

2019 Mosquito Division Tournament Rules

Welcome to the 2019 end-of-season houseleague tournament. The following are the rules that will be in force during the tournament. All coaches must take time to become familiar with the rules.

We'll start with an important friendly reminder....even though these are the "playoffs", as coaches you need to refrain from challenging umpires on judgement calls such as balls/strikes and safe/out....if there is a situation in which you think an umpire missed seeing something, then in an appropriate manner you can ask the umpire to check with their umpiring partner to see if they saw something the first ump may have missed. If you feel an umpire has mis-interpreted a rule, then again in an appropriate manner you can inform them of that. Field supervisors will be on hand at each diamond to provide you with further clarification if you need it.

Let's keep everything on a friendly basis...you won't necessarily agree with every call the ump makes but you need to respect the call and move on. It is also important that as a coach you do what you can to ensure that the parents of your players aren't getting on the umps...there should be NO communication between the parents and the umps regarding calls on the field. If a parent really needs to make a point they can make it to you or the field supervisor.

Keep the Games Moving

In terms of keeping the games moving, which we need to do because of darkness on some fields and second games happening on others, there are three very important steps you can take as coaches to help.

- i) Please get your catcher ready once there are two outs...this is by far the single most important step that can speed up the games. If your next catcher is on base, ask the ump for time and send your last out to pinch run for them. Also tell your other players what position they'll be playing during your team's at bat to save time.;
- ii) Please refrain from asking for time to go out and talk to your pitchers (or any other players). And if you absolutely feel the need to go out and say something to them rather than telling them from the dugout then DO NOT have the other players come to the mound to join you...keep it short and to the point.
- iii) Please don't have your base runners do the dancing routine part way down the third base line to try to draw an errant throw...this wastes an enormous amount of time. If there is a passed ball and you want to send your runner home or to the next base then by all means do so...but let's refrain from the dancing.

It is **very important** that games start on time and keep moving once they have started. Having a coach at the diamond 30 minutes before game time, and players arriving as close to 30 minutes before game time as possible, will be important steps towards being able to start right on time.

Pools

The 14 mosquito teams will be organized into two 7 team pools for the purposes of keeping standings. Both pools will have some teams from the Tuesday division and some teams from the Thursday division, so teams will be playing some teams in the tournament that they didn't play during the season. During the round robin portion of the tournament teams will be scheduled for four games...two during the Sept. 4th to 7th weekdays and two on Saturday Sept. 8th. Teams will play primarily in their pool, but not exclusively. Here are the two pools.

Blue Pool: A's, Expos, Lizzies, Mariners, Red Sox, Royals, White Sox.

Red Pool: Angels, Astros, Jays, Rays, Tigers, Twins, Yankees.

Innings/Mercy

Round robin games – **4 innings with a 3-run mercy** in effect.

6 vs 7 and Round of 12 elimination games within each pool – **4 innings with a 4-run mercy** in effect.

2 v 3 within the pool games, semi-finals and championship – **5 innings with a 4-run mercy** in effect.

For the last inning, if the visitors (who bat in the top of the inning) are ahead in the game or tied, they can only score the “mercy” number of runs. If the visitors are behind they can score enough runs to go ahead by the “mercy” number of runs. In the bottom of the last inning the home team can score as many runs as they need to win the game. Throughout all innings, however, the three out rule is also in effect.

During round robin games we will, whenever time allows, play the bottom of the fourth inning even if the home team is already ahead. We will do this to provide at least three more players the chance to bat and to provide another chance for nine players from the visiting team to play in the field. If we don't do this and the bottom of the fourth inning doesn't need to be played then if the visiting team has fourteen or fifteen players at the game (which we're hoping for) then some players will only play ONCE in the field and possibly only bat ONCE. We want to avoid those situations when possible. The three-run mercy will be in effect for that half inning.

No new inning will be started after one hour and thirty minutes from first pitch. There will also be a firm “stop” point for the game, which will be one hour and forty-five minutes after first pitch. At that time the game will end. If the teams were playing the bottom of the fourth inning when the home team had already been leading after the top of the fourth inning, then the final score will be the score after three and a half innings. If the teams were playing the top of the fourth inning then the final score will be the score after three full innings. The plus/minus score for tie breaking purposes will be from the bottom of the third inning, whether a fourth inning was completed or not.

Start Time/Duration

Games will begin at the start time listed on the schedule regardless of how many players are present. We need to do this because with no lights on the Bickford South diamond we run out of daylight earlier and with second games scheduled on Christie #2, Christie #3 and the Dovercourt diamond each night we need to start the first game on time to end on time.

Should a team not be able to field a complete team at the scheduled start time, they will field all available players (up to nine fielders). Batting teams will bat available players. Automatic outs will not be called, but if a situation arises in which the next batter listed on the batting order is on base, the half-inning will immediately end and the opposing team will go up to bat. The only exception to this is if the next batter is on base running for the catcher with two outs and there is an on-deck batter available. In that case the player on base running for the catcher will go up to bat and the on-deck batter will run for the catcher.

Standings/Seedings

In the mosquito division, standings will be determined by the number of points obtained during the round-robin games. There will be 3 points awarded for a win and 1 point awarded for a tie. If two or more teams are tied after the round-robin portion of the tournament, the following tie-breaking sequence will be used:

- 1) Head-to-Head (if they played each other);
- 2) Over-all run differential (the +/- after the third inning);
- 3) Total runs against (lower is better);
- 4) Coin toss.

Run Differential

Regardless of the result, the run differential after the third inning will be used for purposes of tie-breaking.

Playoffs

At the completion of the round robin there will be two 7th seed vs 6th seed elimination games – one in each pool. After those games there will be 6 teams in each pool seeded 1 through 6. There will then be the following elimination games in each pool – 1st seed vs the winner of 6/7, 2nd seed vs 5th seed, and 3rd seed vs 4th seed. The higher seed will always be the home team.

After those games there will be three remaining teams in each pool. At that point the highest seed in each pool will receive a bye to the semi-finals, while the other two teams in each pool will play an elimination game with the higher seed being the home team.

After those games the semi-finals and then the championship final will take place. The semi-final games will be “cross-over” games, with teams playing a team from the other pool.

Pitching & Catching

Pitchers may only pitch 1 inning per game. One thrown pitch constitutes one inning. Prior to each half-inning the pitcher will be allowed 6 warm up pitches, during which the fielding players will be allowed warm up balls. **When the umpire calls “balls in” warm up balls must be returned to the dugout.**

Pitchers may be changed during an inning (but we would discourage that happening unless an injury has occurred), but a player may not come off the bench to replace a pitcher. A player already playing in that half-inning must take over for a pitcher that is being replaced. The pitcher coming in will be allowed 4 warm up pitches. Catchers can't catch more than 3 innings per game...again they don't need to be consecutive innings.

Leadoffs

Runners cannot leave the base until the pitch crosses the plate or is hit. No warning will be issued on leadoffs in mosquito...runners who leave before the ball crosses the plate will be called out.

Player Rotation/Positions

Prior to the start of each game, a player line-up with sweater numbers and names listed must be provided by the coach to the Field Supervisor, who will not be a coach from either team. All players will bat in the order listed on the line-up.

All eligible players present at the game shall be listed on the team's line-up sheet. The expectation, as it was during the regular season, is that all players will play both in the infield and outfield during each game...***we don't want to have the same player at first base or shortstop inning after inning.*** No player will be listed on the game line-up if he is unable to play a defensive position. All players listed on the line-up sheet will bat. Field Supervisors will be monitoring this during all games.

No player will sit out a second defensive inning until everyone else has sat out at least one (Player A's second inning sitting and Player B's first inning sitting can happen at the same time), and no player should sit out two consecutive defensive innings unless injured during that game. A batter or runner may not have a pinch runner unless injured during their turn as a batter or runner. Exception: catcher on base with 2 outs.

General

All players must wear their houseleague jersey (including their black TP hat) for tournament games. No metal spikes allowed on cleats. No jewelry shall be visible. Exception: Medical Bracelets.

Coaches or players warming up pitchers either on the field between innings or in the "bullpen" must wear a protective mask. The batter shall wear a protective helmet while on deck, at bat or running the bases. The helmet may not be removed until the batter is retired, has crossed home plate or the half inning has been completed. ***There shall be only one on-deck batter at any time; additional players out of the dugout may result in automatic outs at the umpires' discretion.***

Players should remain in the dugout while their teams are batting and during defensive innings that they are not playing...this is an important aspect of playing a team sport...cheering on your team throughout the entire game.

The league representatives/field supervisors at each diamond have the final authority relating to any matter that requires a ruling or clarification.