

**Olentangy Patriots
Little League
2018**

**Policies, Local Rules and Selected
Little League International Rules for Major League,
Minor League, Coach Pitch and T-Ball Divisions**

All divisions of Olentangy Patriots Little League baseball are governed by the 2017 Little League Baseball Official Regulations and Playing Rules, commonly referred to as the “Green Book.” Managers, coaches and umpires should be readily familiar with the rules contained in the Green Book. The following information highlights, supplements or modifies those rules

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I.

GENERAL INFORMATION APPLICABLE TO ALL DIVISIONS

A. OPLL WEBSITE

OPLL maintains a website that includes schedules for all teams, as well as game results and standings for all divisions except t-ball. To access the website, go to olentangyll.org and click on the Patriots tab.

The website is also used to communicate decisions on game postponements. In the event of inclement weather or poor field conditions, game postponements will be posted on the website one hour before game time. If a postponement is not posted on the website, teams should go to the field where the coaches (or, once the game begins, the umpires) will make the decision whether to play.

B. FIELD SCHEDULES

Due to limited field availability, all games, rescheduled games and practices are scheduled by OPLL. Coaches should not schedule any event on an OPLL field at any time without first reserving the field from OPLL.

C. RESCHEDULED GAMES

All postponed games will be rescheduled by OPLL, generally within 24 hours of the decision to postpone. It is the responsibility of each coach to periodically check the website following any postponement to determine the makeup date. Although OPLL will attempt to directly contact coaches involved in postponed games concerning the makeup date, direct contact cannot be guaranteed.

D. REGISTERED AND REPLACEMENT PLAYERS

For insurance and liability purposes, no player is permitted to participate in any OPLL game or participate in any OPLL practice unless that player is (a) registered with Olentangy Little League and (b) assigned to the team's roster or otherwise approved by the OPLL Player Agent.

In the Major League division, teams must have at least nine players to start a game. In all other divisions, games may be played with fewer than nine players.

In the event a team requires or desires additional players in order to field a full team, the following guidelines apply:

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Major League:

Replacement players must be selected first from a Minor League team. If a sufficient number of players from the Minor League team are not available, the manager should contact another Major League Coach to select a non-travel Player with the OPLL Player Agents approval.

Minor League: Replacement players may come from Minor or Coach Pitch. 11-year-olds may not play as replacement players in the Minor League division. In the event players are needed, Minor League managers should contact the OPLL Player Agent.

Coach Pitch: Coach Pitch managers in need of replacement players should contact the OPLL Player Agent. Because of the availability of replacement players, and because of limited field availability, games will be postponed because of player shortages only in extreme circumstances.

E. BACKGROUND CHECK

Per Little League regulations, all persons who provide regular service to OPLL and/or have repetitive access to, or contact with, players or teams must annually complete and submit an official “Little League Volunteer Application” to the OPLL President. This rule applies to all managers and coaches, as well as parent or other volunteers who provide assistance on a repetitive basis. Annual background checks are paid for by OPLL.

F. CONCUSSION TRAINING

Pursuant to Ohio law, all coaches must complete concussion management training in order to participate as an OPLL coach.

G. UNIFORMS

OPLL provides hats and shirts to all players and coaches. All uniforms worn by managers, coaches or players during OPLL games should be those provided by OPLL.

NO TRAVEL LEAGUE UNIFORMS ARE PERMITTED TO BE WORN AT ANY SCHEDULE GAME

Teams may opt to place player and coach names on the top, back portion of uniforms, at the player's and/or coach's own expense. If a team opts to do so, however, all rostered players' uniforms must include the nameplate. Uniforms may not otherwise be altered without prior approval of the OPLL Board of Directors.

Pursuant to Little League regulations, uniforms should not be worn by players during practices or scrimmages.

The manager should select the color of pants to be worn by the team.

H. NO JEWELRY

Pursuant to Little League International Rule 1.11(j), players may not wear jewelry of any kind, other than that worn for medical purposes.

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I. LITTLE LEAGUE POST-SEASON TOURNAMENTS

Little League International operates post-season tournaments in the U12, U11 and U10 age groups. The U12 tournament concludes with the Little League World Series, played in Williamsport, Pennsylvania in late August. The U11 and U10 tournaments conclude with Ohio state championships.

OPLL intends to enter at least one team in each of the three tournaments. Teams will be selected based on criteria to be determined by the OPLL Board of Directors, and will be announced (pursuant to Little League International rules) no earlier than June 1.

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II.

CONDUCT OF GAMES – ALL DIVISIONS

A. FIELD PREPARATION, PREGAME, AND CONCLUSION OF GAME

The home team is responsible for preparation of the field before each game, including dragging and lining of the field.

Both teams should have an equal amount of infield practice prior to a game. The visiting team should take infield first, followed by the home team. If time permits, each team should have a total of 10 minutes infield. Each team is responsible for cleaning its dugout area at the conclusion of each game, including removal of all trash.

Both teams are responsible for ensuring that, at the conclusion of the final game on a field for the day, all trash has been placed in trash cans (including in spectator areas) and that all equipment has been stored and locked. Coaches are also encouraged to empty trash cans and replace trash bags when trash cans are full or overflowing.

B. PRE-GAME LINEUP EXCHANGE

In all divisions except t-ball, managers should exchange line-ups prior to each game. Line-ups shall include, at a minimum, (a) the batting order (including each player's number), (b) the starting pitcher, and (c) the pitch counts for all players who pitched in any OPLL game in the past five days.

C. CONTINUOUS BATTING ORDER

All OPLL games utilize a continuous batting order, where all players on a team's roster bat in order, regardless of the players' defensive positions. A player who arrives late to a game must be placed at the end of the lineup. Because OPLL uses a continuous batting order, defensive substitutions may be freely made, subject to Green Book restrictions on pitchers and catchers.

D. DUGOUTS

The home team should occupy the first base dugout or bench. When not on the playing field, players should remain in the team dugout or on the team bench at all times. The dugout or bench should not be occupied by anyone other than players and coaches.

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E. PRE-GAME OATH

Prior to each game, a manager, coach, player or players chosen by the home team manager should lead the teams in reciting the Little League Oath and, when a flag is visible, the Pledge of Allegiance. The Little League Oath is printed on the back cover of the Green Book.

F. SAFETY RULES

All safety rules are to be strictly enforced. These including, but are not limited to:

1. Lightning

Games must be halted once any lightning is seen or thunder is heard. Games may not resume until 30 minutes after the last lightning or thunder. It is the umpires' responsibility to determine whether lightning or thunder is present. Coaches must ensure that all members of their team are removed from the field and taken to a safe area during any storm. Players may not remain on the field for any reason during such delays.

2. No On-Deck Hitter

Pursuant to Little League International rules, on-deck hitters are not permitted in any circumstance. No player is permitted to swing a bat at any time other than when that player is called to the plate. This rule must be enforced by all umpires, managers and coaches.

3. Warming Up a Pitcher

Pursuant to Little League International rules, only a player in *full catcher's gear* may warm up a pitcher, either between innings or while warming up prior to entering the game. Between innings, a player in less than full catcher's gear may receive warm up pitches by standing in front of home plate while wearing a catcher's helmet. **At no time may a coach or any other non-player warm up a pitcher.**

3. Athletic Cup

All male catchers must wear a metal, fiber or plastic cup.

G. TIME LIMITS

All games, except t-ball, are six innings long. Due to limited field availability, time limits may be imposed on some games. Specifically, if a game is scheduled on the same field following the current game, no new inning may start less than 25 minutes before the scheduled start of the following game. For example, if the next game on the same field is scheduled to begin at 2:30 PM, a new inning may not begin in the current game after 2:05 PM. Umpires have sole authority to determine whether the time limit has been reached. Once any inning is started, it must be finished. **No time limits apply in OPLL unless there is another game scheduled to follow on the same field.**

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H. SCOREKEEPERS

Except in t-ball, each team should provide an official score keeper for each game. The scorekeepers for each team should compare scores after each inning and any discrepancies in the score must be resolved before the game continues.

I. TIE GAMES

Unless the teams have a future game scheduled against one another, tied games which are suspended because of time limitations, weather, or darkness, and which constitute a regulation game per Little League rules, will be declared a tie. Whether a game is to be declared a tie (i.e., whether runs scored in the final inning count) is governed by Little League rule 4.11. This rule does not apply to t-ball, where scores are not kept.

J. SCORE REPORTING

OPLL has established an online score reporting system for all divisions except t-ball. The winning manager in each game is responsible for posting the final score. Scores should be posted on the day of the game. The score reporting system can be accessed through the OPLL website. Game scores and current standings are updated by OPLL on a daily basis throughout the season.

K. BAT RULES

Big barrel bats may not be used in any division of OPLL. Bats must be no more than 2 ¼ inches in diameter. Further, all composite bats are prohibited by Little League International rules, unless expressly authorized. A list of permitted bats can be found on the Little League International website.

L. FORFEITS

Forfeits are discouraged under any circumstance. OPLL encourages all games to be played to completion in order to maximize the amount of baseball played by our participants. No game will be declared a forfeit unless a decision is made by the OPLL Board of Directors to order a forfeit.

M. PROTESTS

OPLL **strongly** discourages protests of games. Issues should be resolved at the game site whenever possible. In the event a protest is made, it must strictly comply with Green Book requirements.

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III.

CONDUCT OF GAMES – PLAYER PITCH DIVISIONS

A. UMPIRES

Harassment of umpires by managers, coaches, players, or fans will not be tolerated in any circumstances.

Per Little League Rule 9.02(a):

Any umpire’s decision which involves judgment, such as, but not limited to, whether a batted ball is fair or foul, whether a pitch is a strike or a ball, or whether a runner is safe or out, is FINAL. **No player, manager, coach or substitute shall object to any such judgment decisions.**

A manager, player or coach who violates Rule 9.02(a) is subject to immediate ejection and further OPLL disciplinary action. This rule is strictly enforced in Little League Tournament play and should be followed by all OPLL coaches. Nothing in this rule, however, prevents a manager or coach who receives a favorable ruling from conceding that such ruling was in error and should be changed.

A manager or coach may, if there is any reasonable doubt that an umpire’s decision is in conflict with the rules, appeal the decision and ask that a correct ruling be applied. But such appeal may not be made concerning any judgment call, as set forth above.

B. PITCH COUNTS

Pitch count rules are strictly enforced.

Pitch count rules are fully set forth in the 2017 Green Book and all OPLL managers are expected to be fully and readily familiar with these rules. Note that these rules also include limitations on a player playing both the catching and pitching positions in the same game, which is permitted only in limited circumstances.

As set forth in the Green Book, per-game pitch limits are based on age. Note that a player’s “playing age” is determined as of May 1, 2014 and does not change during the season, regardless of whether the player has a birthday between May 1 and the end of the season.

At the conclusion of each game, the managers or scorekeepers for the participating teams must agree upon and record the pitch count for each player who pitched in that game. It is recommended that scorekeepers compare pitch counts after each inning. Pitch count forms are available on the OPLL website. At the beginning of each game, pitch counts for all games played within the prior five days should be included on each team’s lineup. Note: This rule requires the availability of the actual pitch counts for each player, not just a list of eligible or ineligible players. Failure to provide an actual pitch count when requested may result in a forfeit.

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IV.

PLAYING RULES

A. MAJOR LEAGUE DIVISION

OPLL's Major League division follows Green Book rules.

Exception: A team may pinch run for its catcher with two outs, in order to allow the catcher sufficient time to put on catcher's gear prior to the next inning. The pinch runner must be the last player to have made an out.

The following are selected Green Book rules:

1. Minimum Playing Time

All players must play a minimum of six consecutive defensive outs.

2. Dropped Third Strike

A batter may become a runner on a third strike not caught by the catcher. (Rule 6.05(b))

3. Infield Fly Rule

The infield fly rule is in effect and is a judgment call by the umpire. (Rule 6.05(d))

4. Stealing/Base Running

Runners must remain on their base until the pitched ball has been batted or has crossed home plate. (Rule 7.13)

5. Mercy Rule

A 10-run "mercy" rule is in effect after four innings. (Rule 4.10(e))

6. Balks

There are no balks in Little League play. (Rule 8.05)

7. Number of Players to Start Game

Teams must have at least nine players to start an official game, although a game may continue if circumstances cause a team to have fewer than nine players after the game has started. Although an official game may not be played when a team has fewer than nine players to start, such event does not result in automatic forfeiture. A decision as to the outcome of the game will be made by the Board. (Rule 4.16)

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8. Sliding

A base runner is declared out if the runner “does not slide or attempt to get around a fielder who has the ball and is waiting to make the tag” (Rule 7.08(a) (3))

A base runner may not slide head first while advancing to a base, but may do so when returning to a base. (Rule 7.08(a) (4))

9. Warm-up Pitches

A pitcher is entitled to eight warm up pitches between innings, which “shall not consume more than one minute of time.” (Rule 8.03)

10. Behavior

No manager, coach or player may, from the bench or field, “use language which will in any manner refer to or reflect upon opposing players, manager, coach, an umpire or spectators.” (Rule 4.06)

NOTE: There is no Green Book or OPLL rule governing thrown bats.

NOTE: There is no Green Book rule requiring removal of a pitcher because of one or more hit batsmen.

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B. MINOR LEAGUE DIVISION

Except as set forth below, OPLL's Minor League division follows Green Book rules.

1. Run Limits and Mercy Rule

Each half-inning concludes when the defense makes three outs, or the batting team scores **five** runs, whichever occurs first. However, no run limit applies in any inning after the fifth inning is completed.

The ten-run "mercy" rule set forth in the Green Book applies in OPLL Minor League games.

2. Defensive Positions

There are nine defensive positions, which must include three outfielders (each to be positioned at least 15 feet behind the base path) and a catcher.

3. Playing Time

OPLL Minor League baseball is a developmental league. Therefore, managers are encouraged to allow all players the opportunity, subject to reasons of safety, to play both infield and outfield defensive positions. During each game, every player must play at least two defensive innings as an infielder or catcher, and at least one inning as an outfielder. No player may play more than three defensive innings at a single position.

4. Coaches on Playing Field

Defensive team coaches must remain in the dugout and are not permitted on the field during play. The offensive team must have both a first base and third base coach. Teams must also have an adult coach in the dugout at all times.

5. Stealing/Base running

Base runners must stay on their base until the pitched ball has been batted or has crossed home plate. **There is no stealing of home, or advancing to home on a passed ball or wild pitch, in the OPLL Minor League division.**

6. Removal of Pitcher

A pitcher who hits three batters in a single game must be immediately removed from the game.

7. Pinch Running for Catcher

Because OPLL uses a continuous batting order, pinch runners are generally not permitted. However, to speed the game, teams are permitted and encouraged to pinch run for their catcher when the catcher is on base with two outs.

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8. Two-Walk Rule – Coach Enters to Pitch

Once the defensive team has walked two batters in any inning, the offensive team's manager or coach is required to enter the game as a pitcher *on any four-ball count reached during the remainder of that inning (regardless of whether a new pitcher enters the game)*. The offensive team does NOT have the choice of accepting the base on balls, but instead must have their manager or coach enter the game to pitch. The following rules apply:

Three Pitch Limit: The coach is to throw up to three additional pitches to the batter. The three-pitch limit is **strictly enforced**, regardless of the quality of the pitches. The **sole** exceptions to this rule are (a) when the third or subsequent pitch from the coach is hit into foul territory, or (b) when a pitch hits a batter (which pitch will not count). Once the three pitch limit has been reached, a batter who has not batted the ball into fair territory will be declared out.

Carryover of Pitching Count: Once the coach enters the game to pitch, the strike count on the batter will continue, but the ball count will be dropped (for example, a 2-2 count becomes 0-2, a 3-1 count becomes 0-1, etc.). The umpire will continue to call balls and strikes. As a result, a player may still strike out but cannot draw a walk.

Coach Preparation for Pitching: In order to be as efficient as possible, the coach who will be entering the game to pitch should be warmed up and prepared to enter the game without delay.

Pitching Position: The coach who enters the game to pitch must throw the ball over-handed from the set position and from the same pitching rubber used by the Minor League pitcher. The pitched ball may not be intentionally lobbed to the batter.

Defensive Position of Original Pitcher: The original Minor League pitcher should be positioned behind and to the side of the coach throwing the pitches, such that the defensive player has a clear view of the hitter.

Coach Hit by Batted or Thrown Ball: Once a ball is batted, the coach who pitched the ball should not interfere with the ball or any player on the field of play and should, if possible, promptly move to foul territory. A batted or thrown ball which hits any part of the coach who pitched the ball (including his glove) is a live ball.

Interference: The umpire should call interference if either (a) a batted or thrown baseball hits the coach who pitched the ball **and**, in the opinion of the umpire, the coach failed to make a reasonable effort to avoid the batted or thrown ball or (b) the coach otherwise impedes a defensive player's ability to cleanly field, throw or catch the ball. When interference is called, the batter will be called out and all offensive players on a base at the time of the pitched ball must return to their original base.

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Coaching of Base runners: Base runners may only be instructed by first-base and third-base coaches. A coach pitching under this rule is prohibited from providing any coaching or instruction to any base runner.

Hit-by-Pitch Rule: A batter hit by a pitch thrown by a coach pitching under this rule will not be awarded first base, but the thrown pitch will not be counted as one of the three permitted coach-thrown pitches.

Base running: Base runners may not steal any base once the coach enters the game to pitch. When a coach is pitching, base runners may not leave the base until the batter makes contact with the pitch.

Bunting: Once the coach enters the game to pitch, bunting is prohibited.

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D. COACH PITCH DIVISION

Except as set forth below, OPLL's Coach Pitch division follows Green Book rules.

1. Run Limits and Mercy Rule

Each half-inning shall conclude when the defense makes three outs, or the batting team scores five runs, whichever occurs first. If the run rule applies such that one team cannot win (for instance, if the home team is winning 14-2 in the fifth inning), the game must still be completed. The "Green Book" mercy rule does not apply in OPLL Coach Pitch.

2. Defensive Positions

There are ten defensive positions, which must include four outfielders (each to be positioned at least 15 feet behind the base path) and a catcher.

3. Minimum Playing Time

OPLL Coach Pitch baseball is a developmental division. Therefore, managers are encouraged to allow all players the opportunity, subject to reasons of safety, to regularly play all infield and outfield defensive positions.

During each game, every player must play at least two defensive innings as an infielder or catcher, and at least one inning as an outfielder. **No player may play more than two innings at the same defensive position during a single game. Managers should arrange their lineups to ensure that playing time requirements are met early in the game, in case the game is shortened because of weather or time limits.** A manager is not required to meet minimum playing time requirements for late-arriving players, but should make a good faith effort to do so.

4. Coaches on Playing Field

Each defensive team is permitted to have up to two coaches on the field. Teams must also have a coach or other responsible adult (who has been background checked) in the dugout at all times.

5. Umpiring

One umpire will be at each coach pitch game to call the bases and to manage runner's positions.

6. Stealing/Base running

Base stealing is not permitted. No base runner shall leave any base until a ball is batted. Any base runner who leaves early shall be declared out.

7. Position of Infielders

Infielders are not permitted to position themselves within 45 feet of home plate.

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8. Pitching

Coaches must pitch from an area between 30 and 40 feet from home plate and in a direct line between home plate and second base. The coach must throw the ball over-handed and should attempt to avoid lobbing the ball to any batter. Once a ball is batted, the coach should not interfere with the ball or with any player. A batted ball which hits the coach or the coach's glove is a live ball and is therefore in play. If a coach catches a batted ball, he should immediately drop the ball and, to the full extent possible, move out of any defensive player's path.

The defensive team must place a player in the pitcher position. The player should be positioned behind and to the side of the coach throwing the pitches, such that the defensive player has a clear view of the hitter.

9. Number of Pitches Allowed/Strikeout Rule

The "pitcher" may throw no more than six pitches to any batter. A player who fails to hit the ball into fair territory after six pitches shall be declared out. If the sixth or later pitch is hit into foul territory, the batter shall be given an additional pitch. A pitched ball which hits the batter will not count against the pitch limit, but such a pitch shall not cause the runner to advance to first base. **The six pitch rule is to be strictly enforced, even if the pitches are unhittable.** There shall be no strikeouts, i.e., a player may swing and miss at up to six pitches.

10. Overthrow and Dead Ball Rule

Base runners may not advance because of an overthrow (or an otherwise miss-targeted throw) made by an infielder who fields a batted ball. Once the ball is thrown by an infielder, or held by the infielder without the intent to throw, the ball is dead.

Balls hit to the outfield should be fielded by an outfielder. Such a ball is dead as soon as it is returned to the infield, unless the infielder is immediately attempting to make a play. If the infielder is immediately attempting to make a play, the ball is dead as soon as that play is completed. (If an infielder goes to the outfield to retrieve a ball, he is to be treated as an outfielder under this rule).

For purposes of this rule, the "outfield" is any grass area beyond the dirt infield.

At the time of a dead ball under this rule, any base runner must go or return to the closest base, unless that base is already occupied, in which case the runner must go to the second closest base.

Under no circumstance may a base runner advance beyond the base to which he or she was running at the time of the dead ball.

11. Bunting

Bunting is prohibited in OPLL Coach Pitch baseball.

12. Pinch Running for Catcher

Because OPLL uses a continuous batting order, pinch runners are generally not permitted. However, to speed the game, teams are permitted and encouraged to pinch run for their catcher when the catcher is on base with two outs.

12. Infield Fly Rule

The infield fly rule is not in effect in the Coach Pitch division.

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C. T-BALL DIVISION

1. **Enforcement of Rules**

There are no umpires in OPLL T-Ball games. The following rules should be applied by the managers in the interest of fairness and the spirit of cooperation. In the case of a dispute, coaches of the offensive team shall make all final “umpiring” decisions.

2. **Protective Cup**

All players should be encouraged to wear a protective cup.

3. **Use of Tee**

Junior T-Ball: In order to best ensure each player’s development as a hitter, to reinforce proper batting technique, to instill player confidence and to promote play in the field, **all hitting will take place off of a tee. There shall be no pitching at any time.**

Senior T-Ball: In the Senior T-Ball division, an offensive manager or coach has the option of throwing up to three pitches to a batter during each at bat before the tee is utilized. In order to prevent delay, **the three-pitch limit should be strictly enforced**, regardless of the quality of the pitches. Pitches may be thrown in any manner desired by the pitcher, but shall be thrown from a position in a straight line between home plate and second base.

4. **Number of Batters Per Inning**

Each player present at a game will bat once each inning. Three defensive outs do not end an inning. The final batter in each half-inning shall continue running until that player is retired or scores a run.

5. **Defense**

All players on a team’s roster must be assigned a defensive position each inning. There shall be no more than 5 players in infield positions (1B, 2B, SS, 3B and P). There are no catchers. Any remaining players should play a “true” outfield position.

6. **Length of Games**

Games shall be four innings long. If the fourth inning or any later inning is completed before 55 minutes have expired since the start of the game, the teams may play an additional inning.

7. **Scoring**

Scores shall not be kept.

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8. Base running

Base stealing and leading off are prohibited. No base runner may leave any base until the batter has struck the ball. Base runners and hitters may advance more than one base on a batted ball if the ball is not in control of a defensive player. Base runners are not permitted to advance on an overthrow.

9. No Strikeouts

A player shall have an unlimited number of swings in which to hit the ball off of the tee. There are no strikeouts.

10. Fair Territory

Any batted ball that travels into fair territory, but less than 10 feet, should be declared a foul ball.

11. Retired Batters and Runners

Although three outs shall not end an inning, any player who is retired while at bat or on the bases is required to return to the dugout. In order to reward the defense, no player who is retired should be permitted to continue running the bases.

12. Coaches in Field of Play

Each team is permitted to have up to two coaches on the field during defensive game play. Coaches should not interfere with play after a ball is batted into fair territory, but are encouraged to orally instruct players during live game play. While on offense, each team shall have a manager or coach positioned at home plate (to assist with the tee) and at first base. Once a ball is batted off of the tee, the coach positioned near home plate must immediately remove the tee to foul territory. Managers should jointly agree on the outcome of any inadvertent coach interference.

13. Equal Opportunity for Players

Managers and coaches should ensure that all players are given an equal opportunity throughout the season to play each defensive position, and to bat in each position in the hitting lineup. However, a manager may exclude a player from playing the first base or pitcher positions if the manager believes that such a player would be exposed to undue risk of injury as a result of playing one of these defensive positions.

13. Player Substitutions

There are no limits on the participation of players who arrive late or leave early from any Junior T-ball game. Such players may be inserted into, or removed from, the offensive and defensive lineups in a manner that is fair at the manager's discretion.