



## ***Tournament Rules & Regulations*** **9U, 10U, 11U and 12U Divisions**

### **AGE DETERMINATION**

1. Age divisions will be determined by child's age on May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2026.
2. Players must be born on or after May 1<sup>st</sup>:
  - a. 2013 for 12U
  - b. 2014 for 11U
  - c. 2015 for 10U
  - d. 2016 for 9U
3. Teams should have proof of age readily available for all players on their roster. In the case that a player's age is called into question via a protest, their team will need to prove the age of the player in defense of said protest. Acceptable documentation of a player's date of birth includes (but is not limited to):
  - a. Birth certificate
  - b. Student ID
  - c. Passport
  - d. School records (Skyward or other school registration sources are acceptable)
4. Palouse Summer Series reserves the right to allow exemptions to the age rules in specific cases. If a player has been granted an age exemption, documentation of the exemption (email from PSS Directors) should be readily available as well.

### **EQUIPMENT NOTES:**

1. No metal cleats allowed in any division
2. All bats must have a USABat or BPF 1.15 (USSSA) sticker to be eligible for tournament play. Wood bats are also allowed.
5. Penalty for the Use of an Illegal Bat:
  - a. Each team is responsible for ensuring they are using legal bats – umpires will not check all team's bats prior to the game
  - b. In the case where the batter is discovered to have used an illegal bat (or step in the batter's box with an illegal bat) prior to the next pitch being thrown, the batter is declared OUT and all base runners will be returned to their original bases from the start of the previous pitch.
  - c. The second offense of an illegal bat in the same game (by ANY player) will result in the same penalty above, as well as a coach & player ejection

## **GENERAL PRE-GAME & GAME PROCEDURES**

1. Home team, in pool play, will be the first team listed on the bracket. During bracket play, the home team will be determined by the higher ranked seed. Tie breakers below will be used to determine the home teams.
2. We will attempt to stay on schedule as much as possible. Teams should do their best to be warmed up and prepared to play at their scheduled game times, regardless of when the game being played in front of them ends. Player health and safety will be first and foremost, but please show a sense of urgency when getting players & pitchers warmed up for your games if the prior game runs longer than expected.
3. Games may start early if both coaches and the umpires agree to it.
4. No infield will be taken before games.
5. Scorekeeping: Home team will be responsible for keeping official scorebook during game.
6. Protests will not be allowed on judgment calls. The umpire will settle all problems on the field at the time of dispute. Umpire may confer with Tournament Director and Umpire-in-Chief for help at time of dispute. No protest will be allowed after next pitch is thrown or following the game.

## **TIME LIMITS & RUN RULES**

1. Game length will be 6 innings OR no new inning at 1 hour and 45 minutes. Umpire will start game time when first pitch is ready to be thrown.
2. Time limits apply to all pool play and bracket games with the exception of the championship game.
3. Tie Games: For all pool play and/or consolation games, if a game is tied after regulation but time remains, the game will continue until either (A) a winner has been determined or (B) the time limit has been reached.
  - a. All extra innings will be played by placing the previous batter in the lineup on second base with no outs, following the Major League Baseball rule
  - b. If after an extra inning is played and the time has elapsed, the game will be declared a tie
  - c. All ties will be considered a 1/2 (.5) win and a 1/2 (.5) loss in the pool standings
  - d. For all bracket play games where a winner must be determined, all extra innings will be played by placing the previous batter in the lineup on second base with no outs, following the Major League Baseball rule
4. Mercy Rule
  - a. 15 runs after 3 innings (2.5 if the home team is ahead)
  - b. 10 runs after 4 innings (3.5 if the home team is ahead)
  - c. 8 runs after 5 innings (4.5 if the home team is ahead)
5. 3 innings constitute a complete game when delayed or called because of inclement weather.

## RULES OF PLAY

1. 12U & 11U will be played on 70' bases with a 50' pitching distance. Lead off, stealing, and dropped 3rd strike is allowed. Balks will be enforced.
2. 9U & 10U will be played on 60' bases with a 46' pitching distance. Stealing allowed after the ball crosses the plate. No dropped 3<sup>rd</sup> strike and no balks will be enforced.
  - a. When a runner is deemed to leave the base prior to the ball crossing the plate:
    - i. If the ball is not put in play, the runner that left early must return to the base he came from.
    - ii. If the ball is put in play, upon completion of the play, the runner that left early must be returned to the last unoccupied base – he can only advance to the base that the hitter forces him to. If the runner that left early is called out, the out will stand as called.
3. Lineup Rules:
  - a. The batting lineup must consist of a minimum of 9 players; there is no maximum
    - i. (EX) If a team's roster consists of 13 players, they can choose to bat 9, 10, 11, 12 or 13 batters
    - ii. NOTE: Teams can start a game with as few as 8 players; in that case, the 9th spot in the order is an automatic out. Teams with fewer than 8 players must take a forfeit – the game can still be played
    - iii. If players are removed from the lineup for whatever reason (injury, etc.), the spot of the player removed from the lineup will result in an automatic out
  - b. High school substitution rules apply – starters are eligible to re-enter the game one time in their original spot in the batting order
  - c. Regardless of lineup construction, teams are allowed free defensive substitutions throughout the game. A player may enter the game defensively at any time without entering the batting lineup
    - i. The only time a player should report as an eligible substitute is when replacing another player in the batting order. This is NOT a requirement per Official Baseball Rules; it just serves as a courtesy to the umpires and the opposing team
  - d. Based on the fact that there are free defensive substitutions, there is no need for a designated hitter, as anyone can be in the field at any given time
  - e. For the purposes of tracking pitching, all pitching changes MUST be reported to both the umpires and opposing team. Pitchers are eligible as free defensive substitutes
4. In-Game Rules:
  - a. Intentional Walks – teams simply need to request to the umpire to issue an intentional walk.
  - b. Sliding – the high school force play/slide rule is in effect. Players must go straight into the bag on force play sides; no malicious contact. It is the discretion of the umpire if the runner is trying to avoid contact or a collision. Malicious contact-runner will be ejected.

- c. Possession – defensive players must have possession of the ball to block a base or home plate.
  - d. Head first slides – allowed in ALL divisions.
- 5. No slug bunting is allowed. Any player who does will be ejected from the game.
- 6. Courtesy runners – allowed for the current pitcher and catcher WITH 2 OUTS only
  - a. If you are not batting your entire team, the courtesy runner can be anyone NOT CURRENTLY in the batting order – they do not have to be an eligible substitute. The same player cannot run for both the pitcher and the catcher in the same inning
  - b. If you are batting your entire team, the courtesy runner MUST BE the last batted out
- 7. On-deck hitters must remain on their own dugout side of field in designated on-deck area.

## **PITCHING RULES & REGULATIONS**

1. Once a pitcher is removed from the mound, he is ineligible to return to that game as a pitcher, even if he remained in the game at another defensive position.
2. Mound Visits – 1 coach visit per inning to the same pitcher; 2nd coach visit in an inning to the same pitcher must result in a change. No limit per game.
3. 11U/12U Balks – big book; balks are live balls until the conclusion of the pitch/play. No warnings on balks regardless of age group
  - a. Third to First Move – this move is ILLEGAL; penalty is a balk
4. GameChanger will be the system of record for all pitch count protests. The site / tournament director will review GameChanger records to determine whether a pitch count violation has occurred
  - a. If the team being questioned does NOT use GameChanger, the site / tournament director will use their opponent's GameChanger data to determine whether a violation has occurred. If neither team has a GameChanger account, the pitch count protest will not be upheld
  - b. If there is a discrepancy between pitch counts in GameChanger between teams, the GameChanger for the team that the player in question is on will be used as the official pitch count
5. Each team is STRONGLY ENCOURAGED to keep the welfare of their players at the forefront of all pitching decisions.
6. We have imposed the following pitch count rules for all youth PSS Events:
  - a. NOTE: A day of rest is measured by a calendar day, not a 24-hour period. Regardless of the time of the game, a pitcher that needs 1-day rest or more based on the pitch counts below needs a full calendar day off (or two); not 24 hours of rest)
  - b. Maximum of 85 pitches in a single day
  - c. Maximum of 105 pitches over a 2-day period
  - d. Maximum of 125 pitches over a 3-day period
  - e. 40 pitches or less requires NO day off; 41+ requires one day off

- f. 41 to 60 pitches – 1 day rest
  - g. 61-85 pitches – 2 days of rest
  - h. **NOTE:** Pitchers will be allowed to finish out the batter when they hit a pitch count threshold (threshold = DAILY MAX) during an at-bat. Days of rest needed will be determined by the FINAL pitch count, regardless of what the number was when the pitcher started his final at-bat
    - i. For example, if a pitcher started his final at-bat at 37 pitches and finished the at-bat at 42 pitches when removed from the game, one day of rest is required
  - i. All protests of pitch count violations must happen during the game, and only apply to the current pitcher. No protests will be considered once a game has concluded, or on pitchers that have already been removed from the mound..
    - i. Process of a pitch count protest is as follows:
    - ii. Coach must ask for time and alert the umpires that he/she is submitting a pitch count protest. \$100 cash is required for all filed protests. The cash will be refunded if the protest is deemed successful. For all denied protests, the \$100 is non-refundable
    - iii. Umpires will contact the site / tournament director and alert them of the protest
    - iv. If it is determined that a pitch count violation has occurred, the pitcher must IMMEDIATELY be replaced on the mound. The pitcher and head coach will be ejected from the game, and the head coach will also be suspended for the team's next game.
7. Please have a player/coach available to warm up your pitcher between innings when your catcher is not ready. A player should have protective facemask on at all times.

## **POOL SEEDING & TIEBREAKERS**

1. Divisions (and pools within divisions) will be seeded from top to bottom based on pool play record (win percentage). If ties exist, the following tiebreaker criteria will be used:
  - a. Head-to-Head, if applicable
  - b. Total Runs Allowed
  - c. Total Run Differential
  - d. Total Runs Scored
  - e. Coin Flip
2. In the case of a 3-way tie where head to head cannot break the tie, the remaining tie breakers will be used to break the 3 way tie and seed teams. We will never revert back to a previous tie breaker once a tie has been broken.
3. Pool protection – we reserve the right to change matchups in the first round of bracket play to avoid pool play rematches and/or inter-program matchups. The goal here is to create unique matchups within the same event as much as possible. If pool or program protection results in a “like” matchup that has already happened in pool play, we will not “pool protect”.

## GENERAL EXPECTATIONS

1. All players must wear uniform on outside of their undershirts or sweatshirts so official scorekeeper can easily identify player.
2. Coaches / Team Personnel – We ask that each team has no more than four (4) coaches / team personnel in the dugout for games.
3. Electronic Communication – one-way electronic communication from the coaching staff to players is allowed at all levels of play
4. Eliminate defensive huddles prior to your team taking the field between innings.
5. At the end of the game, remove garbage from dugout and clear dugout in a timely manner. Hold post-game discussions outside the dugout and preferably off of the playing field.
6. Show respect to the umpires, the fans, your players, your opponents and most of all to this great game.
7. Players / Coach Ejections:
  - a. Any player or coach ejection will result in a one-game suspension, to be served in the next tournament game
    - i. For all player ejections, the player should remain in the dugout
    - ii. For all coach ejections, the coach must leave the complex immediately and be out of sight from game officials. Failure to comply with this directive will result in forfeiture of the game.
    - iii. If the same player or coach is ejected for a 2nd time (either in the current tournament or any future PSS event), he or she will be suspended for the remainder of the tournament.
8. Fan / Parent Ejections:
  - a. Any fan or parent ejections will result in removal from the complex. The fan or parent in question will not be permitted back into the complex for the remainder of the tournament.
  - b. A second fan or parent ejection for the same team will result in the removal of ALL FANS for that given team. This fan restriction will remain in place for that team for the remainder of the current event.
9. Alcohol Policy
  - a. Alcohol will not be permitted within the complex at any PSS event. This offense will result in immediate removal from the complex, and the above fan ejection policies will apply.
  - b. PSS is committed to providing a positive and safe experience for all participants at our events. Alcohol has no place at a youth sporting event, and we will have zero tolerance if anyone is found to be consuming alcohol at any complex being used for a tournament. Failure to comply with these guidelines and/or comply with on-site tournament staff will result in the immediate removal from the complex, along with the consequences listed in the fan ejection policy above.  
Thank you in advance for your help with this policy.
10. Tobacco products are not allowed at any of the PSS sites.
11. Dogs are not allowed at any turf facility (Valley Road Playfields)

12. Sunflower Seeds - For games played on turf fields, absolutely NO SUNFLOWER SEEDS are allowed on site – on the playing surface, in the dugouts, or in the stands. This includes spitting the shells into a cup. All in attendance should not chew sunflower seeds on the complex in any capacity.
13. Weather or other extenuating circumstances, such as smoke, that occur during tournament play that limit the number of games played will determine the following refund:
  - a. 1 game played = 50% refund
  - b. 2 games or more played = no refund
14. Each team will provided a box of baseballs upon arriving at the tournament. Any additional new baseballs will be provided by the team if you run out of the courtesy box of balls from the PSS.
15. There are no gate fees for the 2026 Palouse Summer Series. All guidelines for fans attending the game will be determined by each fields governing body and will strictly follow our states guidelines at the minimum.
16. We will follow all health guidelines in place by the state of Washington, Whitman County and Washington State University as well as the state of Idaho, Nez Perce County and Lewis and Clark State College.
17. Upon arrival each tournament may have game awards, prizes, homerun coupons, etc. The gates and site supervisors will handle distribution of those prizes, but make sure coaches and parents are also communicating as a reminder. We want to make sure those coupons are handed out.