

**MANITOWOC COUNTY YOUTH SPORTS, INC.
YOUTH BASEBALL PROGRAM**

2026 COLT LEAGUE RULES

*******SPECIAL NOTE: Unless noted in this document, all league rules are to follow the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) Baseball Rules Book. Reference <http://www.nfhs.org/>.**

Additions or clarifications to rules for 2026 are in **bold block font.**
Deletions to rules for 2026 are ~~struck out.~~

I. ORGANIZATION

1. All entries for teams desiring to play in the Colt League must submit entry by the date established at the Annual Spring Meeting each year.
2. An official master schedule with designated Colt League regular season game dates and starting times will be released no later than one day after the Annual May Coaches Scheduling Meeting each year.
3. Colt League regular season games will be generally played on Thursday evenings.
 - a. Any team may, by mutual agreement with the opposing team, change the date or time of play if necessary. Postponed games should be made up in good faith and in a timely manner. The Colt League Commissioner must be notified of the change.
 - b. Teams must schedule make-up games within 2 (two) weeks after postponement due to weather or other conflict. If a new date and time cannot be agreed upon, teams are directed to work with the Colt League Commissioner to facilitate rescheduling. If they are not scheduled within this time, a request may be filed by one of the teams with the Colt League Commissioner regarding forfeiture.
 - c. If one team does not show or is not ready to play 15 (fifteen) minutes after the designated starting time, a forfeit can be requested from the Colt League Commissioner.
 - d. A team failing to field 9 (nine) players at game time shall forfeit the game.
 - e. All forfeits in this rule must be presented to, and granted by, the Colt League Commissioner.
4. A Colt Tournament may be scheduled towards the end of the regular season. A Colt Tournament will be structured as follows:
 - a. Team participation in the Tournament is voluntary.
 - b. Tournament bracket structure and seeding will be set by the Colt League Commissioner, and may include a portion of the regular season record.
 - c. Member Communities may bid on hosting the Colt Tournament Games at the Annual May Coaches Scheduling Meeting.

- i. Colt Tournament games may be bundled with other League Tournament games
 - ii. If multiple bids are received, the games shall be awarded to the Community with the longest time passing since last hosting.
 - iii. In case of a tie, a random drawing of bidding Communities will determine the winner.
 - d. In Tournament championship games for first/second place, establishing Home Team is by means of the flip of a coin - heads or tails.
 - e. If any team fails to show up for their scheduled games at the appropriate tournament site and date the MCYS would:
 - i. Impose a fine of \$500 (five hundred dollars) which would be paid by the Community who the team plays for and paid to the MCYS Treasurer. This monetary amount would be then given back to the community hosting the tournament.
 - ii. All MCYS awards acquired during the year would be forfeited.
 - iii. Penalties in this rule must be approved by the Steering Committee.
5. The following dimensions shall apply for the layout of the ball diamonds for Colt games:
 - Base path distance – 90 (ninety) feet
 - Pitcher’s mound distance – 60 (sixty) feet 6 (six) inches (this distance is from the front of the pitching rubber to the rear point of home plate).
 - Starting in 2020, an emphasis shall be placed on batter’s & catcher’s boxes being properly marked to start any Colt game. If they are not marked, or if the lines have been removed by normal play, the Home Plate Umpire’s judgement shall apply to whether the batter or catcher is positioned correctly relative to the batter’s or catcher’s box, for all plays. See Appendix B for dimensions.
6. All Colt regular season and tournament (non-championship) games shall be 7 (seven) innings duration, unless tied. If weather or darkness interferes with play so that the game is called (ended) by the umpire, it is a regulation game:
 - a. If 5 (five) full innings have been played, or if the home team has scored an equal or greater number of runs in four or four and a fraction turns at bat.
 - b. If play has gone beyond 5 (five) full innings. If the game is called when the teams have not had an equal number of completed turns at bat. The score shall be the same as it was at the end of the last completed inning; except that if the home team in its half of the incomplete inning scores a run (or runs) which equals or exceeds the opponents score, the final score shall be as recorded when the game is called.
 - c. If a game is called before completion of the number of innings and conditions as specified above, the umpire shall declare the contest “no game”. A “no game” shall be rescheduled.
 - d. Any game that is tied at the end of 4 ½ (four and one-half) or at least 5 (five) full innings when the game is called, shall be a tie. Game shall be rescheduled. The official score book is used to restart the game where it ended.

7. All Colt regular season and tournament (non-championship) games shall have the following run rule limits.
 - a. The game shall end when the visiting team is behind 10 (ten) or more runs after 4 ½ (four and one-half) innings or after the 5th (fifth) inning, if either team is 10 (ten) runs behind and both teams have had an equal number of times at bat.
 - b. A 20 (twenty) run rule lead after 3 (three) complete innings shall constitute a complete ball game upon mutual agreement by both coaches.
8. There is no run rule limit for MCYS Tournament Colt championship games. Any MCYS Tournament Colt championship game shall be a 7 (seven) inning game unless tied, or unless called before 7 (seven) innings by agreement of both managers.
9. Lightning or thunder protocols during games shall be per NFHS Guidelines on Handling Practices and Contests during Lightning or Thunder Disturbances (see Appendix A). It is recommended that practices use these same protocols.

II. EQUIPMENT

1. All players shall wear baseball caps with the exception of the catcher, who must wear a full plastic cap along with a catcher's mask.
2. Players shall wear a full protective helmet while batting and running the bases. (This means a helmet equipped with earflaps).
3. The official ball for the Colt League will be determined each year at the Officer', Director's, and Commissioner's Meeting. 1 (one) dozen balls are supplied with each team entry. See the General Commissioner to purchase additional balls from MCYS inventory, or to obtain the official ball make and model for purchase elsewhere.
4. The use of the aluminum bat is legal, however, if used, it must be intact. Any change in the basic form of the bat causes it to be outlawed.
 - a. In diameter at thickest part (non-wood) - 2 5/8 (two and five eighths) inches or less.
 - b. In length – 36 (thirty-six) inches or less.
 - c. In weight - A bat shall not weigh, numerically, more than 3 (three) ounces less than the length of the bat. Example: a 33 (thirty-three) inch long bat cannot be less than 30 (thirty) ounces.
 - d. All non-wood bats shall meet the Batted Ball Coefficient of Restitution (BBCOR) performance standard and such bats shall be labeled with a silk screen or other permanent certification mark.
 - e. A non-wood bat must have a safety grip of cork, tape, or composite material. The grip must extend a minimum of 10 (ten) inches but not more than 18 inches from the handle of the bat. Slippery tape or similar material shall be prohibited.
 - f. No foreign substance may be added to the surface of the bat 18 (eighteen) inches from the end of the handle.

5. Basic standards for use of wood bats. Bats that are altered or that do not meet the rule specifications are illegal. According to the baseball rule book, each bat shall be:
 - a. In diameter at thickest part (wood) - 2 $\frac{3}{4}$ (two and three quarters) inches or less.
 - b. In length - 36 (thirty-six) inches or less.
 - c. In weight - A bat shall not weigh, numerically, more than 3 (three) ounces less than the length of the bat. Example: a 33 (thirty-three) inch long bat cannot be less than 30 (thirty) ounces.
 - d. All wood bats shall meet the Batted Ball Coefficient of Restitution (BBCOR) performance standard and such bats shall be labeled with a silk screen or other permanent certification mark.
 - e. A wood bat must have a safety grip of cork, tape, or composite material. The grip must extend a minimum of 10 (ten) inches but not more than 18 (eighteen) inches from the handle of the bat. Slippery tape or similar material shall be prohibited.
 - f. No foreign substance may be added to the surface of the bat 18 (eighteen) inches from the end of the handle.

III. ROSTERS (PLAYERS - RESTRICTIONS)

1. To be eligible to play in the Colt League, a player may not reach his/her 19th birthday before June 1st of the current year.
 - a. Any appeal for an age or other MCYS roster exemption must be submitted to the MCYS Steering Committee before the Annual May Coaches Scheduling Meeting.
 - b. Colt League participation is open to both boys and girls, defined as male (boys) or female (girls) as indicated on the child's birth certificate.
2. No player may participate in this program unless they have a current liability form on file with the MCYS. A player is not eligible to participate in any game until a current liability form is properly filed with the Colt League Commissioner.
 - a. Penalty for using a player that does not have a current liability form properly filed will be forfeiture of those games played. Penalties in this rule must be approved by the Steering Committee.
3. No players shall change from one Colt team to another after the start of the season. Before the first league game is played, a roster is to be filed with the Colt League Commissioner. Failure to do so will result in forfeiture of all games played until such roster is filed.
 - a. Players can be added to a roster at any time during the regular season. A player is not eligible to participate in any game until they have been added to the official roster. Penalty for using a player that has not been added to the official roster will be forfeiture of those games played.
 - b. Penalties in this rule must be approved by the Colt League Commissioner.
 - c. The number of players on a roster will be unlimited.
4. Players are generally limited to play on one team and one league only within the MCYS program to give as many players as possible an opportunity to play.

- a. Starting in 2020, each Colt Team Roster may have up to 3 (three) players that are currently eligible and actively playing on an MCYS Pony Team. To be eligible for this special roster exemption, players must be registered to play on Pony and Colt teams from the same community, and must have reached their 14th (fourteenth) birthday by June 1st of the current year. This special roster exemption will apply for the regular season, and for tournament play.
5. To be eligible for tournament play, players must have a current liability form on file and must be on the official roster in the Colt League Commissioner's possession before July 1st. Exceptions to this rule must be approved by the Steering Committee.
6. Note: There are no residency rules for all Leagues starting in 2017.
7. In Colt League play, any of the 9 (nine) starting players may withdraw and re-enter the game once, provided such player occupies the same batting order spot whenever he/she is in the line-up. A substitute who replaces the pitcher whose team is not at bat, shall pitch to the first opponent to bat against them until that batter has advanced to a base or has been put out or until a 3rd out has been registered. ***(Exception: If a pitcher is incapacitated or guilty of flagrant, unsportsmanlike conduct, this rule is ignored).***
8. A substitute who is withdrawn from the game may not re-enter. ***(Exception: In the event rule III.7 has been used, and after re-entering the game, any one of the starters is incapacitated by injury, this rule is ignored).***

IV. BASE RUNNING

1. It is recommended that all managers instruct the base runners that have run past first base and have not made a break or started for second base, to return to first base via foul territory so there is no question as to the runner's intent.
2. If a ball is being returned to the pitcher and is mishandled, runners **may** advance at their own risk.
3. Colt League play shall be subject to the NFHS baseball ground rules concerning overthrows.
4. If a defensive player, in a force out situation has already touched the base and is no longer in the base line, the runner shall not go out of the baseline in an attempt to make contact with the defensive player. If such contact is, in the opinion of the umpire, malicious or flagrant, the runner's interference also prevented an out on the batter-base runner; the umpire shall declare the batter-runner out. ***(Special emphasis should be placed on double play situations where this rule will apply!)***
5. If a runner stands up and runs into a defensive player, the runner will be declared out for the interference. If such contact is, in the opinion of the umpire, malicious or flagrant, the runner's interference also prevented an out on the batter-base runner; the

umpire shall declare the batter-runner out. *(Special emphasis should be placed on double play situations where this rule will apply!)*

6. No base runner shall, upon seeing the catcher or another defensive player who has the ball waiting for the runner, deliberately and with great force, crash into the defensive player in hopes of jarring the ball loose. The umpire shall declare such runner out, and if in the umpire's opinion, it is flagrant act; the runner shall be ejected from the game.
7. Appeal procedures and guidelines for:
 - a. Missing a base.
 - b. Leaving a base on a caught fly ball before the ball is first touched.

Live Ball Appeal - can be made by any fielder in possession of the ball touching the base missed or left too soon on a caught fly ball or by tagging the runner committing the violation if still on the playing field.

Dead Ball Appeal - once all runners have completed their advancement and time has been called, a coach or any defensive player, with or without the ball, may make a verbal appeal on a runner missing a base or leaving a base too soon on a caught fly ball. The umpire shall then make decision on the play. If the ball has gone out of play, runners must be given the opportunity to complete their base running before the **“Dead Ball Appeal”** can be made.

V. BATTING

(No Special MCYS Rules Exist for This Section)

VI. PITCHING

1. Starting in 2018, each team shall establish and maintain a pitch count log for each pitcher used during regular season and tournament games.
 - a. The pitch count will only include pitches thrown while a batter is present in the batter's box. Warm-up pitches allowed by the umpires at any point during the game are not part of the pitch count.
 - b. A number of hours of rest from pitching will be required at the conclusion of each game pitched in. These guidelines are based upon WIAA Adaptations to NFHS Rules, as of the 2018 season.
 - i. 1 to 30 pitches require 0 hours rest.
 - ii. 31 to 49 pitches require 24 hours rest.
 - iii. 50 to 75 pitches require 48 hours rest.
 - iv. 75 to 100 pitches require 72 hours rest.
 - v. When a pitcher reaches 100 pitches, that pitcher may finish the current at-bat, but may not pitch to another batter.
 - c. The pitching rule applies even though a game is called (ended) by the umpire because of darkness, rain or some other factor before it has become an official game.
 - d. At the pregame meeting, coaches should have a copy of their pitch count log for any questions about pitcher status. Each team will designate a pitch count

person for their team. It is recommended (but not mandatory) that a responsible individual be a separate pitch recorder who will also record pitch counts from an area behind home plate.

- e. At the end of each complete inning, coaches (and pitch count recorder if present) will meet at a location designated by the team host and/or umpire to review pitch counts. If there is a difference, the coaches must resolve the difference before beginning the next inning. If the counts differ, the following will be used to determine the pitch count:
 - i. If a pitch count recorder is present and two of three agree, the majority will be considered official.
 - ii. If a pitch count recorder is present and none of the three agree, the pitch count recorder will be considered official.
 - iii. If a pitch count recorder is not present, the home counter will be considered official.
- f. At the conclusion of the game, both head coaches and pitch counter if present will sign the pitch count chart.
- g. It is not the responsibility of game officials to enforce the pitch count rule. Coaches must report violation to the MCYS League Commissioner following competition. Violations are considered in the same manner as a team using an ineligible player. The minimum penalty for such violations is forfeiture of the game.

VII. HOME TEAM RESPONSIBILITY

1. The home team shall furnish the umpires, 2 (two) per game. Once a game starts, the umpires shall have complete control over how the game proceeds. The umpires shall eject from the game, any player, coach, or manager for using profane language. The umpires may also eject from the game, for good reason, any person or player at any time they feel it is necessary for the good of the game and the program. Such ejections shall be agreed upon by all umpires working the game and shall be reported to the Colt League Commissioner as soon as possible, but in no case later than the following day.
2. The umpires must be well versed in the rules of the game, especially MCYS special rules. 2 (two) adult umpires are required per game ... must be 18 (eighteen) years of age or older. The umpires shall, in all cases, be persons worthy of the position, of sufficient maturity to use good judgment, and do a satisfactory job.

The manager or coach of a team involved in a game shall not umpire that game, unless by mutual agreement with the manager or coach from the opposing team.

- a. If the home team has not supplied the required, qualified umpires within 15 (fifteen) minutes after the designated starting time, a forfeit can be requested by the visiting team (**see Rule I.3.e**).
- b. If both teams agree to use umpires that do not meet these requirements, then all decisions made by those umpires will be upheld as final (MCYS will not allow protest of the game results).

3. The home team shall furnish the official scorer. Both teams shall submit full names, first and last, to the official scorer.
4. The winning team shall be responsible for reporting results to the Colt League Commissioner. Results should be phoned, texted, or emailed to the Colt League Commissioner, preferably the night of the game or the morning following the game, but in no case, later than 2 (two) days after the scheduled date of the game.
5. The home team shall have available a current year or one year old copy of the Baseball Rules Book from the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS), and the current year Colt League rules for each game. The MCYS shall provide a new NFHS Rules Book to each coach in every even-numbered year. (The expectation is that new coaches in odd-numbered years will receive their copy of the NFHS Rules Book from their predecessor).
6. The home team shall furnish official game balls for regular season and non-championship tournament games, 1 (one) in new condition and others in good condition, as needed.

VIII. MISCELLANEOUS MCYS RULES

1. To promote sportsmanship and fair play, umpires, managers, and coaches should insist that conversation between opposing teams during the game be addressed to play position, rather than name, nickname, or other forms of razzing. This is of prime importance in the younger leagues. We feel it is equally important for spectators to act in the same manner.
2. The Steering Committee will be composed of the Officers, Directors, and Commissioners of the MCYS. It shall be their responsibility to evaluate any problems or questions submitted to them by any member of this program and to make such decisions and take such action as they feel is necessary to rectify these situations. They shall have authority to suspend temporarily or permanently any member of the program, or to make such reprimands as they deem necessary.
3. Game Protest Procedures and Requirements.
 - a. All game protests must be submitted verbally (no texting) to the appropriate MCYS League Commissioner within 24 (twenty-four) hours of game completion.
 - b. The protest shall then be presented in writing (email is acceptable – texting is not) to the MCYS President within 48 (forty-eight) hours of the verbal submission.
 - c. A \$100 (one hundred dollar) protest fee shall accompany any written protests and must be in the MCYS President's possession before the protest will be reviewed. This fee will be refunded if the protest is ruled in favor of the protesting team.
 - d. No protests will be allowed on judgement calls. Protests will only be allowed on the application of MCYS or NFHS rules.

- e. Any protests will be decided by the MCYS Steering Committee and the teams involved. If a protest is upheld, the original game shall be declared a “no-game”, and will be rescheduled by the appropriate MCYS Commissioner, with the rule infraction corrected.
 - f. There will be no protests allowed in tournament games.
4. Smoking or alcoholic beverages will not be allowed on the playing field or in the play area (dugouts, benches, etc.).
 5. Any proposed changes or modifications of these rules must be submitted in writing to the MCYS General Commissioner by February 1st of the next year. The appropriate League Commissioner (or Commissioners, should the requested change directly affect multiple Leagues) shall review the request and shall decide whether to submit the request to the full Steering Committee for review and a formal vote on adoption, or to place the request on the MCYS next business meeting agenda as a discussion item only. If the decision is to submit for review and formal vote, the Commissioner(s) shall work with the Requestor and the MCYS General Commissioner to draft language for the Steering Committee review. If the decision is for discussion only (not to submit for review and formal vote), The Commissioner(s) shall provide feedback to the Requester after the Steering Committee discussion has been completed. The Steering Committee shall conduct either the reviews with formal vote, or the discussions only, at a regular or special business meeting prior to the annual Spring Meeting.

Appendix A

NFHS GUIDELINES ON HANDLING PRACTICES AND CONTESTS DURING LIGHTNING or THUNDER DISTURBANCES

National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) Sports Medicine Advisory Committee (SMAC)

These guidelines provide a default policy to those responsible or sharing duties for making decisions concerning the suspension and restarting of practices and contests based on the presence of lightning or thunder. The preferred sources from which to request such a policy for your facility would include your state high school activities association and the nearest office of the National Weather Service.

Proactive Planning

1. Assign staff to monitor local weather conditions before and during practices and contests.
2. Develop an evacuation plan, including identification of appropriate nearby safe areas.
3. Develop criteria for suspension and resumption of play:
 - a. When thunder is heard or a cloud-to-ground lightning bolt is seen, the leading edge of the thunderstorm is close enough to strike your location with lightning. Suspend play for thirty minutes and take shelter immediately.
 - b. Thirty-minute rule. Once play has been suspended, wait at least 30 minutes after the last thunder is heard or flash of lightning is witnessed prior to resuming play.
 - c. Any subsequent thunder or lightning after the beginning of the 30-minute count will reset the clock and another 30-minute count should begin.
4. Review annually with all administrators, coaches and game personnel.
5. Inform student athletes of the lightning policy at start of season.

For more detailed information, refer to the "Lightning Safety" section contained in the NFHS Sports Medicine Handbook.

Revised and Approved October 2014

DISCLAIMER – NFHS Position Statements and Guidelines

The NFHS regularly distributes position statements and guidelines to promote public awareness of certain health and safety-related issues. Such information is neither exhaustive nor necessarily applicable to all circumstances or individuals, and is no substitute for consultation with appropriate health-care professionals. Statutes, codes or environmental conditions may be relevant. NFHS position statements or guidelines should be considered in conjunction with other pertinent materials when taking action or planning care. The NFHS reserves the right to rescind or modify any such document at any time.

Appendix B

Batter's & Catcher's Box Diagram for Colt League

Baseball Diamond Marking
Batter's Box Dimensions
Catcher's Box Dimensions

