

SCHOOL SPORT AUSTRALIA
18 Years & Under Baseball Championships
RULES AND GUIDELINES

Section A – Championship Overview

- A - 1.** These Rules and Guidelines should be read in conjunction with the School Sport Australia General Policy and the Baseball Operating Manual.
- A - 2.** The Championships shall be conducted in accordance with the rules as adopted by Baseball Australia for Youth Baseball unless otherwise stated.
- A - 3.** The Championships shall be conducted in accordance with a current Memorandum of Understanding between School Sport Australia and Baseball Australia
- A - 4. Championship Date**
- The event should be held from Sunday to Saturday with the first day of play being Monday and the finals day being Saturday.
- A - 5. Eligibility**
- A - 5.1** Players to be 18 years and under at 31 December in the year of the Championship unless age dispensation has been granted as per rule A - 6.

Amended December 2020

Amended September 2018

Rule A – 5.2 removed July 2021

- A - 6. Age Dispensation**
- Age Dispensation may be granted to a State or Territory for these Championships as allowed through the School Sport Australia Sport Participation Policy.
- A - 7. Team Size**
- Each state is allowed a minimum of fifteen (15) players and a maximum of seventeen (17) players, or eighteen (18) in the event of a 5-team draw.

Amended September, 2023

- A - 8. Attendance at Championships**
- All students who participate in the School Sport Australia Baseball Championships must remain at the Championship location throughout the duration of the Championships and be bound by all Championship arrangements, except in exceptional circumstances as per School Sport Australia policy.

Added December 2020

Section B – Competition Structure

B - 1. Game Format

Program of games may involve the use of two grounds, double headers and night games. Where possible, double headers will be played back to back.

B - 2. Draw

B - 2.1 The team which travels the furthest should not play in the first game of day one. If they are drawn to do so then the nine (9) innings game set down for Time 3 should become Time 1.

B - 2.2 It is preferable for the Opening Ceremony to be scheduled prior to the final game of Day 1.

B - 2.3 Home Team

Will be the first mentioned team in the official schedule of games and will occupy the third base dugout.

B - 2.4 Four State Participation

A double Round Robin will be conducted. Followed by the Educational Tour Day. The Final series will be 3 v 4 followed by 1 v 2

B - 2.4.1 Four Team Format

Round Robin

NB: - Game times and field allocations by agreement.

	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4 - Semis	Day 6 - Play-offs
Time 1	1 v 2	2 v 3	2 v 4	1st v 4th	Loser v Loser
Time 2	3 v 4	4 v 1	1 v 3	2 nd v 3rd	Final Winner v winner

B - 2.5 Five State Participation

A double Round Robin will be conducted. Followed by the Educational Tour Day. The Final series will be 3 v 4 followed by 1 v 2. This Championship will require 5 games each day of the Round Robin Series with each state having two games per day for the Round Robin Series.

Two grounds are necessary for the program with no triple headers to be scheduled

B - 2.5.1 Five Team Format

Double Round Robin

NB: - Game times and field allocations by agreement

DAY ONE

	Field One	Field Two
Time 1	5 V 4	3 V 2
Time 2	5 V 1	4 V 3
Time 3	1 V 2	

DAY TWO

	Field One	Field Two
Time 1	1 V 3	2 V 4
Time 2	4 V 1	5 V 2
Time 3	3 V 5	

DAY THREE

	Field One	Field Two
Time 1	4 V 5	2 V 1
Time 2	2 V 3	1 V 5
Time 3	3 V 4	

DAY FOUR - Rest Day

Amended September, 2023

DAY FIVE

	Field One	Field Two
Time 1	2 V 5	3 V 1
Time 2	1 V 4	5 V 3
Time 3	4 V 2	

DAY SIX

	Time One	Time 2	TIME 3
Field 1	5th V Invitation	3rd Playoff : 3rd v 4th	Final 1st v 2nd

B - 2.6 Six State Participation

A single Preliminary Round Robin will be conducted on the first 3 days of competition. Followed by the Educational Tour Day. The Final series will have two separate Round Robin series where the teams finishing 1, 2 & 3 comprising one pool and the teams finishing 4, 5 & 6 comprising the other pool. These placings having been determined by the Preliminary Round Robin series. The Final series will involve each team in each pool playing each other once.

B - 2.6.1 Six Team Format

DAY ONE

Round Robin – 1st Day

NB: - Game times and field allocations by agreement.

	Field One	Field Two
Time 1	1 V 3	5 V 6
Time 2	3 V 5	6 V 1
Time 3	2 V 4	

DAY TWO

Round Robin – 2nd Day

	Field One	Field Two
Time 1	2 V 3	4 V 6
Time 2	6 V 2	3 V 4
Time 3	5 V 1	

DAY THREE

Round Robin – 3rd Day

	Field One	Field Two
Time 1	1 V 4	2 V 5
Time 2	1 V 2	4 V 5
Time 3	3 V 6	

DAY FOUR

Educational Excursion.

DAY FIVE

Play-offs – 1st Day

Teams are re-ranked according to their performance in the Round Robin.

NB: - Game times and field allocations by agreement.

	Field One	Field Two
Time 1	2nd v 3rd	5th V 6th
Time 2	1st v 3rd	4th V 6th
Time 3	1st v 2nd	4th V 5th

Amended August 2017

DAY SIX

Play-offs – 2nd Day

Teams are re-ranked within their own pools according to their performance on Day Five.

	Field One	Field 2
Time 1	5th V 6th	
Time 2		3rd v 4th Bronze Medal Game
Time 3	1st V 2nd Championship Game	

B - 3. Champion State

B - 3.1 The **Champion** State will be based on performances in the Round Robin games (Round 1), followed by a Semi-Final Series (Round 2), followed by Play-Off Games to determine final Championship positions

NOTE: A team must complete 50% of Round 1 games in a four and five state Championship or 60% of their scheduled matches in a six state Championship, to be eligible to win the Championship.

B - 3.2 Where **teams** are tied after Round 1, the positions will be decided by:

B - 3.2.1 Head to Head clashes in all games between the teams involved.

B - 3.2.2 If still tied, the team with the lowest ratio of (number of runs scored against them) divided by (the number of defensive outs) in the games played between the tied teams, shall decide the position.

B - 3.2.3 If still tied, go to the runs allowed by each of the tied teams against the highest ranked team in Round 1, then the next highest team and so on.

B - 3.2.4 Ranking of the final two tied teams will be determined by the Head to Head process.

B - 3.3 Where teams are tied **after** Round 2, the positions will be decided by:

B - 3.3.1 Head to Head clashes in Round 2 games between the teams involved.

B - 3.3.2 If still tied, then the Head to Head results of the Round 1 game(s) will be used to separate the teams.

B - 3.3.3 If still tied, the team with the lowest ratio of (number of runs scored against them) divided by (the number of defensive outs) in the Round 2 games played between the tied teams, shall decide the position.

B - 3.3.4 If still tied, go to the runs allowed by each of the tied teams against the highest ranked team in Round 2, then the next highest team and so on.

B - 3.3.5 However, the ranking of the final two tied teams will always be determined by the Head to Head process for the Round 2 game.

B - 3.4 Higher ranked **teams** in all Round 2 and Play-off games will be the home team and proceed to the next round in the event of a game not being able to be played.

B - 3.5 In the event of a Championship Final not being able to be played, then the Champion Team will be determined by:

B - 3.5.1 the team ranked number one after the completion of Round 2.

Amended January 2017

B - 3.5.2 If Round 2 was not able to be completed, then the Champion team will be the team ranked number one after Round 1.

Amended January 2017

Item 2.2.5 (iii) removed January 2017

B - 4. Length of Games

B - 4.1 All preliminary round **robin** and semi-final round robin games are 2 hours or 7 innings in duration, with the exception outlined below in rule B – 4.1.1.1. If games are tied after 7 innings and time permits, the game may continue until there is a result or the two hours has elapsed

B - 4.1.1 **Tiebreaker Rule** is to be implemented for use in all Round 2 games. If a game remains tied after the completion of seven innings or two hours, the following tiebreaker procedures will be implemented during extra innings:

Amended January 2017

- Each team will begin the first extra inning (and any subsequent necessary extra innings) with a runner on first base (1B) and second base (2B), no outs.
- To begin the first extra inning, the player who was scheduled to be the next hitter will be the leadoff hitter, and the two previous hitters will be the runners on 1B and 2B. Once those players/runners are determined for the first extra inning, the order of any subsequent innings will be determined by how the previous inning ended. That is, if the first extra inning ends with the #6 hitter having the last plate appearance (PA), then the next inning begins the #7 hitter at bat, and the #5 hitter at 2B and the #6 hitter at 1.
- With the exception of beginning the inning with runners on 1B and 2B with no one out, all other “Official Baseball Rules” will remain in effect during extra innings required to determine a winner.

B - 4.2 Games on final day are to proceed as follows:

Playoff for 1st and 2nd is to be a 9 innings game with no time limit, and if tied at the end must play for a result. The mercy rule will apply after 7 innings have been played. However, if any team’s return travel arrangements may lead to a problem because of the extended game time, then the game will follow the same guidelines as those set out below for 3rd and 4th. The length of the playoff for 1st and 2nd is to be an agenda item at the pre-championship meeting each year where a final decision will be resolved.

Playoff for 3rd and 4th is to follow the above rules, but if tied at the end must play for a result

Playoff for 5th and 6th – the game must go no longer than 2 hours and must be played on Diamond 1 if possible.

Amended August 2017

B - 4.3 Where both teams plays only one round robin game in a day, then that game will be of nine innings duration or of two and a half hours limit. If games are tied after nine (9) innings and time permits, the game may continue until there is a result or the two and a half hours has elapsed.

B - 4.4 Once an innings has begun it shall be completed or until the team in the bottom half of the innings leads.

B - 4.5 The mercy rule will apply:

- after five (5) innings of a seven (7) innings game
- after seven (7) innings of a nine (9) innings game

B - 5. Legal Game

If a game is shortened by weather, darkness or any other causes which makes it impossible or further play in the game, a legal game shall be a minimum of eighty (80) minutes or four (4) innings.

B - 6. Suspended / Rescheduled Games

B - 6.1 It is a suspended game when the umpire terminates play on account of darkness, weather or any other cause which makes it impossible for further play in the game, and where less than a minimum of eighty (80) minutes or four (4) innings has been played re-scheduled, suspended games will be recommenced at the point where the games were halted.

B - 6.2 If re-scheduled, suspended games will be recommenced at the point where the games were halted.

B - 6.3 When a number of games are suspended or not commenced, these games shall be re-scheduled so that each team plays as near as possible an equal number of games. In the event that the suspended or non-commenced games are key game between teams vying for the championship, these games will be given precedence in any rescheduling.

B - 6.4 If game(s) are rain delayed or rained out, they may be rescheduled on an alternate ground.

B - 6.5 Games may be rescheduled on the Educational Excursion day if required.

B - 6.6 Note: Any pitches thrown in a suspended game shall be counted in pitch statistics and must be included in calculations concerning pitch limits and required rest.

Amended October 2019

B - 7. Pitching Restrictions

B - 7.1 A pitcher's assignment will be classified as:

Maximum - from 76 to 105 pitches

Major- from 61 to 75 pitches

Substantial - from 46 to 60 pitches

Moderate – from 31 to 45 pitches

Short - 30 pitches or less

B - 7.1.1 A pitcher may complete the batter in which the pitch limits occur, and still be considered as throwing the lower assignment, and will only be required to observe the calendars day(s) rest of the threshold they reached during that at bat

B - 7.1.2 The maximum DAILY limit of pitches is 105

- B - 7.2** A pitcher reaching his maximum number of daily pitches is to be removed from the game once he has completed the batter up to a maximum of 105 pitches or has been moved to Designated Hitter. However, if the pitcher retires that batter as the 3rd out of an inning, then that pitcher is entitled to take their place as a batter should they be due to hit in the next half inning.
- B - 7.3** For a maximum assignment, four (4) days rest is required before the next pitching assignment and one (1) days rest from any defensive role. This pitcher can only be used as pinch hitter, runner, designated hitter on their first day of rest, or in the second game of a double header.
- B - 7.4** For a major assignment, three (3) days rest is required before the next pitching assignment and one (1) days rest from catching. If a pitcher is removed from the mound after pitching a major assignment he is not permitted to play in another defensive position on that day and can only participate in the second game of a double header as a designated hitter, pinch hitter or runner.
- B - 7.5** For a substantial assignment, two (2) days rest is required before the next pitching assignment and one (1) days rest from catching. If a pitcher is removed from the mound after pitching a substantial assignment he is not permitted to play in another defensive position on that day and can only participate in the second game of a double header as a designated hitter, pinch hitter or runner.
- B - 7.6** For a moderate assignment, one (1) days rest is required before the next pitching assignment and one (1) days rest from catching.
- B - 7.7** No day's rest is required after a short assignment. However, consecutive short assignments, either on the same day or consecutive days, require one (1) days rest from pitching and catching.

Note: consecutive short assignments in one (1) day or consecutive days that do not exceed 30 pitches total will not disqualify players from catching during their pitching rest period.

Amended June 2019

Amended September 2023

- B - 7.8** If a pitcher throws in both games of a double header, then his total pitches for the day will be added up to fall into one of the above categories, and the same restrictions will be enforced. If a player is removed from pitching after completing a second short assignment on the same day, they shall leave the game and may not participate any further on that day, except as a designated hitter.
- B - 7.9** Any player who has played the position of catcher in four (4) or more innings, is not eligible to pitch on that calendar day.
- B - 7.10** A player once removed as a pitcher may not pitch again in the same game.
- B - 7.11** No pitcher/catcher interchange in the same game.

- B - 7.12** A Balk Pitch delivered to the plate whether it is hit safely or not shall be considered to be valid for the purpose of recording the 'number of pitches'.
- B - 7.13** A 'no pitch', e.g. batter steps out of the batter's box and the pitcher delivers the pitch, shall not be included in the pitch count.
- B - 7.14** The scorers shall indicate in the scorebook for each pitcher the assignment and when the pitcher may next pitch / play
- B - 7.15** The National Baseball Advisor or Carnival Manager will be responsible for the delivery of this information to the Umpires Coordinator and all Managers/Head Coaches before the commencement of each day's play, or as soon as possible prior to the next game.
- B - 7.16** No player may come straight from the field in a defensive inning to pitch. They must come from the bullpen.

Rule B – 7.4 amended January 2019

B - 8. Pitcher Re-Entry Rule

Can only be used with players who have not already been used defensively in the game. The removed player, if not used on the mound that inning or to start the next inning, may resume a position in the field in that next inning and be deemed eligible to go directly to the mound in that next inning as having 'warmed up'.

Amended September 2023

B - 9. Penalties for Infringement of Pitching Rules

- B - 9.1** When an offending team in breach of the tournament pitching rules has won the game, then that team will be deemed to have lost the game on a forfeiture, and the non-offending team will be awarded the win 9-0 (9 innings game) or 7-0 (7 innings game).
- B - 9.2** If the offending team loses the game, then the violation shall be reported to the National Baseball Advisor for the consideration of the imposition of a penalty.
- B - 9.3** If the offending team is tied with one or more teams at the end of Round 1 or Round 2, then it will automatically be ranked last amongst the tied teams, at the end of the round in which the breach occurred.

B - 10. Designated Hitter

The designated hitter rule may be used in the Annual School Sport Australia Baseball Championship.

B - 11. Speed Up Rules

- B - 11.1** One (1) foot in the batter's box at all times.
- B - 11.2** Courtesy runners for catchers and pitchers and any offensive player who will be the starting pitcher in the next innings may be used at any time but are mandatory with two out for catchers, however no change can be

made once the at bat has commenced. Courtesy runners may be players not currently in the line-up.

Amended June 2018

B - 11.3 Sixty (60) seconds between innings/minimum five (5) warm up pitches.

B - 12. Injuries

- B - 12.1** A player who is injured and requires treatment to stem the flow of any body fluids may leave the game without penalty and may re-enter the game up to the time of his next at bat.
- B - 12.2** A courtesy player may be used for the player if removed for treatment. The courtesy player may be any rostered player, whether or not they have already participated in the game, except for pitchers who are unable to take a defensive position due to their rest period.
- B - 12.3** If the player is unable to return to the game by his next at bat, then he shall be replaced, subject to the normal replacement rules, and may take no further part in the game.
- B - 12.4** Soiled clothing shall be replaced.

Section C – Facilities / Equipment**C - 1. Bats**

Baseball bats for use in all School Sport Australia Baseball Championships must be wood or wood composite/laminated as approved by Baseball Australia.

C - 2. Pre Game Warm Up

Twenty (20) minutes before the scheduled starting time of a game, the home team shall be entitled to a seven (7) minutes warm up on the playing diamond. The away team shall be entitled to seven (7) minutes warm up starting twelve (12) minutes before the scheduled starting time of the game. The Tournament Co-ordinator or designated official shall supervise the warm up before the game.

C - 3. Host State Responsibilities

The host state shall be responsible for:

First Aid
Umpires
Scorers
Statistician
Baseballs (as approved by Baseball Australia)
Covered Dugouts

Amended August 2017

Section D – Uniform

- D - 1.** During the play of game players must wear the designated state / territory uniform.

Section E – Injury Management

- E - 1.** Refer to School Sport Australia Championship Protocols and Policy for the management of injuries. This policy will override any sport specific injury management Protocols.

[School-Sport-Australia-Injury-Management-Policy.pdf \(schoolsportaustralia.edu.au\)](https://schoolsportaustralia.edu.au/School-Sport-Australia-Injury-Management-Policy.pdf)

New Policy Dec 2023

Section F – Officials

- F - 1.** Carnival Manager - The host State shall appoint a Carnival Manager for the conduct of all matches. This to be done in consultation with the National Advisor
- F - 2.** Umpires Coordinator - Responsible for the procurement of sufficient umpires, and the schedule of umpires for all Championship games. To be appointed in consultation with the Host State, National Advisor and SSO. All umpires to be of at least a Level 2 BA standard.
- F - 3.** Scorers Coordinator - Responsible for the procurement of sufficient scorers and the schedule of scorers for all Championship games. To be appointed in consultation with the Host State, National Advisor and SSO. All scorers to be of at least a Level 2 BA standard.
- F - 4.** Sports Medicine - The Hosts State shall be responsible for supplying a First Aid official of appropriate accreditation, who will be available for one hour before the start of the first game each day, and then for the duration of play each and every day of the Championship.

Section G – Protests

- G - 1.** Clarifications regarding the rules are the responsibility of the National Baseball Advisor or his / her nominee.

Section H – Judiciary and Disputes

- H - 1.** At this Pre-Championship meeting a participating official shall be elected to act with the National Baseball Advisor and the Championship Carnival Manager to act as a Judiciary and Disputes Panel should it be needed. An alternate member will be seconded if the elected official is perceived as having a conflict of interest in the situation being reviewed.

Amended August 2017

- H - 2.** In the event of an official Protest being lodged during a game, then the Chief Umpire will “stop the clock” while the Panel makes its decision. Once a decision has been made, the game clock will then restart.

Section I – Trophies / Awards / Medals

- I - 1. All Australian Team Selection**

An All Australian team consisting of twelve (12) players will be selected at the Championship.

Amended June 2018

I - 1.1 All Australian Team

- I - 1.1.1** Selectors will include the National Baseball Advisor and the Head Coaches, with the National Baseball Advisor having a deciding vote where necessary.
- I - 1.1.2** The All Australian Team shall include a Designated Hitter, who shall be the Batting Champion unless they are already chosen as a positional player, in which case it will be the first runner up not already chosen.
- I - 1.1.3** Players selected must display a high level of sportsmanship and behaviour throughout the entire Championship.

I - 1.2 Touring Team Selection

The Australian Touring Team is to be selected by a panel consisting of:

- Australian Schoolboys Team Management (if in attendance)
- National Baseball Advisor
- Baseball Australia representative (if in attendance)
- Up to two others elected from participating states.

I - 2. MVP Awards / Individual Awards

At the conclusion of each game throughout the Championships, the opposing coaches will confer and decide on an MVP Award for a player in each team. This to be in the form of a medallion and announced to the public with both teams in the vicinity of the home plate area.

I - 3. Series Awards

The following Series Awards will be presented at the end of the Championships based on the following criteria:

- Golden Arm Award – minimum eight (8) innings, ERA and strike outs
- Batting Award – minimum fifteen (15) plate appearances

Amended September 2023

- Golden Glove Award (Graeme Webb Memorial Award) – voted from one nominee per state/territory; casting vote with National Baseball Advisor
- MVP of the Series (Ken McGuire Medal) – voted from one nominee per state/territory; casting vote with National Baseball Advisor.