugout
- 3rd offense – Ejection
- No more than 4 coaches including the scorekeeper for 10U and up

Mercy Rules

Games will be called if the following run limits have been met or exceeded:

- 12 runs after 3 innings

- 10 runs after 4 innings
- 8 runs after 5 innings

The home team will not bat once the run rule has been acquired, if ahead.

Time Limits

- CLOCK STARTS ON THE FIRST OFFICIAL PITCH.
- Umpires clock will be the official game clock.

Innings and Time Limits

- 9u-12u | 6 innings | Time Limit: 1 Hour/40min
 - 1 Hour/50min Hard stop
- 13u-14u | 7 innings | Time Limit: 1 Hour/40 Mins
 - 1 Hour/50min Hard stop
- Friday Time Limits
 - 1 Hour/30 min (no new innings)
 - 1 Hour/40 min (Hard Cutoff)
- SUNDAY SINGLE ELIMINATION
 - No new inning after 1 hour and 40 minutes rule. NO HARD STOP. If the game is tied, we will immediately go to California tiebreaker rules (runner starts on second base) for the following innings until a winner is determined.

Home Team

- All pool play games will flip for the home team.
- If a bracket game, the high seed will be home throughout bracket play.
- The only exception would be if the team that wins the undefeated game is the lower seed, that team will be the home team if they continue to the championship game undefeated.
- In the event of an “if” game, the home team will be determined via a coin toss.

Official Game

- A (7) inning game (13U and up) affected by but not limited by the weather, run rule, light failure, darkness or time limits, shall be considered a complete game after four (4) complete innings or three and a half (3 ½) if the home team is ahead. A game which is stopped after the 4th inning, but not in a complete inning, reverts to the last completed inning.

- A (6) inning game (6U-12U) affected by but not limited by the weather, run rule, light failure, darkness or time limits, shall be considered a complete game after three (3) complete innings or two and a half (2 ½) if the home team is ahead. A game which is stopped after the 3rd inning, but not in a complete inning, reverts to the last completed inning.

In Case Of Rain

- All rain out games may not be made up depending on time constraints. In case of scheduling changes, it is the team's responsibility, not the tournament director, to make sure they are aware of the new schedule or any scheduling changes.
- Note: No special requests will be honored if rescheduling becomes necessary. All coaches should make sure the tournament director has current contact info along with back ups.
- If games are cancelled, pool winners and championship qualification for bracket play will be determined by the tie breaking procedures (listed below).
- Tournament directors retain complete ability to change schedules for any reason at any time. Any changes will be communicated through game changer and text to the manager of each team.

Stop In Play (Due to weather)

- If a game is stopped, the game must start within 1 hour of the stop in play. If games are not resumed, they will become suspended or called official. Games called by umpires that cannot be resumed within 1 hour will be considered an official game (if the "official game" innings have been completed).
- If the "official game" score is tied, a tie score will be recorded in pool play.
- The tournament director can extend the 1 hour if there are extenuating circumstances
- A suspended game will resume where the game was halted.
- Awards will not be given out due to weather or other circumstances unless teams advance to the championship game.
- If the championship game is cancelled prior to or during the game when two teams have already advanced and not enough innings have been played to determine a winner, both teams will receive awards.

Forfeit

- Any forfeit in pool play will result in the forfeiting team being placed as the last seed in the tournament.
- The tournament director will rule on all forfeits. No team should benefit from the result of a forfeit in an unfair manner.

- This rule could result in a dispute and the tournament director reserves the right to look at and rule in the fairest possible way. The director's decision will be final.

Late Arrivals

- Late arrivals should be placed at the bottom of the batting order.

Warm Ups

- There are 2 batting cages underneath the grandstand on the first base side and field space behind the outfield wall (12U and under). The schedule is tight so there will not be time to warm up on the field before games.
- Priority of batting cages goes to the next two teams playing in tournament schedule

Additional Notes

- **All Teams scheduled for regular time slot games must be prepared to play up to 45 minutes earlier than scheduled start time. This is to help keep a flow in running the tournament efficiently.**
- **Tournament Director is Ben Strassman. Cell: 763-273-3560. Please call or text with questions**
- **The goal is to have 2 umpires for each game. Barring unforeseen circumstances we will still run the game with 1 umpire.**

Age Eligibility

10U Division

- Players who turn 11 prior to May 1st of the current season are not eligible unless they are in the 4th grade. Also, any player turning 12 prior to May 1st will not be eligible. Players who are 10u are eligible for this division regardless of their grade.

11U Division

- Players who turn 12 prior to May 1st of the current season are not eligible unless they are in the 5th grade. Also, any player turning 13 prior to May 1st will not be eligible. Players who are 11u are eligible for this division regardless of their grade.

12U Division

- Players who turn 13 prior to May 1st of the current season are not eligible unless they are in the 6th grade. Also, any player turning 14 prior to May 1st will not be eligible. Players who are 12u are eligible for this division regardless of their grade.

13U Division

- Players who turn 14 prior to May 1st of the current season are not eligible unless they are in the 7th grade. Also, any player turning 15 prior to May 1st will not be eligible. Players who are 13u are eligible for this division regardless of their grade.

14U Division

- Players who turn 15 prior to May 1st of the current season are not eligible unless they are in the 8th grade. Also, any player turning 16 prior to May 1st will not be eligible. Players who are 14u are eligible for this division regardless of their grade.

Grade Exemption

2025 Season

- 3 grade exempt players allowed 6-13u
- 14u: no grade exempt rules (All 8th grade players eligible)

Game Play Rules

Force Play Slide Rule

- Force Play Slide Rule at 2nd, 3rd or Home, runner must slide directly into bag (if they decide to slide) . All players are required to avoid violent contact with another player while running the bases. Players running to a base must slide directly into the base. If, in the opinion of the umpire, the runner does not make an effort to avoid collision, he is to be declared out. If the act is deemed by the umpire to be malicious, the runner will be ejected from the game.
- NOTE: Force Play Slide Rule is in effect for all ages.
- NOTE: Sliding head first is legal for all ages

Courtesy Runners

- Courtesy Runners for the catcher and pitcher are allowed for age's 9U-14U. Rule:
 - Last made out
 - If last made out is the pitcher or catcher, player must run (no sub)
 - Only allowed to be used when there is 2 outs

Intentional Walks

- Intentional Walks at 9U-14U age levels, the pitches do not need to be made.

Re-entry

- Starters may re-enter the game one time, however they must re-enter in the same place in the batting order. Substitutes may not re-enter the game. Pitchers may not re-enter as the pitcher once removed from the mound.

Feet On The Rubber

- In the Windup Position, a pitcher is permitted to have his “free” foot on the rubber, in front of the rubber, behind the rubber or off the side of the rubber.

Mound Visits

- A coach is allowed 2 mound visits per game without removing the pitcher (A visit is not charged if you are removing the pitcher)
 - A coach has to pull his pitcher on the 3rd mound visit of the game. Each visit after results in pulling the pitcher.
- *Mound visits do not reset when you enter in a new pitcher

Balk Calls (13 and older)

- When a balk is called it is a dead ball. Fake 3rd to 1st is LEGAL.
- One warning per pitcher

Slashing 7U-13U

- Slashing (Fake bunt/swing away) attempts is not allowed. Batter will be called OUT.
- Defensive players cannot fake tags. One warning per team will be given. After that, any further fake tags will be automatic ejections and vacant spots in the order is an automatic out. Batters cannot show bunt and swing away

Time limit

- No new inning will begin after 1 hr 30 min. A game is considered official when the losing team has batted 4 times or at tournament director's discretion due to weather. The championship game will have no time limit.
- Speed up rules are enforced (6 warm up pitches, limited use of the infield ball, throwing the ball back to the pitcher after an out (no throwing around the horn after an out) This rule will be in effect for all games leading up to the championship. No time limit for championship games. Run Rules still apply

Injured player

- If a player is injured and cannot bat, his spot will be skipped without penalty. If a player is ejected for bad sportsmanship his vacant spot in the batting order will be an automatic out.

Additional Rules

- Mallards will run scoreboard to keep official score of each game. Teams will be responsible for their own score.
- Pitchers may not wear a white wristband, or a white long sleeve undergarment. Pitchers may only wear prescription sunglasses.
- A pitcher INTENTIONALLY throwing at an opposing batter , as determined by the umpire , will be ejected and the vacant spot in the batting order will be an automatic out
- Batters, on deck batters, base runners and warm up catchers must wear helmets. If a player coaches a base, they must also wear a helmet.
- **MANAGERS ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE CONDUCT OF ALL PLAYERS, COACHES, PARENTS AND FANS**
- All teams will be asked to clean up their dugout and seats areas after the game

Pitch Counts (9-11U)

Division of Play

- 9U-11u
 - One Day Max to Pitch Next Day = 35
 - One Day Maximum = 75
 - Three Day Maximum = 110

*NOTE: Finish the batter is in effect. (See below)

*NOTE: If the difference in pitch count between opposing teams is 5 or fewer, the batting team's count will be used. If the difference exceeds 5, the count will be adjusted by splitting the difference in favor of the batting team.

One Day Maximum To Pitch The Next Day

- The maximum number of pitches a player can legally pitch in one (1) day and still pitch the next day. Example: In the 9U – 11U age divisions, a player may legally pitch a maximum of (35) pitches in one (1) day and still legally pitch the next day. If the player pitches 36 or more pitches in one (1) day, the player cannot legally pitch the next day. A player may not pitch in more than 2 games in a day.

One Day Maximum

- The maximum number of pitches a player can legally pitch in one (1) day. Example: In the 9U – 11U age divisions, a player may legally pitch a maximum (75) pitches in one (1) day, in no more than 2 games.

Three Day Maximum

- The maximum number of pitches a player can legally pitch in three (3) consecutive days. Example: In the 9U – 11U age divisions, a player may legally pitch a maximum of 110 pitches in three (3) consecutive days.

Finish The Hitter

- If a pitcher is approaching his pitch count limit, he may finish the hitter but must be removed from the mound following the last hitter. Any pitches thrown over his limit to the last hitter will not be counted against his pitch count.

Mandatory Days Of Rest (pitching)

1. A player that pitches more than (35) pitches in one day MUST rest the next day, regardless of # of days in a tournament.
2. A player 9u-11u that pitches (110) in two (2) consecutive days MUST rest the next day if playing in a 3+ day tournament.
3. A player that pitches three (3) consecutive days (regardless of total quantity of innings pitched) MUST rest the next day.
4. Pitches recorded during a game that ends in forfeit shall count towards a pitchers' pitch limits.

5. For purposes of pitching limitations rules, a pitcher is in violation of the rule if he records any pitch above the legal pitching limits pursuant to these rules.
6. It shall be the responsibility of each team to challenge pitching violations by immediately notifying the Umpire and/or Tournament Director.
7. Pitchers removed from a game cannot re-enter the pitching spot later in the game.
 - a. Relief pitchers will not receive more than 6 warm up pitches

Protesting Pitch Counts

- A protest must be filed immediately if the pitcher is in violation of the pitch count rules.
- The pitcher of record must be on the mound during the protest.
- Stop the game and inform the umpire that you are protesting the pitcher on the mound is in violation of the pitch count rule.
- The umpire will then stop the game, stop the clock, and inform the director of a protest.
- If the Tournament Director deems the pitcher is in violation of the pitch count rule, this will be considered the first violation, the pitcher in violation will be removed from the game with a new eligible pitcher being entered in and the coach will be ejected. If a second violation occurs during the season, the team will forfeit the game. If a third violation occurs during the tournament, the team will be removed from all tournaments.
- If there is a question on the official pitch counts from the previous tournament day, it must be made prior to the first tournament game the following day.

Recommendations

- It is recommended that a player does not pitch and catch during the same game.
- It is recommended that a player does not pitch in more than one game per day.

Bat Rules

The official bat shall be constructed of wood or aluminum or any other material or combination of materials.

Division Of Play | Bpf/bbcor | Wood | Aluminum | Max Negative Weight

- USSA Bat rules apply
- USA Bats Allowed as well

Bat Violations

If a team violates the bat rules, the bat will be removed from play and the following will occur:

- a. If an illegal bat is identified prior to the batter putting the ball in play, the bat will be removed from play and the batter will continue his at bat with a legal bat. It is the responsibility of the Head Coach to remove the bat from the dugout or ensure the bat is not available for use. No exceptions.
- b. If any batter comes to the plate and has a previously removed illegal bat, the bat will be removed again, the batter will be out, and the coach will be ejected.
- c. If an illegal bat is identified after a batter put the ball in play but before a pitch is thrown to the next batter, the player who used the illegal bat will be declared out and all runners who advanced must return to the base they occupied.
- d. NOTE: It is the responsibility of the opposing Coach to report/ask the umpire to check the bat. If a pitch is thrown to a batter that results in base runners advancing a base and/or scoring (via a passed ball, pick off, or direct steal), the opposing coach must bring it to the umpire before the next pitch is thrown. The only exception would be a player advancing due to a balk by the pitcher. If a player advances due to a balk, the base runner does not have to return to the previous base.

Roster Rules

General Roster Rules

- Participating teams are required to create a Game Changer web account.
- Every team that participates in any Madison Mallards Sports event must have their roster online through game changer.
- No player may play on 2 different teams in the same event under any circumstances as this will result in a team forfeit for both teams. Unless approved by the tournament director.
- Any team playing up must only use players of that team's age. If you choose to pick up older players while playing up, you must sanction an older team and play under that team's name.
- Rosters are official once bracket play begins. If a team feels another team is in violation of a roster rule, it must be brought to the directors attention prior to the start of bracket play. The Madison Mallards will not handle roster discrepancies or issues on the last day or once bracket play begins

Grade Exemption

- 3 grade exempt players allowed 6-13u

- 14u NO grade exempt rules (All 8th grade players eligible)

Lineup Rules

Lineup Options – bat 9, 10, or everyone.

- If you are batting a continuous lineup (All Players) and a player cannot continue in a game, he will be declared an out when his turn in the batting order is scheduled to bat.
- Teams may play an official game with an eight (8) player line-up. If a team plays with an eight (8) player line-up, an out shall be declared for the ninth (9th) position in the batting line-up each turn at bat. A ninth (9th) player and all subsequent players may be added to the bottom of the batting line-up as soon as they become available.
- If a team cannot field at least 8 players, the game will be forfeited.
- DH is allowed in 9 or 10 person lineups

Approved Team Line-up Options

- If a team uses a line-up that contains substitute players, all starting players may be removed and re-enter the game once but must re-enter in their original position in the batting order.
- Non-starters are not allowed to re-enter.
- When a starter re-enters, the player in the starter's batting position in the batting order must be removed from the game and is ineligible for the remainder of the game.
- If a team uses a line-up that contains ten (10) players, the player in the Extra Hitter position has free defensive substitution.
- If a team uses a continuous line-up, all players other than the nine (9) defensive position players are Extra Hitters and may move freely in defensive positions with the exception of the pitching position.
- Any player(s) arriving after the game has begun, shall be added to the bottom of the batting line-up.
- When using the continuous lineup and a player has to leave the game for any reason, that position in the line-up becomes an out when that at bat comes around.

Designated Hitter (DH)

- Teams may bat a nine (9) player line-up, or a nine (9) player line-up with a Designated Hitter (DH), or a ten (10) player line-up with an Extra Hitter (EH), or a 10-player line-up up with a DH and EH, or a continuous line-up of all present, eligible, uniformed players.
- Such line-up must be declared before the start of the game and used the entire game.
- A Designated Hitter (DH) can be used for ages 9u thru 14u.

- The DH can bat for any defensive player (not just the pitcher, as in some leagues).
- The DH would normally bat for one player and any of that player's substitutes on defense for the original player.
- The DH must be listed next to or under the player he is batting for in lineup.
- The DH and the player he is batting for are both locked into the same batting slot; neither of these two players can ever bat in another batting position.
- If the DH enters the game on defense, the player he was batting for must come out of the game.
- A replaced DH can re-enter the game one time since he was considered a starter. The defensive player being hit for can also re-enter the game one time if subbed for. Both must always stay in the same batting spot.
- The DH role for a team is terminated for the rest of the game if:
- A replaced DH re-enters the game on defense (the acting DH is disqualified from further participation).
- The player for whom the DH was batting pinch hits or pinch runs for the DH. The DH assumes a defensive position.
- In Scholastic divisions (15U-18U), if the Extra Hitter (EH) is not utilized, then the Designated Hitter (DH) may be utilized in accordance with the National Federation of High School Associations (NFHS) rules.

Seeding & Tie Breakers

Seeding Rules

1. Pool play overall record (winning percentage)
 2. Total runs allowed in pool play.
 3. If still tied – Total runs scored in pool play
 4. If still tied – Total runs allowed minus pool play game with most runs allowed
 5. If still tied – Total runs allowed minus the two pool play games with most runs allowed
 6. If still tied – Runs scored inning by inning, starting with each team's first pool play game, going inning by inning until one team has more runs after the completed inning.
- When teams are divided into pools, the pool winners will be seeded as 1 seeds.
 - Overall place in effect for all other division positions.

Ejection Policy (Coach/Fan/Players)

Back the Blue' Policies

1. Zero tolerance policy on verbal and physical abuse of umpires; including profanity or consistent berating of officials during the game
2. Zero tolerance policy on verbal and physical abuse/altercations with opposing coaches and fans; including profanity or consistent verbal altercations throughout the game
3. Zero tolerance policy on verbal and physical abuse of event staff; including facility workers, directors, and event staff

In the event of an altercation

- One warning will be issued by umpire and/or director. If behavior continues, fan will be ejected along with the head coach of the team.
- Zero tolerance policy on excessive ejections of coaches from games.

Coach Ejection

- The director and umpire will review the ejection; if deemed excessive, the coach will be suspended a minimum of 1 game (at the discretion of the director and umpire-in-chief)