In The Dirt Baseball Club
2025 Tournament
Rules & Policies

<Updated March 2025>

SPORTSMANSHIP: (UPDATED MARCH 2025)

In The Dirt Baseball Club is a youth baseball tournament operation and strives to create a family friendly environment that allows players to have fun and enjoy their experience. Negative behavior and poor sportsmanship at youth sporting events has become a major issue. In The Dirt Baseball Club Tournaments are not immune as we still see coaches and parents that choose to act in a negative manner toward the opposing team or an umpire from time to time.

Please remember that the games are for the kids, not the adults, and we expect each adult to set a positive example for the players through their words and actions. Everyone that attends a tournament is expected to act in a positive manner, no matter the outcome of a play, call by an umpire, or the game itself.

We simply ask the following: Let the players play Let the coaches coach Let the umpires umpire umpire and fans and parents cheer. Moreover, even when you're not on an In The Dirt Baseball Club field, your personal behavior is a reflection on your team and our tournament operation. **We expect players, parents, coaches and family members to act in a positive manner at all times – with respect for people and property throughout our local community.**

Additionally, intentional disregard for the stated rules (or spirit in which those rules exist) as well as obvious unsportsmanlike behavior will not be tolerated and will place the individuals and/or teams involved at risk for a possible forfeit or banishment from this tournament and future tournaments.

Lasty, these are youth baseball tournaments and the use of profanity directed to umpires or the opposing team is not tolerated. If profanity is used in a manner directed towards an umpire or other team at the discretion of the umpire or tournament director **that player and the head coach** will either be warned or ejected from the game.

In accordance with this the head coach of each team is responsible for the behavior of their players, assistant coaches, fans, and parents. If there becomes an issue with any of the aforementioned groups the head coach is ultimately the one responsible. If behavior that is unbecoming continues the team risks forfeiting the game and their ability to continue play in the current and future tournaments.

EJECTIONS: (UPDATED MARCH 2025)

In accordance with the posted update on sportsmanship the following will be implemented for the 2025 season:

1. Player Ejections for Unsportsmanlike Conduct: If a player is demonstrating behavior that is unsportsmanlike as outlined in the 'Sportsmanship' Section that player will be warned and the head coach will be notified of this warning.
    a. If the behavior is egregious at the discretion of the umpire or tournament official that player can be immediately ejected from the game and the head coach will be ejected as well.
2. Fan Ejections: If a fan is demonstrating behavior that is unsportsmanlike as outlined in the 'Sportsmanship' Section that fan will be warned and the head coach will be notified of this warning.
    a. If the behavior is egregious at the discretion of the umpire that fan can be immediately ejected from the game. The head coach and team will be warned and any further issues will result in the head coach's ejection from the game.
    b. Umpires will address behavior of all groups involved with a team with the head coach.
3. Other Player Ejections: If a player is ejected for a reason other than unsportsmanlike conduct the head coach may not be ejected (ex/ player is ejected for a bat throw)
    a. This is at the discretion of the umpire or tournament official.

Coaches and fans ejected from a game must exit the playing area (must leave the field and fan area) immediately and not return for the rest of that game plus their next scheduled game.

*The tournament director has discretion over ejections to either shorten or extend the duration of a suspension depending upon the situation. No conversations will be had on in game ejections until after the game being played has concluded.

*Players only may stay with their respective teams but may not participate in the rest of that game plus the next scheduled game provided they display a sportsmanlike manner for the duration of the game. If they do not display a sportsmanlike attitude they will be asked to leave the facility.

ROSTERS & INSURANCE:

All teams are required to carry with them at all times a copy of their official roster, a copy of each player's birth certificates or government issued photo ID and a copy of their insurance. The tournament does need to be listed as additional insured. Carry a copy of your insurance and have it available if asked. In the event of a player's age challenge, each team must show the player's birth certificate or valid government issued ID. If a player is found to be ineligible, the player will be removed from the tournament. There will be NO FORFEITS because of an ineligible player. A sub may replace the ineligible player if one is available, otherwise an automatic out will take place in the same manner as an injured player. 17 maximum players rostered per team unless otherwise noted.

A player may appear on ONLY one roster at a time. Any player found to be participating with more than one team shall result in the second team's disqualification, and suspension of the player for the remainder of the tournament.

LINEUPS:

All teams have the option of the following lineups:
•Teams may bat 9 batters, entire roster, or any number in-between. Whatever number of batters you start with you must finish with that number, or take an out for the missing batter.
•Teams may bat the entire roster. When batting their entire lineup, if a player is unable to bat at any time solely due to an on-field injury, then no out will be called but the player is no longer eligible to play in the rest of the game offensively or defensively. If a player arrives late, he may be added to the bottom of the order with no penalty.

***Each team must announce their options when exchanging line-ups with the other team at the pregame conference with the umpire. Only one of the three options.

Injuries/Substitutions:

If a player is injured and no substitute is available, that spot in the lineup will be skipped with no penalty. If an injury occurs during an at-bat and the player can't continue the at-bat, the next batter in the lineup will take over that at-bat and assume the count. If an injury occurs while on the base paths and there are no substitutes available, the player that made the last recorded out will take the place of the injured player on the bases.

RE-ENTRY RULE:

ALL DIVISIONS Teams may substitute for defensive positions (except pitcher) as many times as they wish, as long as the batting order remains the same. A player does not have to play the field in order to bat. Conversely, a player does not have to bat to play the field. A substitute is anyone not placed in the batting order. Once a substitution bats or runs for a player, the sub and the original starter are locked into that batting position and either one may bat or run in that position ONLY.

TIME LIMIT:

Schedule for games will be 6 innings for 9U – 12U, 7 innings for 13U and Older.

Pool Play:
No extra innings in Pool Play. Games can end in a TIE.
For 9u - 12u, no new inning will start after 1 hour and 45 minutes.
For 13u & Older, no new inning will start after 1 hour and 45 minutes.

DROP DEAD TIME LIMITS MAY APPLY TO TOURNAMENT POOL PLAY GAMES AND WILL BE NOTED IN COACHES EMAILS PRIOR TO THE FIRST DAY OF THE TOURNAMENT. If the game ends with an incomplete inning, the inning and any runs scored in it are not counted, and the final score reverts to the last completed inning. If the game is tied when the drop dead time is reached, it may end in a tie.

*In the event that the home team is winning and no new inning time passes the game will end at that point in time, the home team will not continue their at bat as the game cannot continue. This applies in games with and without drop dead times.

Elimination Play:
For 9u - 12u, no new inning will start after 1 hour and 45 minutes.
For 13u & Older, no new inning will start after 1 hour and 45 minutes.

No time limits in Championship games only, a Championship Game can be limited to darkness or weather. If in the judgment of the umpire or tournament official notice will be provided to teams in a reasonable time manner to let them know, e.g. game will end after the next inning. All other games adhere to time restrictions.

Games called before a full inning is complete because of weather, darkness, or other pertinent matters will revert back to the previous inning for the score. If the game has not reached official game status by reverting back to the previous inning, the coaches will mark their books and the game will be considered a complete game. A game is considered to have reached official status at the completion of 4 innings (3 ½ if the home team is leading). Games ending in ties due to darkness, time or weather after 4 innings will remain as ties.

Games tied after regulation in ELIMINATION ROUND will begin each extra inning with the last batter starting on 2nd base with no outs (MLB extra innings rule).

Your base runners will be the last listed on line-up before the current batter to start the inning. It doesn't matter who made the last outs the previous inning. No substitutions. Repeat until someone has the lead after a completed inning. This does not apply to the

Championship games.

No time limits for championship games only, but mercy rules still apply. **Time limits may be modified in advance at the discretion of the tournament director.**

INTENTIONAL DELAYS:

The umpire and tournament director reserves the right to eject any player, coach or fan for intentionally delaying a game. A forfeit may be enforced at the Tournament Director's discretion.

INFIELD FLY RULE:

There will be NO infield fly rule for 8U - 10u. There will be infield fly rule for 11u & older.

CATCHER DROP 3RD STRIKE:

8U - 10u the batter is automatically out. 11u & older regular baseball rules apply.

RULE SETS:

The default rule book for ITD Tournaments will be the USSSA rules followed by the Official MLB Rule Book for anything not covered.

TIEBREAKERS:

Tiebreak Rules will apply to determine seeding after pool play.
Tiebreakers are applied in this order:
-Win Loss Record
-Head to Head record – if two teams are tied.
- If three teams are tied – If one team has defeated both other teams, that team advances. - If not, go to next:
- Least amount of total runs allowed
- Run Differential
- Coin Flip

PROTESTS:

No protests!! Judgment calls are final. A coach may politely ask the umpire who made the call to clarify a rules interpretation. The umpires on the field will make a final decision on the field.

SCOREBOOKS:

The home team will be the official scorebook. The visiting team is encouraged to maintain a book also.

MERCY RULE:

12 runs after 3 innings (2½ if home team is ahead) 10 runs after 4 innings (3½ if home team is ahead). 8 runs after 5 innings (4½ if home team is ahead).

8U ONLY. Maximum of 5 runs per inning for the 1st, 2nd and 3rd inning only. The 4th, 5th and 6th will be unlimited runs.

In the event that a team is unable or unwilling to continue a game there will be a 12 run penalty assessed to the final score.

STEALING:

Stealing is allowed for ALL age groups. Leadoffs and steals for 11U and older. 8U - 10 U – No Leads. Can't Steal until the ball crosses home plate. The runner will be called out for leaving early and the pitch will not be allowed.

Head first slides are allowed into any base for ages 11u and above.

8U -10 U – No Leads. Can't steal until the ball crosses home plate. The runner will be called out for leaving early and the pitch will not be allowed.

8U Only: 8U teams cannot steal home under any circumstance. The runner cannot advance home on a passed ball, wild pitch, overthrow back to the pitcher or overthrow on a play at 3rd.

COURTESY RUNNER:

For Pitcher and Catcher only at any time. If you have substitutes, they will be your courtesy runner. If you do not, then use the player who made the last batted out.

PITCHING:

We no longer impose pitching limits on teams. It is the manager's discretion. It is the responsibility of the manager, coaching staff and parents/guardians to monitor the pitch counts and mechanics of players to ensure they are pitching safely. There is a significant number of resources available to all that provide recommendations on pitch limits and rest periods across all age groups. We highly recommend all teams and parents review those recommendations and follow them for the safety of all.

INTENTIONAL WALKS:

A pitcher is NOT required to throw to a hitter during an intentional walk situation. In other words you CAN declare your intent and automatically give the batter 1st base.

BATS:

See Additional handouts concerning bats.

AVOID CONTACT RULE:

On any force play, the runner must slide AND slide directly to the base or remove himself from the play in such a manner as to not interfere, intentional or unintentional, with the fielder making a play. In addition, the runner cannot interfere with a fielder's ability to throw the ball in any way.

A runner is out when he does not slide and his not sliding creates illegal contact and/or illegally alters the actions of a fielder in the immediate act of making a play, or on a force play, does not slide in a direct line between the bases. This is true even when the runner did not intend to cause contact. In the case of potential double play, not only is the runner who created the violation is out, but also the other runner trying to be doubled up on the play.

If, in an umpire's judgment, there is intentional contact, that umpire may call the runner out on that play. If the contact is judged as intentional and malicious, that umpire **WILL** eject the player from the game. If a player is ejected for this reason, they may face suspension for their team's next game with the possibility of further sanctions as well. The Tournament Director will make the final ruling on a possible suspension.

PROPER CHEERING/NOISE MAKERS:

All individuals (players, coaches, parents and fans) are expected to cheer in a positive manner for their own team and never in a negative manner toward the opposing team. Noise makers are not permitted in the dugouts and if they are used by parents/fans, they must not cause any sort of distraction to the opposing team. Because the term "distraction" can be subjective, if an issue arises at a field involving noise makers, then Tournament Officials may mandate that they not be used during moments of game play. They would only be permitted to be used when the ball is dead or in between innings. If that stipulation is not followed, the noise makers would be prohibited all together for that team for the remainder of the tournament.

DUGOUTS:

Dugouts first come. Teams playing a doubleheader and staying at the same field will stay in the same dugout for both games. Home team as depicted on the schedule for Pool Play.

PREGAME INFIELD:

There will be absolutely NO infield warm-ups before any scheduled game. Please allow the field crews to work on the fields between games.

START OF GAME:

All teams are expected to be at fields ready to play 1 hour prior to game time. Please be prepared to start games early if the field, umpires and teams are ready to play. Teams must have 8 players to start a game. (Out taken for vacant spot in lineup). Teams may finish with 8 players (out taken for vacant spots in the lineup).

REPORTING SCORES:

As the home team is the official scorekeeper, at the completion of the game they will verify with opposing coach/scorekeeper the correct score and then report score to by texting scores to:

Joe Kennedy: (301) 514-1557,
Stating Score, Age Group and Team Names.

REFUND POLICY:

In The Dirt Baseball Club is committed to doing all we can each tournament to play games so long as it is safe to do so. In the event there is inclement weather or the tournament is unable to be completed for whatever reason in full In The Dirt Baseball will issue credits to teams that have registered that can be applied to future tournaments. Credits are valid for two years after being issued.

Play 0 Games: Full Credit towards future tournament

Play 1 Game: 50% Credit towards future tournament

Play 2 Games +: No Credit

Special Considerations for Pre-Game at ITD Park

The schedule is very tight and there is very little time between games. Please be prepared to start up to 30 minutes before the designated start time, as the Tournament Director has the ability to flex start times up to 30 minutes before their originally scheduled start time.

There is only 1 batting cage at the facility and with so many teams using the space the batting cage will be **limited to 10 minutes per team** for warmups before the game. We ask that teams

bring their own pop up nets for warm ups and respect the time limit when another team is waiting to use the batting cage for warm ups. Thank you for your understanding.

NO infield use in pre-game is permitted as our field prep crews work to prepare the fields for the next game. Do not use vacant adjacent school fields for warm ups – doing so could result in tournament disqualification. Teams may use the outfield of the field their game is on or the grassy area next to the batting cage to conduct warm-ups.

Special Considerations for Field of Dreams

There can be NO MUSIC played at Field of Dreams on any game day. The field is near multiple residences and we must show respect to those nearby. Additionally, there are NO DOGS ALLOWED at any time. Coaches are responsible for communicating this information to their families.

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The Tournament Director has the final say on all rules and rules can be modified up until the start of the first game played.

Special Considerations for 8U, 9U and 10U Divisions

Live Play Rule- For base running purposes, play does not begin or resume ("live play") until the pitcher delivers the ball that crosses home plate or the batter hits the ball officially into play.

Dead Ball Rule- For base running purposes, play ends or ceases (a "dead ball" occurs) when the pitcher has control of the ball within a 10' radius around the rubber (umpires discretion). At this point in time, the umpire must determine the position of the base runners at the moment of the "dead ball." Base runners who have reached at least a point midway (30 feet) between the bases may advance to the next base. Base runners who have not yet reached the mid-way point must return to the preceding base.

If the pitcher continues a play by attempting to throw-out an advancing runner after the ball has been returned to him (from a fellow player) within the "infield area" the pitcher has forfeited a "dead ball" and has officially resumed the ball in play, allowing players to advance. A "dead ball" will not occur again until the ball returns back to the pitcher in the "infield area".

Base-on-Balls for Batter – A batter turned runner on their ball-4 pitch for a base-on-balls is not allowed to advance beyond first base on an cleanly fielded pitch by the catcher that is returned cleanly to the pitcher. Other runners on base are allowed to steal or advance, but in this case the batter turned runner is not allowed to advance beyond first. If the ball-4 pitch gets away from the catcher, or away from the pitcher on the return throw from the catcher, or either the pitcher or catcher attempts a pick-off then the batter turned runner can advance. The intent of this rule is to prevent teams from taking unfair advantage of the inexperience of 10U and under players. This prevents a batter turned runner continuing to run to second after reaching first when another runner is on third.