

Advancement to the Centex Championship Double Elimination Bracket will be based on performance in the 3 weeks of pool play. The top (TBD #) of division 1 teams will be placed in the National League Bracket. Any remaining division one teams will be placed in the American league bracket. The (TBD #) of slots remaining in the American League bracket will be filled by the top division 2 teams. If there are enough teams after filling out the National and American brackets in an age group, the remaining division 2 teams will be placed in the AAA Bracket.

** The Centex Committee reserves the right to modify any and all formats if weather or other circumstances prevent play to proceed as outlined above.

League Centex Championship Series:

The League Centex Championship series award goes to the league that accumulates the most points throughout the Centex Series. Points are awarded as follows. 3 Points for 1st place finishes in the National League, 2 point for all 2nd place finishes in the National League. 2 points for 1st place finishes in the American League, 1 point for 2nd place finishes in the American League, 1 point of 1st place finishes in the AAA League. Points will be awarded for final standing in only the final weekend championship tournament. In the event of a tie both league names will be placed on the trophy.

Rainout Guidelines

In the event any pool games are rained out. We will try to make some up, if not possible they are eliminated and we move on to the championship weekend based on the largest number of games played by all teams in the division.

For example if 6 teams in a division have played 8 games and 1 team has played 9. Seeding for week 4 would be done based on the 8 game pool results only counting the last 8 games played by all teams in the division.

In the event of rainouts for the final weekend it is possible the tournament could be shortened to single elimination and or rescheduled for a later date.

These are general rainout guidelines and subject to change by the Centex committee if the need arises.

CENTEX RULES

(These rules are not final until after the Centex Managers meeting and may be amended by the Centex committee.)

2023 USSSA Baseball (Tournament) rules and regulations apply with the following additions and exceptions noted.

- ✚ **ZERO TOLERANCE POLICIES ARE IN AFFECT AT EVERY COMPLEX.** Any player, manager, coach or fan ejected from a game must leave the facility immediately and will serve a minimum 1 additional game suspension. During the suspension the ejected person may not be at the ballpark.
- ✚ In addition to the above suspension if a coach or manager is ejected from a game they will not be allowed back in the dugout or on the field as a coach for the remainder of the series. This means the whole month-long series not just that weekend. This additional suspension could be appealed to the 3 person Centex committee in charge of exceptions and be overturned allowing the coach back in the game. However, all appeals must be brought to the committee by a Centex league representative NOT BY THE COACH.
- ✚ League approved rosters along with copies of birth certificate to be available for opposing coach at anytime.
- ✚ Rosters are limited to 12 players and must be turned in at the mandatory managers meeting prior to the start of the Centex series. Requests to carry more than 12 players must be approved by the exception committee.
- ✚ There are no formal protests allowed, any rules issues must be addressed on the field before play continues. There will be no protest of any judgment calls, only protests of pitching violations or rule interpretations. In the event of a protest the head coach and only the head coach will notify the plate umpire before the next pitch is thrown of their protest and must provide a copy of the rule being protested. If the plate umpire is unable to resolve the issue he will request the assistance of the designated onsite Centex committee member and the committee member will make the final decision. All protests will be resolved on the field between only the head coaches, umpires, and Centex committee member. No protests can be made after a game has been completed.
- ✚ Home team is responsible for keeping the official scorebook. Teams should confirm outs recorded and runs scored each inning to avoid any controversy
- ✚ Umpires will maintain official score cards that will be turned in to report scores and pitching. Score cards are final once they have been signed if not signed it is assumed the coach agrees with the umpire's card.
- ✚ No coolers with food or drinks can be brought into any of the parks, water bottles are ok, host leagues do not have to have water in dug outs
- ✚ Teams are responsible for cleaning up their dugouts after games
- ✚ The Centex Committee reserves the right to modify any and all rules and formats as seen fit by the Centex Committee.

PLAYING RULES

No local rules will be enforced. Centex rules supersede all local rules.

Playing field, Equipment and Safety

Playing field size for each of the divisions is listed in the table. Base and pitching distances may vary slightly based on each ball park.

Metal cleats are not allowed except for the 13-14U Division and not on any artificial mounds.

AGE	GAME TIME	INN	BASE DIST	PITCH DIST	RUN LIMIT	PITCH LIMIT
5/6	1:00	6	55 ft	NA	5	NA
7/8	1:15	6	60 ft	40 ft	8 D I 5 D II	NA
9/10	1:25	6	65 ft	46 ft	8	75
11/12	1:35	6	70 ft	50 ft	8 (Pool) Open (Bracket)	85
13/14	1:45	7	80 ft	54 ft	Open	95

All bats must be labeled with either of a BBCOR, 1.15BPF stamp or the official USA Baseball Stamp (USABat).

1) For ages 6 and under - The maximum diameter shall not exceed two and five eighths (2-5/8") inches.

2) For ages 7 and older - The maximum diameter shall not exceed two and three quarters (2 ¾") inches.

All bats must be commercially manufactured for baseball play, softball bats or bats altered after manufacture to reduce or add weight will not be allowed. It is the manager's responsibility to ensure compliance with this rule.

Penalties – Use of an illegal bat shall not be grounds for ejecting the player or declaring the batter 'out' except as follows: **A)** If the umpire discovers that a bat does not conform to the Centex bat rule stated above before a ball has been put in play, the umpire will remove the illegal bat from the game and issue a warning to the manager. Warnings will be recorded on the game card. **B)** If the umpire discovers that the bat does not conform to the Centex bat rule stated above after the ball has been put in play and before the next legal pitch, the defensive team will have the choice of the result of the play or the batter being called 'out'. If the batter is declared 'out', all runners must return to the base officially occupied before the pitch. **C)** A second offense incurred during the Centex series will result in the manager being ejected in addition to application of the first offense penalty.

Pitching

Pitching regulations apply to 10U, 12U and 14U Divisions

Pitch Limits

Pitchers will be limited to the following pitches:

- 9-10U – 75 pitches max per weekend series
- 11-12U – 85 pitches max per weekend series
- 13-14U – 95 pitches max per weekend series

A weekend series will begin Thursday at 12:00am and runs through the next Wednesday. For example, a 10U player can pitch a total of 75 pitches from Thursday at 12:00am through the next Wednesday

In the weekend series, the pitch count can be divided into separate appearances as long as combined total does not exceed appropriate pitch count max. (ex: In weekend series, starter goes (X) innings for a total pitch count of (X) (amount not exceeding max count) in first game series. That same athlete can be used in games of the same weekend series, up to the combined total pitch count max.)

If a pitcher reaches the limit imposed while facing a batter, the pitcher may continue to pitch until any one of the following conditions occurs:

- a) That batter reaches base;
- b) that batter is put out;
- c) the third out is made to complete the half-inning.

Exceeding pitching limits will result in a forfeit of the game if determined during the game or before the game card is signed by both coaches, coach is out of next game and player cannot pitch for remainder of the weekend.

Only official game pitches will count towards the count total (warm up pitches and bullpen prior to the game are not considered towards the total). Coaches should make every effort to monitor the athlete's bullpen and warm-up pitches and take this into consideration. For purposes of determining the maximum count total, only pitches delivered to the plate during game action are considered. If the umpire declares play dead, with a no pitch, the pitch will not count towards the total.

Each game will need an official pitch counter provided by the visiting team. The official pitch counter will not be allowed to be in the dugout for games. Coaches/team representative should meet between innings to verify counts reported to the umpire, which are then reported on the scorecards. Pitch counts will be certified at the conclusion of the game by the coaches signing the scorecard. It is recommended that both teams keep track of and retain documentation (such as taking a picture of the final scorecard or other method) on pitch counts in case of discussion between coaches and umpires. A count sheet will be provided on the website for coaches to print out for their teams to retain. **Penalty:** Failure to report/verify pitch counts on the scorecard will be handled by the 3-Man Rules Committee; which could include a forfeit by both teams, removal of the manager(s) for the Series, and/or loss of player(s) pitching eligibility for the weekend Series, etc.

Regardless of limits established at Centex, coaches are cautioned to carefully monitor the number of pitches thrown by any player during the course of a game/series/practice. A young player's arms and muscles are still growing and developing. In addition, coaches are cautioned about using a catcher as a

pitcher in the same game for the same reasons outlined above. All other issues not covered above will be referred to the 3-Man Rules Committee, and their decision will be final.

Coaches/Managers who allow pitchers to exceed pitching limits will forfeit the game if the violation is determined during the game, or before the game card is signed by both coaches. The offending Coach/Manager will be suspended for the next game and player cannot pitch for remainder of that weekend. A suspended Coach/Manager is not allowed to be at the park during while serving their suspension.

Warm-Ups

Beginning each half inning, pitchers will throw no more than five (5) pitches to the catcher. A relief pitcher is allowed eight (8) pitches. In case of an injury or an ejection, the umpires shall allow the relief pitcher an adequate time to warm-up.

Removal, Reentry

A pitcher must be removed from the mound after hitting 3 batters in a single game.

Pitchers may not re-enter the game as a pitcher once they are removed as a pitcher

Miscellaneous

The new MLB rule where the pitcher can no longer fake a pick off to third and then throw to 1st will not be considered a Balk for Centex play.

Starting and Ending a Game

Game Preliminaries

Each team must supply one new leather covered baseball for each game and one in fairly new shape.

Coin flip before each round robin/pool game determines Home team. In bracket play the higher seeded team is home except Championship game; team coming from the winner's bracket is the home team. The Championship game will be the final game for the 2023 season; there will be no "if" games.

It is the umpire's discretion to allow coaches to stand outside the dugout

Completing a game

All games will be normal time limits, no extended time is added or set number of innings for Championship or "IF" Games.

Unless the run rule limits apply the game will be played until time expires. Once time has expired if the visiting team is ahead more than the maximum number of runs allowed in an inning or the home team is winning the game will be called and the score recorded as it stands at that time. The game will not be called until time has expired unless the run rule (mercy rule) applies after a complete inning. Scores will not revert to a previous inning.

Complete games are 2 ½ innings if home team is ahead, 3 if visiting team is ahead. Run rules and time limits supersede

Age	Game Time	Inn	Run Limit
5/6	1:00	6	5
7/8	1:15	6	8 D I 5 D II
9/10	1:25	6	8
11/12	1:35	6	8 (Pool) Open (Bracket)
13/14	1:45	7	Open

Scores do not revert back to previous innings if time expires; the inning is completed; home team only bats if it is behind. All runs scored when umpire calls ball game are recorded even if game ends in the middle of an inning

Forfeits will be recorded as a 7-0 score;

Run Rules:

- 25 after 1 complete inning
- 20 after 2 complete inning
- 15 after 3 complete inning
- 10 after 4 complete inning
- 8 after 5 complete inning

Example 1: Ten minutes left in regulation play in a 5 run per inning game. Visiting team is up and ahead 6 runs. Play continues until time expires and the score is recorded as it stands at the end of the time limit.

Example 2: Seven minutes left in regulation play in a 5 run per inning game. Home team is up and trails by 6 runs. Play continues and home team bats until time expires, when time expires even if there are only 1 out the ball game will be stopped and the score recorded as it stood when time expired.

Example 3: Home team at bat and behind 3 in the bottom of the 5th of a 5 run per inning game when time expires. Play continues until the end of the inning.

Tie Games

Pool play games can end in a tie. If a pool play game completes 6 innings (7 in the 13/14) and there is still time left teams will play 1 additional inning using the California tie breaker (last recorded batter from previous inning occupies 2nd base with 2 outs). A maximum of 5 runs can be scored.

In Bracket play if the score is tied after regulation time or regulation innings the Texas tie breaker will be used until a winner is determined. The inning begins with bases loaded and one out. The last three batters from the previous inning will occupy the bases: last batter at 1st base, next to last batter at 2nd base, second to last batter at 3rd base. Each team has an opportunity to bat. The game ends when one team is ahead at the end of an inning. No courtesy runners allowed for these runners.

Batting Order, Batting, Runners

Roster

Teams must bat entire roster, there is open defensive substitutions except for pitching. Players arriving late can be added to the bottom of the order (notify other team and umpire)

Since Centex rules require that all players bat, there are technically no substitute players if a batter is injured and cannot finish their at-bat. Rather than the player being called out, the next batter can assume the injured player's at-bat; however, the injured player cannot return to the game at a later time.

Teams must have at least 9 players (6U/8U) or 8 players (10U/12U/14U) to play; if missing the last player, it will count as an out when that spot comes up to bat. Players arriving late can be added to the bottom of the order (notify umpire)

If a team starts with more than 10 (6U/8U) or 9 (10U/12U/14U) batters and loses a player an out will not be recorded unless the team drops below 10 or 9 players or if the player was ejected.

Batter

No slashing: if a batter squares to bunt and then swings at the pitch (slashing), with or without runners on base, the batter is out, the runners go back to their bases, and the third-base coach is given a warning. On the second offense, the batter is out, the runners go back to their bases, and the third-base coach is ejected.

Throwing the bat will result in 1 warning per player, 2nd occurrence will result in the batter being called out.

Runners

No head first slides when advancing bases, runner will be called out, diving back into a bag is ok

Runners should avoid contact, intentional contact or malicious contact in the umpires opinion can lead to player being called out and/or removed or ejected from the game

A squeeze is defined as a play where there is a runner on third base (this includes the situations where there are runners on base in addition to the runner on third) and in which the runner on third base starts home as the pitcher delivers the ball (this includes starting to advance home during the windup) and continues toward home, without stopping, while at the same time the batter attempts to put the ball in play via a bunt. This is NOT ALLOWED in order to protect the safety of the fielders, the runner, and the batter.

A safety squeeze is defined as a play in which there is a runner on third base (including the situations where there are runners on base in addition to the runner on third) and in which the runner on third pauses his advancement toward home plate as the batter squares to bunt and waits until the ball is in play before attempting to continue to advance toward home. This IS ALLOWED as it provides clear protection for the fielders and runner.

Stealing home is defined as attempting to advance to home plate during the pitch. Under this narrow definition, the runner may not steal home; however, this definition is not intended to limit other plays at the plate, but rather to provide protection to the runner, batter, and fielders. Runners may attempt to advance from third base to home plate, at their own risk, after the ball has crossed home plate and between pitches, including, but not limited to, the following examples:

- When the ball gets past the catcher, either as a passed ball or wild pitch.
- When the catcher attempts to throw the ball back to the pitcher after a pitch.
- When the catcher attempts to throw the ball to another fielder after a pitch.
- When the pitcher is in possession of the ball on the mound, but has not yet begun the windup.
- When the pitcher makes a pickoff move toward, third, second or first.

Division Specific Rules

6 and Under

1. No new inning to start after 1 hour.
2. Teams must have at least 9 players to play; if missing the 10th player it will count as an out when that spot comes up to bat. Players arriving late can be added to the bottom of the order (notify umpire)
3. If a team starts with more than 10 batters and loses a player an out will not be recorded unless the team drops below 10 players or if the player was ejected.
4. Batted ball must pass the 10-foot arch in front of home plate, called foul if it does not pass the marked line.
5. Batter must have both feet in the box when hitting the ball.
6. Batters receive 3 swings per at bat, if 3rd swing results in a foul ball, batter will be called out.
7. A strike will be called if a batter measures up at the "T" when a ball is on the "T"
8. Time should be called by the umpire when the ball is in the possession of an infielder and the lead runner hesitates; this is an umpire's judgment call.
9. Regulation leather covered baseballs will be used, no Riff Balls
10. Four outfielders will be used on defense; players cannot be stacked (no Rover) and must be at least 16 feet behind the bases.
11. A pinch runner (last out) may be used for a player that is injured while running the bases.
12. Any player that is unable to take their official at bat will be out for the remainder of the game. No out will be recorded unless the team falls below 10 players or if the player was ejected
13. Intentional walks are not allowed.
14. Defensive coaches are not allowed on the field of play (between the foul lines)
15. Catchers must wear a catchers helmet with mask or mask with hard skull cap and chest protector, shin guards are optional.
16. A coach may be at home plate to assist the batter in getting set up at the tee, but the coach may not physically position the batter in such a manner as to direct the hit in a particular direction. The coach cannot physically set the batter to "pull" the ball, etc. The coach may tell the batter where he wants the ball to go and if the batter can position himself to hit it there, that is acceptable. The coach may not draw lines or make marks in the batter's box to indicate to the batter where to place his feet in order to hit the ball in a particular direction. The batters' feet must be completely within the batters' box at the time the ball is contacted.
17. The only tee that will be allowed for play by either team will be the tee provided by the host venue and Centex. The plate portion of the tee should sit directly on top of the home plate and should not be moved or positioned so that only part of the tee is in contact with home plate. The coach may only raise or lower the level of the ball, not move the tee to position the ball anywhere other than the middle of home plate.

8 AND UNDER

1. No new inning to start after 1 hour & 15 minutes.
2. Teams must have at least 9 players to play; if missing the 10th player it will count as an out when that spot comes up to bat. Players arriving late can be added to the bottom of the order (notify umpire)
3. If a team starts with more than 10 batters and loses a player an out will not be recorded unless the team drops below 10 players or if the player was ejected
4. Batters receive 5 pitches or three strikes per at bat; if a foul ball occurs on the 5th pitch the batter will continue to hit until the ball is put in play, or the batter strikes out
5. Any hit ball hitting the coach-pitcher will be ruled a foul ball
6. The coach-pitcher is a “pitching machine” and cannot speak to anyone and cannot coach in anyway from the field. Coaching from the field will result in a warning from the umpire; a second occurrence will result in the removal of that pitcher.
7. A Coach-pitcher cannot be voluntarily changed in the middle of an inning
8. Time should be called by the umpire when the ball is in the possession of an infielder and the lead runner hesitates, this is an umpire’s judgment call.
9. A pinch runner (last out) may be used for a player that is injured while running the bases.
10. Any player that is unable to take their official at bat will be out for the remainder of the game. No out will be recorded unless the team falls below 10 players or if the player was ejected.
11. Four outfielders will be used, players can be stacked (rover allowed) and must be on the outfield grass when the ball crosses the plate
12. Intentional walks are not allowed
13. Catchers must be in full gear (catchers helmet with mask or mask with hard skull cap, chest protector, shin guards & cup), catcher’s mitt is optional

10 AND UNDER

1. No new inning to start after 1 hour & 25 minutes.
2. Teams must have at least 8 players to play; if missing the 9th player it will count as an out when that spot comes up to bat. Players arriving late can be added to the bottom of the order (notify umpire)
3. If a team starts with more than 9 batters and loses a player an out will not be recorded unless the team drops below 9 players or if the player was ejected.
4. No slashing if a batter squares to bunt and then swings at the pitch (slashing), with or without runners on base, the batter is out, the runners go back to their bases, and the third-base coach is given a warning. On the second offense, the batter is out, the runners go back to their bases, and the third-base coach is ejected.
5. A pitcher must be removed from the mound after hitting 3 batters in a single game.
6. Pinch runners are allowed anytime for the pitcher or catcher of record or for a player injured during an at bat or while running. The last out will be the replacement runner. It does not have to be the last batted out just the last out. In the event there have been no outs yet recorded in the game there can be no substitute runner until there is an out recorded.
7. Any player that is unable to take their official at bat will be out for the remainder of the game. No out will be recorded unless the team falls below 9 players.
8. Catchers must be in full gear (catchers helmet with mask or mask with hard skull cap, chest protector, shin guards & cup), catcher's mitt is optional

Division I and National League

- a. Play open bases just like 12U and 14U.
- b. Balks – only one warning per game per team.
- c. Squeeze play, as defined in the rules section, is NOT ALLOWED.
- d. Safety squeeze play is ALLOWED.
- e. Stealing home, as defined in the rules section, is NOT ALLOWED.
- f. Advancing to home between pitches and during the other situations called out in the rules section is ALLOWED.
- g. If in the umpire's judgment, based on the perceived intent of the runner, the offensive team violated the rules related to squeezes and stealing home, the 3rd base coach will be ejected.

Division II, American League and AAA League

- a. Runners must remain in contact with the base until pitch crosses the plate (closed bases). Penalty: If the runner leaves early a "team" warning will be issued. The second occurrence will result in the runner being called out by rule and does not have to be tagged out.
- b. Batter will not be allowed to advance to first on an uncaught 3rd strike. The batter is out on strike three, whether or not the pitch is caught.
- c. Safety squeeze plays are ALLOWED; must still follow the closed bases directive.
- d. Advancing to home between pitches and during the other situations called out in the rules section is ALLOWED.
- e. Runners may advance at their own risk from the time the pitch has crossed the plate up until the time that they must return to and remain in contact with their base in preparation for the next pitch.

12 AND UNDER

1. No new inning to start after 1 hour & 35 minutes.
2. Teams must have at least 8 players to play; if missing the 9th player it will count as an out when that spot comes up to bat. Players arriving late can be added to the bottom of the order (notify umpire)
3. If a team starts with more than 9 batters and loses a player an out will not be recorded unless the team drops below 9 players or if the player was ejected.
4. Squeeze plays, as defined in the rules section, are NOT ALLOWED.
5. Safety squeeze plays are ALLOWED.
6. Stealing home, as defined in the rules section, is NOT ALLOWED.
7. Advancing to home between pitches and during the other situations called out in the rules section is ALLOWED.
8. If in the umpire's judgment, based on the perceived intent of the runner, the offensive team violated the rules related to squeezes and stealing home, the 3rd base coach will be ejected.
9. No slashing if a batter squares to bunt and then swings at the pitch (slashing), with or without runners on base, the batter is out, the runners go back to their bases, and the third-base coach is given a warning. On the second offense, the batter is out, the runners go back to their bases, and the third-base coach is ejected.
10. A pitcher must be removed from the mound after hitting 3 batters in a single game.
11. Balks will be called – no warnings
12. Pinch runners are allowed anytime for the pitcher or catcher of record or for a player injured during an at bat or while running. The last out will be the replacement runner. It does not have to be the last batted out just the last out. In the event there have been no outs yet recorded in the game there can be no substitute runner until there is an out recorded.
13. Any player that is unable to take their official at bat will be out for the remainder of the game. No out will be recorded unless the team falls below 9 players or if the player was ejected.
14. If players are used as base coaches they must wear batting helmets
15. Catchers must be in full gear (catchers helmet with mask or mask with hard skull cap, chest protector, shin guards & cup), catcher's mitt is required.

14 AND UNDER

1. No new inning to start after 1 hour & 45 minutes.
2. Teams must have at least 8 players to play; if missing the 9th player it will count as an out when that spot comes up to bat. Players arriving late can be added to the bottom of the order (notify umpire)
3. If a team starts with more than 9 batters and loses a player an out will not be recorded unless the team drops below 9 players or if the player was ejected.
4. Squeeze plays, as defined in the rules section, are NOT ALLOWED.
5. Safety squeeze plays are ALLOWED.
6. Stealing home, as defined in the rules section, is NOT ALLOWED.
7. Advancing to home between pitches and during the other situations called out in the rules section is ALLOWED.
8. If in the umpire's judgment, based on the perceived intent of the runner, the offensive team violated the rules related to squeezes and stealing home, the 3rd base coach will be ejected.
9. No slashing if a batter squares to bunt and then swings at the pitch (slashing), with or without runners on base, the batter is out, the runners go back to their bases, and the third-base coach is given a warning. On the second offense, the batter is out, the runners go back to their bases, and the third-base coach is ejected.
10. A pitcher must be removed from the mound after hitting 3 batters in a single game.
11. Balks will be called – no warnings
12. Pinch runners are allowed anytime for the pitcher or catcher of record or for a player injured during an at bat or while running. The last out will be the replacement runner. It does not have to be the last batted out just the last out. In the event there have been no outs yet recorded in the game there can be no substitute runner until there is an out recorded.
13. Any player that is unable to take their official at bat will be out for the remainder of the game. No out will be recorded unless the team falls below 9 players or if the player was ejected.
14. If players are used as base coaches they must wear batting helmets
15. Catchers must be in full gear (catchers helmet with mask or mask with hard skull cap, chest protector, shin guards & cup), catcher's mitt is required.