

Battle of the Mahoning Valley Rules

A. Player Guidelines

In all age divisions, the player's age on April 30th determines the player's eligible age division for the current season. Players can play up an age division but can never play down.

Elite Level Performance will use NFHS (High School) Rules with the following exceptions --- Note ages 9u-14u are allowed to lead off and steal bases.

1. Courtesy runner for pitcher or catcher at any time is allowed. It must be a player not currently in the line-up. If there are no players available on the bench then last out made is used. The runner cannot be the same for both pitcher and catcher.
2. 9u -12u All games will have a 1:45hour time limit, 13u-14u will have a 2:00hour time limit except the championship game. NO inning can start after the 1:45hour or 2:00hour limitation– however, once started the inning must finish. THE CHAMPIONSHIP GAME WILL HAVE NO TIME LIMIT! The Umpire will verify the start time with the home scorebook. The umpire's watch then becomes the official time and it is his decision when the time limit is reached. The clock starts once grounds rules are completed. The time limit must be reached before the last out of the current inning, not before the first pitch of the next inning to have reached the time limit – For example (the last is recorded at 1 hr 44 min or 1 hr 59 min. another inning is allowed to be played)
3. If the game is tied after the time limit has expired in POOL PLAY, the game will end in a tie. – IF a game is tied IN the championship rounds after the time limit we will go to an Elite Level Shootout
4. Shootout Format – the home team remains the home team. An inning starts with a runner on 2nd base, 1-1 count on the batter, all ensuing batters, and NO outs. Play 3 outs – both teams bat. If after a full inning is played the game remains tied – we will play a second inning under the same format and so on until a winner is decided.
5. Run rule is 15 after 3 innings, 10 after 4 innings, and 8 after 5 in all games. This includes the Championship Round. If the time limit has been achieved and the home team is leading the game is over. We will not play the bottom half of the inning
6. **There are no pitching rules or limitations at 9u-14u. However, please have the player's best interest in mind!**
7. Metal spikes are allowed in the 13-18 age groups – ages 9-12 must use rubber or plastic molded spikes.
8. **GAMES WILL BE SEVEN INNINGS FOR AGES 13U – 14U AND 6 INNINGS FOR 9U – 12U.**
9. A flip of a coin between the two teams determines the home team for each pool play game. For bracket play games, the highest seed is the home team, including the championship game unless seeds were not used then a coin flip will decide the home team.

10. Base Distances/Pitching Distances/ Game Length

11.

- 9u – 10u 65/46 -- 6 innings
- 11u – 12u 70/50 -- 6 innings
- 13u 54/80 -- 7 innings
- 14u 60/90 - 7 innings A legal slide can be either foot first or head first. If a runner slides feet first, at least one leg and buttock must be on the ground. If a runner slides, he or she must slide within the reach of the base with either a hand or a foot.

12. Runners are never required to slide, but if a runner elects to slide, the slide must be legal.

If a tag play is imminent, the runner should slide or seek to avoid contact, but there is no penalty if the player does not slide.

No player can initiate malicious contact. It is the umpire's judgment call that determines whether the contact is malicious.

PENALTY: *The player initiating malicious contact is removed from the game. Note: There can be a collision where both players go head over heels that is not malicious contact. The key to malicious contact is **intent**. Umpires must ask themselves when making the call, "Did the runner deliberately or intentionally run into the fielder to break up the play or cause harm to the fielder?" If the answer is yes, then you have malicious contact, if the answer is no, then it is a clean play and you have nothing. Umpires must be careful when making this call to avoid ejecting players if the intent is not there. Keep in mind that the younger ages are just learning the game, and sometimes there is contact by the runner not sliding and running into the catcher. Remember, the keyword is **intent**.*

If a defensive player is obstructing the runner (judgment call by the umpire), contact by the runner is not illegal unless it is malicious.

13. **Balk rule: 11 and under 1 balk warning per pitcher, 12u 1 balk warning per team, 13 and up no balk warnings.**

14. Once a pitcher leaves the pitching position (mound) for 1 pitch – he cannot return as a pitcher for the remainder of the game

15. **Bats must be made of an approved material and be smooth and round. There are no bat restrictions in the 9u – 13u divisions unless notice is made available regarding a specific bat being illegal. In the 14u division only minus 5 or minus 3 bat areas are allowed. If a 14u (60/90) team plays up at 15u they must use a minus 3 - BBCOR certified bat. They will be held to the high school bat restriction rule. If a player is found using an illegal bat that player will be ejected and the at-bat will be an out or the result of the play - whichever benefits the opposing team. The illegal bat must be found during or immediately after the at-bat - not a batter later.**

16. Intentional walks – no pitches need to be thrown.

17. Umpires- Ages 8u-10u will have 1 umpire per game. Ages 11u-14u will have 2 umpire per game.
18. Pay at the Plate Style- Umpires for 8u-10u will receive \$60 per game (\$30 from each coach), Umpires for 11u-13u will receive \$60 per game (\$60 from each coach), Umpires for 14u will receive \$65 per game (Each coach pays \$65).
19. Re-entry Rule – a starting player may re-enter the game one time in their original batting order. Substitutes may not re-enter the game once removed.
20. Players may only be on one roster per tournament, and can only play for 1 team in the tournament violation will result in games forfeited.
21. Games suspended will begin where they left off. Suspended games can be due to darkness or weather. However, if 4 innings are complete or 3 ½, if the home team is leading the game, is considered official. In 6 innings games 3 innings or 2 ½ if the home team is leading. All games called before these limits are reached are considered suspended. if the game is called due to weather and is in the middle of an inning and is an official game, we go back to the last completed inning for scoring.
22. Game time is forfeit time. Teams may start with 8 players and when the 9th player shows he can be inserted into the game in the 9th spot in the batting order. **If a team forfeits a game during the tournament they are not permitted to move to on to any Championship Round games - they will be allowed to play Consolation Round Games. All Forfeits will be recorded as 1 - 0.**
23. If a team drops below nine players due to injury, no automatic out is recorded. If a team drops below nine eligible players due to an ejection or any reason other than injury and leaves the game, an automatic out is declared in the batting order position of the player that left the game unless there is an eligible substitute.

If a team drops below eight players for any reason, the game has ruled a forfeit and is not rescheduled.

24. Catchers must be properly equipped – umpires' discretion.
25. Batting team is required to retrieve foul balls and HRs and returns game balls to the umpire – you hit it you get it.
26. MANDATORY RULE – YOU WILL CLEAN YOUR DUGOUT AFTER YOUR GAME. FAILURE TO DO SO MAY RESULT IN A FORFEIT. WE ARE NOT HERE TO CLEAN UP AFTER YOUR TEAM.
27. **EJECTIONS - PLAYERS, COACHES, SPECTATORS --- IF ANY OF THE AFOREMENTIONED ARE EJECTED FROM A GAME THAT PERSON WILL BE REMOVED FROM THE CURRENT GAME AND IF IN THE UMPIRE'S OR SITE DIRECTOR'S JUDGEMENT THE VIOLATION THAT CAUSED THE EJECTION IS DEEMED TO BE OF A FLAGRANT OR MALICIOUS NATURE THAT PERSON WILL ALSO BE REMOVED FOR THE FOLLOWING GAME.**
28. Turf Fields -- with the turf fields being more and more in-play all teams must be respectful of the cost of installing and maintaining the facility. The rules are NO metal spikes --- NO Sunflower Seeds -- No Gum. Teams found not following these guidelines will forfeit their game and pay the cost to repair and clean the field.

29. Playoffs/Tie Breakers

Seeding results will be available on the Elite Level Performance website once Pool Play Games have been completed for your age division.

If teams are tied after pool play, the following process will be followed:

Head to Head only applies if all teams that are tied have played each other. If they have not we go to the next tie-breaker and we keep moving forward until all ties are broken. Once the ties are broken and only 2 teams are remaining we do NOT go back to the head-to-head record.

A. Fewest Runs Allowed

B. Run Differential

C. Runs Scored

D. Coin Flip

In the event there is an uneven amount of Pool Play games between teams due to rain, there is a possibility we could seed based on Win % with exceptions -- for example, 2-0 is better than 1-0, 1-0 is better than 1-1 ---

Please note: there will be no re-seeding in the playoff brackets.

30. **Batting Order** --- In ages 9u - 13u teams can use an EH (Extra Hitter) or roster bat. If teams choose to roster bat and a player is hurt and has to leave the game there is no out when that spot comes up in the order. If a player is ejected then that spot will be an out when it comes up in the order. The EH is free to play any defensive position --- the batting order must remain intact.

Ages 14u teams can use a DH, EH, or roster bat. The DH can be for any defensive player and NFHS DH rules apply.

31. Ages 9u Dropped 3rd strike the batter is out -- however baserunners may advance. Baserunners can steal home.

32. **Scorekeeping** --- we realize technology is a great thing but if using an electronic device to keep the official book please make sure it is powered up. It is always best to keep a paper book as a backup --- those do not turn off and lose the game information.

33. **Refund Policy** --- There will be no entry refunds for withdrawal from a tournament within 30 days of the start of that particular event. If a team registers, pays, and then drops out before the 30 days, they can either transfer their entry or receive a refund less a \$150 administrative fee. Refunds due to weather postponement will be calculated by the number of games played. **Please Note: If you withdraw from an Age Division that is FULL you will not receive a refund until/if your spot is replaced by another team! (\$100 Admin Fee still applies).** The weather refunds will go as follows:

For 3 Game Minimum Events ---

A. 0 games played: Entry fee minus a \$100 administrative fee

B. 1 game played: 25% Refund

C. 2 games played: No Refund