

## Walnut Pony Baseball Tournament Rules

### GENERAL RULES

Walnut Pony Baseball (WPB) tournaments will follow the official USSSA Baseball Rules unless stated otherwise here.

A coin flip before each game will determine the home team, and the winner of the toss chooses whether to bat first or second.

WPB will be official score keeping using a digital scoring app.

### ROSTERS & ELIGIBILITY

Each team must submit a signed roster before their first game begins. Any team using an ineligible player will forfeit all games in which that player participated.

Players may not be on more than one roster within the same age division.

Repeated violations of age or roster policies can lead to disqualification from the Tournament of Champions or future Walnut Pony Baseball events.

Teams must keep copies of player birth certificates for age verification. A player without proper proof of age will be considered ineligible until documentation is provided.

### AGE DIVISIONS

Player eligibility is based on their age as of April 30 of the current season.

For example, if a player turns 11 on or before April 30, 2026, they must compete in the 11u division or higher.

Players are always welcome to “play up,” but they may not “play down” into a younger division.

### GAME LENGTH

Time limits are as follows:

- 7u-12u: 1 hour 30 minutes
- 13u-14u: 1 hour 40 minutes

Once time expires, no new inning will start — but any inning in progress will be played to completion. There is no “drop dead” time limit.

Pool play games will be limited to six innings (seven innings for 13u and older). Games may end in a tie during pool play.

In playoff rounds, games must have a winner. If the score is tied after regulation or time expires, the **California Tie Breaker** will begin: the last batter from the previous inning will start on second base, and play continues until a winner is determined.

## **CHAMPIONSHIP GAME LENGTHS**

- 7u–12u: 1.45 hours no new. If tie, implement California Tie Breaker rule
- 13u: 2 hours no new. If tie, implement California Tie Breaker rule
- 14u: 2 hours no new. If tie, implement California Tie Breaker rule

## **LINEUPS**

Teams may choose to bat nine players, ten with an extra hitter, or the entire roster. Anyone in the batting lineup is considered active and can play defense freely.

If a team bats the entire roster and a player is injured, no out will be recorded for that spot.

A player who leaves due to injury may not return.

Teams may begin a game with as few as seven players, with automatic outs recorded for empty spots in the batting order. Late arrivals can fill those spots when they arrive.

## **PITCHING**

There are no specific pitching restrictions; coaches are expected to use good judgment and prioritize arm safety.

Once a pitcher is removed from the mound, they may not return to pitch again in the same game. A pitcher is considered “in the game” as soon as they throw a warm-up pitch.

Balks will not be called in 7u or 8u. At 9u and 10u, a pitcher will receive one warning before a balk is enforced. Starting at 11u, balks are enforced under full regulation rules.

The “fake to third” move without stepping off the rubber is a balk.

## **PROTESTS**

Protests may be made only for rule interpretations, not judgment calls.

A \$100 protest fee must be paid at the time of the protest. If the protest is upheld, the fee will be refunded.

## **SPECIAL PINCH RUNNERS**

A special pinch runner may be used for the current pitcher or the next inning’s catcher at any time. With two outs, the pinch runner for the next inning’s catcher becomes mandatory.

If batting the entire lineup, the last recorded out serves as the pinch runner.

## **INTENTIONAL WALKS**

No pitches are required to intentionally walk a hitter. The manager simply informs the umpire, and the batter is awarded first base.

## **SLIDE OR AVOID**

Base runners must slide or avoid contact when a defensive play is being made.

Failure to do so will result in the runner being called out. Malicious or dangerous contact may lead to ejection and suspension.

## **FIELD DIMENSIONS**

7u: 60' bases, 40' mound

8u: 60' bases, 40' mound

9u: 60'–65' bases, 46' mound

10u: 60'–65' bases, 46' mound

11u–12u: 70' bases, 50' mound

13u: 80' bases, 54' mound

14u–18u: 90' bases, 60'6" mound

## **BATS**

For 13u and younger, bats must have a 1.15 BPF stamp or be BBCOR/wood-certified.

For 14u and older, only BBCOR or wood bats are permitted.

Any player entering the batter's box with an illegal bat will be called out immediately. Once a play occurs, the results will stand — no retroactive outs.

## **PACE OF PLAY**

- Teams have 90 seconds between innings.
- Each pitcher is allowed two mound visits per game without removal; a third visit requires a pitching change.
- Umpires may prevent stalling tactics to ensure fair play and game flow.

## **EQUIPMENT**

Metal cleats are prohibited for divisions 10u and younger and are permitted for 11u and older, except when portable mounds are in use. Players wearing metal cleats illegally will be called out or required to change shoes.

## **7U & 8U DIVISION RULES**

- Stealing home is not allowed. Runners can only score from third base on a hit ball, walk, or hit-by-pitch.
- No lead-offs are allowed. Base runners may advance only after the pitch crosses the plate.
- The ball becomes dead when the pitcher controls it within the mound area.
- In 7u, teams may score a maximum of six runs per inning for the first three innings; unlimited runs are allowed thereafter.
- Bunting is not permitted. Any bunt attempt resulting in contact is a strike and dead ball.

## **MERCY RULE**

A game will end early if one team leads by:

- 13 runs after three innings
- 10 runs after four innings
- 8 runs after five innings

## **TIEBREAKERS**

1. Head-to-head results (only if all tied teams played each other)

2. Total run differential (maximum of +8 per game)
3. Fewest runs allowed
4. Coin flip

#### **TOURNAMENT FORMAT ADJUSTMENTS**

Walnut Pony Baseball reserves the right to adjust schedules, game times, or formats as needed to ensure completion of the tournament.

If games are canceled due to uncontrollable circumstances, refunds or credits may be issued.

#### **TEAM WITHDRAWALS**

If a team withdraws after the schedule has been posted or within 48 hours of the event, 50% of the tournament entry fee remains due to Walnut Pony Baseball. If a team withdraws within 24 hours of the event, no refund will be given.

#### **FIELD INFORMATION**

Creekside Park - 780 Creekside Drive Walnut CA 91789

Snowcreek Park (13U/14U)- 20633 Snow Creek Drive Walnut CA 91789