

# AM National Tournament Rules

Divisions are based upon a player's age as of the 2015 League Age date (April 30th, 2015). Players may play up in age but may not play down. The 2015 season runs from Sept. 1, 2014 to Aug 30, 2015. Players younger than the League Age must have the approval of the Director.

Any team knowingly using an illegal player shall be subject to discipline ranging from forfeiting a game, ejection from tournament, and suspension from all AMNATIONAL sanctioned leagues and tournaments for a one year period.

Players are required to be in complete baseball uniforms and teams must have non-duplicating numbers on their jerseys. Players may not change numbers during the tournament. The only exception is if a player must change jerseys due to blood on the jersey. That will be allowed and must be reported to the tournament director. If a player plays with a different number during the tournament, the penalty will be ejection from that game for the player and manager.

Batters are required to wear a standard batting helmet with appropriate ear-flaps. Base coaches are ENCOURAGED to wear protective head gear.

Metal cleats are prohibited for teams 11U and below and on all portable pitching mounds.

Teams are prohibited from warming up or conducting their pre-game on any of the infields, no matter what the facility. Warm up in foul territory only!

Major League Baseball™s Sporting News rules shall apply, along with those found in the AMNATIONAL Bylaws booklet.

## Pitching

Right handed pitchers cannot fake a pickoff attempt to third base. A pitcher that steps toward first or third must throw to that base or balk will be called. Pitcher can still step towards second and not throw to that base.

**14U -18U** will use high schools rules where the fake to third is a legal move.

Pitching restrictions our tournaments are as follows:

- **6U:**
  - Coach pitched or machine pitched.
  - If batted ball hits pitching coach, play is dead. The pitch is a foul strike and no runners may advance.
  - If batted ball hits pitching machine & goes in fair territory, ball is in play.
  - If batted ball hits pitching machine & goes foul, dead ball & player is awarded base.
- **7U, 8U:** 5 innings in a day, 7 in the tournament
- **9U, 10U, 11U:** 6 innings in a day, 9 in the tournament
- **12U , 13U, 14U:** 7 innings in a day, 11 in the tournament
- **15U and up:** no pitching restrictions

Pitching does not recycle for the playoffs. Once a pitcher is removed from the mound, he may not pitch again in that game. Umpires show leniency on balks in 9U and below. Violation of pitching restrictions will result in the automatic ejection of the offending Manager and player will be restricted. Umpires and Tournament director will maintain a Pitching Log for each team throughout the duration of the tournament.

Pitching Distances for all AM National baseball tournaments are as follows:

- **6U:** 38 ft mound and 50ft bases
- **7U - 8U:** 40 ft mound, 60 foot bases
- **9U-10U:** 46 ft mound, 65 ft bases
- **11U - 12U:** 50 ft mound 70 ft bases
- **13U:** 54 ft mound 80 ft bases
- **14U and up:** 60 ft. mound 90 ft bases (Some 14Us will play 54x80)

To intentionally walk a batter, a coach simply needs to inform the umpire and point to first base. No pitches need to be thrown

## **Base Running**

### **6U**

Batters will have up to 5 pitches to put the ball in play. If the batter fails to reach base in 5 pitches or 3 swings, the batter is out. Base paths will have halfway chalk marks in the infield between 1st & 2nd base, 2nd & 3rd base, and 3rd & Home. These marks will be used by Umpire to award or return a runner based on where they are when the ball is returned to the infield, and the defensive player raises both their hands. This call is an umpire's judgment!!

Coaches cannot coach from pitcher's mound once ball is in play. Base runners are not permitted to steal bases and must remain in contact with the base until the ball is hit or crosses home plate.

Base runners who lead/take off early from the base before the ball is hit will be called out & play will continue. If ball was not hit, then runner must return to base & pitch will count as a dead ball.

### **7U - 8U**

Bunting is allowed

Teams in the 7U and 8U divisions may steal home as home plate is dead. Runners from 3rd base may only advance on a hit ball or when forced-in by a walk. Runners may steal or take a secondary lead after the ball crosses home plate. The ball is dead when the pitcher has the ball in area of mound and play has stopped in the judgment of the Umpire.

The infield fly rule is in effect.

## **All Divisions**

Courtesy runners will be allowed for the pitcher or catcher at any time. The courtesy runner must be a player not currently in the game or if the team has no players on bench, the last out.

It is the base runner's responsibility to avoid contact with the fielder when he has the ball. Slide or avoid is in effect at all times when fielder is in possession of ball. Intentionally running into a fielder who is in possession of the ball is grounds for ejection and possible suspension of next game (Umpire's judgement).

## **Hitting**

### **6U**

Teams can use up to 10 players defensively, with four of them being outfielders. Outfielder has to be 15ft behind the baseline when ball is pitched. Once an infielder has possession of the ball and raises both hands in the infield, the ball is dead and time will be called (Umpire's judgment). No courtesy runners

## All Divisions

Teams may elect to bat 9 players AND/OR bat 10 players with the 10th player being an EH. The EH is considered a defensive player and may switch in and out defensively. Teams may also bat their entire roster. If a team bats entire roster or has no subs when a starter is injured, an out is recorded each time the injured player's spot comes up to bat. Once a player is removed from a game due to injury, he may not return. Starters may re-enter only one time only in their original spot on the line-up.

Teams may play with 8 players with an out being taken for each time the 9th spot comes up. A 9th player may be added any time during the game.

## Length of Game

- **6U:** Play 5 innings with no new inning after 1 hour 15 minutes
- **7U-8U:** Play 6 innings with no new inning after 1 hour 30 minutes
- **9U-10U:** Play 6 innings with no new inning after 1 hour 35 minutes
- **11U-12U:** Play 6 innings with no new inning after 1 hour 40 minutes
- **13U-14U:** Play 7 innings with no new inning after 1 hour 45 minutes
- **15U and up:** Play 7 innings with no new inning after 2 hours

Once an inning begins, it must be completed. However, if home team is ahead and batting when time expires, the game is over and the inning is not completed. Ties are allowed in pool play.

AM National has the right to modify game lengths due to issues involving limited visibility or park curfew. Every effort will be made to finish the tournament but in cases of rain, other acts of God, tournament director reserves the right to modify schedules/games in order to finish the event.

## Run Rules

- **6U:** 5 run max per inning for first four innings. No run limits for the last inning.
- **7U:** 5 run max per inning for first three innings. No run limits for the last 3 innings.
- **8U and above:** No run limits per inning unless otherwise stated at start of the tournament.

## Mercy Rule:

- **7 inning game:**
  - 12 run lead after 3 innings
  - 10 run lead after 4 innings
  - 8 run lead after 5 innings
- **6 inning game:**
  - 12 run lead after 3 innings
  - 10 run lead after 4 innings
  - 8 run lead after 5 innings

## Bat Restrictions

No Tee ball bats are allowed. Wood and BBCOR (-3) bats are permitted in all age divisions. All other bats must have 1.15 BPF or current USSSA stamp.

Penalty for use of illegal bat after ball has been hit will be an out. Players not put out during play will return to the base they occupied prior to the pitch. 2nd team offense in same tournament will result in ejection of manager and player restriction.

## **Miscellaneous**

The Home team will be determined by a coin flip. In the playoffs, the higher seeded team will be the Home team for duration of tournament. Each team may provide a scorekeeper but all changes must go through the home plate umpire, who is the official scorekeeper.

All conversations with an umpire should be conducted after a time-out has been called and be handled in a calm and professional manner. ONLY Managers or Acting-Managers may question Umpires about rulings; coaches and players who disregard this rule may be subject to ejection at the Umpires digression. Verbal abuse of the umpire will not be tolerated and may result in ejection from the game.

Any manager or coach ejected from the game is required to sit out the next game also. After being ejected, a manager or coach must vacate the premises of the current game and the next game in which he is suspended. Any manager caught continuing to coach after being ejected or suspended will be suspended for an additional period of time. Any player ejected from a game is subject to a one game suspension at the tournament director's discretion.

The Manager or Acting-Manager is responsible for conduct of players, staff, fans and team followers; if situations on or off the field arise the Manager or Acting-Manager shall solve the situations to the satisfaction Umpire Crew-Chief or AM National if not the team shall forfeit. Managers are subject to ejection if his players or fans are out of control.

To protest a game, the umpire must be informed that the game is being played under protest and \$30 must be paid prior to the next pitch being thrown. Once the protest has been made, you must get a ruling from a tournament director immediately. Do not continue the game under any circumstances. Once the next pitch is thrown, both teams have lost the right to protest.

Site Director may be present and will not have any control over the outcome of any play. Umpires will be in complete charge of the games. If an AM National rule is to be questioned, the game will not stop and you may head over to the Site Director and address your issues unless a proper protest has been made.

Any team forfeiting a game on purpose may not advance to the next playoff round if it is determined that it is beneficial to that team with regards to runs allowed/differential etc.

## **Rainout/Tournament Cancellation Policy**

In the event of tournament being cancelled by weather or any other unpreventable occurrence, every effort will be made to complete the tournament. Schedules may be changed, games may be shortened and a 2 day tournament may become a one day tournament. In the event of a rainout with no make-up tournament scheduled, we will offer all teams a credit based on the following criteria:

- Full rainout, meaning no games were played, credit will be issued for the entire entry fee.
- If one game was played, a team will receive credit for ½ of the entry fee.
- If two games are played, no credit will be given.

If a tournament is rained out while in progress and a make-up is scheduled, there will be no refund or credit for teams that do not play the make-up. The tournament director has the right to alter schedules, adjust time limits, or adjust the number of playoff participants in order to complete the tournament. The tournament director also has the right to alter the amount of the credits issued.

*Regardless of the division, In the event of any confusion, conflict, or disagreement about any rule or regulation included herein; the rules committee or site directors will make a ruling that is final and binding for the remainder of the tournament.*

## **Additional Rules for 14U and above only**

The Official Rules of Major league Baseball shall be used; the following modifications apply along with any already stated above for this age group:

**Bats:** Wood bats or BBCOR (-3) bats only

**Ruling:** Players utilizing an illegal bat shall be declared OUT; runners will be returned to the base they occupied at the time the pitch prior to discovery, (all other outs recorded during the at-bat shall stand), discovery of the illegal bat must occur prior to the next batter's first pitch.

**Ejections:** If ejected, you may NOT return to the playing facility until the umpires have left the field; failure to obey this rule will result in suspension from the entire tournament. Confronting the umpires after completion of the game will NOT be tolerated. Anyone ejected will NOT have to sit out the next game unless he/she is ruled to do so by an AM National tournament official. Anyone ejected a second time during the same tournament WILL be suspended the following game. A third ejection will result in suspension from any remaining games. AM National defines a suspension as NOT being able to be present at any playing facility; failure to obey this rule will result in your team's disqualification.

**PITCHING RULES:** Pitchers are NOT restricted to a maximum number of innings during a tournament. Pitchers moved to other positions may return to pitch; but NOT in the same inning. Pitchers may go to their mouth while on the dirt circle but must, in the umpire's judgment wipe prior to touching the baseball. Failure to wiping will result in a BALL to the batter and the baseball shall be replaced.

**RE-ENTRY:** Starters may re-enter ONCE.

**DESIGNATED HITTER (DH):** One DH for any player per team; the DH is a starter. If entered at a defensive position the DH is terminated.

**EXTRA HITTER (EH):** One EH per team; the EH is a starter. The EH is treated as a free-sub who bats; if the EH is placed at a defensive position then the player being removed from the field becomes the EH; they switch designations; the batting order does NOT change.

**Example:** The EH is batting 4th; a DH is used for the pitcher (batting 7th); later in the game the EH is put in to pitch. Ruling: The original EH becomes the pitcher and continues to bat 4th, the original DH or pitcher (manager's choice) becomes the EH and continues to bat 7th - they switch designations; this particular move also terminates the DH.

Teams using an EH (10 player line-up) must finish the game batting 10 players; if a player is injured or ejected and the team does not have any substitutes the EH may play a defensive position; each time the injured or ejected player's turn at bat is reached an out will be recorded. Teams must have 9 defensive players on the field to continue playing; if not, they forfeit the game.

**COLLISION RULE:** When a collision between a runner and a fielder (who is clearly in possession of the ball) occurs - Umpires judge the following: 1) was the collision avoidable (could the runner have reached the base/plate without colliding) or un-avoidable (the runner's path to the base/plate was blocked) and 2) was the runner attempting to reach the base/plate or attempting to dislodge the ball.

Ruling: If the runner; a) could have avoided the collision, or b) attempted to dislodge the ball; the runner shall be declared out; even if the fielder loses possession of the ball, dead ball and all other runners shall return to the last based touched prior to the collision. Not all collisions result in ejection; however, MALICIOUS CONTACT always results in an out and ejection - UMPIRE JUDGEMENT.

**PROTESTS:** Team protesting a 15u and above game shall do so by submitting a \$100.00 cash protest fee to that days tournament director where a prompt decision will be made by AM National officials after gathering the necessary facts. Money will be returned to team filing the protest upon winning the protest.