

*OFFICIAL*  
**RULES**



**TOP GUN SPORTS - USA**

912 Gasser Dr SW  
Concord, NC 28027

**January 12,2026**

# **WARNING**

**Outdoor/Indoor sports facilities such as baseball, softball, soccer fields, and basketball courts by their design and use have inherent hazards such as, but not limited to:**

- Uneven and variable walking surfaces, seating, and standing areas and bleachers that vary by design, construction, and condition.**
- Risks of injury from colliding with other people or persons, slipping, or falling on walking surfaces, bleaches, and stairways, and tripping over unknown objects which other persons may have left or discarded on the premises.**
- Risk of injury from wayward flying objects that may be thrown or struck such as balls, bats, gloves, and other items that may not be reasonably foreseeable.**
- Players, coaches, team personnel, and spectators may damage the premises or create hazards at any time without the knowledge of Top Gun-USA Sports.**

**This list of risks is not, and cannot be, all inclusive. There may be other risks that can injury you. Players, coaches, team personnel, and spectators should always pay attention to the action at hand and be alert for objects headed their way and should listen to public announcements regarding safety during any Top Gun-USA Sports event.**

**Players, coaches, team personnel, and spectators are responsible for their own safety while on the premises of any even hosting a Top Gun-USA Sports event. If you do not which to assume the risk of harm while attending a sporting event conducted by Play Top Gun Sports, then do not enter any such facility.**  
**Play Top Gun Sports and the owners of the facilities in which Play Top Gun Sports events are conducted are not responsible if a player, coach, team personnel, or spectator is injured at a Play Top Gun Sports sporting event.**

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## II. Part 1

# ADMINISTRATIVE RULES

A. MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS TO PARTICIPATE IN A PLAY TOP GUN-USA SPORTS SANCTIONED TOURNAMENT

- All teams participating in a Play Top Gun-USA Sports tournament must be registered/sanctioned with the Top Gun-USA Sports office for the current season.
  - The sanction period commences on January 1 of each year.
  - The sanction period terminates at 11:59:59 p.m. on December 31 of each year.
- All rostered personnel must be registered as a Top Gun-USA Sports member for each year and before the start of a sanctioned tournament.
  - Rostered personnel include:
    - Coaches.
    - Players.
    - Bat Boys.
    - Scorekeepers.
- All teams must bring the following to each sanctioned tournament in which they participate (failure to have these could result in a forfeit):
  - Top Gun-USA Sports Roster (a/k/a “On-Line Roster”)
  - Paper copies of each player’s birth certificate
  - Copy of a current Team Insurance Certificate
    - Top Gun-USA Sports requires that all teams have team insurance before playing in a Top Gun-USA Sports sanctioned event.

2. Teams may purchase insurance on the Top Gun website.
3. Teams not having insurance purchased through the Top Gun website (and having a policy from another source) must list "Top Gun Sports, 912 Gasser Drive, Concord, NC 28027" as an "additionally insured" on their insurance policy before participating in a Top Gun-Sports sanctioned event. This must be presented to Top Gun-USA Sports prior to participating in an event.

#### **B. AUTHORITY OF TOP GUN-USA SPORTS**

- a. Top Gun-USA Sports Baseball shall investigate complaints alleging the violation of Top Gun-USA Sports General Rules by Top Gun-USA players/athletes, coaches, volunteers, or teams.
- b. If Top Gun-USA Baseball determines, because of any such investigation, that a violation of the Top Gun-USA Baseball General Rules has occurred, Top Gun-USA Baseball may impose penalties as provided, *infra.*, in these General Rules.
- c. Penalties imposed by Top Gun-USA Sports Baseball may be appealed, in writing, to the Play Top Gun-USA Sports Board of Review. Said Board shall be appointed by the CEO/President of Top Gun-USA Sports.
- d. Alternatively, Top Gun-USA Sports Baseball may delegate any of the duties set forth in this section to an "Infraction Committee" appointed by the CEO/President of Top Gun-USA Sports to consider Code/Rules Violations. Should this occur, said "Infraction Committee" shall have the right to refer any case directly to the Play Top Gun-USA Board of Review without the "Infraction Committee" having taken any action.

#### **C. TOP GUN-USA SPORTS DOES NOT ORGANIZE TEAMS**

- a. Top Gun-USA Sports' events provide rules for play and a tournament structure that leads to end-of-season tournament opportunities for teams that register to participate in Top Gun events that are overseen by Top Gun Directors.
  - i. We encourage parents/guardians who determine (1) the team for a youth team participant, (2) the adult team participants (such as team coaches or team sponsors) of a team, (3) the community organizations who are involved in the team organization, and (4) creation or management of such teams to thoroughly investigate and screen the background and character of the individuals who coach, manage, volunteer, or otherwise come into contact with such teams and their minor participants and to vigilantly supervise any and all activities of any youth team with which they are associated.
- b. Background checks are available, among other places, "on-line" for a small fee. Top Gun-USA Sports encourages those responsible for team activities and the parents/guardians of youth athletic team members to utilize such tools to limit the exposure of youth athletes to those who might pose a danger.
- c. Because Top Gun-USA Sports is not an organizer, manager, or creator of teams, Top Gun-USA Sports does not in any way take responsibility for the organization, creation, management, or any other activity of any team(s) (customers) that register to play in Top Gun tournaments, except to provide the opportunity to play in Top Gun events under Top Gun-USA Sports rules overseen

by a Top Gun Director. TEAMS THAT PARTICIPATE IN TOP GUN EVENTS ARE CUSTOMERS OF TOP GUN SPORTS-USA AND NO MORE.

- d. When a team chooses to participate in a Top Gun activity, the team, and its players, coaches, volunteers, organizers, parents and fans must abide by the rules found in the Top Gun Rule Book posted on our web site ([www.playtopgunsports.com](http://www.playtopgunsports.com)). Top Gun has nothing to do with the practice sessions of any team, the choosing of team coaches, the picking of which team to play for, the activities with respect to any other body, nor any other activities of a team. Top Gun-USA Sports simply provides registered participation in Top Gun directed activities.
- e. Top Gun takes no responsibility for any such other non-Top Gun event/activity of any team. While Top Gun is not responsible for checking the background of each of its customers (including the coaches of the baseball teams that play in Top Gun events), those convicted or charged with a violent felony or a sex offense against a minor are automatically suspended from all Top Gun activities (until found innocent of such charges or the charges are “dropped”).
  - i. Anyone with knowledge of a person who has been charged with or convicted of a violent felony or a sex crime against a minor, and that person may be, in any way, involved with a Top Gun activity, should
    - A. immediately notify a Top Gun Director. Upon being provided with proof of such charges or conviction, that individual will be immediately and automatically suspended from all Top Gun activities. ii. By way of example: if you complete a background check on a coach before joining a team and that background check indicates that such coach has been charged with a sex offense against a minor, you should report this to your Top Gun Director or the Top Gun Sports main office immediately...even if you have decided to play for another team. Furthermore, if you are aware of any person who has committed a violent felony or a sex offense against a minor and that person has not been charged and/or arrested, you are obligated to immediately report any such crime to the proper law enforcement authorities.

#### D. CONDUCT

##### a. ZERO TOLERANCE POLICY

- i. Top Gun-USA Sports has a **ZERO TOLERANCE POLICY** regarding inappropriate behavior. This policy encompasses all interactions during the course of the Top Gun-USA Sports baseball program.
  - 1. This Zero Tolerance Policy shall include, but is not limited to:
    - a. Practices.
    - b. Games.
    - c. Opening Day Ceremonies.
    - d. Tournaments; and,
  - i. Any other Top Gun-USA Sports Baseball sponsored event
- ii. It is Top Gun-USA Sports belief that our sons, daughters, nephews, and grandchildren far too often watch many of us forget the real reason for being involved in youth sports. We all must promote fair play, good

sportsmanship, and teach our children how to play the game. It is Top Gun-USA Sports' belief that it is everyone's responsibility to teach the players that there is "more to the game than winning or losing and the final score". Top Gun-USA Sports takes this responsibility seriously.

**b. GENERAL CONDUCT POLICY**

- i. Teams, coaches, players, spectators, and organizations are subject to sanctions imposed by the Baseball Chairman for misconduct.
- ii. Sanctions may be appealed to the Play Top Gun-USA Sports Board of Review Committee.
- iii. Sanctions may include fines, suspensions, forfeitures, probation, or any other action Play Top Gun-USA Sports, in their sole discretion, deems appropriate.
- iv. "Misconduct" includes, but is not limited to:
  1. Sportsmanship that is detrimental to the Top Gun-USA Sports program.
  2. Destruction of property.
  3. Intoxication.
  4. Possession of alcohol, drugs, and/or weapons.
  5. Use of profanity.
  6. Commission of a crime during any Play Top Gun-USA Sports event.
- v. Sanctions may also be imposed for failure to comply with any portion of these "General Rules" of Top Gun-USA Sports.

**c. SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY**

- i. Top Gun-USA Sports does not tolerate
  1. Abusive or personal attacks.
  2. Unprofessional comments that Top Gun-USA Sports deem unsporting.
  3. Material that is unlawful, obscene, defamatory, threatening, constitutes harassment, abusive, slanderous, hateful, and/or embarrassing to any other entity;
  4. Any third-party advertising, third-party social media sites, chain letters, and/or "spam" to be "posted" or "shared" on any social media site, page, or platform. ii. Top Gun-USA Sports reserves the right to terminate the involvement in Top Gun-USA Sports of any person who violates this social media policy. Any rostered member of Top Gun-USA Sports (including coaches, athletes, parents, guests, and spectators) may be suspended from the Top Gun-USA Sports' program for violating this policy.
- iii. Top Gun-USA does not warrant, nor will it be held responsible, for the accuracy or reliability of any information (including views and opinions) posted by external parties on any third-party social media site.

**d. UNSPORTING CONDUCT WITH RESPECT TO FIGHTS/ALTERCATIONS/BRAWLS**

- i. Any player, coach, manager, sponsor, or spectator leaving their position or base, in the field, on the bench, in the dugout area, or grandstands to

participate in a fight, brawl, or altercation shall be immediately ejected from the game and may be disbarred/suspended from Top Gun-USA Sports.

- ii. This includes prior to a game starting, during a game, after a game, or after the conclusion of a Top Gun-USA Sports Sanctioned Event.

e. VIOLATIONS OF POLICIES OR TOURNAMENT RULES

- i. Any parent, coach, team member, or spectator that violates the policies or rules of Top Gun-USA Sports may be removed from any and all venues during an event and may have future sanctions placed against them. This includes being “ejected” during a Top Gun-USA sanctioned event.

**E. EJECTIONS:**

**F. FOR A FIRST EJECTION DURING A TOURNAMENT:**

**G. Any Manager/Head Coach,**

**Coach, or Fan/Scorekeeper/Spectator receiving an ejection from an umpire shall be “suspended” for the remainder of that day. If ejection occurred on that team’s last game on Saturday, the ejected person must still serve a one game suspension on the first game of the following day. If ejection occurs on the first game on Sunday, the ejected person will be “suspended” for the remainder of that day regardless of number of games that team may play. The game will not start back until ejected person has been removed from the game venue.**

**H. Any Player receiving an ejection from an umpire shall be “suspended” for that ejected game and one additional game. Players are not required to leave the venue.** “Player Suspended from his team’s next scheduled game,” means an ejected player is not permitted to be “in attendance” at his team’s next game following the game in which he was ejected.

**I. Any Assistant coach (including a base coach, bench coach, and/or scorekeeper) that is ejected from the game shall also result in the Head Coach being immediately restricted to the dugout for the remainder of the game. The intent of this rule is to remind head coaches that they are responsible for controlling all team members.**

**J. FOR A SECOND EJECTION DURING A TOURNAMENT:** Any person ejected for a second time during a tournament shall be suspended for the remainder of the tournament. Said person is also subject to imposition of further sanctions upon review by Top Gun-USA Sports. iii. Umpires may eject coaches, players, or fans. 1. When an umpire ejects a person, that person must leave the venue immediately and playing time is stopped until the ejection is resolved. 2. The umpires shall notify the site director, while playing time is stopped. 3. If an ejected person does not leave the venue, the police will be called. a. However, players are not required to leave.

## K. COACHES

### a. HEAD COACH'S RESPONSIBILITY

- i. The Head Coach of a team is responsible for the conduct of his assistant coaches, players, and fans/spectators. He should make sure that all rules of a tournament are explained to each of these people.
- ii. The Head Coach is responsible for ensuring that all coaches on the field or in the dugout are on his team roster. All coaches in a team's dugout, bench, or on the field must be on the team's roster. COACHES NOT ON THE ROSTER WILL BE EJECTED FROM THE GAME WHEN DISCOVERED.
- iii. **The Head Coach Appeal Protocol rule. No coach may come onto a field or at home plate area to contest a call. Penalty is automatic ejection.**
- iv. **The Head Coach only during tournament play may come to the respective foul line in front of their respective dugout, midway between home plate or first/third base to confer with the crew chief and base umpire to ask for an appeal play.**
  1. Coaches' Passes will only be allocated to coaches listed on the team roster.
  2. No person, other than listed adults on the team roster, are to be in any dugout or on the field at any time.
  3. Top Gun-USA Sports allows for a maximum of Four (4) adults on the team roster for ages 9u and above.
    - a. This may be three (3) coaches and one (1) scorekeeper OR three (4) coaches.

**4.** 8u Coach Pitch or Machine Pitch Division will allow a total of Four (4) Coaches, as outfield coaches are permitted.

**5.** Any question pertaining to the eligibility of any coach or scorekeeper must be protested during the game. No protests are accepted after the game.

**b. COACHES' DRESS CODE**

- i. All coaches on the same team shall be similarly dressed.
  1. Coaches should have the same color shirt, etc.
  2. "Flip-Flop" or open-toed sandals are not allowed. Only closed toe shoes are allowed.
  3. Tank Top shirts are not allowed.

**c. COACHES/VOLUNTEER CODE OF HONOR**

- i. "I promise upon my word of honor to help create an environment which primary emphasis is placed upon the emotional and physical wellbeing of Play Top Gun Sports Athletics rather than winning. I will lead by example, and I will demonstrate the value of fair play and sportsmanship to all that participate. Lastly, by becoming a Play Top Gun Sports Member, I agree to be bound by these Top Gun Baseball General Rules as well as all procedures and policies.

## L. PLAYERS

### a. AGE DETERMINATION

- i. The sanction period for players' ages runs from January 1 until December 31.
- ii. **B. All teams will “move up” in age on August 1 of each year.**

iii. Age cutoff date is May 1<sup>st</sup>. See Below Examples

1. 7U: Player cannot turn 8 prior to May 1, 2026
2. 8U: Player cannot turn 9 prior to May 1, 2026
3. 9U: Player cannot turn 10 prior to May 1, 2026
4. 10U: Player cannot turn 11 prior to May 1, 2026
5. 11U: Player cannot turn 12 prior to May 1, 2026
6. 12U: Player cannot turn 13 prior to May 1, 2026
7. 13U: Player cannot turn 14 prior to May 1, 2026
8. 14U: Player cannot turn 15 prior to May 1, 2026
9. 15U: Player cannot turn 16 prior to May 1, 2026
10. 16U: Player cannot turn 17 prior to May 1, 2026
11. 17U: Player cannot turn 18 prior to May 1, 2026
12. High School: Player cannot turn 19 prior to May 1, 2026

### iii. GRADE EXCEPTION RULE

1. 7U Division: Players who turn 8 prior to May 1 of the current season are not eligible unless they are in the 1<sup>st</sup> grade. Any player turning 9 prior to August 1 is not eligible. Players who are 7 are eligible for this division regardless of their grade.
2. 8U Division: Players who turn 9 prior to May 1 of the current season are not eligible unless they are in the 2nd grade. Any player turning 10 prior to August 1 is not eligible. Players who are 8 are eligible for this division regardless of their grade.
3. 9U Division: Players who turn 10 prior to May 1 of the current season are not eligible unless they are in the 3rd grade. Any player turning 11 prior to August 1 is not eligible. Players who are 9 are eligible for this division regardless of their grade.
4. 10U Division: Players who turn 11 prior to May 1 of the current season are not eligible unless they are in the 4th grade. Any player turning 12 prior to August 1 is not eligible. Players who are 10 are eligible for this division regardless of their grade.
5. 11U Division: Players who turn 12 prior to May 1 of the current season are not eligible unless they are in the 5th grade. Any player turning 13 prior to August 1 is not eligible. Players who are 11 are eligible for this division regardless of their grade.
6. 12U Division: Players who turn 13 prior to May 1 of the current season are not eligible unless they are in the 6<sup>th</sup> grade. Any player turning 14 prior to August 1 is not eligible. Players who are 12 are eligible for this division regardless of their grade.

7. 13U Division: Players who turn 14 prior to May 1 of the current season are not eligible unless they are in the 7th grade. Any player turning 15 prior to August 1 is not eligible. Players who are 13 are eligible for this division regardless of their grade.
8. 14U Division: Players who turn 15 prior to May 1 of the current season are not eligible unless they are in the 8th grade. Any player turning 16 prior to August 1 is not eligible. Players who are 14 are eligible for this division regardless of their grade.
9. 15U Division: Players who turn 16 prior to May 1 of the current season are not eligible unless they are in a freshman in high school. Any player turning 17 prior to August 1 is not eligible. Players who are 15 are eligible for this division regardless of their grade.
10. 16U Division: Players who turn 17 prior to May 1 of the current season are not eligible unless they are in a sophomore in high school. Any player turning 18 prior to August 1 is not eligible. Players who are 16 are eligible for this division regardless of their grade.
11. 17U Division: Players who turn 18 prior to May 1 of the current season are not eligible unless they are in a junior in high school. Any player turning 19 prior to August 1 is not eligible. Players who are 17 are eligible for this division regardless of their grade.
12. 18U Division: Players who turn 19 prior to May 1 of the current season are not eligible unless they are in a senior in high school. Any player turning 20 prior to August 1 is not eligible. Players who are 18 are eligible for this division regardless of their grade.
13. HS Division: Players who turn 19 prior to May 1 of the current season are not eligible unless they are a senior in high school.

iv. PROTESTING OF ELIGIBILITY OF PLAYER'S AGE

1. Any question pertaining to the eligibility of a player's age at the tournament must be protested during the game. Protesting after the game is "too late".
2. Coaches are responsible for seeing that their team meets all eligibility requirements. **NO TEAM REFUNDS WILL BE ISSUED**
3. If a player is found to be ineligible for the age group prior to the start of the tournament, that player will be expelled from the tournament.
4. If a player is found to be ineligible for the age group after the tournament has begun, the player will be expelled. Additionally, that player's entire team may be expelled.
5. Any questions during a game pertaining to the age eligibility of players must be handled by filing a protest during that game. If the age of the player is being protested and that player's coach cannot produce the legal copy of the birth certificate of the player in question, the game shall be a forfeit, and the team may be removed from the tournament.

v. PICK-UP GUEST PLAYER RULE

1. Top Gun-USA Sports is “open rostered”. Players may be “picked up” as a guest if the player is not rostered on two (2) teams in the same tournament or tournament weekend, regardless of age division.
  - a. Players may not play on two separate teams in the same event or same weekend.
  - b. A player’s first game played will freeze that player to that team’s roster. If that player is discovered playing on a second team during the same tournament because of a proper protest, that player shall be classified as an ineligible player for that (second) team. The player shall be ejected from that game and an “out” shall be charged each time that player’s turn comes up to bat for the remainder of the game. No substitutions are allowed for the ineligible player that has been ejected. The head coach is ejected from that game with the applicable ejection penalties to apply. The ejected player can resume play with his legal team’s next scheduled game. However, any innings pitched by the ineligible player will apply and remain with that pitcher for tournament pitching record purposes. Those innings will count for the event.
  - c. No exceptions to this rule will be allowed.

vi. ON-LINE ROSTERS

1. Rosters must be kept up to date “on-line” with Top Gun-USA Sports for each event.
2. Your on-line roster is used for all pitching, homerun, wins, and losses.
3. All roster updates should be done before playing your first game.
4. No roster additions can be made after the tournament has begun unless approved by the tournament director.
5. **PENALTY:** If a team discovers that another team does not have a player listed on their on-line roster as being active, that team must file a protest during the game. If the protest is upheld, the ineligible player, when discovered, shall be ejected from the game. The ejected player’s spot in the batting order will be an “out” each time that spot in the batting order comes up for the remainder of

the game. No substitutions are allowed for the ineligible player that has been ejected. The head coach will also be ejected for that game and carry an additional one (1) game suspension pursuant to Top Gun-USA Sports normal ejection policy set forth in these General Rules. Once the game is concluded and the game cards are signed,

a protest alleging a player is not on a team's on-line roster will not be entertained.

6. The ineligible player(s) may be added to the team's roster at the completion of that team's game. That player WILL BE ALLOWED to play in his team's next game if properly added.
7. The intent of this rule is not to eject the entire team or player from a tournament. It is the belief of Top Gun-USA Sports that this is a coaching or administrative error and not a player error.
8. **8U Roster Rule:** Roster size will be a minimum of 10 players and a maximum of 15 players, with a minimum of two (2) and a maximum of **Four (4) coaches.** A bat boy is also allowed. Any such bat boy must always wear his helmet outside the dugout.

## K. CONDUCT OF TOURNAMENTS

- a. **Altered Bats Inspection and Suspension:** A Top Gun Director may at any time ask to inspect a bat that has been brought into the location of a Top Gun sanctioned event or any other Top Gun facility.
  - i. Upon request to inspect by the director, the owner/user of the bat may either:
    1. Withhold the bat from inspection and accept an immediate two-year suspension from Top Gun sanctioned activities with no right to appeal (this shall be an automatic lifetime suspension for a second occurrence); or,
    2. Allow the Director to inspect the bat and reach a conclusion as to whether the bat has been altered.
  - ii. If, after making the inspection of a potential altered bat, the Director in his discretion decides that the bat might be an altered bat, the suspected offending owner/user may either:
    1. Withhold the bat from further examination by the Top Gun Altered Bat Committee Chairman or bat manufacturer and accept an immediate two-year suspension from Top Gun sanctioned activities with no right to appeal (this shall be an automatic lifetime suspension for a second occurrence); or
    2. Allow the Director to send the bat to the Top Gun Altered Bat Committee Chairman and/or bat manufacturer for a determination as to whether the bat has been altered. If the manufacturer or the Top Gun Altered Bat Committee Chairman determines that the bat has been altered, the Altered Bat Committee Chairman, in consultation with the Director who inspected the bat at the Top Gun facility/event, may suspend a first-time offender for up to five (4) years from Top Gun play. A second-time offender shall be suspended for life.

- b. **Approving of Final Score**: After the game is over, the final score must be approved by each team's Head Coach, each team's Official Scorekeeper, and the Umpires.
  - i. The signature of each team's head coach and each team's official scorekeeper is required on the official scorecard. This is to verify the correct score, pitching, and home runs of that game.
  - ii. Once the scorecard is signed by both head coaches and both scorekeepers, that score is now the official score of that game.
  - iii. Failure/refusing to sign the scorecards by either or both team(s) shall constitute consent that the scorecard is correct and that no revisions need to be made.
- c. **Awards Presentations**: After the championship game of any event, Top Gun-USA Sports will have an awards presentation. The location may be on the field, or at an awards presentation location selected by the tournament director.
  - i. After the championship game is over, teams should line up on the foul lines for the awards presentation OR proceed to the awards presentation location as selected by the tournament director. **ii. Failure to participate in the awards ceremonies will be deemed “unsporting” and such action will subject the team to penalties for unsporting actions as set forth in these General Rules.** **iii. Failure to participate will void any awards being given to a team being champions or runner up.**
- d. **Batting Cage**: Batting cages are available at most sites. Teams should share batting cage times.
- e. **Clean Dugouts**: Coaches are responsible for ensuring that the team's dugout/bench is cleaned after each game.
- f. **Coin Flip**: During the pre-game conference at home plate with the umpires, the teams shall flip for “home team” during pool play. The high seed shall have the choice of “home” or “away” during bracket play.
- g. **Coolers**: Top Gun-USA Sports does not have a “cooler policy” for our sporting events. We do recommend that a team cooler be allowed in the team dugouts during tournament play. However, this is a facility issue. Teams must abide by Facility guidelines, rules, and regulations.
  - i. Top Gun-USA Sports does not recommend that venues provide team water coolers in a dugout due to issues and concerns with providing and maintaining clean water after each game. Regulations on a Facility to provide and maintain clean drinking water for each game or to each team is not recommended by Top Gun-USA Sports due to health issues/concerns.
- h. **Definition of “Tournament”**: A Top Gun-USA Sports Baseball tournament exists when at least three (3) teams are competing. Top Gun-USA Sports may allow only two (2) teams to play, but this would not constitute a tournament.

i. **Field Dimensions**

<b>AGES</b>	<b>MOUND</b>	<b>BASES</b>	<b>BASES</b>
9 & U	46'	60'	CLOSED BASES
9 & U	46'	65'	MODIFIED BASES 10-FOOT LINE
<b>9 &amp; U</b>	<b>46'</b>	<b>65"</b>	<b>OPEN BASES</b>
<b>10 &amp; U</b>	<b>46'</b>	<b>60'</b>	<b>CLOSED BASES</b>
10 & U	46'	65'	OPEN BASES
11 & U	50'	70'	OPEN BASES
12 & U	50'	70'	OPEN BASES
13 & U	54'	80'	OPEN BASES
13 & U	60'6"	90'	OPEN BASES
14 & U	60'6"	90'	OPEN BASES
15 & U	60'6"	90'	OPEN BASES
High School	60'6"	90'	OPEN BASES

j. **Forfeits**

- i. All forfeits are subject to review by the Tournament Director and Top Gun-USA Sports.
- ii. Any team that forfeits may result in that team being declared ineligible for any future Top Gun-USA Sports Baseball Tournament play.
- iii. The Tournament Committee shall administer the rules so that the forfeiting team will not benefit and may not advance to the Championship Pool Play or Bracket Play...unless the tournament committee determines that there were extenuating circumstances causing the forfeit.
  1. Teams not having enough players to participate, in either starting or ending a game, shall not constitute "extenuating circumstances".
  2. The use of an ineligible pitcher in a game shall not be considered an "extenuating circumstance".
- iv. Umpires do NOT have the authority to declare a forfeit. Should such a situation arise, umpires shall call the Tournament Director to the field.

k. **Four (4) Game Scheduled With/No Bye Protection:** Each tournament listing has a game **schedule, not Guaranteed**. For example, three (3) or Four (4) games is the standard. However, the **game scheduled** is subject to change in the situation of a "bye", "acts of nature", "acts of God", etc., which results in possible re-formatting of the tournament. By way of example: the format can change due to weather. By way of further example: the number one seed that received a bye, being unseeded.

1. **Playing Rules:** National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) rules, as interpreted by the North Carolina High School Athletic Association, shall be used. However, these rules are subject to exceptions enacted by Top Gun-USA Sports. **SEE PART 2 OF THESE GENERAL RULES FOR MORE INFORMATION ON PLAYING RULES.**

m. **Pitching Restrictions:**

- i. Single Day Limits: In addition to the Tournament Limits
  1. In ages 9U – 10U, a pitcher may not pitch more than 6 innings in one calendar day.
  2. In ages 11U – 12U, a pitcher may not pitch more than 6 innings in one calendar day. In ages 13U – 15U, a pitcher may not pitch more than 7 innings in one calendar day.

**Consecutive Day Limits**

1. **9U - 10U are 7 innings**
2. **11U - 12U are 8 innings**
3. **13U - 15U are 9 innings**
4. **16U – High School has no limit**
  - a. Athletes may pitch these established innings in consecutive calendar days.
  - b. Once the athlete has reached the allowed number of innings in consecutive calendar days, the athlete must rest one calendar day before being allowed to pitch again.
  - c. Once a player rests for one calendar day, the rest day “clears” him and the innings start over. A pitcher’s inning resets to Zero after one (1) day of NOT PITCHING.
- iii. A pitcher is deemed to have pitched an inning if he is the pitcher when the **umpire puts the ball in play to start an inning**...even if he does not actually throw a pitch.
- iv. **MANDATORY DAY OF REST: A player that pitches more than three (3) Inning in ONE (1) Day MUST rest the next day.**
- v. **PENALTY:** If a protest is filed and upheld for a team using a pitcher in violation of the pitching restrictions:
  1. The ineligible pitcher is ejected from that game and suspended for the next scheduled game.
  2. The Head Coach is ejected for the remainder of the tournament.
  3. The current game is immediately a “forfeit”.
    - a. If the offended team is winning at the time of the forfeit, the score will stand if more than 6 runs in ages 12U and under. If not, a score of 6 to 0 will stand. In ages 13U and above, the score will stand if more than 7 runs. If not, a score of 7 to 0 will stand.
  4. Like all protests, an ineligible pitcher must be protested during the game that he is ineligibly pitching. If an ineligible pitcher was used and not protested during the game in which he was used, and that game is now an official game, no protest will be allowed.

n. **Proper Equipment:**

- i. All players and coaches must be properly equipped according to NFHS Rules.
  1. EXCEPTION: Top Gun-USA Sports allows for the wearing of
  2. Phi tens break-away necklaces during play.
  3. STEEL CLEATS

- a. Steel cleats are permitted in ages 13U and above.
- b. Ages 8U through 12U must wear rubber cleats.
  - i. **PENALTY: Players in these age groups discovered wearing steel cleats shall be ejected and also results in the Head Coach being ejected as it is his or her responsibility to make sure all rules are adhered to.**
- c. Regardless of age group, steel cleats are NOT permitted on any portable mounds. Sometimes portable mounds are used in age groups 13U and above. In such case, the

Pitchers must wear all-purpose rubber shoes when pitching on portable mounds.

- i. PENALTY: Pitchers at any age division discovered wearing steel cleats while pitching on portable mounds shall be ejected. The Head Coach will also be Ejected for such actions. No warnings shall be given.**
- ii. To be “properly equipped” a team must comply with the new equipment safety rules for catcher’s chest protectors. Also, the catcher’s mask/skull cap combination must meet NFHS requirements**

**o. Protests:**

- i. Protests must be made verbally by the offended team at the time of play and before the next pitch is thrown. ii. A fee of \$100.00 cash (to be refunded if the protest is upheld) must accompany the protest.
- iii. Upon the proper filing of a protest, the game shall be stopped (clock is stopped). The umpires shall call the tournament director to the field. All decisions of the protest committee shall be final.
- iv. Only a decision involving the misinterpretation or misapplication of a rule may be protested. NO PROTEST SHALL BE ALLOWED IN MATTERS SOLELY INVOLVING THE UMPIRES’ JUDGMENT.
- v. Games are NOT to be played under protest. That is, the game must be stopped and the protest resolved prior to resuming the game.

**p. Rain**

- i. Teams should report to venues if there is any doubt about the game being played. All teams are to report to their scheduled locations, until a Tournament Director has posted on the Top Gun website (and/or called coaches) that a game is canceled. ii. The Head Coach has the responsibility to find out if games are “rained out” or being resumed. Coaches must come to the venue to find out if games will be played, or if a game has been rescheduled.
- iii. If at all possible, games will be played in complete. Games that are stopped before official game status will be continued from the point of interruption. Games stopped after official game status has been reached shall be an official game.
- iv. RAIN DELAYS COULD LAST FOR ANY PERIOD OF TIME. THE TOURNAMENT DIRECTOR HAS THE AUTHORITY TO CHANGE THE FORMAT OF THE TOURNAMENT DUE TO INCLEMENT WEATHER.

q. **Rain – Official Game Status:** If rain occurs after “official game status” (as defined in these rules) has been reached AND the games are stopped due to the rain or field conditions...that game will be called and become a complete “Top Gun Official Game”. The tournament directors will make this decision, only.

- i. **In ALL ages 8U through HS, a game is official if 2 ½ innings have been played and the home team is winning.**

**ii. Rain during Bracket Play – Official Game Status**

1. If official game status has been reached in a bracket play game and a full complete inning cannot be completed, the score will revert back to the last completed full inning.
  - a. If the reverted score results in a tie game, the high seeded team will be ranked higher.
  - b. If the reverted score would result in a tie game and it is the championship game, the higher seed shall be declared the champion, and the lower seeded team will be the “runner-up” team.
- r. **Rain Policy Seeding:** Teams will be seeded into brackets based on the following procedures during rained out pool-play games: Games Played, Runs Allowed, Runs Scored, Run Differential, Flip of Coin:

1<sup>st</sup> Seed-Teams 2-0 – Runs Allowed, Runs Scored, Run Differential, Flip of Coin  
2<sup>nd</sup> Seed Teams 1-0—Runs Allowed, Runs Scored, Run Differential, Flip of Coin  
3<sup>rd</sup> Seed Teams 1-1 -- Runs Allowed, Runs Scored, Run Differential, Flip of Coin  
4<sup>th</sup> Seed Teams 0-1 -- Runs Allowed, Runs Scored, Run Differential, Flip of Coin  
5<sup>th</sup> Seed Teams 0-2 -- Runs Allowed, Runs Scored, Run Differential, Flip of Coin  
6<sup>th</sup> Seed Teams 0-0 -- Runs Allowed, Runs Scored, Run Differential, Flip of Coin

- s. **Team Arrival:** Teams should be present at least one (1) hour before their scheduled game starting time. The scheduled starting time of the game is the forfeit time unless the game is delayed by Top Game.
  - i. Games may start early if fields are ready for play. However, no game may start more than one (1) hour early, unless the tournament has been shortened by the Tournament Director as set forth in these rules. **t. Tie-Breaker Rule**
    - i. Random Pool Play (all teams do not play the same common opponents during pool play).
      1. Win-Loss Record
      2. Head-to-Head
      3. Runs Allowed in all Pool Games
      4. Runs Scored in all Pool Games
      5. Run Differential-last game played
      6. Coin Flip Round ii. Round Robin
    - ii. Pool Play (all teams have played one another in pool play).
      1. Win-Loss Record
      2. Head-to-Head (if only 2 teams are tied; skip if 3 or more tied)
      3. Runs Allowed
      4. Runs Scored
      5. Run Differential – last game played
      6. Coin Flip
  - ii. **Tournament Director:** The tournament director always has the authority to revise and/or change the tournament format due to rain or any reason the tournament director deems is necessary in the best interest of the tournament.

## L. MISCELLANEOUS MATTERS

- a. TEAM RE-CLASSIFICATION FOR WORLD SERIES AND NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS
  - i. Teams will not be allowed to reclassify into a lower division (i.e., drop from Division 1 to Division 2 or drop from Division 2 to Division 3) within 30 days of a World Series or National Tournament.
  - ii. Teams with no Top Gun playing history may enter our World Series “at large”. Those teams’ classification must be D1 or D2, only. No team may enter at the D3 level with no Top Gun-USA Sports Baseball history unless approved by Top Gun-USA Sports.
- b. POINTS PROGRAM
  - i. Teams that move up or down in divisions have created issues in Top Gun-USA Sport’s Points Program.
  - ii. Thus, we will award points based on the three (3) point winners in an age division (**Divisions 8U-13U**) regardless of skill level associated with teams.
- c. FUNDRAISER EVENT
  - i. Any fundraiser tournament must be hosted through a Top Gun-USA Sports sanctioned director. ii. Top Gun Sports does not grant fundraiser tournaments to an organization nor 3<sup>rd</sup>-party group.
  - iii. Directors may elect to run a fundraiser for a cause during the year if they choose to do so. That decision will be made by contacting the Director.
  - iv. All Top Gun rules and guidelines must be followed during a fundraiser event. There is no exception to this rule.
- d. RAIN REFUND POLICY
  - i. If a tournament is cancelled due to rain prior to any games being played, all teams will receive a full refund.
  - ii. If one game is started or completed, and the tournament cannot continue, the team shall receive ½ of the team entry fee.
  - iii. If teams have two (2) games played, which are “official game status”, the event will be classified as a one (1) day event and refund would apply accordingly. Awards and Points will apply in this case. Perks would not be required for this event.
- e. RAIN REFUND POLICY FOR GATE ADMISSIONS
  - i. Refunds for gate admission will never be given for any reason, including rain.
  - ii. Top Gun has a “Gate Admission Price” and not a “Game Guarantee Price”. Players and Coaches may enter ball parks during issues. iii. Parents and fans that enter venues during rain are doing so at their own risk. They assume the risk that no games will be played. If games are not played there, is NO REFUND.

## III. Part 2

# PLAYING RULES

A. Top Gun-USA Sports Baseball uses NFHS Rules with the following modifications/changes:

**a. Playing the game**

**i. Beginning the game**

1. Pool games begin with a coin toss. Winner of toss selects home or away.
2. Non-pool games have the highest seed as the home team.

**ii. Plate Meeting**

1. Umpires are to remind coaches at plate meetings that NFHS rules are used. Specifically, state, “this means fake third to first pickoff moves are allowed.”
2. Umpires are to remind coaches at plate meeting that one (1) coach is allowed outside the dugout on a bucket (except for two base coaches when team is on offense).
3. Time Limit clock begins at end of plate meeting.

**iii. Innings/Length of Games**

1. 8U through 12U games are scheduled for 6 innings.
2. 13U through HS games are scheduled for 7 innings.

**iv. Time Limits**

1. The game begins at the completion of the home plate meeting.
2. “Super Saver” One Day Tournament
  - a. 8U time limit is 1:15
  - b. 9U through High School time limit is 1:30

**3. Multi-Day Tournament**

**a. Pool Games ONLY**

- i. **8U time limit is 1:15**
- ii. **9U through High School time limit is 1:30**

**b. Bracket Games times is 1:45**

**c. Championship Game**

- i. 8U time limit is 1:30
- ii. 9U through High School time limit is 2:00

4. If time expires after the third out is made, then a new inning must be played.

- a. **PLAY:** The third out of the bottom of the fifth inning occurs with 45-second remaining in the time limit. As the teams are switching sides, the time limit is reached. **RULING:** The sixth inning must be played.
- 5. **All consolation games have a time limit of 1:30.**
- 6. When time expires during an inning in a pool play game or championship game, teams will finish the current inning.
  - a. **PLAY:** The time limit expires in the bottom of the sixth inning. The home team was batting with one out, the bases loaded, and a score of 5 to 5. After the time limit expires, the batter is hit-by-pitch. **RULING:** The hit-by-pitch forces R3 to score. The game is now over, the teams do not play the rest of the sixth inning.
- 7. Stopping of Game Clock.
  - a. **As set forth elsewhere in these General Rules, the game clock shall be stopped by the umpires when an ejection occurs or when a team files a protest.** [Please see Part 1 of these General Rules for more information on ejection and/or protest procedures.](#)
  - b. Additionally, if a player becomes injured requiring the stoppage of play for more than a brief pause (for instance, the player needs medical attention on the field), the umpires shall stop the game clock. It is umpire's judgment as to whether the delay is more than "brief" to warrant the stopping of the game clock. Thus, the umpire's decision is not subject to protest.

**b. New International Tie-Breaker Rule**

- c. a. The International Tie-Breaker will be used for Bracket Games ONLY.
- d. b. In Pool Play ONLY, if time has expired and the inning has been completed with the teams still Tied, the GAME WILL BE OVER. There will be No International Tie-Breaker in Pool Games
- e. Each team shall begin their offensive half of the inning with the bases loaded and one out. The last hitter from the team's prior offensive inning shall go to 1st base, the hitter before him shall go to 2nd base, and the hitter before him shall go to third base. This rule shall be used for each inning from this point forward until a winner can be declared.
- f. Teams may NOT use a courtesy runner when the game is being contested under international tie- breaker rules.
- g. 1. If a player has been ejected from the game and is now in order to bat in an international tie-breaker, an "out" will be called when it is his time to bat. If an ejected player would have been required to start an inning on base pursuant to the international tie-breaker rule had he not been ejected, the umpires shall place the next previous batter in that spot-on base (no "out" is called in this situation).

h. In bracket play, there shall be no ties. If time has expired and the inning has been completed with the teams till tied, the International Tie-Breaker Rule shall be used as set forth supra. In bracket play, the teams will play as many innings as is necessary, using the International Tie-Breaker, to determine a winning. a. In a championship game, if time expires (and the inning has been completed) and the teams are still tied, the International Tie-Breaker Rule will be used in championship games.

### i. Run Rule

1. COACH PITCH/MACHINE PITCH: 15-run lead after 5 innings of play for Coach Pitch Only.
2. **ALL AGES: 9u and Above: 12 runs after (3) innings, 8 runs after (4) innings, OR 8 runs after (5) innings.**
  - a. **PLAY:** In the top of the third inning the visiting team scores (5) runs to take a 12-run lead. **RULING:** The home team must bat in the bottom of the third inning. The home team is entitled to the same number of innings at-bat as the visitors.
  - b. **PLAY:** In the bottom of the third inning the home team scores (5) runs to take a 12-run lead. There is still only one out in the inning. **RULING:** The game is over. The visitors have already had three turns at-bat.

### ii. Protests

1. If a team properly protests (before next pitch, etc.) pursuant to the NFHS rules, the umpires should stop the game and call the site director over the field immediately.
2. [See the discussion about “Protests” in Part 1 Administrative Rules in these General Rules.](#)

### a. Roster and Line-up Rules

- i. A team may begin a game with 8-players.
  1. The 9<sup>th</sup> player spot in the line-up will be an “out” each time it is reached.
  2. If the 9<sup>th</sup> player arrives during the game, he may be entered into the line-up. If the coach fails to list this player on the umpire’s scorecard at the beginning of the game, the umpire shall add him when he arrives.
  3. **If a player is late for a game and the team has batted (9) players, through its line-up that did not require an out to be taken, a late player can be added as a substitute only.**
  4. **In coach pitch (only) a late player would be added to the bottom of the line up without penalty.**

### ii. Batting Order

1. Teams may bat nine (9) players OR up to their entire roster.
  - a. Batting more than nine (9) is NOT mandatory.
  - b. A team may bat more than nine (9), but less than its entire roster (for example, it may bat 11 players).
  - c. If a team bats all its rostered players, that team will not have any substitutes.
    - i. Thus, if a player becomes injured or sick, an “out” will be called the first time that player’s spot comes up to bat. Subsequently:

1. If the team wants that player to be able to come back later in the game, an “out” will be called every time his spot in the line-up is reached.
2. However, if the team states that the injured/sick player will not return, no more “outs” will be called. Rather, his spot in the batting order will be skipped each time it is reached. Once he is skipped, the team cannot change its mind; the player cannot return to the lineup in that game.
- d. If a team bats all its rostered players and a player is ejected, an “out” will be called each time that spot in the line-up comes up to bat.
- e. If a team bats all its rostered players, it may use the player who made the last recorded out as a courtesy runner.
  - i. If a team is NOT batting the entire line-up, then an eligible substitute must be used as a courtesy runner. A player who has already appeared in the game may only be used if no eligible substitutes remain.
  - ii. In any event, a courtesy runner is never required.
  - iii. A courtesy runner cannot be used when the international tie-breaker rule is in effect.

**f. NFHS Designated Hitter Rule.**

**If a team bats only (9) players, they may (but not required) use the NFHS Designated Hitter Rule. The DH Hitter may hit for any position player.**

- iii. Bunting is allowed.

- 1. Fake bunts (followed by a swing) are NOT allowed in ages 8-- 12u.**  
**This is commonly called Slash Bunting.**
  - a. Penalty is Player is out, and the ball is dead. All base runners return to previous base.**
  - b. If a batter shows bunt, all defensive players may “charge”.**
2. The NFHS re-entry rule for starters is in effect for teams not batting all players.
  - a. Note: A pitcher may be withdrawn from the game as pitcher and substituted for and subsequently re-enter the game as pitcher only if the pitcher was withdrawn on the first trip during an inning.

**iv. Pitching Restrictions**

1. **See Part 1, Administrative Rules of these General Rules**

2. If protested, umpires are not to rule on the protest. Rather, umpires are to call the tournament director to the field.

#### **v. Trips to the Mound**

1. On the second mound trip to the same pitcher in the same inning, the pitcher must be removed from the game.
  - a. If a pitcher is removed from the game pursuant to this rule, he may play another position, but he cannot pitch again.
    - i. Removal from the mound on the second visit in the same inning disqualifies the pitcher from returning to the mound as pitcher only in that game.

- a. If a pitcher is removed on the first visit, he may come back and pitch in that game after one batter has been retired.
- b. Pinch-hitting for the pitcher is allowed. The pitcher who was batted for may re-enter the game as pitcher as long as the team has eligible substitutes.

## **b. Equipment**

### **i. Bat Rules**

- 1. The High School Federation Rules will be used for illegal bats or any banned bats.**
- 2. Age groups 14U and above use the NFHS bat rule (BBCOR) which is a drop 3 bat.**
  - a. PENALTY: Umpires working these age groups are instructed to follow the NFHS rule exactly; including imposing the required penalties as set forth in the rule book for discovery of an illegal bat.
- 3. For 13u only, drop 8, 7, 6, 5, and 4 with a Bat Performance Factor (BPF) of 1.15 or USA Stamp and -3 BBCOR bats are legal.**
- 4. For all other age groups, there are no bat size restrictions, but all bats must be stamped with a BPF of 1.15 or have a USA Baseball Logo.**
  - a. With respect to bat protests in the 8U through 13U age divisions:
    - i. if a team protests that an opponent is using an illegal bat, the umpire shall call “time” and call the site director to the field.
    - ii. Only the site director, or his/her designated UIC, can rule on whether a bat is legal or illegal.
    - iii. PENALTY: If a bat is found to be illegal, the site/tournament director shall apply the NFHS illegal bat rule as written in the NFHS rulebook.
- 5. The following bats are illegal regardless if they comply with the above requirements:**
  - a. 2017 CF Zen Balanced (-8) – 29”/21oz.
  - b. 2017 CF Zen Balanced (-8) – 30”/22oz.
  - c. 2017 CF Zen Balanced (-8) – 31”/23oz.
  - d. 2017 CF Zen Balanced (-8) – 32”/24oz.
  - e. 2017 CF Zen SL 2  $\frac{3}{4}$ ” (-10) – 28”/18oz.
  - f. 2017 CF Zen SL 2  $\frac{3}{4}$ ” (-10) – 29”/19oz.
  - g. 2017 CF Zen SL 2  $\frac{3}{4}$ ” (-10) – 30”/20oz.
  - h. 2017 CF Zen SL 2  $\frac{3}{4}$ ” (-10) – 31”/21oz.
  - i. 2017 CF Zen SL 2  $\frac{3}{4}$ ” (-10) – 32”/22oz.
  - j. 2017 CF Zen Zero Dark 2  $\frac{3}{4}$ ” (-10) – 29”/19oz.
  - k. 2017 CF Zen Zero Dark 2  $\frac{3}{4}$ ” (-10) – 30”/20oz.
  - l. Custom 2017 CF Zen 2  $\frac{3}{4}$ ” (-10)

- m. Custom 2017 CF Zen Balanced (-8)
- 6. Wooden bats are always approved for all age groups.

- a. A wooden bat is 100% wooden OR it may be composite, but if it is composite the barrel of the bat must be 100% wood.
- 7. Bat Rule for Coach Pitch, Machine Pitch, and Hybrid
  - a. A coach pitch bat may be a large barrel or composite bat or a wooden bat.
  - b. **Bats are not to be heated during games.**
    - i. However, "Pyrolite Microwavable Bat Warmer" is a Top Gun-approved device to keep bats from dropping below the bat recommended temperature. As this is a safety issue, Top Gun has approved this device.
- ii. **Baseballs**
  - 1. Only Top-Gun baseballs are to be used.
  - 2. Umpires should get three baseballs from the site director before each game. Old baseballs should be returned to the site director (not coaches) after each game.
    - a. Exception: A batter is allowed to keep a baseball if he hits a homerun.

**c. Forfeits**

- i. Umpires may eject coaches, players, and/or fans, but cannot declare a forfeit.
- ii. If conditions become unbearable (due to unsportsmanlike behavior), the umpire shall stop the game and call the site director/UIC to the field immediately.
- iii. [See Part 1 of these General Rules for more on forfeits.](#)

**d. 9u Special Program Rules**

1. **Balks in the 9U age division vary in the Spring and Fall Season.**
2. **9u Bases will be 65 feet base paths for both Fall and Spring Season, and the mound will be 46 feet.**
3. **Fall Season is August 1, until December 31, of each year.**
4. **In the Fall Season 9u play Modified Bases, if a balk occurs on a pickoff attempt in a 9U game in the Fall Season, the ball is dead, and all runners return to their time-of-pitch.**
5. **There will be a drawn 10-feet line placed 10-feet beyond first, second and third bases.**
6. **The Base Runner can take a lead, but must not be beyond the 10-feet line when the ball crossed the plate. The Runner's feet must be stationary before the pitcher begins his delivery to the plate. The Runner is allowed to steal after the ball crosses the plate.**
7. **If the runner gets running state in an attempt to steal before the ball crossed the plate or is put in play, the runner shall be declared out.**
8. **Penalty: Immediate Dead Ball. The base runner is OUT and removed from the bases. All other runners return to their time of pitch base.**

9. **Third Strike Rule: In the Modified 9u Season the Cather DOES NOT have to catch the Third Strike.**
10. **In the Spring Season 9u play Open Bases Normal Baseball, and Balks are called. There are no warnings.**
11. **Open Baseball means no 10-foot base line, and runners are free to steal bases. Base Runner may advance on dropped 3<sup>rd</sup> strikes.**

ii. **Balks are called in the 10U through HS division.**

1. **There are NO WARNINGS in any age division.**
2. **Balks will be a Live Ball.**
3. **No Balks will be called in the 9u age Divisions in the 9u Fall Modified Division. (This means if a pitcher does balk to pick-off a baserunner the ball is dead, and all runners return to their original base with no penalty).**
4. **In the Spring Season, the 9u age Division will be open bases.**

**e. Base Running**

i. **8U Coach Pitch & 9U Closed Bases**

1. All runners shall be in contact with their bases and shall not leave their base until the ball has crossed the plate. If a runner leaves the base before the ball crosses the plate, the umpire shall signal to indicate the violation at the time the violation occurs.
2. **PENALTY:** Immediate dead ball. The runner is out and removed from the bases. All other runners return to their time-of-pitch base.
3. **See Part 3 of these General Rules for more on 8U Base Running Rules.**

ii. Courtesy Runners

1. A courtesy runner must be an eligible substitute (meaning he is not in the batting line-up as a player).
2. A “burnt sub” may be used as the courtesy runner if a team does not have an eligible sub.
3. A courtesy runner may be used for the pitcher or catcher of record.
4. A courtesy runner is never required.
5. A courtesy runner cannot be used when the international tie-breaker rule is in effect.

## IV. Part 3

# 8U COACH PITCH, MACHINE PITCH & HYBRID PLAYING RULES

**"WE WILL ONLY OFFER COACH PITCH FOR ALL WORLD SERIES AND NATIONAL EVENTS. NO HYBRID WILL BE OFFERED."**

**"WE WILL BE GLAD TO OFFER MACHINE PITCH FOR ANY TOURNAMENT PROVIDING WE FOUR (4) MACHINE PITCH TEAMS TO OFFER A MACHINE PITCH DIVISION!"**

### **A. Hybrid Rules, Selecting Coach Pitch or Machine Pitch**

a. Teams may elect to use a machine to pitch to players, or use a coach.

- i. Teams must use the same method for an entire inning.
- ii. Teams may change method from inning-to-inning.

b. *See Part 2 of these General Rules for number of innings to be played, time limit, and international tie breaker rules.* **B. Pitching**

#### **a. Coach Pitch**

i. The Adult Pitcher must pitch from 40-feet. ii. There is a 16 feet round circle that is eight (8) feet from the pitcher rubber.

1. The player/athlete playing the position of pitcher must have one foot inside the pitching circle, and be positioned behind the Adult Pitcher.

2. The player/athlete playing the position of pitcher is not allowed to come out of the circle until the ball is batted. If the batter is bunting, all players may charge at the time the batter shows bunt.

iii. The pitcher must throw overhand.

iv. The adult pitcher can only instruct the batter.

1. The adult pitcher cannot instruct the base runners. Base runners may only be instructed by the base coaches.
2. Violation of this rule results in a restriction to the dugout for the coach (meaning he can no longer pitch).
- v. The same adult must pitch to the players for the entire inning. Teams may switch adult pitchers only at the start of a new inning.
- vi. There are no Base-on-Balls.

**b. Machine Pitch and Hybrid**

- i. Hybrid is not allowed in World Series or National Championships. We will offer Machine Pitch if we have a minimum of four (4) teams requesting
- ii. The front of the pitching machine is set 46-feet from the back tip of home plate straight toward second base.
  1. There is a box that extends SIX (6) FEET to either side of the pitching machine and for SIX (6) FEET in front and SIX (6) FEET behind (for a total of TWELVE (12) Feet) the pitching machine. This forms a 12x12 box with the pitching machine in the center of the box. (NOTE: This is for the Machine Pitch Division ONLY.  
If you are playing Hybrid, use the coach pitch box rule.)
    - a. This mark is considered a safety mark for the player/athlete playing the pitcher position.
    - b. The player/athlete playing the position of pitcher must have one foot inside the pitching box.
    - c. The player/athlete playing the position of pitcher is not allowed to cross this mark until the ball is batted. If the batter is Bunting, all players may charge at the time the batter shows bunt.
  2. The pitching machine speed for 8U is 40-44 MPH with a setting of 9-3-3 on the spring-loaded machine.
  3. The pitching machine speed for 7U ONLY Division is 38-42 MPH with a setting of 8-3-3 on the spring-loaded machine.
- iii. If a pitched ball hits a batter, it is a “no pitch” and a dead ball.
  1. The batter is not awarded first base.
  2. It is still a “no pitch” even if the batter swings or hits the ball.

**C. Batting Order**

- a. All players present in uniform and in the dugout will be in the batting order.
- b. Teams are to bat the entire roster.
  - i. All players present at the game and dress to play must bat.
  - ii. Coaches may not delete players from the playing roster to gain a competitive advantage.
    1. PENALTY: Such actions shall constitute “unsportsmanlike” conduct. See Part 1 of these General Rules for penalties for unsportsmanlike conduct. Additionally, team may be disqualified from the tournament.

- c. See Part 2 of these General Rules for dealing with injured players who are unable to bat their turn.
- d. Courtesy runners are only allowed for the catcher of record. **D. Defense**
  - a. All players must play every other inning in the field.
    - i. An “inning” means three consecutive outs.
    - ii. A team uses only 10 defensive players at a time.
      - 1. Only six (6) infielders can be played.
      - 2. Four (4) outfielders will be used.
        - a. Outfielders may not cover second base for a put-out on the first throw.
        - b. Outfielders must play behind the 90’ mark on each field.
        - c. Teams that start with less than 10 players must play a full infield.
      - iii. There is “free” substitution on defense.
      - iv. To allow teams to comply with this rule, a substitute does not have to sub for the same player each inning.

## **E. Equipment**

- a. A player who “slings” a bat will receive a warning.
- b. A second incident by any batter on the same team will be an “out” and the ball will be dead and no runner may advance.
- c. See Part 2 of these General Rules for bat size restrictions. **F. Batting**
  - a. Each batter is allowed 5 pitches or 3 strikes.
    - i. If a batter hits a foul ball on the fifth pitch, he or she is allowed to continue batting until he or she does not make contact with the ball OR (s)he puts the ball in play.

## **G. Coaching:**

**Four (4) Coaches may be rostered in the 8u division.**

- a. Defensive Coaching**
  - i. A defensive coach may be positioned on each foul line in the outfield.
    - 1. The coach may only coach the outfielders, he may not coach the infielders.
    - 2. Violation of this rule results in a restriction to the dugout.
- b. Offensive Coaching**
  - i. Base coaches may not have any contact with the base runners while the ball is live and in play.
    - 1. Penalty: The runner is out.

## **H. Game Play**

- a. Only one batter may be on deck, and they must be in the on-deck circle.
- b. Once the ball is batted, the adult pitcher (coach pitch or machine operator) must avoid interference by moving to the nearest sideline until all play is dead.
  - i. On a bunt, the adult must take a knee in the pitcher circle.
  - ii. Interference/Obstruction may be called for violation of these two rules.
  - iii. Continued violations will result in the coach being restricted to the dugout.
  - iv. A batted ball that hits the adult is “dead” and the umpires shall rule a “no pitch”. All runners return to their time-of-pitch base.

1. NOTE: Anytime a pitch is to be declared a “no pitch” by rule, it is still a “no pitch” even if the batter swung and/or hit the pitch.
- v. A fair batted ball that hits the pitching machine is a dead ball.
  1. The batter is awarded first base. 2. All other runners are awarded one base.
- c. Teams may score a maximum of five runs in the first inning.
  - i. In the 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> inning, the team in the lead may score no more than 5 runs. The team that is trailing may score enough runs to “even up the score” plus five additional runs. ii. In the 6<sup>th</sup> inning or any additional innings (including international tie- break innings) is unlimited scoring.
- d. A batted ball (unless foul) is a live ball and in play until the defense stops the progress of all runners.
  - i. The umpires can call “time” after every play and declare the ball dead.
  - ii. Umpires should call time when all three of the following occur:
    1. The defensive team has stopped the progress of all runners attempting to advance.
      - a. It is umpire judgment as to whether the lead runner has stopped attempting to advance
      - b. If a coach is trying to have their runner “dance” around the base to draw a throw...this is NOT to be considered trying to advance.
    2. The ball is in the possession of a fielder in the infield that has stopped the lead runner.
    3. No defensive play is imminent.
- e. Runners may not leave their bases until the pitched ball crosses the front edge of home plate.
  - i. A runner who leaves early is declared “out” and the pitch is called a “no pitch”. The ball is immediately dead. ii. If the bases are loaded with no outs and a runner leaves the base early, but the batter hits a single (or better) the runner who left early is “out”, the pitch is a “no pitch”, all other runners return, and no runs score. This is an immediate dead ball.
- f. NFHS slide rule applies.
  - i. Additionally, if a tag play is imminent, the runner should slide or seek to avoid contact.
    1. For a tag play to be “imminent” the defensive player must have possession of the ball.
    2. There is no penalty, unless the runner also commits malicious contact. ii. NFHS Malicious Contact Rule applies.
- g. Bunting is allowed.
  - i. Fake bunts (followed by a swing) are not allowed.
    1. Player is out and the ball is dead.
    2. If a batter shows bunt, all defensive players may “charge”.
- h. Catcher
  - i. The catcher must be properly equipped pursuant to NFHS rules.
    - i. The catcher must be in the catcher’s box and no more than four (4) feet behind home plate.

1. PENALTY: If the catcher continuously refuses to position himself within four (4) feet of home plate, the coach shall be required to replace that player.

- i. Run Rule

- i. See Part 2 of these General Rules

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