

Zone 2 Provincials format 2026

Baseball Manitoba restructured its format for provincials in 2024 to replace the previous “A” and “AA” provincials with the representation for the events varying at each age group.

The goals that Baseball Mb were trying to attain included:

- *Offer the player development opportunity that best suits that particular age group**
- *Create more opportunities for the different calibre of teams our leagues produce**
- *Create a more level playing field for small associations when competing vs large associations**
- *Create the appetite and ability for more teams/associations to want to attend provincials and host provincials.**
- *Transition the goal of provincials to becoming an event that can maximize participation, competition, and development for all age groups**
- *Have the teams in each provincial event following the same roster formation guidelines**

Results: The new format has been very successful although we were expecting a few changes over the first few seasons. Changes for 2026 will be in red in the document.

11U

Zone 2 provincials (Tier 1, Tier 2 and Tier 3)

Team Formation

Local associations have 2 options for team formation at the 11U level.

1. All players in the local association at the 11U level (major aged and minor aged) are put into a pool of players and are split into teams of similar talent level (even teams) (i.e. if the association has 30 players their 3 teams should be of similar skill level).

-Although the goal is for equal teams, there is an understanding that not all teams will be equal as the season progresses. This could be due to not knowing the talent pool at the start, the top player(s) being that much better than others, or an association with only one team having a strong group of players that year, but leagues are asked to do their best to maintain a level of parity.

2. Local associations can choose to split their players by ages (ie. major or minor) and create the team based on those numbers. If a local association has enough players for 2 teams in that birth year (ie. major or minor year) the teams are to be made of equal calibre. If an association chooses to use birth year to make teams, the major aged team can only be eligible for Tier 1 provincials and are limited to 2 roster additions. Minor aged teams are eligible for any tier and have the same roster addition rules as the other teams

Provincial Representation

Each Zone 2 league is allowed 1 representative in each provincial with the host league having the option of another representative. Should there be an opening in the provincial due to a league not attending, Baseball MB will decide the remaining teams needed to fill the 10-team tournament based on the size of league, amount of league teams in other provincials, etc.

Local leagues can decide on how best to choose their provincial representative (i.e. provincial playdown, league tournament, acclamation etc.) Ideally, leagues tier themselves in the league based on the team formation rules and the “Tier 3” rep would come from the bottom half of the league or the top team in the minor aged league (if the league chooses to have that).

Leagues are not required to send a rep to a provincial(s) if they prefer not to (i.e. they feel their teams would not be competitive in the “Tier 1” provincial, there is not interest in going, etc. The absence of attending does not affect their eligibility to send a team to other provincials at that age level. Leagues should remember that since the expectations is for even teams the teams attending the Tier 1 provincials are not all-star teams so they should not dismiss the idea that a team in their league could compete.

Leagues must inform Baseball Manitoba by June 1st of their intentions to fill their assigned provincial spots.

Player Pick Ups

Teams are allowed 4 player pick-ups from their league for the provincials which should be done in the following order.

1. all “Tier 1” provincial pick-ups
2. all “Tier 2” provincial pick-ups
3. all “Tier 3” provincial pick-ups

If more than one team from a league at a certain tier is attending, a draft style format should be followed in that tier and when completed move to the next tier

All players are eligible to be picked up for any provincial i.e. players from teams that may be considered of Tier 1 calibre in their league can still be a roster addition for a team attending Tier 3 provincials. *The rationale includes the fact that equal team formation means that “tier 3” players could be just as strong as “tier 1” players, as well as the fact that “Tier 3” teams will likely need pitching to allow for a decent calibre of baseball at the provincials. Having the “Tier 1” pick-ups chosen first will lower the calibre of “Tier 3” pick-ups.*

Leagues can choose to allow teams less pick-ups than Baseball Manitoba allows should they see fit (ie. team is already strong enough, limited talent pool to fill all league teams attending provincials, etc.)

*Zone 2 Leagues wanting to attend provincials are expected to host at least one provincial that season (does not need to be at the 11U level).

13U

Zone 2 Provincials Tier 1, Tier 2, Tier 3

13U Zone 2 Local Association Categories

*Local Associations will be separated into 3 categories based on their registration numbers at 13U in 2026.

“A” Centre is a local association (or amalgamated) with more than 33 players

“B” Centre is a local association (or amalgamated) with 18-33 players

“C” Centre is a local association (or amalgamated) with 17 or less players

Larger Associations than these guidelines will fall into the level that makes the most sense based on their numbers. For example. If Brandon has 83 players, the expectation is they will act as if they consist of 2 “A” Centres

*Local Associations have different options for Team Formations which can allow them to fall into a different class.

Example 1- an “A” Centre chooses to make 3 even teams. These teams would be considered as if they came from a “C” Centre. This would be the same idea for a “B” Centre making 2 equal teams.

Example 2- an “A” Centre chooses to make 2 top tier teams (splits top players evenly) and one low level team. Their 2 top teams would follow the guidelines for a “B” Centre and the bottom team would follow the guidelines for a “C” Centre.

Example 3- an “A” Centre chooses to make 1 top tier team (classified as “A” centre) and two second tier teams (classified the same as “C” centres) for provincials.

Eligibility of teams for 13U provincials

This is a guideline explaining the restrictions for each provincial.

If Local associations believe they should be in a lower division than their registration numbers state, they can appeal to their league (and the league to Baseball Manitoba). Reasons for this could be where the league/local association is regarding baseball development, the fact there is no regional AAA team etc.)

Zone 2 13U “Tier 1” Entrants

Any team from any sized Centre (A, B, or C) is eligible to play in the 13U “Tier 1” provincials.

Roster Formation Restrictions Tier 1

Tier 1 teams from “A” Centres can have a maximum of 2 major aged AAA players

Tier 1 teams from “B” Centres can have a maximum of 3 major aged AAA players

Zone 2 13U “Tier 2” Entrants

Teams that are ineligible for “Tier 2” provincials

The top tiered teams from “A” Centres.

The top tiered team from “B” Centres with 1 or more major aged AAA player. **ie. “B” Centre team with 0 major aged AAA players may attend Tier 2 provincials.**

Zone 2 13U “Tier 3” Entrants

Teams that are ineligible for “Tier 3” provincials

The top tiered teams from “A”, or “B” Centres

**It is expected that leagues send teams to the Provincial that they are best suited to compete at. For example, if a “C” centre has a team that includes 3 players that are among the top players in their league they should attend the tier 2 or even tier 1 provincials. A good rule of thumb is if the team consists of 3 or more players from the regional AAA team, they should move up at least one level. This is not a set rule from Baseball Manitoba, as not all AAA players are at the same calibre, and a rule could negatively affect the competitive nature of a team as their AAA players may not be of a AAA calibre.*

Team Formation

There are 3 options for team make-up for local associations.

1. Local associations can choose to make tiered teams (not necessarily teams of equal talent) if they have the numbers to do so and can split as they see fit i.e. tryouts, major/minor, interest level, etc. This can include one tier 1 team or multiple if the associations are large enough.
2. Local associations can choose to make even teams for their local league and provincial representatives if they choose to, instead of tiering. (i.e. if the association has 30 players their 3 teams should be of similar skill level in this system).
3. Leagues can choose to allow local associations to make equal teams for league play, but tiered for provincial’s purposes. (This is needed due to the size and distance between our leagues. For example, if portage, who runs a 13U league with roughly 40 players, was to create a top tiered team and 3 bottom tiered teams, the top tier team would have nobody to play. This way, if they chose to, they could create 4 equal teams for league play, but one tier 1 team for provincials and 2-3 teams eligible for tier 3 teams for provincials.

Provincial Representation

Each Zone 2 league is allowed 1 representative in each provincial with the host league having the option of another representative.

Local leagues can decide on how best to choose their provincial representative (i.e. provincial playdown, league tournament, acclamation etc.) Ideally, the top team in the league would go to “Tier 1” the next best to “Tier 2” and the “Tier 3” rep would come from the bottom half of the league or the top team in the minor aged league (if the league chooses to have that).

Leagues are not required to send a rep to a provincial(s) if they prefer not to (i.e. they feel their teams would not be competitive in the “Tier 1” provincial, there is not interest in going, etc.) The absence of attending does not affect their eligibility to send a team to other provincials at that age level. Provincial spots from leagues not attending a provincial will be picked by Baseball Manitoba from interested leagues.

Leagues must inform Baseball Manitoba by June 1st of their intentions to fill their assigned provincial spots.

***The new roster formation rules were put in place to allow for more leagues to be competitive at each 13U Tiered provincial, therefore Baseball Manitoba is expecting leagues will do their best to send a team to each provincial.**

Pick-up rules

13U Tier 1, 2 and 3 All teams are allowed to add up to 4 players to their roster from their local league/region for Provincial Championships, under the following parameters.

- If a team from a B or C center has 2 or less major aged AAA players on the roster one (1) of the pick-ups can be a minor aged AAA player from their league/region.
- The remainder of the pick-ups must be players, from their league/region, that are not on a AAA roster
- Leagues should do their pick-ups in the following order: If more than one team at a certain tier is attending a draft style format should be followed in that tier and when completed move to the next tier
 1. all “Tier 1” provincial pick-ups
 2. all “Tier 2” provincial pick-ups
 3. all “Tier 3” provincial pick-ups
- *Leagues can choose to allow teams less pick-ups than Baseball Manitoba allows and/or modify the draft suggestion should they see fit (ie. team is already strong enough, limited talent pool to fill all league teams attending provincials, etc.)

15U

Zone 2 Provincials Tier 1 and Tier 2

There are multiple leagues that are choosing to single roster for 15U which includes most of the large local associations. This has lowered the players attending the Tiered provincials and diluted the associations that attended Tier 1 provincials in the past. Therefore, there will now only be 2-Tiered provincials at the 15U level.

Tier 1 Provincial

*There are no restrictions on AAA players for Tier 1 provincials except in the case where a large association (18+ players) makes an all-star team for provincials. These teams would be limited to 2 AAA players.

Tier 2 Provincials

*Teams are limited to 2 major aged AAA players for Tier 2 provincials.

Leagues are not required to send a rep to a provincial(s) if they prefer not to (i.e. they feel their teams would not be competitive in the “Tier 1” provincial, there is not interest in going, etc.) The absence of attending does not affect their eligibility to send a team to other provincials at that age level. Provincial spots from leagues not attending a provincial will be picked by Baseball Manitoba from interested leagues.

Leagues must inform Baseball Manitoba by June 1st of their intentions to fill their assigned provincial spots.

Pick-up rules

15U Tier 1 and 2 teams are allowed to add up to 4 players to their roster from their local league/region for Provincial Championships, under the following parameters.

- Pick ups are players that are not on a AAA roster
- Leagues should do their pick-ups in the following order: If more than one team at a certain tier is attending a draft style format should be followed in that tier and when completed move to the next tier
 1. all “Tier 1” provincial pick-ups
 2. all “Tier 2” provincial pick-ups
- *Leagues can choose to allow teams less pick-ups than Baseball Manitoba allows and/or modify the draft suggestion should they see fit (ie. team is already strong enough, limited talent pool to fill all league teams attending provincials, etc.)

18U

Zone 2 Provincials Tier 1

*18U players will be allowed to single roster for AAA and there will be no requirement to play at the community club level.

18U Tier 1 provincials

Tier 1 Provincial- Follows similar guidelines as the AA provincials did in the past with the following parameters.

*AAA players are eligible to play in the provincials if they are on the roster, but can not be added to rosters as pick-ups

*Teams eligible for provincials include:

-Local teams from any sized association which the rosters include AAA players (local teams without AAA players are obviously eligible as well)

*Pick-up rules

- Pick-ups are players that are not on a AAA roster
- teams with AAA players on the roster are allowed 2 pick-ups
- teams with no AAA players are allowed 4 pick-ups

Tier 2 and Tier 3- Due to the minimal number of players at the 18U level there is no tier 2 or 3 provincial

11U, 13U, 15U and 18U Tier 1, Tier 2 and Tier 3 provincials Tournament format

The 10-team provincial format will be as follows:

*2 pools of 5 in which round robin play occurs

*Playoff rankings are made using the standings(wins/losses) and Baseball Manitoba tie-break formula (without the use of any tie-breaking games) to decide 1st vs 5th in each pool.

*Playoff play (Sunday) would be

9:00- Semi-Finals 2nd in Pool A vs 1st in Pool B, 2nd in Pool B vs 1st in Pool A

11:30- 9th place game- 5th Pool A vs 5th, 7th place game- 4th in pool A vs 4th in pool B

2:00- 6th place game 3rd in Pool A vs 3rd in pool B, Final (winners of the 2 semi final games)

This format allows for:

*All teams to play 5 games on the weekend (Friday-Sunday) except the finalists who play 6 games

*All teams to play a game on Sunday

*Meaningful games for all teams on Sunday that should be versus like calibre teams

If there are less than 10 teams the format will be adjusted while trying to keep the same rationale in place.

Frequently asked questions:

Question:

1. Why is there no tie-break game used to decide ties in the standings and it goes directly to the formula?
2. Why is there no 3rd place game on Sunday between the teams that lose in the semi-finals?

Answer: Both questions above can be answered the same way. The provincial format with 3 tiers, 10 team events, and placement games was put in place to allow more teams to attend provincials, allow more associations the opportunity to host, and have a meaningful game on Sunday for all teams not just the top four. To attain all of these goals and have the event end at a reasonable time on Sunday there is not enough time in the schedule to allow for a tie-break game or a 3rd place game.