

2017 World Baseball Classic Rules and Rule Modifications

The 2017 World Baseball Classic, which will be played under the Official Rules of Major League Baseball and will include the use of a designated hitter, will feature the following rules:

ROSTERS

On or before February 6, 2017, each Federation Team shall submit to WBCI a proposed Final Roster of no more than 28 players, each of whom must have been on that Federation Team's Available Player List, plus one manager and six coaches. An approved Final Roster shall include at least 13 pitchers and at least two catchers.

DESIGNATED PITCHER POOL

Each Federation Team may identify a designated pool of 10 pitchers who are eligible to participate in one or more consecutive rounds. The list is submitted to WBCI at the time the Provisional and Final rosters are due. For the Federation Team to utilize the Designated Pitcher Pool, the Federation Team's Final Roster shall include one or two pitchers from the pool. If no pitcher is listed from the pool, on their submitted roster to WBCI, the Federation Team is prohibited from using the Designated Pitcher Pool for the remainder of the Tournament. Once the pool pitcher is named on a Tournament roster and subsequently removed prior to the next round, the pitcher is no longer eligible to participate. After each round of the Tournament, any pitcher from an advancing Federation's Designated Pitcher Pool may be replaced on the Federation's Final Roster with another pitcher from that Federation's Designated Pitcher Pool, provided that no member of the Designated Pitcher Pool may be added back to his Federation's Final Roster once he has been replaced by another member of the Designated Pitcher Pool. Affiliated members of the Designated Pitcher Pool who are not included on their federation's Roster for a given round of the Tournament should report to or remain with their Major League Club, as directed by the Club. If the pitcher being replaced is an affiliated pitcher, he must return to his Major League Club's spring training camp once he is no longer an active member of the Federation's 28-man roster.

PLAYER ELIGIBILITY

Each player on a Federation Team's approved Available Player List must be eligible to participate for that Federation Team. A player will be so eligible only if:

- » The player previously appeared on a Federation Team's final roster at the start of either a WBC Qualifier or Tournament round; or
- » The player is a citizen of the Federation Team's country or territory, as evidenced by a valid passport the player holds as of three months prior to the start of the Tournament; or
- » The player is currently a permanent legal resident of the Federation Team's country or territory, as evidenced by documentation satisfactory to WBCI and the World Baseball Softball Confederation ("WBSC"), or
- » The player was born in the Federation Team's country or territory, as evidenced by a birth certificate or its equivalent; or
- » The player has at least one parent who is, or if deceased was, a citizen of the Federation Team's country or territory, as evidenced by a passport or other documentation satisfactory to WBCI and the WBSC; or
- » The player has at least one parent who was born in the Federation Team's country or territory, as evidenced by a birth certificate or its equivalent; or
- » The player presents documentary evidence satisfactory to WBCI that he would be granted citizenship or a passport in due course under the laws of the Federation Team's country or territory (excluding any requirement of the Federation Team's country that the player would need to renounce his current citizenship), if he were to apply for such citizenship or passport.

PLAYER RESTRICTIONS PER MLB CLUB

WBCI will not approve a player's participation in the Tournament if such participation would cause an MLB Club to have more than 14 players from its organization, or more than 10 of its players who were on any MLB Club's Major League Active or Disabled List as of August 31, 2016, participate in the Tournament, unless the MLB Club informs WBCI in writing that it has no objection to allowing additional players to participate. Notwithstanding the foregoing, WBCI will retain the discretion to determine whether an otherwise eligible Player is ineligible to participate in the Tournament on the basis that such participation would pose an undue burden on his Club (e.g., a Club has its top five starting pitchers electing to participate). If limits of player participation from an MLB Club are reached, WBCI will choose which players will participate, guided by the principle that Federation Teams' rosters that have fewer available Major League Baseball affiliated players will be given priority.



DISABLED PERSONNEL

A Federation Team may replace a player, manager or coach on its Final Roster if the player, manager or coach is disabled and WBCI confirms that the player, manager or coach has a specific injury or ailment that renders the player, manager or coach unable to continue to participate in all or part of the Tournament.

A player so designated as Disabled shall be ineligible to participate in any further Tournament games. A Federation Team may replace on its Final Roster a player designated as Disabled with another player who had appeared on that Federation Team's Available Player List. A pitcher designated as Disabled may be replaced only by a pitcher and a player designated as Disabled who is other than a pitcher may be replaced only by a player other than a pitcher. A catcher who is designated as Disabled may be replaced only by a catcher, if the Disabled catcher would otherwise cause the Federation Team to have fewer than two catchers. A Federation Team must provide a written request for replacement, in a reasonable amount of time, to a person designated by WBCI and receive the approval of WBCI before such replacement appears in a Tournament game. If a player other than a catcher is injured during a round in the Tournament, no replacement for such player shall play until the beginning of the next round. If a player is injured in the championship round, no replacement for such player shall be permitted.

BEREAVEMENT / FAMILY MEDICAL EMERGENCY / PATERNITY LEAVE

A Federation Team may request that a player be given Bereavement/Family Medical Emergency/Paternity Leave. No player may be given Bereavement/Family Medical Emergency / Paternity Leave unless such player is unable to render services because of the serious or severe illness or death of a member of such player's immediate family (spouse, parent, grandparent, sibling, child or grandchild), of such player's spouse's immediate family (parent, grandparent, sibling, child or grandchild) or such other family member as WBCI determines is in keeping with the spirit of this Bereavement /Family Medical Emergency Leave policy. No player may be given Paternity Leave unless that player is the father of a child whose delivery or adoption is imminent or has occurred within the prior 48 hours.

The minimum period of Bereavement / Family Medical Emergency Leave shall be three consecutive days and the maximum period of Bereavement / Family Medical Emergency Leave shall be seven consecutive days, during which time the player is not permitted to be with the Federation Team. The minimum period of Paternity Leave shall be one day and the maximum period of placement shall be three consecutive days, during which time the player is not permitted to be with the Federation Team.

A player given Bereavement / Family Medical Emergency / Paternity Leave may be replaced on the Final Roster by another player who had appeared on that Federation Team's approved Available Player List. A pitcher given Bereavement / Family Medical Emergency / Paternity Leave may be replaced only by a pitcher and a player other than a pitcher may be replaced only by a player other than a pitcher. Such replacement shall be subject to the same game and Final Roster restrictions above to which the player he is replacing was subject. Upon expiration of a player's Bereavement / Family Medical Emergency / Paternity Leave, such player shall be reinstated to the Final Roster, the player who replaced the player given leave shall be removed from the Final Roster and the returning player shall likewise be subject to the same game and Final Roster restrictions to which the player who replaced him would otherwise have been subject. If replacement of a player on Bereavement / Family Medical Emergency / Paternity Leave would otherwise cause a Federation Team's Final Roster to have fewer than two catchers, then any replacement shall be a catcher.



PITCHER USE LIMITATIONS

The Official Baseball Rules shall be supplemented for Tournament games played by a Federation Team, as follows:

A pitcher must:

- » Not pitch until a minimum of four days have passed since he last pitched, if he threw 50 or more pitches when he last pitched;
- » Not pitch until a minimum of one day has passed since he last pitched, if he threw 30 or more pitches when he last pitched;
- » Not pitch until a minimum of one day has passed since any second consecutive day on which the pitcher pitched;

The aggregate number of pitches thrown in two successive games over two days is not used to determine pitcher rest restrictions.

- » Throw no more than
 - 65 pitches per game in the First Round of the Tournament;
 - 80 pitches per game in the Second Round of the Tournament; and
 - 95 pitches per game in the Championship Round of the Tournament;
 unless the pitcher needs more to complete a batter’s plate appearance; and
- » Throw no more than
 - 49 pitches per exhibition game for a Federation Team, or the maximum number of pitches that WBCI sets forth for such pitcher for such exhibition game, whichever is less, if the pitcher is under reserve to an MLB Club. WBCI may set forth such a maximum upon the written request of the pitcher’s MLB Club.

No position player (i.e., a player other than a pitcher) who is on the Reserve List of an MLB Club (within the meaning of the Major League Rules) shall be permitted to pitch for a Federation Team in (1) an exhibition game, under any circumstances, or (2) a Tournament game, unless the Game Operations Technical Committee has first given such WBC Federation Team permission to do so in such Tournament game. Other than the foregoing, there shall be no restrictions on the use of position players.

For purposes of the pitcher use limitation rules, both semi-final games shall be deemed to have been played on the day of the latest semi-final game.

EARLY TERMINATION FOR LARGE LEADS

The umpire-in-chief shall call a regulation game in the First and Second Rounds of the Tournament and award the victory to the Federation Team that is ahead whenever:

- » such Federation Team is ahead by 10 or more runs after any complete inning, beginning with the completion of the seventh inning; or
- » such Federation Team is ahead by 15 or more runs after any complete inning, beginning with the completion of the fifth inning.

EXTRA INNINGS

For any inning beginning with the 11th inning, the Federation Team at bat shall begin the inning with runners on first and second base. The batter who leads off an inning shall continue to be the batter who would lead off the inning in the absence of this extra-innings rule. The runner on first base shall be the player (or a substitute for such player) in the batting order immediately preceding the batter who leads off the inning. The runner on second base shall be the player (or a substitute for such player) in the batting order immediately preceding the runner on first base.

EXAMPLE

If the #5 hitter in the batting order is due to lead off the 11th inning, the #3 player in the batting order (or a pinch-runner for such player) shall begin the inning on second base and the #4 player in the batting order (or a pinch-runner for such player) shall begin the inning on first base. Any runner or batter removed from the game for a substitute shall be ineligible to return to the game, as is the case in all circumstances under the Official Baseball Rules. For purposes of calculating earned runs under the Official Baseball Rule 9.16(b), the runners who begin an inning on first and second base pursuant to this rule each shall be deemed to be runners who have reached first base because of a fielding error, but no error shall be charged to the opposing Federation Team or to any player.



HOME / VISITOR DESIGNATIONS

In each pool in the First and Second Rounds, home team designations, for purposes of the Official Baseball Rules, shall be as follows, without any regard to the sequence of games played:

- » Team 2 visitor, Team 1 home;
- » Team 4 visitor, Team 3 home;
- » Team 3 visitor, Team 1 home;
- » Team 4 visitor, Team 2 home;
- » Team 1 visitor, Team 4 home;
- » Team 3 visitor, Team 2 home.

In each of the semi-final games:

- » The Federation Team that finishes in first place in its Second Round pool shall be the home team (but in the event that a Game 6 of a Second Round pool is cancelled, called, not resumed or remains a tie game, then the Federation Team from that pool without a loss shall be deemed to be the Federation Team that won its Second Round pool, for purposes of being the home team in a Semi-final game).

In the championship game:

- » The Federation Team with the higher winning percentage of games in the Tournament shall be the home team. If the Federation Teams competing in the championship game have identical winning percentages in the Tournament, then WBCI shall conduct a coin flip or draw to determine the home team.

For the First Round, the designated Federation Teams are determined by:

- » Federation Team One represents each of the four teams that advanced to the 2013 WBC championship round.
- » Federation Team Two represents each of the four teams that advanced to the Second Round of the 2013 WBC tournament.
- » Federation Team Three represents each of the four teams that won a game in the First Round of the 2013 WBC tournament but did not advance to the second round.
- » Federation Team Four represents each of the four teams that won their respective 2016 WBC Qualifier pools.

For the Second Round (Pool E – Tokyo), the designated Federation Teams are determined by:

- » Federation Team One represents the winner of Pool B (Tokyo).
- » Federation Team Two represents the winner of Pool A (Seoul).
- » Federation Team Three represents the runner-up of Pool B (Tokyo).
- » Federation Team Four represents the runner-up of Pool A (Seoul).

For the Second Round (Pool F – San Diego), the designated Federation Teams are determined by:

- » Federation Team One represents the winner of Pool D (Jalisco).
- » Federation Team Two represents the winner of Pool C (Miami).
- » Federation Team Three represents the runner-up of Pool C (Miami).
- » Federation Team Four represents the runner-up of Pool D (Jalisco).

WINNING PITCHER

Official Baseball Rules 9.17(a)(1) and 9.17(b) shall not apply to Tournament games. Instead, Official Baseball Rule 9.17(e) shall apply to the determination of the winning pitcher of each Tournament game.

VIDEO REPLAY REVIEW

In the First and Second Rounds, video replay review by the umpires shall be available to assist the umpires only in regard to plays involving home runs or potential home runs and, then, only in two circumstances:

1. A home run/no home run “boundary” calls involving a decision regarding:
 - i. Whether a ball left the playing field or struck an object;
 - ii. Whether a ball struck the top of the fence, hit a railing or otherwise stayed within the field of play (including “yellow line” calls); or
 - iii. Whether a ball was interfered with by a fan reaching over the fence.
2. A decision regarding whether a potential home run ball traveling over either side of the foul pole was fair or foul. The decision to use video replay review shall be in the sole discretion of the umpire crew chief. Neither Federation Team shall have the right to insist on video replay review.

If the umpire crew chief determines that video replay review is appropriate, the umpire crew chief shall conduct the review himself with participation from at least one other member of the umpire crew.

For the Championship Round, video replay review by the umpires shall be available to assist the umpires in the same manner as used during the Major League Baseball championship season, with the exception of manager challenges.



DISPUTES

All disputes between and among players and Federation Teams (other than anti-doping disputes whose resolution is provided for in other agreements among Major League Baseball, the Major League Baseball Players Association and the World Baseball Softball Confederation) shall be referred to WBCI for decision. **WBCI's decisions shall be accepted by all parties as final.**

POOL PLAY AND TIE-BREAKING PROCEDURES

First Round:

- » In the First Round, the Teams in each pool shall be ranked according to the percentages of games won in the First Round. The two teams with the highest such percentages in each pool shall advance to the Second Round.

Second Round:

- » In the Second Round, the Teams in each pool shall be ranked according to the percentages of games won in the Second Round, without regard to the results of the First Round. The two Teams with the highest such percentages in each Second Round pool shall advance to the Championship Round.
- » If at the end of pool play in the First and Second Rounds of the Tournament, teams within a pool are tied with an identical winning percentage, then tie shall be broken in the following order of priority. The higher ranked Federation Team will be the home team.

Tie-Breaking Scenarios:

- » **First and Second Place Teams Tied:** In the event that the first and second-place teams are tied for Pool Winner designation, the Team that defeated the other tied Team in that Round shall be ranked higher in the pool standings for that Round.
- » **Three Teams Tied 2-1:** If there are three teams 2-1, then the tiebreaker rules would be applied to rank the three, and the first-ranked team would advance. The second and third-ranked teams would play a game to determine who the second-place team is. The tiebreaker rules applied would be as follows:
 - Step 1: The tied Teams shall be ranked in the standings for that Round according to fewest runs allowed divided by the number of innings (including partial innings) played in defense in the games in that Round between the Teams tied.
 - Step 2: The tied Teams shall be ranked in the standings according to fewest earned runs allowed divided by the number of innings (including partial innings) played in defense in the games in that Round between the Teams tied.
 - Step 3: The tied Teams shall be ranked in the standings according to highest batting average in games in that Round between the Teams tied.
 - Step 4: Standings shall be determined by the drawing of lots, conducted by WBCI.
- » **Three Teams Tied 1-2:** If there are three teams tied 1-2, then the tiebreaker rules would be applied to rank the three, and the first two ranked teams would play a tiebreaker game, the winner of which would advance. The tiebreaker rules will be applied as follows:
 - Step 1: The tied Teams shall be ranked in the standings for that Round according to fewest runs allowed divided by the number of innings (including partial innings) played in defense in the games in that Round between the Teams tied.
 - Step 2: The tied Teams shall be ranked in the standings according to fewest earned runs allowed divided by the number of innings (including partial innings) played in defense in the games in that Round between the Teams tied.
 - Step 3: The tied Teams shall be ranked in the standings according to highest batting average in games in that Round between the Teams tied.
 - Step 4: Standings shall be determined by the drawing of lots, conducted by WBCI.
- » **Championship Round:** The Semi-final game and Final game of the Tournament shall be conducted in a single elimination format. Each Semi-final game shall match a winner of a Second Round pool against a runner-up of the other Second Round pool. The winners of each Semi-final game shall meet in the Championship game of the Tournament.

