

SEPTEMBER SLUGGERS TOURNAMENT

2025 OFFICIAL RULES

ROSTERS & INSURANCE:

All teams are required to submit a copy and, it is strongly encouraged, to maintain a copy of their official roster, a copy of each player's birth certificate and a copy of their insurance. Please have the following name listed as additional insured.

Sandy Spring Athletic Association, Inc.
PO Box 362
Olney, MD 20830

ROSTERS: All rosters (15 player maximum) must be emailed to the Tournament Director by **8pm on Thursday, September 18, 2025**. In the event of a player's age challenge, each team must show the player's birth certificate. If a player is found to be ineligible, the player will be removed from the tournament and the head coach of the team will be ejected from the remainder of the tournament. There will be NO FORFEITS because of an ineligible player. All challenges must be made prior to the start of the second inning to avoid intentional end of game delays.

A player may appear on ONLY one roster within a given age group. Any player found to be participating with more than one team within a given age group shall result in the second team's disqualification, and suspension of the player for the remainder of the tournament. For example, a player can be on both a 10U roster and 11U roster if the player qualifies based on age requirements and the teams are not competing in the same bracket.

EXPECTED BEHAVIOR / EJECTIONS:

Negative behavior and bad sportsmanship are not acceptable by players, coaches, and fans. Umpires or the tournament/site director will eject anyone they deem as not living up to expected behavior. The tournament/site director may issue warnings at their discretion. Anyone ejected from a game will be suspended for the remainder of the tournament. Coaches and fans must leave the premises immediately upon ejection. Ejected players must leave the field and dugout area but may stay with the fans. Ejections are not appealable, but suspensions for remainder of tournament may be appealed to the Tournament Director or his delegate.

- Use of noise makers are not allowed during the tournament.
- Abusive statements or actions towards anyone will not be tolerated.
- Excessive profanity will not be tolerated.
- Alcohol, tobacco products and illegal substances are not allowed during the tournament.

MUSIC:

Teams are welcome to play music while warming up or between innings. However, please keep all music clean and turn it off during game play. Elicit lyrics are not appropriate for this environment.

All games will be played under NFHS rules and amended as follows:

Any rule disputes will be handled at the discretion of the head umpire and Tournament Director.

PRE-GAME WARMUPS:

Teams are **NOT** permitted to warmup on the infield before games. Teams may warmup in the outfield or foul territory once the previous game ends. Batting cages and pitching stations may be used on a first come basis where available.

GAME BASEBALLS:

Three new baseballs will be provided for each game and teams are responsible to retrieve foul balls and return them to the umpire promptly.

GAME LENGTH:

- **9U-12U:** All games will be **6 innings**.
- **13U & up:** All games will be **7 innings**.
- For all age groups, no extra innings for pool play. Pool play games can end in a TIE.
- **9U-12U:** All games except for the Sunday championship game, no **new** inning will start after **1 hour and 40 minutes**. A new inning begins when the final out of the previous inning is recorded.
- **13U & up:** All games except for the Sunday championship game, no **new** inning will start after **1 hour and 50 minutes**. Once a new inning starts it **MUST** be completed. No “drop dead” time limit.
- Championship games can be shortened for darkness or other extenuating circumstances.
- In elimination play, after the time limit is reached, international rules will be used to decide tied games. The last batted out from the previous inning will be placed on 2nd base for each team.
- An official start time is to be announced by the umpire and documented by **both** home and away scorekeepers. The official start time is the conclusion of the pre-game coaches conference.
- **All Games:** If the game must end early for weather, darkness, or other extenuating circumstances, first pitch thrown constitutes a game for the purposes of refunds.
- Be ready to play up to 30 minutes prior to game time should field and umpire(s) be ready to start.

RUN LIMITS

- **All age groups:** No maximum run limits per inning.

MERCY RULES

- **9U-12U:** Twelve (12) runs after three (3) innings. Ten (10) runs after four (4) innings. Eight (8) runs after five (5) innings.
- **13U&up:** Fifteen (15) runs after three (3) innings. Twelve (12) runs after four (4) innings. Ten (10) runs after five (5) innings.

INFIELD FLY RULE:

- **9U:** No infield fly rule.
- **10U & above:** Infield fly rule in effect.

STEALING:

9U & 10U: No leads and the runner can't steal until the ball crosses home plate. One warning per team per game. After warning, the runner will be called out for leaving early and the pitch will not be allowed.

11U and up: Leading and stealing are allowed.

SLASH BUNTING:

A slash bunt is defined as a player showing bunt at any time during the pitch and then swinging at that same pitch.

- **9U-12U:** The slash bunt is illegal, and the player will be called out if this play is attempted.
- **13U and up:** Slash bunting is allowed.

BAT RESTRICTIONS:

9U-13U: All bats must have either the BPF 1.15, USABat, USSSA or BBCOR designation displayed on the bat. No other weight or size restrictions.

14U and up: must have BBCOR stamp for all players, including younger players playing up.

CLEATS:

9U-13U: No metal cleats.

14U and up: Metal cleats are allowed.

FIELD DIMENSIONS:

- **9U** - 60' base paths. 46' mound distance.
- **10U** - 65' base paths. 46' mound distance.
- **11U - 12U** - 70' base paths. 50' mound distance. Pitching mounds for all games.
- **13U and up** - 90' base paths. 60.6' mound distance.

HOME VS. AWAY

- For pool play games, home and away will be determined by coin flip prior to the start of the game.
- During elimination games, the team with the higher seed is the home team.

LINEUPS/OFFENSE (ALL AGE GROUPS):

All teams have the option of the following lineups:

- Lineups must have 9 batters, the entire roster or any number in between.
- If you start with an (EH) you must finish with an (EH) or take an out at that at-bat.
- Teams may bat entire roster. When batting entire lineup, if a player is unable to bat at any time solely due to an on-field injury, then no out will be called but the player is no longer eligible to play in the rest of the game offensively or defensively.
- If a player arrives late, he may be added to the bottom of the order with no penalty.
- If the batter is skipped due to any other reason other than injury, the team will take one out the first time that players bat returns in the lineup. No out will be called thereafter.

NOTE: Each team must announce their options when exchanging lineups with other team at pregame conference with umpire.

Injuries/Substitutions when batting the entire roster:

If a player is injured and no substitute is available, that spot in the lineup will be skipped with no penalty. If an injury occurs defensively or during an at-bat and the player can't continue the at-bat,

the next batter in the lineup will take over that at-bat and assume the count. If an injury occurs while on the base paths and there are no substitutes available, the player that made the last recorded out will take the place of the injured player on the bases.

Substitutions when batting less than the entire roster:

A substitute is anyone not placed in the original batting order. Once a substitution bats, runs or fields for a player, the sub and the original starter are locked into that batting position and either one may bat or run in that position ONLY. These players are in other words married to one another offensively.

Courtesy runner for Pitcher/Catcher

Teams are allowed a courtesy runner for the pitcher or catcher without regard to outs. The courtesy runner is not considered a substitute. However, only a substitute can be used as a courtesy runner if you have a substitute available. If you DO NOT have a substitute available, then you must use the player who made the last batted out. REMINDER: Married players can hit or run at any time.

RE-ENTRY RULE/DEFENSE:

ALL DIVISIONS: Teams may substitute for defensive positions (except pitcher) as many times as they wish, as long as the batting order remains the same. A player does not have to play the field to bat. Conversely, a player does not have to bat to play the field. Offense and defense are separate. The only exception is the pitcher position where a player may not return to the mound after another player becomes the pitcher of record.

BAT THROWING:

9U and 10U: Same rules apply as seen above with two exceptions: 1) each player will receive one warning; and 2) If the player throws his bat again, the player is to be called out. No players can be ejected in these age groups for throwing a bat during an official swing.

11U and up: If a batter throws his bat during an at bat after his follow through or after contact with a pitched ball, the umpire will provide ONE team warning. If this occurs again, the batter will be called out in each instance it occurs. If the same batter throws his bat twice in the same game, the umpire has the right to eject the player from the game. No additional penalties will be incurred in subsequent games.

PITCHING:

We will not impose pitching limits on teams. It is the manager's discretion. It is the responsibility of the manager, coaching staff and parents/guardians to monitor the pitch counts and mechanics of players to ensure they are pitching safely. There is a significant number of resources available to all that provide recommendations on pitch limits and rest periods across all age groups. We highly recommend all teams and parents/guardians review those recommendations and strictly follow them for the safety of all.

BALKS:

- **9U and 10U:** No balks.
- **11U and 12U:** One warning per TEAM per game. Immediate dead ball.
- **13U and up:** No warnings. Immediate dead ball.

CATCHER DROP 3RD STRIKE:

9U and 10U: the batter is automatically out, no dropped 3rd strike.

11U and up: regular baseball rules apply.

INTENTIONAL WALKS:

A pitcher is NOT required to throw to a batter during an intentional walk situation. In other words, you CAN declare your intent and automatically give the batter 1st base at any time during the game.

INTENTIONAL DELAYS:

The umpires, field directors and/or Tournament Director reserves the right to eject any player, coach or fan for intentionally delaying a game. A forfeit may be enforced at the Tournament Director's discretion.

Teams taking the field have 2 minutes to warm-up between half innings. Exceptions made for injury and catchers to be properly equipped.

New inning begins when the last out is recorded of the previous half inning.

PROTESTS:

No protests!! Judgment calls are final. A coach may politely ask the umpire who made the call to clarify a rule interpretation. The umpire(s) on the field will make a final decision on the field.

SCOREBOOKS/HOME-AWAY:

The home team will be the official scorebook. The visiting team is strongly encouraged to also maintain a scorebook. Home team will be decided by coin flip before pool-play games. Higher seed is home team during bracket play.

AVOID CONTACT RULE (SLIDING):

9U and up: Headfirst sliding is not encouraged but is allowed at all bases.

On any force play except for 1st base, the runner must slide AND slide directly to the base or remove himself from the play in such a manner as to not interfere, intentional or unintentional, with the fielder making a play. In addition, the runner cannot interfere with a fielder's ability to throw the ball in any way.

A runner is out when he does not slide and his not sliding creates illegal contact and/or illegally alters the actions of a fielder in the immediate act of making a play, or on a force play, does not slide in a direct line between the bases. Unfortunately, this is true even when the runner did not intend to cause contact because intent is not easily discernable by umpires. In the case of potential double play, not only is the runner who created the violation out, but also the other runner trying to be doubled up on the play. Try to avoid contact!

If, in an umpire's judgment, there is intentional contact, that umpire may call the runner out on that play. If the contact is judged as intentional and malicious, that umpire can eject the player from the game. If a player is ejected for this reason, they may face suspension for them and/or their team's next game with the possibility of further sanctions. The Tournament Director will make a final ruling on a possible suspension.

DUGOUTS:

During pool play, the dugouts are first come first choice. Teams playing a doubleheader and staying at same field will stay in same dugout for both games. During tournament play, the higher seeded team will be the home team and occupy the third base line or the side of choice. In any case, if a team is playing multiple games at the same field, that team will stay in the same dugout regardless of seeding.

START OF GAME:

All teams are expected to be at fields ready to play at least 30 minutes prior to game time. Please be prepared to start games early if field, umpires and teams are ready to play. Teams must have 8 players to start a game. (No out taken for vacant spot in lineup). Teams may finish with 8 players (no out taken for vacant spot in lineup). If a team starts with 8, the batting order is fixed at 8 but teams can add only 1 batter at any point upon arrival of the 9th player. Additional players that join the game will be treated as substitutes that can also be married to batters in the lineup.

REPORTING SCORES:

The home team is the official scorekeeper and will verify with opposing coach/scorekeeper the correct score at the end of the game. In Pool Play, **both** teams are responsible for texting the score to **both** numbers:

Cell Numbers: 301-873-1677 & 202-316-0598

Age Group, Team names, and Score.

Example:

10u Division

Baltimore Bombers – 5

Louisville Sluggers – 4

REFUND POLICY:

We work closely with park managers and staff to make every effort to get as many games played as possible for our participating teams. Unfortunately, weather conditions beyond our control may cause field conditions to deteriorate to the point where fields close for the safety of the players. In the event the tournament is abbreviated, the following refund policy will apply to all teams:

- **NO GAMES PLAYED:** Tournament Fee refund minus \$150 admin fee if all games for a team are cancelled due to inclement weather or other conditions outside of our control. A team has the option to apply their refund towards a future tournament in lieu of receiving a cash refund.
- **1 GAME PLAYED:** 50% refund if only one game is played.
- **2 OR MORE GAMES PLAYED:** no refund.

DROP POLICY:

Teams dropping out less than 14 days prior to the start of the first game of the tournament will receive NO refund or credit. A withdrawal should be communicated to the Tournament Director by phone or email.

Extenuating circumstances causing a team to withdraw within 14 days of the first game of the tournament may be discussed with the Tournament Director for consideration of a refund or credit.

WHAT IF THE TOURNAMENT IS CANCELED AFTER POOL PLAY GAMES HAVE BEEN COMPLETED?

The #1 seed will be deemed the champion and will be rewarded the tournament champion awards. The #2 seed will be deemed the runner-up and will be rewarded the tournament runner-up awards.

FORFEITS:

If a team decides to forfeit a pool-play game, they are not eligible to compete for the championship or consolidation round and will not receive a refund. The final score of the forfeited game will be 5-0.

SEEDING:

Seeding for bracket based in order on:

1. win/loss/tie record.
2. head-to-head results (if only two teams have the same record).
3. Total runs allowed.
4. Run differential.
5. coin flip.

CHAMPIONSHIP BRACKETS: Refer to TeamSnap Tournaments App.

The Tournament Director has the final say on all rules. If we need to modify a rule prior to the tournament, ALL modifications will be updated and communicated to the coaches/managers. Please keep handy a copy of the official rules.