

2021 Essex Invitational Tournament Rules rev 9/2/21

The **Father's Day** tournament and will consist of one weekend. Trophies will be awarded to a maximum of 15 players for each First and Second place teams in each age bracket unless otherwise decided by the Essex Baseball/Softball board. Team trophies will be awarded.

The **Labor Day** Tournament will consist of one weekend (three days). Saturday will be for seating and Sunday will begin single elimination. Championship games on Monday. Team trophies for 1st and 2nd place teams in each age bracket and a maximum of 15 medallions for the players for each age bracket.

The tournament will be conducted under the following rules:

U8, U9, U10 age groups will use the Official Little League Rule Book and U11, U12, U13, U14, U15, U16, U17, U18, U19 age groups will use the American League Baseball Rule Book, except as modified by the following rules:

PLAYER AND TEAM:

1. Age cut off date is May 1, 2021. Younger players may play up into the next highest age bracket.
2. The Tournament Board will determine the division for all teams. Players' eligibility will be determined by the Tournament Board.
3. The Tournament Director will use his/her sole discretion in determining the eligibility of teams for the each division. Factors will include, the bracket where they are placed in their particular league, does their program already have a team in the A bracket, win/loss record, ages of the players. Any team may request to play in a different bracket but they must do so before the schedules are prepared. The Tournament Board reserves the right to make changes for any team from one division to another at any time that it appears that they have been placed into the wrong division., i.e. a team in B division can be moved by us to A division, and an A division team can be moved to B division at any time. Decisions for such change in placement will be made by the Tournament Director and are nonappealable. In some age groups, there may only be one bracket, depending on the number of teams signed up for that particular age group. No guarantee is or will be made that there will be a B bracket in any age group, nor is there a guarantee for any single age groups. We will be using Division 1, Division 2 as opposed to A Division and B Division. We do not want the players to get hung up on which division they are playing in. Decisions such as these are based on the number of teams signed up to play.
4. Players, coaches, managers, parents, spectators, or umpires are not permitted to use alcohol, narcotics, or profanity during the game. Penalty is ejection from the game. No smoking is permitted on or around the benches, on the playing field or on school property.
5. Each team is entitled to a **maximum of 18 players** (but the winning teams will still only get 15 trophies/medallions, whichever applies). **Home team will be determined by a coin**

toss before each game during the seeding round. On Sunday during the single elimination rounds, the team with the highest seed will be home team. Final decision is made by the Tournament Director and is nonappealable.

Team rosters must match the roster turned into the Tournament Director. Rosters are frozen at the time of your first game, except in extreme emergency situations. Manager must immediately contact Tournament Director if such a situation exists. The numbers on the uniforms will be listed on the Roster that is turned in. Players must have the same number on their uniform throughout the tournament unless authorized by the Tournament Director to make such a change.

6. Managers, four (4) coaches, players, score keepers, and batboy or girl are the only people permitted on the benches during the course of the game. See Rule 29. All managers, coaches must be easily recognized or they will not be allowed on the bench/field. The umpires will ask you to remove yourself from the bench/field. The Rule will be enforced by the Tournament Director.

7. All players and coaches are to remain on their respective benches in their designated areas during the course of the game. This rule will be enforced by the Tournament Site Director. No more than one player may be in the on-deck area at one time.

8. Players must wear headgear with earflaps while batting and while on base. Penalty for failure to do so is the batter or runner is out when the batter steps into the batter's box (Umpire's discretion). Catchers must also wear a catcher's helmet, athletic cup, and throat protector while catching.

9. Use of unauthorized players will result in game forfeiture. If it is brought to the Tournament Director's attention that a team is playing with a player who is NOT on their Roster, that team will forfeit the game to the opposing team. The team with the offending player must be prepared to prove that the player is rostered. The use of an illegal player must be brought to the Tournament Director's attention during the game or within one hour after the game. If the team has a game immediately after said game, then the offending player will NOT play in any subsequent games until a final decision is rendered by the Tournament Director. If it is challenged during the game, the manager will have the option of continuing the game with the offending player until the Tournament Director makes a decision and take a chance on a forfeit, or he can remove the challenged player immediately from the game and the game will not be forfeited even if it is determined that the challenged player is an illegal player.

10. **Batting:**

7-8 rule (note: all 7/8 references also apply to U8):

Option 1: Bat nine (9) or eight (if you only have 8 players). No re-entry rule. No DH or EH. Once a player is removed from the batting rotation, he cannot go back into bat. However, if you are fielding ten (10) – see below paragraph 12 – then you may bat ten.

Note: The team must have eight (8) players available to continue the game.

Option 2: Bat your entire Roster. You would have free substitution of players, except for the pitcher. If a player is injured, leaves the game, or is ejected from the game, he will be called out. Only one out can be called on the same batter. Should a player arrive late, he will be inserted at the end of the batting order.

Note: If the opposing coaches both agree to it prior to the start of the game, a planned early departure by a player may result in no penalty whatsoever.

No intentional bunting is allowed, however, swinging bunts are allowed. If a batter intentionally bunts a baseball in the umpire's discretion, the batter is out and the ball is dead with no base runners advancing. **No stealing of bases.** No leading off. The runner may not leave the base before the ball has crossed homeplate.

All Other Age Groups Batting Rule:

Option 1: Bat nine (9) or eight (8) if you only have 8 players with free substitution in the field. No re-entry rule. Once a player is removed from the batting rotation, he cannot go back into bat but may continue with defensive free substitution. No DH or EH.

Note: The team must have eight (8) players available to continue the game.

Option 2: Bat your entire roster and field nine (9) (or eight if you only have 8 players). You would have free substitution of players, except for the pitcher. If a player is injured, leaves the game, or is ejected from the game, he will be called out. Only one out can be called on the same batter. Should a player arrive late, he will be inserted at the end of the batting order.

Note: If the opposing coaches both agree to it prior to the start of the game, a planned early departure by a player may result in no penalty whatsoever.

Once the Batting Option is selected, the option cannot be changed during the game. At the plate conference before the game begins, each manager must notify the opposing manager which option they are using.

11. The team at bat may use **runners for the pitcher and catcher** anytime regardless the number of outs. These runners must be players that are currently not in the game, but are eligible to enter. If batting entire roster, then runner would be last out.

If all players have been used and an injury occurs and the injured player cannot continue, a player who had exited the game, if available may re-enter the game. That player may not pitch, if he has pitched previously in the game.

Bat throwing by batter: 1st offense, there is a warning to offending team. 2nd offense by any batter on offending team becomes an **“OUT”**. *All subsequent offenses are also OUTS.*

The “MUST AVOID CONTACT” rule is in effect for all age groups at the Umpire’s discretion. While not a specific rule, coaches are requested to highly discourage any type of headfirst slides (U8 there is no headfirst slide allowed. See rule 12). This is a safety request and not a rule as such. Sliding into a base will be interpreted to be attempting to avoid contact.

12. U8 RULES:

Fielding for U8 only: Team can field 10 players in the field. 10th player must be in the outfield, thus playing with 4 outfielders. Outfielders must be in outfield grass and not on infield dirt, if playing on a larger field, umpire’s discretion will be used.

Ending a play for U8 only: A play ends when the ball is in the pitcher’s hand on the pitcher’s mound circumference dirt area. It is the umpire’s discretion as to whether or not the end of a play has occurred. A play may also end when a play is made at a base such as tagging a runner, or the ball is thrown out of the playing field. If the throw to the base results in a rundown play, then play will be maintained until the player involved in the rundown is either put out or successfully advances to the base he was attempting to reach. Out of play balls and overthrows will result in the placement of runners at the umpire’s discretion. Final ruling on placement of runners is at the umpire’s discretion.

Placement of Runners for U8 only: A runner who is more than halfway to the next base before the play ends will advance to the next base. If the runner is less than halfway to the next base when the play ends, the runner goes back to the base he was at. Placement of the runners shall be in the sole discretion of the umpire. Players are not allowed to advance on throws from the catcher to the pitcher after a thrown pitch.

Collisions for U8 only: Runners must avoid contact. All players, whether on offense or defense, shall make a good faith effort to avoid unnecessary collisions at all times. This means that the offensive player must slide or take other appropriate action to avoid collisions, and the defensive player must avoid contact other than that necessary to attempt to get the out. The umpire is the sole authority in determining if the collision is intentional or incidental, and in determining the appropriate response. Failure to observe this rule may result in the awarding of the base and/or an out and may result in additional sanctions by the umpire, including a warning or ejection of the offensive and/or defensive player where necessary.

NOTE: It is recognized that some degree of collisions are inevitable on plays at home plate; however, blatant (in the judgment of the umpire) attempts by the runner to dislodge the ball or cause injury are not allowed, and in likewise fashion the catcher must avoid contact other than that necessary to attempt to get the out. **HEAD FIRST SLIDING IS NOT ALLOWED.** No sliding into 1st allowed under any circumstances.

Obstructions for U8 only: Defensive players shall have unimpeded access to attempt to field the ball. Likewise, offensive players’ ability to advance must not be unnecessarily blocked by defensive players. In cases where the advancement would interfere with the fielding of the ball, the fielding of the ball shall take precedence. Offensive players must take any reasonable action

(e.g., pausing or slowing their advancement, etc.) needed to provide that unimpeded access to the defensive player. If the defensive player's ability to field the ball is impeded – inadvertently or intentionally - by the offensive player, then the umpire may choose to call the impeding player out. If an offensive player's ability to advance is impeded by any defensive player's action other than that associated with fielding the ball then the umpire may award an advancement. The umpire's judgment is final.

Scoring for U8 only: Innings will be three (3) outs or five (5) run maximum per inning for innings 1 through 5. However, if the bases are loaded and the final batter hits more than a single, then those runners who come in to score will count (which could conceivably make it more than 5 runs max and that is okay.) During the 6th inning and extra innings, there is unlimited scoring.

13. **Infield Fly Rule for U8, U9, and U10:** Infield fly rule **WILL NOT** be in effect.

14. You can start with eight (8) players and finish with eight (8) players. If you start with nine (9), and one player is ejected you can still finish the game with eight (8) players, even if the reduction in players is due to an ejection. If you do not have a player to replace the ejected player, you will take an "out" each time the missing player comes to bat. However, if you are missing a player for any other reason (injury, had to leave) and you have no player to replace him, you will take an "out" when the missing players comes to bat but only the first time.

Note: The rules above supersede both Little League and American League Rules.

15. Rubber cleats or rubber soled baseball shoes will be permitted for all age groups. Metal spikes are optional for all teams U13 and above.

16. Conventional baseball uniforms are required and will include shirt, pants, cap, and socks. Shirts are to be numbered and numbers must be visible with no duplications. Any duplications or missing numbers will result in a penalty or loss of time at bat and the batter will be called out. Neatness should be stressed. Special permission from the Tournament Director is needed to deviate from this requirement. We realize that some teams may have been put together just for the tournament so their uniforms may not all be identical. Contact the Tournament Director for permission.

17. Game balls will be at the field for the umpires to use during the games. However, some off-sites may run out of balls, and in that case please be prepared to bring balls to the field. There will be balls at the Eastern Regional concession stand if needed.

18. Unsportsmanlike conduct going to the bases will result in the runner being called out at the Umpire's discretion. Manager must notify Tournament Director immediately if a player/coach/manager has been ejected. **Please text me (443-642-0349) immediately.** If a player is ejected, he will not be allowed to play in the next game - one game suspension unless waived by the Tournament Director. If a manager/coach is ejected, it will be the Tournament Director's

decision regarding any suspensions. Failure to notify the Tournament Director of ejections could result in a forfeited game.

19. PLAYING FIELD

The following playing fields will be used:

Age Group U8	60' diamond with 40' pitching distance. Home to 2 nd base 84'10"
Age Group U9, U10	60' diamond with 46' pitching distance
Age Group U11, U12	70' diamond with 50' pitching distance
Age Group U13 and up:	90' diamond with 60'6" pitching distance

20. No team player, coach or manager is allowed on the playing field prior to the coin toss.

21. **PITCHING RULE:** Any team member may pitch, subject to other restrictions of the pitching rules. Batters must make an effort to get out of the way of the pitch. This is in the umpire's judgment. A player, who is removed as a pitcher, regardless whether the removal is during or in-between innings, is not eligible to pitch again in the same game. **For U8 only**, any pitcher hitting two (2) batters in one inning or three (3) in one game must be removed as a pitcher. For other age groups, there is no restriction on the number of hit batters by a pitcher. This is a decision for each manager.

22. We do **NOT** keep "innings pitched" so you do **NOT** have to report it. There is a restriction on the number of innings allowed for each pitcher:

Age group U8:	No more than three (3) innings PER GAME . No balks.
Age group U9, U10:	No more than four (4) innings PER GAME . No balks.
Age group U11, U12:	No more than four (4) innings PER GAME .
All teams playing on 90 ft:	Unlimited pitching – no restrictions.

If a pitcher has pitched more than the allotted innings above, the umpire should be notified immediately and the offending pitcher will be removed from the mound. If he is not immediately removed from the mound, the game will be forfeited.

If a player steps onto the mound and picks up the baseball, he will be considered the pitcher of record. **Please make sure that no one other than the pitcher steps on the mound at any time during the game.**

23. One pitch constitutes one inning pitched. In 7-8, it is child pitching, no coaches pitch.

24. **For U8 only: Strike Zone**. The strike zone should be agreed upon by both managers and the umpire before the start of the game. It is recommended that the strike zone be slightly enlarged to speed up play and minimize the number of walks.

25. Any pitcher who is withdrawn from the mound cannot return to the mound in the same game.

26. Warm up of pitchers and catchers during the game shall be in an area behind the fence sheltered from foul balls. No warm up pitching on the field prior to the commencement of the inning; any violation will result in an automatic “out” before the inning begins. If a player is used to warm up a pitcher, they must wear a catcher’s facemask or batting helmet with facemask and a protective cup. If a relief pitcher comes into the game, he is allowed five (5) warm up pitches, except in the case of injury.

27. Any manager or coach who goes onto the playing field two (2) times in an inning to talk to a player or pitcher must make a pitching change. The only exception to the rule is if the umpire in the case of injury or some equipment damage calls time.

MANAGER AND COACHES

28. Refusal of a manager or coach to leave the field when requested by an Umpire could result in forfeiture of the game by the Umpire.

29. It must be apparent during the game who are managers and coaches. All managers and base coaches are to be dressed the same so that they can be distinguished from parents. **Only the manager, not coaches, are allowed on the field to talk to an umpire regarding any call or controversy.** Other coaches and parents are not allowed on the field. All managers must notify the umpires prior to the game that they are the manager and the appropriate party to discuss controversies with the umpires. Managers are responsible for their parents **and must keep their parents under control at all times.**

OFFICIAL GAME

30. Game time will be set by the Tournament and forfeit time will be **ten (10) minutes** after the time set. In the case of teams that have to move from one field to another, which is noted on the schedule, they will be allotted sufficient time to go from one field to another without a forfeiture.

There is a time limit for all games (unless designated otherwise at the start of the tournament). All teams will be notified when the schedule comes out as to the time limit. **Note that the time limit will begin to run at the end of the ground rules at which time the managers and umpire will synchronize their watches.** Games on Saturday may end in a tie.

In case of rain or darkness, it will be considered a completed game after 3 innings in U8, U9, and U10 age groups; and after 4 innings in all other age groups. If the game is in the middle of the inning when it is called for rain or darkness, the score will revert back to the last completed inning. If the game is not completed as noted above because of rain or darkness, the game will be

suspended. The Tournament Director must be notified immediately will set a time/location for the game to continue. The game could be moved to another field with lights in the case of darkness.

2021 Time Limits for Labor Day are as follows:

On **Saturday**, time limit is 2 hrs and 15 minutes. If the inning is not completed at 2 hrs and 15 minutes, the teams will complete the inning. Ties will stand. Depending on the length of a game, the umpire will take a 15 minute break between games. There is additional time allotted between the 11 am game and 2 pm game so time should not be an issue.

On **Sunday**, time limit of 2 hrs and 30 minutes. If the inning is not completed at 2 hrs and 30 minutes, the teams will complete the inning. There can be no ties. If the game ends in a tie, we will follow the **International Tie Breaker rule**, wherein for that inning, a runner will be placed on 2nd base. The runner is the last batter to make an out in the previous inning. At least one full inning is played, allowing each team the same chance to score. If the score remains tied, the same process is used in each inning until a victor emerges.

On **Monday**, there is no time limit. All games must be completed.

31. Number of innings per game for seeding round could change due to weather or daylight as indicated in Rule 30. Otherwise, it will be:

Age group U8:	Six (6) innings
Age group U9, U10:	Six (6) innings
Age group U11, U12:	Six (6) innings
Teams on 90 ft:	Seven (7) innings

32. **REPORTING SCORES:** It is very IMPORTANT that we get the scores as soon as the game ends. Send a **TEXT to 443-642-0349** to report the scores (both teams). When texting, please be sure to put your AGE GROUP and each team name and score.

Please use text opposed to emailing. If you must email, send the email to bat4essextournament@gmail.com.

Please review scores on the website for accuracy. If you see an error, please text immediately. Scores will be posted on the website at www.essexdugout/tournamentpage2021.htm

After Saturday's seeding games, the team with the highest win/loss record will be placed in 1st place and so on. However, if there is a tie, then we will look at the team's "runs allowed". The team with the least number of runs allowed will take the higher seed. If the teams are still tied, we will then look at the "runs scored". The team with the highest "runs scored" will take the higher seed. If there still is a tie, there will be a coin toss as determined by the Tournament Director (actually it will be done via email with the choosing of numbers). There is no head-to-head tie breaker.

33. **OFFICIALS:** Umpires will make the decision concerning stopping the game in the event of darkness or wet playing conditions. The Tournament Director will have final authority as to the playability and use of the fields.

MISCELLANEOUS

34. **Refund policy:** There are no refunds. At the discretion of the Tournament Director, all teams who pull their teams after the cutoff date for registration, will not be refunded their registration fee. However, if the Tournament Director decides to refund the registration fee, there will be at least a \$100.00 administration fee for all refunds.

35. **Bats:** Composite bats are allowed. All bats for U8-U13 must be stamped a USA or 1.15 BPF Certification. (BBCOR is also allowed at U13).

All bats for U14 to U19 must be stamped BBCOR.

It is the responsibility of the coach to ensure that only authorized bats are used. During play, umpires have, at their discretion, the right to inspect bats at any time or upon the request of the opposing coach. If upon inspection, the bat is found to not conform to tournament rules, the player will be ruled out and the bat must be removed from play. **Coaches please check your players' bats to ensure compliance.**

The allowed maximum bat sizes for this tournament are below, however, **“if you can swing it you can use.”**

8U & 9U - No barrel restrictions, minus unlimited
10U to 13U- No barrel restrictions, minus unlimited
14U to 19U- BBCOR, minus 3

No inappropriate heating of bats will be allowed in the Tournament. If any coach, player or parent is found have altered the temperature (and thus performance) of a bat by an inappropriate means – such as propane, heating pads, heaters, etc. – the HEAD COACH of the offending team will be ejected for the remainder of the tournament. The altered bat will be removed for the rest of the tournament.

36. **Slaughter Rule:**

On Saturday: A ten (10) run rule will be in effect for all age groups after four (4) innings.

On Sunday and Monday: U8, U9, and U10 will have a ten (10) run rule in effect after four (4) innings. For all other age groups, there will be a ten (10) run rule in effect after five (5) innings. **This does include the Championship games.**

37. Action taken for violations of these Rules may result in game forfeiture, game suspension, or removal from the tournament. Verbal or physical threats of personal/physical assault to any umpire will not be tolerated and will result in disciplinary action. Unsportsmanlike

conduct by players, managers, coaches, parents, or spectators will not be tolerated. Managers are responsible for their team, their conduct, and the conduct of the team parents, and spectators. Failure to control any of the above may result in a game forfeiture being issued by the home plate umpire, if in his judgment, he has issued the appropriate warning with no positive results. **No use of AIR HORNS or COW BELLS during the games.** This is extremely annoying to the other team as well as onlookers. Razzing of players is not allowed. The use of profanity and/or fighting among players will result in the removal of the players involved. The throwing of equipment and/or uniform parts (gloves, hats, etc.) will result in a warning being issued to the Team for the first offense. The second offense will result in the player(s) being removed from the game. **At no time are players, coaches, managers, or spectators allowed in the area immediately behind and/or along the backstop and/or out-of-bounds marker.** If, in the judgment of the umpire, any person is in flagrant violation of the above rule, that shall constitute grounds for warning, ejection, and/or forfeiture of the game by the offending team.

38. **PROTESTS:** A protest based upon a play that involves an Umpire's judgment is not permitted. The Umpire's word is final. If the Protest concerns Rule interpretations, the objecting manager must notify the Umpire **PRIOR TO THE NEXT PITCH** that the game is being played under protest. The Umpire will notify the opposing manager and make a public announcement to the scorekeeper. The game must be completed. After the game is completed the protesting manager must submit in writing to the tournament director with the protest fee. The written notification must be completed within four (4) hours of the completion of the teams last scheduled game for that day.

The protest fee is \$100.00 cash and must be submitted at the time of the Protest. The protest fee is non-refundable and is an administrative fee which will be placed in the Tournament treasury. Decisions on Protests made by the Tournament Direction are final.

All controversies of any kind (other than protest based upon a play above indicated) will be decided by the Tournament Director and those decisions will be final and non-appealable.