

2021 Homeschool World Series - Tournament Rules

National Federation of High Schools Rules Apply with the Following Exceptions/Additions

- **New for 2021:** as a health & safety precaution, there will be no high-five line-ups after games. See other health instructions on page 10 of the tournament program, and on the website.

Bracket and Tournament updates: The tournament bracket specifies the intended game times, fields, and matchups for each game in the World Series. Tournament staff instructions can supercede the bracket with instructions for teams or groups of teams, and updates to the bracket will be posted periodically throughout the tournament. Changes can be driven by bracket results or outside factors e.g. weather. Teams and individual families should refer to hwsa.net frequently for up-to-date information. We strive to make updates as quickly as possible, and when doing so, to allow sufficient advance warning for travel time, etc. Failure of players to notice or plan for a bracket update will not be cause for a delay or replay of any game.

Game Balls, balls out of play: HWSA will provide all game balls. Each home run ball may be kept by the team/player. Other game balls out of play must be returned to the field or to the Field Manager; **COACHES** please ask your families for help with this. Offensive team retrieves foul balls behind catcher. Both teams retrieve foul balls along fence and out of play on their respective side of field.

Game Schedule: Starting game times for Tues. and Thurs. are contingent on the previous day's results and will be set later in the tournament. Refer to hwsa.net for regular updates.

Weather Contingencies: We will use Wednesday as a rain makeup day, if needed. After Wednesday, we will do whatever it takes to get the tournament completed, even if it means shortening games and/or playing at unusual times or places. In the event of rainy conditions, please be flexible as we work out field and time contingencies. Refer to hwsa.net for updates.

- **COACHES**, please confirm your correct contact information (cell #) with the Tournament Director AND ensure that your cell-phone is charged and monitored with the ringer and text notification ON at ALL times.
- For schedule changes due to weather, teams should be flexible and prepared to play within 2 hours' notice.
- **COACHES:** check in at the tournament office after each game to confirm your next game time.

Home Team and Dugouts: Home (H) and visiting (V) teams are denoted on the bracket for some games; for other games there is a coin-flip needed to determine Home. Please check the bracket for details on each game.

- When both teams are newly arriving at a *particular* field, the Home team will occupy the First Base Dugout
- When one of the opposing teams has just completed a game *on the same field*, they will remain in their dugout regardless of which team is Home/Visitor

Official Score Book: The home team score book will be the official score book for each game. The official scorekeeper may NOT sit in the dugout, and must be accessible to the plate umpire. It is strongly encouraged that the scorekeepers from each team consult and work together throughout the game. A scorebook should be kept even if electronic scoring is also used.

Scoreboard: The visitor team will provide the scoreboard operator.

Pre-Game In and Out: Only if allowed by the field maintenance crew and if time allows for both teams to take in and out; 8 minutes maximum allowed per team. Game times will not be altered in order to allow for pre-game infield, so if games are running late, there will be no pre-game practice. Use the outfields while fields are being prepared.

Courtesy Runners: Are allowed for the catcher and pitcher of record only (not mandatory).

Protests: Protests are allowed on potential rule interpretations only; there are no protests on judgment calls by the umpire. Protests must be handled at the time of the dispute before the next pitch. Specific and detailed procedures for any protests are reprinted from the HWSA Rules in the World Series Program.

HWSA Rules of Conduct: The rules of conduct that have been adopted by the Board of Directors will apply. Please refer to the *Rules of Conduct* printed in the program. The tournament staff is committed to running the tournament in a way that is Christ-honoring, and to making the Homeschool World Series a family-friendly event in every respect.

Fan Control: Head coaches are responsible for the conduct of team fans during the game. If a fan becomes unruly and refuses to control his or her tongue, the Field Manager, Tournament Director, or HWSA Board Member will first ask the head coach to control the fan, and if needed, to remove the fan from the premises. If the fan refuses to leave the premises, the team will forfeit the game.

Ejection: A player who is ejected from a game (for whatever reason) may not take the field during the next game. A coach who is ejected may not take the field or be in the dugout during the next game. Depending upon the infraction, HWSA may take additional disciplinary action against an ejected coach. Taking additional disciplinary action against an ejected player is the responsibility of the team.

Pitcher Usage: HWSA does not have “pitch count” rules. It is the responsibility of the individual coaches to be sensitive to the health and welfare of their pitchers’ arms.

Dugout Personnel: Only “rostered” players and coaches are permitted in the dugouts during games, with the exception of a “bat boy” (these must wear a helmet at all times). The Home/official scorebook may not be in the dugout; at the team’s discretion, the Visitor scorebook may be in the dugout provided that it is kept by a “rostered” player or coach.

Dugout Water: Teams are to provide their own water for the dugout.

Uniforms: Unless otherwise agreed – the Home team wears white or their lightest color; Visitor wears their darkest color.

Coaching Attire: The head coach (manager) and all base coaches must wear *full uniforms*, (a windbreaker on top is okay). We encourage base coaches to consider helmets or helmet-hats. Assistant coaches that are confined to the dugout are exempt.

Official Rosters: The World Series Program contains the official roster for each team. No player who is absent from the program roster may take the field for live game action. As a courtesy, any discrepancies in jersey numbers from what is printed in the Program should be brought to the attention of the Field Manager before a game starts.

Litter: Please have your players pick up in the dugout, and have your fans pick up litter in the bleachers. Thank you!

Medical Needs: There is no HWSA medical staff at the tournament. If it is an emergency, 911 should be called. For non-emergencies, the tournament office will have a list of nearby care facilities.

Lightning: In the event of lightning danger, play will be halted on all fields signaled by three blasts from an airhorn. All players and coaches must take shelter in a dugout until given clearance to be back out on the field.

Practice Fields: All batting cages and fields 1 through 8 are available for Practice beginning at noon Sunday afternoon. Practice is not allowed on the Stadium Field (Field 5). Field use is limited to 90 minutes per team; first come, first served. Fields are NOT available for practice on **Wednesday**—only batting cages.

Number of Games: Weather permitting, teams will play a minimum of 5 games and a maximum of 8 games. The number of games depends on the number of 1-1 teams after pool play, and whether Q-Game Replays are required.

Tournament Award Ceremonies: All teams that qualify for medals (Div. I – top 4; Div. II – top 3; Div. III – top 2) are expected to participate in the award ceremonies held immediately following the conclusion of each division championship game. All-Americans will be presented following each team’s final game. All-Americans honored at the first awards ceremony will be re-announced (and are welcome to join the field) in the final awards ceremony following the Division I Championship Game.

2021 HWSA Seeding and Tie-Breaker Rules

Pre-Tournament Pool Play Drawing: The returning teams from the last HWSA Division I have been pre-seeded across the pool groups. The other teams will do a random draw at the Coaches' Meeting Sunday evening to fill out the remaining positions.

Pool Play Tie-Breakers (optional): If all 3 teams in a pool end up with a 1-1 record there will be a tiebreaker needed. The top team based on the tie-break criteria (below) will advance to the Q round, and a tie-break game will be played Tuesday morning between the other two tied teams. The tie-break game winner will advance to the Q round, the loser to Division III.

Division III Seed game (optional): If there are no pool play tie-breakers (meaning that all Division III teams went 0-2 in pool play), there will be a Division III Seed game between the top two D3 teams per the criteria below to determine who earns the top seed in Division III and a first-round bye; the loser of this game will be seed B in the Division III bracket.

Seeding & Tie-break criteria: After Pool Play is completed, the following seeding and tie-break criteria will be evaluated one at a time in the sequence given until the teams can be ranked.

- Better Win/Loss record to-date in the tournament
- Lower average number of runs allowed per defensive inning
- Higher average number of runs scored per offensive inning
- Coin-flip used if teams remain fully tied through criteria above

Advancing from Q Games: If a lower seed defeats a team which went 2-0 in pool play, a Q-game replay will be scheduled, the winner of which to receive a berth in Division I, the loser in Division II. In all other situations, the winner of the Q game immediately gains a Division I berth, and the loser goes to Division II.

Game Times & Time Limits: Most games will have a 2 hour and 10 minute time limit. No new inning may start after time has expired (new inning starts immediately after last out). The plate umpire will keep the time.

Time Limit Exceptions: The time limit does not apply for the Div. I and Div. II semi-final games and all three division championship games. These games are all 7 innings in length, with mercy rules in effect.

Ties: There will be no tie games. Games in all rounds will be played until a winner is determined, regardless of time limits.

Mercy Rule: if the winning team is ahead 20 runs after their opponent has batted 3 innings, 15 runs after 4 innings, or 10 runs after 5 innings, a mercy rule is engaged and the game is ended. Mercy rule applies for all games, including championships.

Double-headers: All teams will play twice on Monday. When a team plays back-to-back games, 45 minutes, if possible, will be allowed between games. Some teams will play doubleheaders on Thursday if a Q-Game Replay is required, and some teams might play a doubleheader on Friday. There is no possibility of playing 3 games in one day, for any team. To maximize fairness for programs with smaller rosters, HWSA avoids scheduling back-to-back double-headers if possible, although it may be required due to weather, tie-break games, Q-replay games, etc.