

Cooper City Optimist



BASEBALL

OFFICIAL PLAYING RULES



**COOPER CITY OPTIMIST BASEBALL
OFFICIAL PLAYING RULES**

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COOPER CITY OPTIMIST BASEBALL OFFICIAL PLAYING RULES

SECTION 1: KNOWLEDGE OF RULES

Cooper City Optimist Baseball (CCO Baseball) is governed by the rules as compiled herein. THESE RULES MUST BE FOLLOWED AND CANNOT BE AMENDED OR CHANGED BY ANY COACH, MANAGER OR UMPIRE.

SECTION 2: ORDER OF RULE PRIORITY

1. Cooper City Optimist Baseball Official Playing Rules
2. USSSA Official Baseball National By-Laws & Rules
3. Official Rules of Major League Baseball

SECTION 3: GENERAL

- A. The rules can be found on the CCO Baseball website in the Documents Section of the Baseball Drop-Down Menu of the Cooper City Optimist (CCO) website. Each head coach will acquaint their players, assistants, sponsors and parents with the rules. If you don't have internet access, the CCO Baseball program will provide you with a copy of the rules.
- B. Any individual violating any of these rules is subject to the penalties, as outlined in said rule or rules of this book.
- C. Ignorance of said rule or rules shall not be accepted as an excuse for any violation.
- D. PLEASE NOTE THAT RULES MAY BE MODIFIED AT ANY TIME BY THE CCO BASEBALL BOARD BY GENERAL EMAIL DISTRIBUTION OF THE UPDATED RULES TO CCO BASEBALL.
- E. Only one (1) coach or designated coach may approach umpire to question or dispute call. NO EXCEPTIONS.
- F. All postponed, protested, or tied games will be rescheduled by the Division Commissioner. Division or Head Commissioners are the only ones who can postpone or reschedule any games. Games cancelled for weather can only be rescheduled by Division Commissioner or Head Commissioner. Games that are rescheduled by anyone other than the Division or Head Commissioner will not have umpires, will not have field space, and will not be counted in the standings.
- G. **Final Standings:** The final standings will be determined as follows:
 1. Most points earned during season (Win * 2 + Ties).
 2. If teams in the same division do not play an equal number of games the following formula will be used (Wins * 2 + Ties) / (Games * 2).
 3. Head-to-Head.
 4. One (1) game playoff if time and scheduling permits. (Date and time to be determined by head commissioner's calendar, not team availability).
 5. Coin toss.

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H. Participation / Substitution Rules:

1. Teams will bat entire roster.
2. 6U Tee Ball, 8U Coach Pitch, and 10U Baseball - No player may sit two (2) innings until all players have sat once.
3. 12U Baseball - No player may sit on the bench for two (2) consecutive innings and no more than two (2) innings in a game.
4. 14U Baseball - No player may sit on the bench for two (2) consecutive innings and no more than three (3) innings in a game. **Note: Interleague Rulebook Rule Prevails**
5. 16U Baseball - No player may sit on the bench for two (2) consecutive innings and no more than two (2) innings in a game.
6. Only the pitching position may be substituted from the bench during an inning except for injury substitutions. If a pitcher is substituted during an inning and is sent to the bench; that player must play the next inning. The player from the bench that is substituted for the pitcher must also play the next inning. (A player sitting on the bench for (1) pitch will constitute a full inning sitting out.)
7. **PENALTY: Game is forfeited.**
8. *G-6 only applies to 10U Baseball division and above. All lower divisions are not allowed any substitutions during an inning except for injury.

I. **Late Arrivals:** Any player arriving after the start of the game and before the completion of the 3rd inning is eligible to participate in the game. The player will be inserted at the bottom of the batting roster regardless of when that position is next scheduled to bat.

J. **Continuation of Suspended Games:** Suspended games due to weather will be rescheduled by the Baseball Commissioner at the earliest available date. A player not present for the continuation of an in-house game is scratched from the line-up and is not an automatic out when the position is due in the batting order. A player who did not participate in the beginning of the game is subject to rule H. and may play if the game has not completed the 3rd inning. Both teams are still subject to rule regarding minimum number of players (8) required to continue game.

K. **Regulation Games: 6U Tee Ball, 8U Coach Pitch, & 10U Baseball:** Four (4) innings, or three and one-half (3½) innings if home team is leading or division time limit. **12U Baseball & 14U Baseball:** Four (4) innings, or three and one-half (3½) innings if home team is leading or division time limit.

L. **Weather:** If weather interferes with play so that the game is called (ended) by the umpire before it is a regulation game, the game will be suspended and it will resume at the point of interruption (See Rule I above for rescheduling of a suspended game). If weather interferes with play so that the game is called (ended) by the umpire after it has reached a regulation game and 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 opponent's score, the final score shall be as recorded when the game is called.

M. **Games Ending in Ties:** All divisions will play one (1) extra inning to break a tie if the time limit hasn't expired.

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- N. **Forfeits:** A forfeited game will be scored one (1) run per inning the division plays. Example: Six inning game would be scored 6-0; a seven-inning game would be scored 7-0.
- O. **Injuries/Illness:** A player may be removed from the line-up for illness or injury reasons without penalty to the team unless it lowers the number of players below the 8 player limit (See rule Q.). It is not an automatic out the next time the player is due up in the batting order. A player removed for illness or injury may not re-enter the game if his batting order has been skipped once. A player may be substituted in the field for illness or injury but must play in the field the next inning following his next turn at bat unless the player is officially removed from the game. ***If the player leaves game for injury, illness, or other reasons they leave early it is not an out.** Players pulled for illness (not injury) will be counted as an out if not announced prior to the start of the previous half-inning. (i.e. if they were not removed from the field due to illness or announced as an illness withdrawal from the game before the first pitch of the half-inning to the Home Plate Umpire and Opposing Team Head Coach then they must bat)
- P. **Ejections:** If a player is ejected an out will be recorded for the player's turn at bat.
- Q. **Mercy Rule (11-Run Rule): 6U Tee Ball, 8U Coach Pitch, & 10U Baseball:** If after four (4) innings, or three and one-half (3½) innings if the home team is ahead, one team has a lead of eleven (11) runs or more the game will end and the team in the lead shall be declared the winner. **12U Baseball & 14U Baseball:** If after five (5) innings, or four and one-half (4½) innings if the home team is ahead, one team has a lead of ten (10) runs or more the game will end and the team in the lead shall be declared the winner.
- R. **Minimum Player Requirement:** Teams must have a minimum of eight (8) players at all times. Teams have 15 minutes after scheduled game start time to meet minimum player requirement. A team that does not meet the minimum player requirement at any time during the game will forfeit to the opposing team.
- S. **Throwing Bat: 6U Tee Ball - 8U Coach Pitch:** A player who throws the bat while at the plate batting will be given one warning, if the player throws the bat a second time the player is called out; the ball is dead and all runners return to the base they started at. Each player is allowed one warning per game. This is a judgment call by the umpire. **10U Baseball - 16U Baseball:** Throwing of the bat while at the plate batting will result in a Team Bench Warning for both teams. Next player who throws a bat is called out; the ball is dead and all runners return to the base they started at. This is a judgment call by the umpire.
- T. **Throwing Equipment:** In any division if a player throws any equipment in anger or for any other reason this is considered unsportsmanlike conduct and the player will be removed from the game. This is a judgment call by the umpire.
- U. **Infield Fly Rule:** Infield Fly Rule will be called in all divisions except 6U Tee Ball and 8U Coach Pitch.
- V. **Time-outs:** One offensive time-out per inning. No defensive time-outs allowed, except mound visits.
- W. **Game Sheets:** The winning team has twenty-four (24) hours to turn in game sheet, otherwise a tie will be recorded.

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- X. **Speed-Up Rule:** The speed-up rule for catchers is optional. A coach may replace a catcher that is on base for a pinch runner if there are two outs. If a player is replaced with a pinch runner with two outs the player that came out must go in the field to catch when his team returns to the field and must catch the full inning. The pinch runner must be the player who made the last out.
- Y. **Maximum Coaches:**
- 4U Instructional Tee Ball:** Maximum of four (4) coaches
 - 6U Tee Ball:** Maximum of four (4) coaches
 - 8U Coach Pitch:** Maximum four (4) coaches
 - 10U Baseball - 16U Baseball:** Maximum three (3) coaches
- Z. **Intentional Walks:** Only allowed in 10U divisions & above. The defensive team may declare intent to walk batter. No need to pitch to batter.
- AA. **Pre-Game Meeting w/ Umpires:** At pre-game meeting, one coach will be designated to the umpires. This coach is the only one that is allowed to approach umpires to either discuss a judgment call or protest a rules interpretation. All other coaches will be warned no more than 1 time per game to not approach an umpire for these matters before they are ejected.
- BB. **Radios, Music Players, PA Systems or Artificial Noisemakers:** Radios, Music Players, PA Systems, or Artificial Noisemakers, i.e. air horns, cowbells, rattles of any kind, are not allowed to be used by coaches, players or spectators during a game.
- CC. **Pre-Game Warm-Up:** No pre-game infield warm-up is allowed. Prior to the game, a team may warm up in foul territory or in the outfield only!
- DD. **Dugouts:** Signage should be followed. Absent signage the Home Team shall take the First Base dugout and the Visitor Team shall take the Third Base dugout.

SECTION 4: ELIGIBILITY OF PLAYERS, MANAGERS AND COACHES / REGISTRATION / DRAFT RULES

Note: Each player under the age of 18, before participation, shall be required to have written consent from his/her parent or legal guardian.

- A. All freezes must be approved by both the child and the parents. Disregard of this rule (and courtesy) will result in loss of the team by the coach. Coaches are required to have the player's parent sign a Player Freeze Consent Form granting permission for the head coach to freeze the player on their team. Once the parent has signed the Freeze Form the player will be obligated to play for that head coach. If for any reason, the parent/player changes their mind after signing the Freeze Form, or if two freeze forms are presented for the same player by different coaches, the player will be placed in the draft and will not be allowed to be frozen by another head coach. **No Exceptions!**
- B. A maximum of four (4) freezes per team are permitted in the 4U, 6U, 8U, & 10U divisions. A maximum of three (3) freezes per team are permitted in the 12U, 14U, & 16U divisions.; inclusive of siblings (if a freeze has a sibling in the same division, the sibling must also be a

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- freeze accounting for two (2) of the allowed freezes. Exception for 4U move-ups - See item N below)
- C. Coaches **MUST** freeze their own child(ren).
 - D. Returning coaches must declare their freezes and submit the completed and signed Player Freeze Consent Form to the Division Commissioner prior to Player Evaluations.
 - E. New coaches may declare 1 additional freeze after player evaluations only if they do not currently have the maximum number of freezes declared at player evaluations. They must submit the completed and signed Player Consent Form to the Division Commissioner after tryouts and before the first draft pick. The intent of this rule is to allow new coaches to connect with potential assistant coaches. It does not allow them to freeze the best-rated players from the tryout without contacting the family. A new coach is defined as a person who has not volunteered as a Head Coach or an Assistant Coach in the previous 24 months.
 - F. It is up to the discretion of the Head Baseball Commissioner whether or not a coach will be allowed to coach two (2) baseball teams in the same season.
 - G. ***Siblings must always go together and count as 2 freezes if a player freeze form is submitted. 6U: See Exception in Section 4(N)(7)***
 - H. **Instructional 4U Instructional Tee Ball ONLY:** Teams will declare freezes per previous rules. The Division Commissioner will then assign Assistant Coach freezes to new coaches that request them. The teams will then select players following the pattern defined in Rule J (below) until all teams are of equal size. There will be no restriction on which players may be selected. The remainder of the roster will then be randomly assigned by the Division Commissioner in a pattern that was previously defined and distributed to the coaches.
 - I. All players from the program that do not attend Player Evaluations **will not be allowed to be drafted unless they are a freeze**. All players are "draftable" only if they attend Player Evaluations. Players who do not attend Player Evaluations or not frozen will be assigned to teams in a blind draw (hat pick). However, a player that did not attend the Player Evaluations may be drafted as long as the player participated in the previous Spring and/or Fall season and at least 3 independent coaches in the draft can rate the player's skills and agree on the same rating. Otherwise, the player will be a hat-pick.
 - J. All trades to accommodate car-pool requests or for any other reason must be made at the draft. No unrated player may be traded unless specially approved by the division commissioner and the head baseball commissioner.
 - K. Teams will select draft order in a blind draw. The draft will then begin with team #1 and proceed through team #n either filling in legitimate freezes or selecting a player. Round 2 will then proceed in the reverse order from team #n through team #1. Round 3 then begins with team #1, Round 4 with team #n, etc. until all "draftable" players have been exhausted. All teams must select a player in a round that contains enough "draftable" players to assign one to each team. In the final round where enough players are not left to assign one per team, each team has the option of selecting a player or passing. The remaining players are then drawn blind along with the unrated players in the same order as the draft was preceding beginning with the first team to pass.

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- L. In the event that all teams do not have the same number of players, late signups are assigned by the Registrar. Dropouts will be replaced in the same manner. The intent of this procedure is to prevent teams from "recruiting".
- M. All drafts are closed. Attendance is restricted to head coaches only. All players will be evaluated, including coaches kids and freezes. Head coaches will rank ability of all based on their projected round ranking of a player, from a 1st round pick to a 10th round pick. Coaches kids and freezes will be slotted into the round based on the consensus of the coaches in the room. Coaches kids and freezes who do not attend evaluations will be considered a 1st round pick. If two or more Coaches kids and freezes are rated the same rating the first duplicate will be rated a round down, any additional duplicates will be rated a round up. **Example:** two players rated a 5th round pick, one will be slotted as a 6th round pick. **Example 2:** if a third player is rated a 5th or 6th round pick for that team they will be slotted as a 4th round pick. **Example 3:** if a fourth player is rated a 4th, 5th, or 6th round pick for that team they will be slotted as a 3rd round pick.
- N. **Playing up or down:** All participants are required to play in the division/age group that corresponds to their date of birth. No playing up or playing down is allowed. **Exception:** A participant may play up to the 6U Tee Ball Division under the following conditions:
1. Player must have played two (2) previous 4U Instructional Tee Ball season for Cooper City Optimist Baseball.
 2. Player would move up to 6U Tee Ball in the next fall season.
 3. Player must attend Player Evaluations for the 6U Tee Ball Division.
 4. Player must be drafted by a 6U Tee Ball coach; otherwise the player stays in 4U Instructional Tee Ball.
 5. Space must be available in the 6U Tee Ball Division.
 6. Exception 1: a 4U aged player whose parent is a registered 6U coach and is eligible for this rule will automatically be counted as an 8th round pick provided the player is used as a freeze. Additional such players will be slotted based on Rule M above.
 7. Exception 2: a player that is frozen with a sibling who is permitted to move up early from 4U to 6U will be automatically treated as the 8th round pick, and not count as a freeze.
- O. **Participation:** All participants must be registered within the current baseball program. At no time may a non-registered player take part in any game or practice. This rule specifically includes, but is not limited to, siblings and friends of team members. All divisions are governed by this rule. **Violation of this rule will result in suspension of coaching privileges and potential loss of team.**
- P. **Farm Up System:** In order to prevent forfeits, a Farm Team System may be used. Farm Team players will be used only to the extent to ensure a team has eight (8) players eligible for a game. In the event a coach foresees that his or her team will not have an adequate number of players for a game, he or she may add a player or players to the roster by utilizing the Farm Team System as follows:
- A. Farm Teams are the next age division of players and identified as follows: For the Fall 2021 season either a) a player from the same division may be used, or b) a sibling from the team needing to farm up a player, whose sibling is playing during the game, and who plays in the immediately lower division.

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- B. Travel baseball players are not eligible to be Farm Team players.
 - C. A maximum of 2 Farm Team players can be used in a game.
 - D. The Primary team may not use the Farm Team players to exceed the minimum eight (8) player requirements.
 - E. The coach seeking a Farm team player to perform on his or her team must first obtain permission from the Farm Team coach and the permission of the player's parent.
 - F. Players brought up from the Farm Team System must be identified as such to the opposing coach and the umpire before the start of the game.
 - G. The Farm Team player must wear an official uniform of either the Primary Team or the Farm Team from which he or she was recruited in order to play.
 - H. In the event a player or players of the Primary Team, previously expected to be absent, shows up to play, the Farm Team player(s) will not be allowed to play if the roster exceeds eight (8) players.
 - I. Farm Team players may not pitch, catch or play infield positions for the Primary Team.
 - J. Farm Team players must occupy the last spot(s) in the batting order.
 - K. Farm Team players must be rotated in defensive positions in order to comply with the Participation Rule for the Primary Team's age division.
 - L. Farm Team players can only play on the Primary Team if they do not have a game with their own team at the same time.
 - M. Farm Team players may not start above the Primary Team players nor may they play more than the Primary Team players.
- Q. Appointment of In-house Coaches:** Coaching candidates must submit an online coach registration prior to the specified deadline.
- Prospective coaches will need to be available for drafts in order to draft their team. Please check the Calendar of Events for the draft dates to ensure your availability.
- Head Coaches will be selected by the Baseball Board from the registered coaches.
- Head Coaches shall submit their Assistant Coaches' names to the Division Coordinator as soon as possible, but no later than ten (10) days after the draft. The Baseball Board will review and approve the Assistant Coaches.
- R. Appointment of Travel Team Coaches:** Travel Head Coaches will be selected based on various criteria including, previous coaching in the recreational and/or travel program; involvement in the Optimist Club of Cooper City; and baseball coaching experience / knowledge. Travel Coaches will be nominated by the Travel Commissioner or Baseball Commissioner and subject to approval by the Baseball Board. Travel Head Coaches will select their Assistant Coaches. All Travel Head & Assistant Coaches must be approved by the Baseball Board.
- S.** All Team Managers, Coaches, Assistant Coaches, Coach Pitchers and Team Helpers must agree to a background check and pass the background check before being allowed to be on the field coaching any kids. **Any Team Manager, Coach, Assistant Coach, Coach Pitcher or Team Helper that has not submitted a background check form prior to the draft will not be allowed to draft a team or have their child frozen on a team.**

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SECTION 5: CONDUCT & DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS

Coaches are required to sign and agree to abide by a Coaches Code of Conduct.

SECTION 5.1: CONDUCT

- A. **MANAGERS ARE ULTIMATELY RESPONSIBLE FOR THE CONDUCT OF THE COACHES, PLAYERS AND PARENTS OF THEIR TEAMS.**
- B. There will be no distracting chatter by the managers, coaches, player, parents or spectators during the game. Clapping, talking/yelling, singing or any other efforts deemed to be a distraction to the pitcher will not be allowed once the pitcher comes set on the pitching rubber. This rule applies to all players, coaches, and fans whether on the base paths, in the dugouts, or in the stands. The head coach will be responsible for the behavior of his team and fans. Violation of this rule will result first in a team warning, with subsequent offenses resulting in a strike being assessed to the batter. 8U: batting team gets the option to take the results of the play or re-pitch without it counting against the 6-pitch limit
- C. Any manager, coach, player, parent or spectator ejected from a game will not be allowed to participate in the next scheduled game.
- D. Any manager, coach, player, parent or spectator ejected from a game must leave the field and/or stands immediately.
- E. If a player is ejected from his last regular season game that player will be suspended for the first playoff game.
- F. Any manager, coach, player, parent or spectator ejected from a game must leave the area of the playing field and is not allowed to participate in the remainder of the game or the next scheduled game. Refusal to comply constitutes as a forfeit of that game and the next game if the offender refuses to observe his suspension for the next game.
- G. Any manager, coach, player, parent or spectator physically abusing any player or other participant, will be immediately suspended until reviewed by the CCO Baseball Board.
- H. Teams are responsible for cleaning up trash from their respective dugouts upon the completion of the game.
- I. Alcoholic beverages and tobacco products are not allowed at any CCO baseball field or surrounding area.
- J. Any manager, coach or player who throws a helmet, bat or any other piece of equipment in an obvious display of anger, or engages in heckling of opposing players, or attempts to distract a batter or pitcher in any way, or commits any other obvious acts of poor sportsmanship is subject to immediate ejection from the game by the umpire.
- K. Managers, coaches, players, parents and spectators are responsible for their actions at games. All will be subject to disciplinary action for behavior that is not in the best interest of CCO Baseball. This includes harassment of umpires.

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SECTION 5.2: DISCIPLINARY ACTION

- A. The CCO Baseball Board has the authority to forgive, suspend, discharge or otherwise discipline any manager, coach, umpire, player, parent, spectator or any other person whose actions or conduct is in violation of:
- the Coaches Code of Conduct
 - rules as set forth by CCO Baseball
 - rules as set forth by USSSA Baseball
 - any action considered to be detrimental to the best interests of CCO Baseball
- B. Different infractions carry different penalties depending on the severity of the infraction. The CCO Baseball Board reserves the right to employ any, or a combination of the following disciplinary actions:
- Probation: Offender will be notified in writing of the offense and warned that further infractions will carry a more severe penalty.
 - Suspension: Offender will be notified in writing of the offense and notified that they are suspended from participating in any number of events for a specified time period
 - Dismissal: Offender will be notified in writing that they have been dismissed from the league for the remainder of the current season.
 - Barred: Offender will be notified in writing that they have been barred from present and future participation in the league, permanently, or for a specified period of time.
- C. Player Disciplinary action
1. If a disciplinary action, such as “benching” a player, is to be taken by a manager during a game, the manager must immediately notify the opposing manager, the umpire and the official scorekeeper.
 2. If disciplinary action is being considered before a game then the manager must discuss and review such action with the player’s parent(s) before it is enforced.
 3. A player that has been ejected from a game and suspended from his next scheduled game must suit up and sit in the dugout, but may not take part in the game.
- D. Any manager who fails to abide by the playing rules as set forth by the league for that division will be suspended for his next scheduled game. If a second infraction occurs the manager could be dismissed or face other disciplinary action as prescribed by the CCO Baseball Board.

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SECTION 6: UNIFORMS, EQUIPMENT AND SAFETY

- A. Catchers must wear a protective cup. **Highly recommended for all positions.**
- B. Players must not wear watches, rings, pins, jewelry or metallic items. This includes silicon wrist bands and braided necklaces. Pitchers may not wear white or grey arm sleeves.
- C. Shoes with metal spikes or metal cleats and screw on cleats are strictly prohibited in all DIVISIONS. **(EXCEPTION: 14U and 16U DIVISIONS)**
- D. Players in all DIVISIONS must wear the “coverall” type head gear while batting, running bases, in the “on deck circle” or coaching the bases. **PENALTY: If a batter or runner intentionally removes or dislodges his/her head gear while running the bases or batting, he/she shall be declared out.**
- E. In between innings, any player warming up the pitcher must wear protective head gear.
- F. A runner on third base may advance no more than 1/2 the distance to home plate before a batter takes a full swing at the pitch. **PENALTY: Base runner will be declared out. Ball is dead. (See 10U specific rules later on)**
- G. Base runners in all divisions must slide OR avoid contact in their own established base line. No runner may hurdle the defensive player to avoid the tag. **PENALTY: This is a judgment call by the umpire as to whether obstruction or interference applies. Runners will be declared out and also MAY be ejected from the game if deemed intentional.**
- **OBSTRUCTION:** the act of a fielder who, WHILE NOT IN POSSESSION OF THE BALL AND NOT IN THE ACT OF FIELDING THE BALL, impedes the progress of the runner.
 - **INTERFERENCE:** an act by the team at bat which interferes with, obstructs, impedes, hinders, or confuses any fielder attempting to make a play.
- H. NO head first slides allowed at home plate. **PENALTY: Base runner will be declared out. Ball is dead.**
- I. No “butcher boy” plays allowed in any division. **PENALTY: The batter is out.** Butcher boy is defined as when a batter shows bunt then pulls the bat back and takes a full swing at the ball.
- J. **Baseball Bat Regulations:** In the interest of making baseball a safe and enjoyable experience for all and to align ourselves with neighboring communities Cooper City Optimist Baseball has moved to adopt the bat rules implemented by the USSSA back in 2012.

Compliance with these rules is mandatory for all players and all teams and applies to all levels of play offered by Cooper City Optimist Baseball (In-House, All-Stars and Travel).

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4U Instructional Tee Ball & 6U Tee Ball Bat will the following Bat Rules:

- Have the new USSSA Mark or USA Bat logo on its taper AND
- Have “Tee-Ball,” “Teeball,” or “T-BALL” imprinted on bat

8U Coach Pitch, 10U Baseball, 12U Baseball, 14U Baseball & 16U Baseball will follow USSSA Baseball Bat Rules summarized below:

Big Barrel Bat Rules (2 5/8” or 2 3/4”) – 12U & Below

- Have the USSSA Mark on its taper OR
- Be a Qualified BBCOR bat OR
- Have the new USA Bat logo OR
- Be a Wood Bat
- **Starting in Fall 2021 a maximum of Drop-10 will be allowed**



Big Barrel Bat Rules (2 5/8” or 2 3/4”) – 14U

- Have the USSSA Mark on its taper OR
- Be a Qualified BBCOR bat OR
- Have the new USA Bat logo OR
- Be a Wood Bat
- **Starting in Fall 2021 a maximum of Drop-8 will be allowed**

Big Barrel Bat Rules (2 5/8” or 2 3/4”) – 16U & Above

- NHSF approved with the appropriate BBCOR certification mark* OR
- Be a Wood Bat
- **Starting in Fall 2021 a maximum of Drop-3 will be allowed**



Small Barrel Baseball Bat Rules (2 1/4” or less)

- Have the USSSA mark on its taper OR
- Have the new USA Bat logo OR
- Be a Wood Bat

All above bats (Big Barrel and Small Barrel) must be manufactured by an approved USSSA Bat Licensee or USA Bat license.

* **Qualified BBCOR Bat** – A Big Barrel bat that is made by a USSSA approved bat license, has a BBCOR mark permanently attached to the bat that is recognized by NHSF as a legal bat for NHSF sanctioned play and has no more than a minimum minus 3 ounces difference from the length of the bat and is a minimum bat length of 29 inches.

For a complete listing of the USSSA bat rules, the new USSSA Mark and for approved USSSA Bat Licensed manufacturers, please see the USSSA baseball website at www.ussabaseball.org.

* Baseball bats that are designed or marketed as Coach Pitch and/or not for use with regulation baseballs are not legal in activities that use regulation baseballs. This is for all ages

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and all divisions of Tee Ball, Coach Pitch, and Kid Pitch, but not limited to these.

PENALTY FOR USE OF ILLEGAL BATS: The bat rule adopted is for the safety of players. It is a coach's responsibility to ensure that the bats being used by their players conform to the bat rule and as such, offenses are considered a serious breach of rules.

- **First Offense** – If the umpire discovers that the bat does not conform to Cooper City Optimist Baseball Rules and prior to a ball being put into play, the umpire will remove the bat from play and the player must then utilize a legal bat. It shall not be grounds for declaring the batter out and/or ejection from the game. If the umpire discovers that a bat has been used to put a ball in play and before the next legal pitch, the defensive team will have the choice of the result of play or the batter being called out and all runners returning to the base occupied before the pitch. 6U Exception: Bat removed from play and a strike will be called, but the player will not be declared out unless it is the third swing/strike.
- **Second Offense** – If a team is found in violation of this rule a second time (coming to the plate with an illegal bat – whether or not a ball is put into play), then the manager (or acting manager) will be ejected in addition to the First Offense penalty.

SECTION 7: UMPIRES

- A. All umpires 18 years and older must agree to a background check and pass the background check before being allowed to be on the field.
- B. There will be two (2) umpires for each game; one (1) for home plate and one (1) for the bases. 4U Instructional Tee Ball will only use (1) umpire.
- C. The home plate umpire will be the head umpire.
- D. All umpires shall be in uniform as determined by the league.
- E. The Head Umpire shall be the sole judge as to whether and when play shall be suspended during a game because of unsuitable weather conditions or the unfit condition of the playing field; as to whether and when play shall resume after such suspension; and as to whether and when a game shall be terminated after such suspension. Said umpire shall not call the game until at least 15 minutes after play has been suspended. The umpire may continue a suspension as long as there is any chance to resume play. Delay time shall be added to end of game by umpire's time.
- F. Umpires are required to record in the official scorebook the circumstances surrounding any protests and the rule being protested at the time the protest is being made. The game may be delayed a sufficient amount of time to do this properly.
- G. If an umpire ejects a player, manager, coach or spectator from the game said umpire must document the reason and circumstances for the ejection in writing on the back of the official game sheet or via an email to the Division Commissioner within 24-hours of the ejection.
- H. If the Head Umpire declares forfeiture after play has started said umpire must document the reason for the forfeiture in writing on the back of the official game sheet or via an email to the Division Commissioner within 24-hours.

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SECTION 8: PITCHING RULES

A. Breaking balls *and or breaking the wrist* are prohibited in all divisions. **Exception: 16U Baseball Division.** If this infraction occurs, the umpire will call it a ball and give the pitcher and Manager a warning. However, if the batter hits the pitch and reaches base safely, the play shall proceed without interference. If the pitcher continues throwing breaking balls after being warned, he/she shall be removed from the mound for the remainder of the game.

B. Balks shall be called in all Divisions (see 10U Baseball rule for warning) from the first game of the season.

C. **Pitch Limits:**

No player shall pitch more than:

10U Baseball: 55 pitches per day; 110 pitches in any seven (7) consecutive day period.

12U Baseball: 65 pitches per day; 130 pitches in any seven (7) consecutive day period.

14U Baseball: 75 pitches per day; 150 pitches in any seven (7) consecutive day period.

16U Baseball: 85 pitches per day; 170 pitches in any seven (7) consecutive day period.

Example: A 10U pitcher may pitch up to 55 pitches. The pitcher's coach will be warned by the opposing team's coach when he reaches 55 pitches, at which time he will be allowed to finish the batter. A pitcher may NOT start a new batter if he has reached 55 pitches, he may finish the batter despite going over the 55 pitch count. A 10U player may pitch a maximum of 110 pitches for a 7 day period. Any coach violating the pitching limit rule should be reported to the league, this will help the league monitor that coach and team.

D. Coaches must bring a pitch counter to games or maintain pitch counts in their score book.

E. In an effort to avoid issues and discrepancies on the number of pitches, score keepers are to monitor pitch counts and check pitch totals every half inning. **If a discrepancy should occur, then the average number of pitches shall be used – rounded up,** if this becomes an issue the home plate umpire will come to a conclusion on the correct number of pitches. Score keepers are to keep a record of the pitch count on each batter. **If this is not maintained, the pitch count discrepancy for their team shall not be able to be used for disputed pitch count purposes.**

F. No pitcher may re-enter game as a pitcher regardless of innings pitched that day.

PENALTY: Game is forfeited.

G. Pitchers are allowed five (5) pitches or one (1) minute to warm up between innings. New pitchers allowed 8 pitches to warm up, the umpire in chief shall allow him as many pitches as the umpire deems necessary.

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SECTION 9: DIVISION SPECIFIC RULES

SECTION 9.1: 4U INSTRUCTIONAL TEE BALL

- A. All players participate every inning; no one sits out except for illness or discipline.
- B. There will be no official score keeping or league standings posted.
- C. All players bat each inning rotating the order 1 to 8 and then 8 to 1. This batting order must be rotated on an alternating basis to allow all players to bat equally throughout the season.
- D. There will be no strikeouts; every batter will hit the ball.
- E. Throwing the bat while at the plate batting will result in a warning.
- F. A foul line is drawn five (5) feet from home plate between the first and third base foul line. A ball not hit beyond this line is considered foul.
- G. Two defensive coaches will be allowed in the field of play behind the base lines, provided they do not interfere with normal play.
- H. Coaches should encourage the throw from the field ahead of the runner to make the play. No outs will be counted if they occur.
- I. There is no advancement allowed on any overthrow.
- J. A play will be called dead when a defensive player touches a base to stop a play and/or the umpire calls the play dead.
- K. The inning will end when the last batter crosses home plate by hitting a “home run”.
- L. No minimum number of players is required. Teams will combine if necessary to play game.
- M. One umpire will call the game.
- N. No catcher will be used.

SECTION 9.2: 6U TEE BALL

- A. Teams will consist of ten (10) players; 4 outfielders. If only 9 players are available then only 3 outfielders will be used. If only 8 players are available, the team may play with 2 outfielders and catcher or 3 outfielders and no catcher. Less than 8 players will be a forfeit.
 - If playing with less than 10 players: no player may play the infield a 3rd time before all other players have played the infield twice. no player may play the infield a 4th time before all other players have played the infield 3 times. For purposes of this rule the catcher position **IS considered** an infielder
- B. Defensive players **MUST** rotate each inning from **outfield/catcher to infield & from infield to outfield/catcher**. No player **can** play the same position two consecutive innings or the same position more than twice in a game. In the event a team has less than 10 players, no

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player may play the infield more than 2 consecutive innings. The catcher is only considered an outfielder for substitution/rotating purposes.

- Head Coaches will be required to exchange their fielding rotations during the Umpire Meeting prior to the start of the game.
 - If a violation of this rotation policy exists the game will stop until the proper adjustments are made to become compliant with this policy.
 - **PENALTIES:** First infraction during the season: Coach will have to become compliant with the rule. Second infraction during the season: Meeting with the CCO Baseball Disciplinary Panel.
- C. A foul line is drawn ten (10) feet from home plate between the first and third base foul line. A ball not hit beyond this line is considered foul.
- D. Pitcher must keep one foot on the pitching rubber until the ball is hit. **PENALTY: If player makes play on ball, batter is awarded first base and all base runners will advance one base.**
- E. The pitcher and catcher must wear a protective helmet with full ear protection and protective mask.
- F. Catcher must be positioned touching the fence behind home plate at the start of the play.
- G. Infield and outfield restraining lines are drawn at forty-five (45/first-line) and sixty-five (65/second-line) feet respectively from home plate. Infielders (excluding pitcher) may not be in front of the 45 ft. line or beyond the 65 ft. line until the batter swings at the ball. Outfielders may not be in front of the 65 ft. line until the batter swings at the ball. **PENALTY: If said player makes a play on the ball, the batter is awarded first base.**
- H. The inning will end after 3 outs or 5 runs whichever comes first.
- Spring season: Official score keeping will happen and league standings posted.
 - Fall season: Official score keeping will happen and league standings posted.
- I. A fielded ball shall not be intentionally handed, rolled, or bounced to another player to make an out. **PENALTY: Runner is awarded the base he/she is advancing to.**
- J. Outfielders are not allowed to tag a base runner or run to a base to make an out. Outfielders must throw the ball to an infielder. Outfielders are not allowed to hand off the ball to an infielder. **PENALTY: Runner is awarded the base he/she is advancing to.** Note: The catcher is only considered an outfielder for substitution/rotating purposes, and is considered an infielder for all other rules.
- K. **Dead Ball** - When the ball is in the possession of an infielder and, in the umpire's judgment, all runners are not attempting to advance, and all play on the runner or runners has ceased, the umpire shall call "time". The ball is dead and shall be returned to home plate. *Comment: When a runner stands off a base and "jukes" or "feints" back and forth, this is to be interpreted as "not attempting to advance" and "Time" shall be called.*
- L. A player or coach asking to call "time" will not stop play unless the umpire calls "time". This will only be done when the defense has stopped the runner's advance.

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- M. Batter runner may not advance on an overthrow to 1st base. All other base runners may advance the maximum allowed bases (see Rule N) at their own risk. **Exception:** If the batted ball passes 65-foot line (second line) this rule shall not apply.
- N. The maximum number of bases that a base runner may advance on a play is two. It will be a live ball. if they pass the second base or advance to the next base it is still a live ball and they can be tagged out. Example: If a base runner is on 1st base and the ball it hit, no matter what happens with overthrows the runner can only advance to 3rd base. If they were to start to run home and get thrown/tagged out before returning to 3rd base they will be out. A batter runner may advance two bases ONLY if the batted ball has passed the 45-foot line (first line) and is NOT in the possession of an infielder. If an infielder has possession of the ball, the batter runner may NOT advance to 2nd base. If the infielder throws the ball before “time” is called the ball is no longer in the possession of an infielder. All other base runners can advance at their own risk per Rule M. **Exception:** A ball hit over the outfield fence in fair territory on a fly will be a homerun. The batter runner will be awarded all bases and any runners on base will be allowed to score.
- O. The ball is hit from the batting tee. Coach will announce “ball on tee” upon placing the baseball on the tee.
- P. The batter must be in the batter’s box and must take a full swing. Although a batter may angle their stance to hit a certain direction, the batter may not have either of their feet directly behind, or in front, of the outside edges of home plate. NO BUNTS ALLOWED
- Q. The batter shall be called out after failing to hit the ball after 3 swings.
- R. A manager or coach is allowed to assist any player in the proper way to play a position or stand in the batter’s box, except while the ball is in play. The ball is in play once it is placed on the tee by the manager. If a manager or coach touches a player while the ball is in play, the player is OUT.
- S. The coach must remove the batting tee when a runner is advancing to home plate.
- T. Only league-issued batting tees are allowed to be used in games.
- U. If a base runner is hit by a batted ball the play is “dead” and all base runners advance to the base they were headed to. The base runner that was hit by the baseball is NOT out.
- V. Two defensive coaches may stand in the outfield in foul territory in line with the outfield players.
- W. Only the player who starts the play as the first baseman may “cover” first base for a thrown out. All infielders may “field and tag” out any player.
- X. A player who is using the bathroom for their at-bat is considered an illness skip of their at-bat and is not considered out, must be announced, and must bat immediately after their return to the dugout. The opposing coach can delay the game and elect to wait for the player to return. A player who is using the bathroom during their fielding assignment is allowed to be substituted temporarily in the fielding rotation by a bench player. If there are no bench players available the Right or Left Fielder must be used as the substitute until they return. If the substitute player records an out it will count for their inning for Rule B. purposes.

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SECTION 9.3: 8U COACH PITCH

- A. Teams will consist of ten (10) players. 4 outfielders. Under all circumstances a catcher and pitcher must be used. If only 9 players are available then only 3 outfielders will be used. If only 8 players are available then only 2 outfielders will be used. Less than 8 players will be a forfeit.
- B. The manager, coach or designated pitcher will pitch to his/her own team. The designated pitcher may not be a rostered player or coach from another Coach Pitch team. ***Coach Pitcher that starts the inning must finish the inning.***
- C. Batter will receive up to six pitches: A batter shall be declared out after failing to hit a fair ball after six pitches are delivered. The batter is out if there are three strikes before the sixth pitch. Missed swings are counted as strikes, as are foul balls and foul tips. A batter who fowls off the 6th pitch will be allowed 1 additional pitch. A batter is not out on a foul ball or a foul tip unless it is also the seventh pitch.
- D. Base runners are not permitted to steal bases and shall remain in contact with the base until ball is hit or crosses home plate. **PENALTY: If a runner is off the base and the ball is hit, the runner is out and the ball is in play. If the ball is not hit, the runner must return to the base.**
- E. Coach Pitcher may coach BATTER ONLY until ball is pitched. Coach Pitcher must not coach while ball is in play. **PENALTY - JUDGMENT OF UMPIRE: 1st Offense - Warning / 2nd Offense - Removal of coach from the position.**
- F. No bunting in coach pitch. **PENALTY- Batter is out.**
- G. **Dead Ball** - When the ball is in the possession of an infielder and, in the umpire's judgment, all runners are not attempting to advance, and all play on the runner or runners has ceased, the umpire shall call "time". The ball is dead and shall be returned to home plate. *Comment: When a runner stands off a base and "jukes" or "feints" back and forth, this is to be interpreted as "not attempting to advance" and "Time" shall be called.*
- H. A player or coach asking to call "time" will not stop play unless the umpire calls "time". This will only be done when the defense has stopped the runner's advance.
- I. Kid pitcher must remain in position until the pitched ball passes home plate. Being in position is defined as behind the pitcher's rubber (no more than 2 feet behind the rubber) and no more than 2 feet to either side of the pitcher's rubber. **PENALTY: If the pitcher makes a play on the ball the batter and all base runners are awarded one base if both the kid pitchers is outside the kid pitcher area when the ball crossed home plate. This is a judgment call by the umpire.**
- J. A Coach from the defensive team will be permitted to stand behind the catcher to retrieve passed balls. This coach's impact on game is to speed up the game when passed balls occur, not to coach from that position. **PENALTY - JUDGMENT OF UMPIRE: 1st Offense - Warning / 2nd Offense - Removal of coach from the position.**
- K. If a batted ball hits the coach pitcher, the ball is dead. The pitch is a foul strike and no

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runners may advance. If a live ball hits the coach pitcher, or in the umpires judgment the coach interferes in the fielders attempt to make a play, the ball is dead and the lead runner is out.

- L. Two defensive coaches may stand in the outfield in foul territory in line with the outfield players.
- M. Kid pitcher must wear protective headgear with full ear protection and protective mask.

SECTION 9.4: 10U BASEBALL

- A. Teams will consist of nine (9) players.
- B. Whenever a third strike is not legally caught by the catcher, the batter shall be declared automatically out and the base runners may advance at their own risk.
- C. Leading and Stealing: FALL 2021: Runners at first, second, or third bases shall remain in contact with the base from the time the pitcher steps on the rubber with possession of the ball until the pitched ball has been hit or has reached or passed the batter. Once the pitcher has stepped on the rubber, in possession of the ball, runners at third base who leave base before the pitched ball reaches or passes the batter shall be called out and the pitch shall be considered as a dead ball. Runners can attempt to advance on a passed ball (assuming that they do not leave the base until ball has passed the batter) or a wild throw back to the pitcher. The play is "live" and runners may advance until the pitcher is in possession of the ball and has stepped on the rubber. Once the pitcher is in possession of the ball and has stepped on the rubber the 3rd base runner must return to 3rd base.
- D. **Dead Ball** - When the ball is in the possession of the pitcher and, in the umpire's judgment, all runners are not attempting to advance, and play on the runner or runners has ceased, the umpire shall call "time". The ball is dead and shall be returned to home plate. *Comment: When a runner stands off a base and "jukes" or "feints" back and forth, this is to be interpreted as "not attempting to advance" and "Time" shall be called.*
- E. A player or coach asking to call "time" will not stop play unless the umpire calls "time". This will only be done when the defense has stopped the runner's advance.
- F. Balks will be called. Each pitcher will get one warning per game. Ball is dead and no runners may advance on a warning.

SECTION 9.5: 12U BASEBALL

- A. See General Playing Rules. Any rule not covered in General Playing Rules is covered by Major League Baseball Rule Book.

SECTION 9.6: 14U BASEBALL

- A. See General Playing Rules. Any rule not covered in General Playing Rules is covered by Major League Baseball Rule Book.

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SECTION 9.7: 16U BASEBALL

- A. See General Playing Rules. Any rule not covered in General Playing Rules is covered by Major League Baseball Rule Book.

SECTION 10: PROTEST RULES

NOTE: A team does not have to be an opponent in order to protest against another team for fielding ineligible players. This section is designed to keep the respective leagues as "PURE" as possible by granting the right to each team to protest against another team at any time under the above conditions.

- A. All protests on a violation of eligibility rules during the regularly scheduled season must be filed no later than twenty-four (24) hours after the close of the last scheduled or rescheduled league game of the current season.
- B. Local League Rules and Protest Committees shall consist of the Baseball Commissioner and at least two (2) Cooper City Optimist Baseball Board Members. Umpires may be used as consultants ONLY.
- C. All protests received on playing rules after the specified time shall not be considered.
- D. The Rules and Protest Committee must notify the team against whom the protest was filed within seventy-two (72) hours after receipt of said protest.
- E. A protest fee of one hundred (\$100.00) CASH must accompany each protest. In the event the protest is upheld, said fee will be refunded. In the event the protest is overruled or ruled invalid, said fee will be deposited in the general fund of the Local League.
- F. Managers and coaches can file protests ONLY on a violation or violations of any rule of Cooper City Optimist Baseball or any rule compiled and adopted by the Official Baseball Rule Book on the respective game for which they have been duly and officially registered to manage or coach. **THE RULE AND SECTION UNDER PROTEST MUST BE CLEARLY DENOTED AND SPECIFIED IN THE WRITTEN PROTEST.**
- G. Managers or coaches contemplating a protest on violations of playing rules on the field of play must notify the head umpire immediately of the desire and before the next pitch. The exact situation & time will be noted in the official scorebook & on the official game sheet & signed by the manager and head umpire.
- H. If the Rules and Protest Committee finds that a ruling in favor of the protest would not have affected the outcome of the game, said protest will be denied.
- I. One representative only from each team may attend the hearing to offer information requested by the Rules and Protest Committee. The Committee will rule, in private, after the facts are presented.
- J. Players are not allowed at protest hearings.
- K. All decisions of the Rules and Protest Committee are final.

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SECTION 11: FIELD DIMENSIONS, BALL SIZES, DURATION OF GAMES, RUN LIMITS

A. Pitching Distances, Distances Between Bases, and Official Baseball Sizes:

<u>Age Division</u>	<u>Pitching</u>	<u>Bases</u>	<u>Baseball</u>
4U Instructional Tee Ball	N/A	50 Feet	9" (Level 5 Safety Ball)
6U Tee Ball	N/A	50 Feet	9" (Level 5 Safety Ball)
8U Coach Pitch	40 Feet	60 Feet	9"
10U Baseball	46 Feet	65 Feet	9"
12U Baseball	50 Feet	70 Feet	9"
14U Baseball	54 Feet	80 Feet	9"
16U Baseball	60.5 Feet	90 Feet	9"

Duration of Games:

<u>Age Division</u>	<u>Duration Of Games</u>
4U Instructional Tee Ball	1 Hour or 2 Innings, whichever comes first
6U Tee Ball	1 Hour 15 Minutes or 6 Innings, whichever comes first
8U Coach Pitch	1 Hour 45 Minutes or 6 Innings, whichever comes first
10U Baseball	1 Hour 45 Minutes or 6 Innings, whichever comes first
12U Baseball	2 Hours or 7 Innings, whichever comes first
14U Baseball	2 Hours or 7 Innings, whichever comes first
16U Baseball	2 Hours or 7 Innings, whichever comes first

An inning ends when the third out is called. An inning starts immediately when the previous inning ends. Example: The 3rd out is called in the bottom of the 5th inning 1 hour and 59 minutes into the game; the 6th inning will be played.

The game clock will stop when a game is delayed for inclement weather or if the lightning prediction system has been activated only. The game clock does not stop for player injuries, field/equipment delays, rule discussions/protests, etc.

B. Run Limits Per Inning:

<u>Age Division</u>	<u>Runs Per Inning</u>
4U Instructional Tee Ball	n/a
6U Tee Ball	5 runs per inning
8U Coach Pitch	5 runs per inning
10U Baseball	5 runs per inning
12U Baseball	7 runs per inning
14U Baseball	Unlimited
16U Baseball	Unlimited