

National Wiffle League Association National Tournament
2015 Rules
Adopted 5/10/2015

The Official Rules of Baseball and the Case Book of the Official Rules of Baseball as adopted by the Major League Baseball Playing Rules Committee will govern all tournament circumstances, with the following exceptions.

Tournament Rules

TEAM ELIGIBILITY: Teams are required to meet requirements as well as submit information to the host committee as requested. Teams who fail to meet the requirements or submit information to the host committee shall be declared ineligible for the tournament and replaced. The rules committee will be the final arbiter of team eligibility.

TOURNAMENT FORMAT:

Regionals: Teams accepted for the tournament shall be assigned to one of four regional locations. Each team assigned to a regional shall play every other team in their regional. A computer generated schedule shall be created in advance in which home and visiting teams are assigned, and each team shall have an even number of home and visitor games. Teams who do not participate at the regional tournament, or who forfeit more than one game, shall not be eligible to move on to the pool play round of the tournament.

Pool Play: Once regionals are completed, teams who finished in the top 8 of the previous year's double elimination tournament, plus additional teams up to 16 total teams shall move on to the pool play round. Should a top 16 team not be able to make it to pool play, the next team in seeding order shall replace them. Teams will be seeded based on total points from regionals, in which each team gets 2 points for each win, 1 point for each tie, and 0 points for each loss. In the event of a tie between teams with the same winning percentage, the tie will be broken in this order: 1) head-to-head play 2) run differential, 3) total bases. Teams shall be placed into four pools of four teams each by random draw the evening prior to the first day of pool play games. Pools shall be balanced so that the best four teams following the regionals will be split into different pools, the second best four teams will be split into different pools, the third best four teams will be split into four pools, and the final four teams will be split into different pools. Teams will each play three pool play games, one against each other team in their pool, prior to the start of the double elimination tournament. A computer generated schedule shall be created in advance in which home and visiting teams are assigned, provided that no team shall have more than two home or two visitor games.

Double Elimination: Once pool play is completed, all teams will be seeded into a double elimination tournament bracket based on their pool play record. Teams will be seeded based on total points from

pool play, in which each team gets 2 points for each win, 1 point for each tie, and 0 points for each loss. In the event of a tie between teams with the same winning percentage, the tie will be broken in this order: 1) head-to-head play 2) run differential, 3) total bases.

TIME LIMIT: Regional and pool play games shall be time limited, regardless of whether or not there is a winning team. No new inning shall be started after 45 minutes from the first pitch of the game, except in the event of a weather delay, in which case the time of the weather delay shall not be counted. Should the home team be ahead at any time after 45 minutes from the first pitch the game shall immediately end. Ties are allowed.

ROSTERS: Rosters must be officially submitted to the tournament listserve by the Manager no later than 12 PM on the day before the first scheduled games of the regional round of the tournament are to take place. Rosters must be no less than 4 players and no more than 8 players. Following the regional round, up to 6 roster changes can be made, with the final roster for the pool play and double elimination rounds being due no later than 12 PM on the day before the first scheduled games of the pool play round.

COMMISSIONER OR LEAGUE PRESIDENT: Anytime the rules refer to League President or Commissioner of Baseball this shall refer to the Rules Committee of the tournament, which shall consist of one voting member from each team participating in the tournament, designated by each team's manager.

Playing Equipment

1.00: BALL: Only unaltered baseball sized Wiffle ball brand balls with be used (8 slots on one side).

1.01: BASES AND PITCHERS PLATE All Bases will be 45' apart, the front edge of the Pitcher's Plate shall be 45' from the back point of home plate.

1.02: STRIKE BOARD: The strike zone will consist of a board that measures 20" wide by 32" tall. The strike zone will be 12" off the ground, and located 2.5' behind the back point of home plate (47'6" from the front of the pitching rubber.

1.03: BAT: Only unaltered "classic Yellow" wiffle bats are to be used. Bats may be taped on the molded grip area.

1.04: GLOVES: Baseball gloves are NOT allowed while playing a defensive position.

1.05: FOOTWEAR: No metal spikes are allowed. Plastic cleats or turf cleats are permitted. No bare feet allowed.

Team and Game Regulations

2.00: TEAM PLAYER REQUIREMENTS: Minimum of 3 players per team to play a regulation game. 6 player's maximum may be in the lineup in a game. Any batters who are not in a designated fielding position shall be considered Extra Hitters. Extra hitters are treated the same as the fielding positions for defensive substitution purposes, and may be freely rotated.

2.01: PITCHER DEFENSIVE SUBSTITUTIONS – Once a player has been in the pitchers position, and has been removed from that position, the player may not return as the pitcher in that same game.

2.02: AGE REQUIREMENT: All players MUST be at least 18 years of age.

2.03: FIELDING: Teams are required to have 3 fielders; two fielders and one pitcher.

2.04: GAME LENGTH: A regulation game is 6 Innings.

2.05: MERCY RULE: Games shall be over if either team leads by 10 runs after 4 innings, or after 3.5 innings if the home team is ahead.

2.06: RAIN OUTS: Games become official after the 4 innings, or after 3.5 innings if the home team is ahead. MLB Rule 4.12a does not apply to either the pool play or double elimination tournament games.

2.07: TEAM TARTYNESS: If a team does not have enough players to field a team 15 minutes past the scheduled start time of the game, the umpire shall forfeit the game to the team present, at a score of 6-0.

2.08: INJURED OR LEAVING PLAYERS: If a player starts the game, they must finish the game, or they are considered an automatic out when they are due up. If the Team has a substitute not in the current lineup, but on the roster, they can sub him into the game in place of the leaving or hurt player.

Pitching

3.00: SPEED LIMITS: Pitching for this tournament is fast.

3.01: GRIPS AND THROW: Any type of throw, overhand or underhand is allowed. Any type of grip is allowed, but no deforming or altering the ball. No "loading" the ball with rocks, dirt or other debris.

3.02: BALKS: Balks are legal. Pitchers must have their foot in contact with the pitching rubber when they release the ball.

3.03: ROTATION: Pitcher rotation is required. A pitcher who pitches 2 or fewer Innings Pitched in a game shall be eligible to pitch in the next game played for that team. A pitcher who pitches more than 2 but not more than 7 Innings Pitched in a game shall not be eligible to pitch in the next game played for that team. A pitcher who pitches more than 7 Innings Pitched in a game shall not be eligible to pitch in

the next two games played for that team. The rotation requirement will be reset and start fresh when moving from the regional games to the pool play games, and from the pool play games to the double elimination tournament games. For the purposes of this rule, a “bye” game does not count as a game played, but a forfeited game does count as a game played. Managers shall indicate on the lineup card for each game any pitchers who are NOT eligible to pitch in that game before providing a copy to the umpire and opposing manager.

Batting

4.00: BUNTING: Bunting is not allowed.

4.01: STRIKES: Batters will be charged with a called strike when 1) a legally delivered pitch hits the strike board without first touching any other object, including the ground, 2) a batter, intentionally or unintentionally, extends any part of his body outside of the batter’s box and interferes with a pitched ball before it has passed the strike board.

4.02: HIT BY PITCH: Batters that are hit with a pitch and do not swing will be awarded a ball, but will not be awarded first base for the reason of being hit with a pitch.

4.03: FOUL BALL ARC: An arc between the first and third base foul lines shall be drawn 20’ from home plate. This line will be treated as a foul line in the exact same manner as the other foul lines between home and first or third base.

4.04: DROPPED THIRD STRIKE: Batters may not advance to first base on a dropped third strike.

Walks and Strikeouts

5.00: BASE ON BALLS: Five balls shall entitle a batter to a base on ball, a walk.

5.01: FOUL TIP: A ball which is fouled off the bat and then hits the strike board without first touching any other object, including the ground is a foul tip. A foul tip is dead the moment it touches the strike board.

Base running

6.00: LEADING OFF BASE OR STEALING: There shall be no leading off or stealing. A runner must remain in contact with the base until the batter makes contact with the ball, unless time has been called by the umpire.

COMMENT: A baserunner who leaves base before the batter makes contact with the ball shall be called out. If a runner leaves base at all on a swing and a miss, if the umpire has not clearly called time following the swing and miss and before the runner left base, shall be called out.

6.01: COURTESY RUNNERS/GHOST RUNNERS: In the event that a batter is due up to bat in the batting order and is still on base, another player from the player's team may run in their place without being counted as a substitution. If no player is available as a courtesy runner, the team may use a "ghost runner". The ghost runner must be the trailing runner on base. All ghost runners must be forced to advance to the next base by the batter-runner, and a force out at a base for the ghost runner can be made if the fielder completes the force play before the batter-runner that is forcing the ghost runner reaches first base.

COMMENT: The bases are loaded, but a ghost runner is on first base because a team only has three players and one of them has to bat. A ground ball is hit to the left fielder, who grabs the ball and steps on second base before the batter-runner gets to the first base. The ghost runner is forced out at second, and the batter-runner is safe at first on a fielders choice.

6.02: MISSED PEGGING ATTEMPTS: Runners may advance at will, as long as the overthrown ball stays inside the fair field of play. Any ball thrown into the bench area or in/around/beyond the backstop will be considered out of play. If the ball continues into foul territory, the lead runner is awarded the base they were headed plus one base.

COMMENT: A runner is trying to stretch a single into a double, and the fielder throws the ball to try to peg the runner as he's sliding into second base. The ball misses the runner, and rolls past the pitcher and past the foul ball arc so that it is on the foul side between the pitchers rubber and home plate. The runner has passed second base by the time the ball rolls past the foul arc, the ball is dead, and the runner is award home plate, because they were heading toward third, plus one additional base.

6.03: PEGGING: Fielders may throw the ball at runners. Runners struck will be out. Runners struck with a thrown ball which first hits any player, a base, or the ground first, will be out. Any balls that strike a runner, regardless of whether the runner is safe or out, will cause an immediate dead ball situation.

COMMENT: A runner that is tagged with a ball is treated the same as pegging with a ball. It does not matter if the ball is knocked loose on the tag, as long as the ball "strikes" the runner, the runner is out.

Fielding and Outs

7.00: PITCHERS CIRCLE FORCE OUT: In addition to any other method of putting out runners, any force out may be made if a player obtains control of the live, batted or thrown ball, in a circle that is 10' in diameter and centered on the midpoint of pitcher's rubber, before the runner reaches a base. Should there be more than one force out in play, only one force out shall be made on a single play. The lead force shall be the first one affected, but should it not have been in time, subsequent forces will be enforced in continuing lead order.

COMMENT: Runners on first and second. Batter grounds a ball to the fielder, who throws it to the pitcher. The runner going from second to third is the lead force, but he gets to base before the pitcher has the ball in the circle, so he is safe. The runner going from first to second is the next lead force, and he doesn't get to second before the pitcher gets the ball, so he is out. The batter-runner is safe at first on a fielder's choice.

7.01 PITCHERS CIRCLE DEAD BALL: Once a player has obtained control of the ball in the circle, the play shall be immediately dead and any runners between bases shall return or advance to the base they are closest to at the time of the dead ball.

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COMMENT: Again the situation if a fly ball or line drive that is caught inside the pitchers circle creates a unique situation in regards to this rule. If runners are on base, they may usually tag and advance on a caught fly ball. However, in this situation, in which a player is already in the pitchers circle when they catch the ball, runners may not advance, and are not awarded the next base on the dead ball. Runners may not advance on a caught fly ball until the player has caught the ball. And when the player catches the ball inside the pitcher's circle, it is immediately dead, and the runner is still "on base". So they would not be able to advance. If they are off base, and did not tag up they would return to the base.

7.02: INFIELD FLY: There shall be no infield fly rule.

7.03: BUCKET: A five gallon bucket of balls shall be allowed to be placed near the pitchers circle, but not in front of the pitchers' plate. Any batted ball that hits the bucket, or any balls that have fallen out of the bucket, shall result in an immediate dead ball, and all runners including the batter-runner shall advance one base. A thrown ball that hits the bucket, or any balls that have fallen out of the bucket, shall be live and in play. A thrown ball that stays inside the bucket, shall result in an immediate dead ball and runners advance or return based on the pitcher's hand rule.