

# **Norman Optimist Club**

## **SOFTBALL**

### **PARK RULES**

#### **~TEAMS~**

##### **1.1-SPRING AND FALL LEAGUE**

1.1.2 Spring and Fall are 2 separate leagues. Players are not required to return to the same teams.

##### **1.2-TEAM ROSTERS AND LINEUPS**

1.2.1 Once a Player is assigned to a team (whether it is a preformed or Pool Team) AND the Roster has been Released, they may not be removed from the roster unless it is by mutual decision of both the Coach and the player (or players Parent/guardian) and must be approved by the Softball Director. Such decision must be submitted in writing, Signed by the coach and Player's Parent/Guardian, to the director.

1.2.2 Once League games have begun, any Roster Changes must be approved by the Norman Optimist Club Board.

1.2.3 Tournament Teams (or preformed teams) may not dismiss players from their league roster once League play has begun.

1.2.4 No Player may play or be listed on 2 Rosters in the same division.

1.2.5 No Players may be added to any Roster after Week 4 of the season, unless approved by the NOC Board, such players must register and pay the late registration fee.

1.2.6 DURING LEAGUE PLAY: NO TEAM MAY PICK UP PLAYERS TO FILL IN DURING A LEAGUE GAME, LEAGUE GAMES MUST ONLY BE PLAYED BY REGISTERED/ROSTERED PLAYERS, Any team caught doing so, will be given one warning and an automatic forfeiture of the game they are currently playing. If a second offense is recorded, the team forfeits their season.

1.2.7 Under no Circumstance will any player be allowed to transfer teams, especially to a team of higher ranking, once League play has begun.

##### **1.3-PLAYER SIGN UP AND TEAM ASSIGNMENT**

1.3.1 The Deadline for the Spring and Fall Softball seasons will determined by the Board of Directors and posted on the website.

1.3.2 All Registrations will be done thru the NOC League Website.

1.3.3 Rosters are first created from the initial registrations with parent and coach requests honored first.

1.3.4 Individual registrations are assigned by Age, Friend, school/location, in order to fill or create new teams. It is possible a player will not be playing with other players from her school due to the number of teams needing players. It is also possible that there are no additional roster spots on any teams, at which point a refund will be issued.

##### **1.4-GRADE EXCEPTION**

1.4.1 There is no grade exception for Softball. See USSSA Age guidelines that will start as of August 31, 2025.

# ~GAMES~

## 2.1 GENERAL-

- 2.1.1 All players must wear Helmets WITH FACEGUARDS. Helmets must remain on while player is on the playing field beginning when the player exits the dugout until they reenter the dugout. This rule also applies to any Batkids used by the team.
- 2.1.2 Catchers:  
8U thru 18U: All Catchers must wear full protective gear. This includes Chest protector, Leg guards, and catchers Mask that covers the circumference of their head(Hockey Style).  
TBALL: A Helmet with a facemask is mandatory, Chest protector is highly recommended. Leg guards are not required.  
ALL AGES: The Catchers helmet and mask shall meet the required NOCSAE standard. ALL CATCHERS HELMETS MUST HAVE FULL EAR AND BACK OF HEAD PROTECTION.
- 2.1.3 DEFENSIVE MASKS:  
10U and UP: All Infield players, regardless of age and position, shall be required to wear a fielding masks at all times when on the field of play.  
6U AND 8U: Infielders and Outfielders are required to wear fielding Masks at all times when on the field of play.
- 2.1.4 NO METAL CLEATS ARE ALLOWED. Players must provide and play with molded cleats only.
- 2.1.5 Only players participating in the game(any player listed on the teams Roster), 1(one) Batkid, and UP TO 4 certified and rostered coaches will be permitted in the dugout during games.
- 2.1.5.1 When the Team is Batting, one coach is allowed at first Base, One Coach is allowed at Third Base, and one coach may be in front of the dugout. These Coaches must confine themselves to these locations, and be able to vacate the area to avoid interfering with a live ball.
- 2.1.5.2 6U TBALL- 1 coach may be at the tee, and 1 each at 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Base. 1 coach can be in front of the dugout but must remain immediately in front of the dugout. Coach at Homeplate is responsible for the removal of any bat or tee that may be in the way of a play at Home including runners coming in to score.
- 8U Coach Pitch- 1 Coach may be in the pitching circle, and 1 each at 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> base. 1 coach can be in front of the dugout but must remain immediately in front of dugout. Pitching coach must remove themselves from the field of play immediately after the ball is put into play to avoid any interference that may happen.
- 2.1.5.3 If, by the judgment of the HOME PLATE Umpire, a coach has violated these rules, the umpire will Warn the Coach For the first offense. IF a second offense occurs, the umpire will confine the offending coach to the dugout. If the offending coach is a Base Coach or Pitching coach, they may be replaced only by a Verified and Rostered Coach.
- 2.1.6-PLAYERS WILL BE AUTOMATICALLY EJECTED FROM A GAME IF CAUGHT THROWING EQUIPMENT OR COMMITTING FLAGRANT UNSPORTSMANLIKE CONDUCT AND/OR CONTACT. PLAYERS MUST REMAIN IN THE DUGOUT AFTER AN EJECTION AND DURING

## SUSPENSIONS.

- 2.1.6.1 Following an ejection from a game for violation of 2.1.6, The player can be suspended from the next league game as well.
- 2.1.6.2 Any Player suspended twice during a season for the violation of 2.1.6 can be suspended for the remainder of the season.
- 2.1.6.3 The player must appear before the Board of Directors, with their parents and Head Coach, Before the end of the current season, to determine if the player will be allowed to return the following year.
- 2.1.6.4 Any Coach caught playing a suspended player will forfeit any game in which the suspended player participated. Taking the field in any capacity constitutes participation. The coach will be suspended until the Board of Directors meeting is held to review the matter.
- 2.1.7-ONLY HEAD COACHES will be allowed to discuss decision calls with umpires; any deviation from this will result in a coach's warning. Appeals must be made before the next pitch is thrown.

## **2.1.8-GAME BALLS AND BAT REGULATIONS**

2.1.8.1- 6U thru 10U: 11" USSSA FASTPITCH Leather Ball Must be provided by each team. During league play, Color of Stitch does not matter, but it must have a factory stamp showing the COR and Compression of the Ball. During Tournament Play, the ball must be a USSSA Blue Stitch 11" Leather Ball.

-12U and UP: 12" USSSA FASTPITCH Leather Ball must be provided by each team. During League play color of stitch does not matter, but must have a factory stamp showing COR and Compression of the ball. During Tournament Play, the Ball must be a USSSA Blue Stitch 12" Leather Ball.

- 2.1.8.2- BATS-** Tball and up may use any bat on the approved bat list, it must be an approved USSSA Fastpitch Softball Bat. Tball may use Softball tball bats. Players caught using an illegal bat, either by a coach or umpire. The first offense, player will be called out; Second offense will result in the player being called out and the head coach being ejected from the game; Third offense will result in the player being called out and the Head Coach being suspended for the remainder of the season. An illegal bat will be recognized as per NOC Softball Rules and the current list of USSSA illegal Bats.

## **2.2-PLAYING FIELD REGULATIONS**

### **2.2.1- Tball**

- playing field will consist of 60' between bases.
- There will be safety lines drawn on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> baseline at 35' to mark the "invisible" safety arc.
- A foul arc will be drawn at 10' from the point of home plate to from baseline to baseline to indicate a ball in play after being hit off tee.
- The Pitching Rubber shall be placed at 35' from the front edge of Home plate.
- A pitching Circle will be drawn around the pitching rubber that measures 16' across.
- The Outfield fence shall be placed at 150' to shorten the playing field.

### **2.2.2- 8U Coach Pitch**

- playing field will consist of 60' between bases.
- There will be an invisible safety arc at 30' from the 1<sup>st</sup> base line thru the pitchers circle to the 3<sup>rd</sup> base line.

- The pitching rubber shall be placed at 35' from the front edge of home plate.
- A pitching circle will be drawn around the pitching rubber measuring 16' across and lines will be drawn at the edge of the circle in line with the pitching rubber to indicate where players are to stand while coaches are pitching.
- Outfield fences will be placed at 200' to accommodate the 8u age group

### **2.2.3- 10U Kid Pitch**

- playing field will consist of 60' between bases.
- The pitching rubber will be placed at 35' from the front edge of home plate.
- A pitching circle will be drawn around the the pitching rubber measuring 16' across.
- outfield fences will be placed at 200' to accommodate 10U age group.

### **2.2.4- 12U Kid Pitch**

- playing field will consist of 60' Base Path
- The pitching rubber will be placed at 40' from the front edge of home plate.
- A pitching circle will be drawn around the pitching rubber measuring 16' across.
- Out field fence will be placed at 200'.

### **2.2.5- 14U Kid Pitch**

- playing field will consist of 60' Base Path
- The pitching Rubber will be placed at 43' from the front edge of home plate.
- A Pitching circle will be drawn around the pitching rubber measuring 16' across.
- Out Field Fence will be placed at 200'.

## **2.3-Game Length, Run Limits, Ending, Forfeiture**

2.3.1- For all Age Groups, Game time will begin immediately Following the Umpire Plate Meeting.

2.3.1.1- During League play a 5 Minute Buffer will be given, after which time if 1 or both teams are not ready to play, the game will be ruled a forfeit (recorded as 0-7 in favor of team that was ready to play.) If neither team is ready score will be recorded 0-0. Umpires will still be paid in this instance and will remain on the field to call if those teams choose to scrimmage.

2.3.2- FOR ALL AGE GROUPS- TOURNAMENT BRACKET ONLY- TIE GAMES WILL USE ITB RULES. LEAGUE GAMES MAY END IN A TIE.

### **2.3.2-GAME LENGTHS**

2.3.2.1-For 6U thru 14U- All Game Lengths for League play will be 1 Hour or 5 innings whichever occurs first.

2.3.2.2-NO NEW INNINGS WILL BEGIN If less than 5 Minutes remain on the clock.

2.3.2.2.1-FOR Tournament Bracket Play only:

6U Game length- 50 Minutes finish the inning.

8U Game Length- 55 Minutes Finish the inning

10U Game Length- 60 Minutes Finish the inning

12U Game Length- 60 Minutes Finish the inning

**2.3.2.2.2- FOR TOURNAMENT POOL PLAY ONLY:**

-All pool play games will be 55 Minutes Drop Dead with the

Score staying as is, no reverting score to the last inning.

**Any team refusing to continue play after game has started, or delays the game more than one minute in resuming play after “play ball” has been called by the umpire, or willfully delays game play, for more than one minute, in an effort to win by running out game time, WILL AUTOMATICALLY FORFEIT that game and the score will be recorded 7-0 in favor of the opposing team. (SEE USSSA 2024 Rulebook. Rule 4. Section 7)** Exception: IF Coach is Awaiting the UIC or TD to arrive at the field. Time must be announced to the Umpires and game time will be paused to prevent disruption.

### **2.3.2.3-RUN LIMITS**

6U thru 14U there is a 6 Run Per Half inning limit.

### **2.3.2.4-RUN RULES TO END GAMES**

– 6U thru 14U Run Rule is 10 Runs after 3<sup>rd</sup> inning; 7 runs after 4<sup>th</sup> inning.

### **2.3.2.5-RAINOUT TO END GAMES-**

6U thru 14U- 2 and a half innings shall constitute a full game played if the home team is ahead. In the event that the game is called before the inning rule is reached, the game will be rescheduled for a later date and will begin where it left off. (Be sure to notate players who are on base, how many outs, and which player was up to bat as well as their count.) The Home Plate Umpire will be responsible for notating time remaining and verifying the home score book is correct.

2.3.2.6- ALL NOC LEAGUE GAMES will be official and played as long as each team begins with 8 players.

2.3.2.6.1-Any team starting with 8 players will not be charged an automatic out for the 9<sup>th</sup> batter in the batting order (LEAGUE PLAY ONLY).

2.3.2.6.2- Any Rostered player may enter the lineup at the bottom upon arrival during a league game.

## **2.4- TEAM LINEUP AND FIELDING**

2.4.1- NO age groups are allowed Designated Hitters. Pinch Runners Shall be allowed for Catchers and injured players only. Pinch runner will be the last player to be called out. If no player has been called out then it will be the player furthest in the lineup from the player being pulled.

2.4.2-LEAGUE ONLY- a Continuous lineup of ALL ROSTER PLAYERS available at the game shall be used. Each player shall play at least half of an inning in each game. And all players must Bat. Any player arriving late to the game may be inserted at the bottom of the lineup without penalty.

2.4.3- 6U thru 8U may use 10 defensive players. 1 player must play in the pitching position and one player must play in the catching position. All 4 Outfielders must remain behind the edge of the grass (where outfield grass meets infield dirt) until the ball has been put into play.

-6U Only- if 9 players are used the catching position may remain empty.

2.4.4- 10U and Up may only use 9 defensive players. 1 player must be in the pitching position 1 player must be in the catching position. Only 6 infielders (including pitcher and catcher) shall be allowed. With 3 outfielders not coming forward of the grass (into the dirt infield) until the ball is put into play.

2.4.5- ALL AGE GROUPS- Both Teams will provide Line up Cards to the Home Plate Umpire and the Opposing teams scorekeeper prior to the start of play. This will

establish a formal Line up. Line Up Must include the Player's Roster Name and Number. These will be kept with the score cards after the game.

## **2.5- TBALL Softball RULES of PLAY:**

- 2.5.1- The Tee shall be an Upright Tee with a solid base having no angles.
- 2.5.2- The Batting team's Coach shall be responsible for placing the ball on the tee and removing the tee after the ball is put into play.
  - 2.5.2.1- The tee may be placed anywhere on home plate.
- 2.5.3- When "Play Ball" is called by the home plate umpire, the coach shall position themselves against the backstop and out of play. After the ball has been batted fair the coach will remove the tee from home plate and position themselves so as to not interfere with the play.
  - 2.5.3.1- Interference by a Coach will be handled the same as any other interference call and will be based on the judgment of the Umpire.
- 2.5.4- The Batter Cannot swing at the ball until "Play Ball" has been called by the umpire.
  - 2.5.4.1- Before Play Ball is called the batter may lineup with the ball and take practice swings, which may knock the ball off the tee without penalty. AFTER play ball has been called a practice swing that knocks the ball off the tee shall be called a strike if it does not go past the foul arc.
- 2.5.5- The Batter Shall have 5 swings to get the ball into play. If the ball is not put into play the batter shall be called out.
- 2.5.6- Defensive players shall be required to wear fielding Masks at all times.
- 2.5.7- All Defensive players must remain behind the 35 foot safety arc until the batter hits the ball. The pitcher may not move forward of the pitching rubber until after the ball is in play. If this happens, by umpires discretion, the Batter will be awarded 1<sup>st</sup> base.
- 2.5.8- NO stealing of bases shall be allowed. Any players caught leaving early shall be given one team warning and then players shall called out if caught leaving early anytime following the warning.
- 2.5.9- Teams may NOT load the safety arc with infield players. Only 3 Defensive players only. (Umpires discretion).

## **2.6- Catching Position-**

- 2.6.1- The Catcher must where a Helmet with Full Mask and a chest protector. (Shin Guards are not mandatory)

## **2.7- Batting-**

- 2.7.1- Offensive players and batters on the field must wear helmets with an attached facemask at all times until they re-enter the Dugout.
- 2.7.2- A batter will be allowed 3 swings per time at bat. If the Batter misses the ball entirely, either above or below the ball, it shall be called a strike. A foul ball will be considered foul if it does not go forward of the foul arc or goes into foul territory on either baseline prior to reaching the bases. If the batter fouls on the 3<sup>rd</sup> swing it shall be called strike 3 and the batter will be out.
- 2.7.3- Bunting is not allowed.
- 2.7.4- There will be no Infield Fly Rule.
- 2.7.5- NO Walks allowed.
- 2.7.6- on a HIT Ball, There is no limit to the number of bases a player may obtain.
- 2.7.7- Time Shall be called when a defensive player has possession of the ball in advance of the lead runner, or the ball has returned to the player pitcher inside the

pitching circle. If at the moment that Time has been called, a runner is MORE THAN HALFWAY to the next base, the runner will be awarded the base closest to them.

- 2.7.8- When the infielder has stopped the lead runner from advancing to the next base, the play is dead. A runner standing off a base the “jukes” or “Feints” back and forth, is not considered attempting to advance to the next base. Time Shall be Called.

## **2.8-GAME BALLS-**

- 2.8.1- An USSSA stamped, Fastpitch, 11 inch, Leather Ball must be provided by each team for game play. (LEAGUE PLAY ONLY color of stitch does not matter but must have a stamp showing 375 Compression and .47 COR) Tournament play Must have a USSSA BLUE STITCH 11” Ball.

## **2.9-COACHES-**

- 2.9.1- ONLY 3 Coaches will be allowed on the field of play. 1 at the tee, 1 at 1<sup>st</sup>, 1 at 3<sup>rd</sup>.  
2.9.2- Coaches may not touch players to stop or make them go. 1 Team warning shall be issued. Any after the warning, the player will be called out.

# **3.1-8U Softball Coach Pitch RULES OF PLAY:**

## **3.1.1- Defensive Positions-**

- 3.1.1.1- All Defensive positions must wear face protection, Catcher must be in Full gear with full Hockey-style helmet.  
3.1.1.2- Defensive positions may not exceed 10 in Numbers.  
When playing with 9, 3 of those positions must be in the outfield. When playing with 10, 4 of those positions can be in the outfield. Starting position for outfielders shall be no closer than the edge of the outfield grass until the pitch has been delivered.  
3.1.1.3- Pitcher may not move forward of the pitcher's block (35' safety arc) before the pitch has been delivered, if this occurs, a dead ball will be called and the batter awarded 1<sup>st</sup> base. Other runners may advance if forced.  
3.1.1.4- Pitcher must play with one foot in the pitchers circle and one foot outside the circle on the provided hash marks. They may choose to be on the right side or left side of the Coach that is pitching. They cannot move forward of the has marks until the pitch has been delivered. (see rule 3.1.1.3).  
3.1.1.5- No Defensive Player, other than the pitcher, may enter the pitching circle during an at bat. If this happens time will be called and the player will be instructed to return to their position and a team warning will be issued. A second offense will result in the batter being awarded 1<sup>st</sup> base.

## **3.1.2- COACHES-**

- 3.1.2.1-A defensive coach may be outside the dugout, just outside the gate.  
Defensive Coaches may not walk into the field of play at anytime unless given a time out by the Umpire. If a live ball hits a defensive coach or bucket, a dead ball will be called and all runners will advance one (1) Base from the time of contact. If the runner is halfway they will receive the next base they come in contact with.  
\*Same rule applies for balls going into dugouts or under outfield nets.  
3.1.2.2- Pitching Coaches can position batters using hand signals only, No Verbal

Commands or Verbal instruction may be given by the pitching Coach. Pitching Coach may not give base runners instruction. The Umpire can and will call the BATTER out if they feel this rule is being abused after the pitching coach has been warned. The pitching coach must do their best to remove themselves from the field of play to give defensive players the best chance to make a play. Any pitching coach who is hit by a THROWN ball without making an attempt to avoid the play will be removed and a new coach will be placed in the pitching position. A Dead ball will be called, the Batter will be out, and all runners will be returned to their previous base.

- 3.1.2.3- If the pitching coach is hit by a batted ball, the ball will be called dead and the batter will be awarded 1<sup>st</sup> base, runners may advance if forced.
- 3.1.2.4- Pitch will be around 30 MPH. adjustments to pitching can be made as necessary. The pitching coach MAY NOT manipulate the pitch to create a defensive disadvantage for the catcher. (i.e. pitching it into the dirt, far outside, behind the batter, extremely high, extreme speed) If, by the umpires discretion, this occurs a dead ball No pitch will be called and all runners will be returned to their previous base, a warning will be issued to the coach, If after the warning is issued the coach violates the rule again, the coach will be removed from the game and replaced.
- 3.1.2.5- If A coach is removed from the game, that coach must leave the playing field and confine themselves to the dugout. They may return for the next game to be played. If the violation is deemed to be excessive then that coach will be removed for the remainder of the day/tournament.

### **3.1.3-GAME BALLS-**

- 3.1.3.1- An USSSA stamped, Fastpitch, 11 inch, Leather Ball must be provided by each team for game play. (LEAGUE PLAY ONLY color of stitch does not matter but must have a stamp showing 375 Compression and .47 COR) Tournament play Must have a USSSA BLUE STITCH 11” Ball.

### **3.1.4- GAME BATS-**

- 3.1.4.1- All Game bats shall adhere to the USSSA Fastpitch Bat Regulations. No Tball or Baseball bats may be used during Gameplay.

### **3.1.5- BATTING-**

- 3.1.5.1- All offensive players and Batters on the field of play must wear a Helmet with facemask at all times. Chinstraps are suggested but not mandatory.
- 3.1.5.2- The Batter shall receive 5 pitches. The umpire may call a no pitch for an extreme unhittable pitch. In which case that pitch is not recorded as one of the 5 pitches.
- 3.1.5.3- The Batter will be called OUT if:
  - a. She has received 3 swinging strikes.
  - b. has received 5 pitches.
  - c. tries to bunt and makes contact. (see Rule 2.7.3)
- 3.1.5.4- Batters are not allowed to Show Bunt, pull back and then swing. Team will receive one warning if this happens. After the warning the batter will be called out.



### **3.1.6- BASE RUNNING AND STEALING**

- 3.1.6.1- Stealing will be allowed as the ball leaves the pitching coaches hand. There will be no warnings for leaving early, It will be an Automatic out.
- 3.1.6.2- If an Unhittable pitch or uncatchable pitch is called by the home plate umpire, all players stealing will be returned to their previous base.
- 3.1.6.3- Players may only steal One Base per Pitch regardless of overthrows.
- 3.1.6.4- PLAYERS MAY NOT STEAL HOME.
- 3.1.6.5- Offensive players may take as many bases as possible on a batted ball. Overthrown Balls are considered Live Balls and Runners may advance (Exception: If ball is overthrown, unintentionally, into the dugout or over the fence. In which case a Dead Ball will be called, runners will receive 2 bases from where they are at the beginning of the pitch.)

## **4.1-10U KID PITCH RULES OF PLAY**

### **4.1.1- DEFENSIVE POSITIONS-**

- 4.1.1.1- All infield positions, other than the catcher(who is in Full catchers gear) are required to wear a fielders mask. Outfield positions, Fielders mask is optional.
- 4.1.1.2- Defensive positions are not to exceed 9 in number: 6 infielders, 3 outfielders.
- 4.1.1.3- Starting position for outfielders is no closer than the edge of the outfield grass until the pitch has been delivered.
- 4.1.1.4- 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Base may charge without limits on a bunt before the batter makes contact.

### **4.1.2- PITCHER-**

- 4.1.2.1- Prior to the pitch the pitcher shall take a position with the pivot foot (this would be their foot that would drive them forward) in contact with the pitching plate, and their non pivot foot (their foot that would land out front) in contact with or behind the pitching plate. BOTH feet must be on the ground within the 24" area on or behind the pitching plate.
- 4.1.2.2- Pitchers hands must remain apart while taking, or simulating taking, a signal from the catcher.
- 4.1.2.3- The Pitcher may not take the pitching position on the pitching plate without possession of the ball, and the pitcher may not simulate pitching with or without the ball while in contact with the pitchers plate. (they may practice the motion while facing the outfield however if the ball is accidentally dropped or lost possession of, it becomes a live ball, with the exception of ball having been fouled or called dead on the pitch)
- 4.1.2.4- Prior to pitching the ball, the pitcher must take position with the ball in either the glove or the pitching hand, with hands separated.
- 4.1.2.5- After the pitcher takes the signal from the catcher (or pretends to) the pitcher shall bring their hands together for no more than 10 seconds. The ball may only be removed from the glove at the start of the pitch. Once the ball has been removed from the glove, while in contact with the pitching plate, the pitcher must continue the pitching motion.

- 4.1.2.6- Once the pitcher has started their pitching motion, they shall continue in a forward motion towards the batter, from the pitching rubber, with only one step, while simultaneously delivering the pitch to the batter.
- 4.1.2.7- The Pivot foot must remain in contact with the pitching plate or push off and drag away from the pitching plate, or be airborne prior to the non pivot foot touching the ground. The pitcher may leap from the pitchers plate, land with the non pivot foot and with a continuous motion deliver the ball to the batter. The pivot foot may follow through with the pitcher's Continuous motion. (NOTE: The pivot foot may not replant and push off again before the ball has been released by the pitcher. This is considered a crow-hop and is an illegal pitch. SEE USSSA 2024 Rule 6 for more details)
- 4.1.2.8- A LEGAL Pitch shall be a pitched ball that is delivered to the batter with an underhand, full rotation, delivery. The pitcher may use any wind up they choose.
- 4.1.5.9- The Pitcher shall not wear anything on the pitching hand, wrist, arm or thigh that the umpire judges to be distracting. Fielding masks worn by the pitcher may not have a shield unless it has a non- Glare surface.
- 4.1.5.10- The Pitcher may keep a towel tucked into the back of their belt to assist in drying their hands. No tacky or sticky substance or field chalk may be used to assist the drying of the hands.
- 4.1.5.11- FOR ILLEGAL PITCH SEE USSSA 2024 RULEBOOK Rule 6 sec 3
- 4.1.5.12- THE LOOK-BACK RULE in USSSA 2024 Rule book Rule 8 sec 2 shall be in effect. The Runner may only stop once and either retreat to the previous base or continue forward, while the pitcher has control of the ball within the 16' pitching circle. There cannot be a pause by the runner. Any attempt of the pitcher to attempt to make a throwing motion while in the circle makes the ball a live ball and the look back rule does not apply. This includes a pitcher pumping her shoulders towards the runner to "Fake" her out. Excludes the pitcher simply turning her head.

#### **4.1.6 COACHES-**

- 4.1.6.1- ONE Defensive Coach may stand just outside of the dugout, against the fence. No Buckets, stools or other seating devices may be used by a coach on the field. These items must remain in the dugout. If a Live Ball hits a defensive coach, a Dead ball shall be called and all runners will advance one base.
- 4.1.6.2- TWO Coaches may be on the field while on offense: 1 at 1<sup>st</sup> base and 1 at 3<sup>rd</sup> base.
- 4.1.6.3- All other coaches not listed in the rules above must remain INSIDE the dugout.
- 4.1.6.4- Any attempt by a coach to intentionally interfere with a fielder, batter, or runner while the ball is in play will result in the coach's Immediate dismissal from the field of play and they must remain in the dugout for the remainder of the game.
- 4.1.6.5- IF the coach refuses to leave the field of play, they will be dismissed from the ballpark, to the parking lot. They may return for the next game. If the violation is deemed to be excessive, the coach will be removed for the remainder of the tournament.

#### **4.1.7- BATTING-**

- 4.1.7.1- Batters and runners on the field of play must wear helmets with full Face Guards at all times.
- 4.1.7.2- Bunting and Slap Bunting Will be Allowed. **(Players are not allowed to Show bunt and pull back and do a full swing.)**
- 4.1.7.3- DROP 3<sup>rd</sup> STRIKE is in effect. Meaning, If a 3<sup>rd</sup> strike is not caught by the catcher, and 1<sup>st</sup> base is unoccupied with less than 2 outs, the Batter may attempt to achieve 1<sup>st</sup> base before being tagged or thrown out. If 2 outs have been recorded, 1<sup>st</sup> base may be attempted whether it is occupied or not but 1B Runner must vacate to attempt to steal the next base so that there is somewhere for the Batter-runner to go. If bases are loaded then all base Runners must advance.
- 4.1.7.4- Stealing will be allowed, as the ball exits the Pitcher's Hand. As Long as the runner Continues a forward motion, with no stops or pauses, there is no limit on how many bases can be Stolen.
- 4.1.7.5- Infield Fly Rule Shall be in effect. (An infield Fly is a fair FLY BALL; not off a bunt, and does not include line drives; which Can be caught with reasonable effort by an infielder; while either 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> base are occupied or bases are loaded with less than 2 outs. IF such a hit occurs The batter shall be called out whether the ball is caught or not. Runners may advance at their own risk or stay )

#### **4.1.8-GAME BALLS-**

- 4.1.8.1- An USSSA stamped, Fastpitch, 11 inch, Leather Ball must be provided by each team for game play. (LEAGUE PLAY ONLY color of stitch does not matter but must have a stamp showing 375 Compression and .47 COR) Tournament play Must have a USSSA BLUE STITCH 11” Ball.

#### **4.1.9- GAME BATS-**

- 4.1.9.1- All Game bats shall adhere to the USSSA Fastpitch Bat Regulations. No Tball or Baseball bats may be used during Gameplay.

### **5.1-12U/14U Kid Pitch RULES OF PLAY:**

#### **5.1.1- DEFENSIVE POSITIONS-**

- 5.1.1.1- All infield positions, other than the catcher(who is in Full gear) are required to wear a fielders mask. For outfield positions, Fielders mask is optional.
- 5.1.1.2- Defensive positions are not to exceed 9 in number: 6 infielders, 3 outfielders.
- 5.1.1.3- Starting position for outfielders is no closer than the edge of the outfield grass until the pitch has been delivered.
- 5.1.1.4- 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Base may charge without limits on a bunt before the batter makes contact.

#### **5.1.2- PITCHER-**

- 5.1.2.1- Prior to the pitch the pitcher shall take a position with the pivot foot (this would be their foot that would drive them forward) in contact with the

- pitching plate, and their non pivot foot (their foot that would land out front) in contact with or behind the pitching plate. BOTH feet must be on the ground within the 24" area on or behind the pitching plate.
- 5.1.2.2- Pitchers hands must remain apart while taking, or simulating taking, a signal from the catcher.
- 5.1.2.3- The Pitcher may not take the pitching position on the pitching plate without possession of the ball, and the pitcher may not simulate pitching with or without the ball while in contact with the pitchers plate. (they may practice the motion while facing the outfield however if the ball is accidentally dropped or lost possession of, it becomes a live ball, with the exception of ball having been fouled or called dead on the pitch)
- 5.1.2.4- Prior to pitching the ball, the pitcher must take position with the ball in either the glove or the pitching hand, with hands separated.
- 5.1.2.5- After the pitcher takes the signal from the catcher (or pretends to) the pitcher shall bring their hands together for no more than 10 seconds. The ball may only be removed from the glove at the start of the pitch. Once the ball has been removed from the glove, while in contact with the pitching plate, the pitcher must continue the pitching motion.
- 5.1.2.6- Once the pitcher has started their pitching motion, they shall continue in a forward motion towards the batter, from the pitching rubber, with only one step, while simultaneously delivering the pitch to the batter.
- 5.1.2.7- The Pivot foot must remain in contact with the pitching plate or push off and drag away from the pitching plate, or be airborne prior to the non pivot foot touching the ground. The pitcher may leap from the pitchers plate, land with the non pivot foot and with a continuous motion deliver the ball to the batter. The pivot foot may follow through with the pitcher's Continuous motion. (NOTE: The pivot foot may not replant and push off again before the ball has been released by the pitcher. This is considered a crow-hop and is an illegal pitch. SEE USSSA 2024 Rule 6 for more details)
- 5.1.2.8- A LEGAL Pitch shall be a pitched ball that is delivered to the batter with an underhand, full rotation, delivery. The pitcher may use any wind up they choose.
- 5.1.2.9- The Pitcher shall not wear anything on the pitching hand, wrist, arm or thigh that the umpire judges to be distracting. Fielding masks worn by the pitcher may not have a shield unless it has a non- Glare surface.
- 5.1.2.10- The Pitcher may keep a towel tucked into the back of their belt to assist in drying their hands. No tacky or sticky substance or field chalk may be used to assist the drying of the hands.
- 5.1.2.11- FOR ILLEGAL PITCH SEE USSSA 2024 RULEBOOK Rule 6 sec 3
- 5.1.2.12- THE LOOK-BACK RULE in USSSA 2024 Rule book Rule 8 sec 2 shall be in effect. The Runner may only stop once and either retreat to the previous base or continue forward, while the pitcher has control of the ball within the 16' pitching circle. There cannot be a pause by the runner. Any attempt of the pitcher to attempt to make a throwing motion while in the circle makes the ball a live ball and the look back rule does not apply. This includes a pitcher pumping her shoulders towards the runner to "Fake" her out. Excludes the pitcher simply turning her head.

### 5.1.3- COACHES-

- 5.1.3.1- ONE Defensive Coach may stand just outside of the dugout, against the fence. No Buckets, stools or other seating devices may be used by a coach on the field. These items must remain in the dugout. If a Live Ball hits a defensive coach, a Dead ball shall be called and all runners will advance one base.
- 5.1.3.2- TWO Coaches may be on the field while on offense: 1 at 1<sup>st</sup> base and 1 at 3<sup>rd</sup> base.
- 5.1.3.3- All other coaches not listed in the rules above must remain INSIDE the dugout.
- 5.1.3.4- Any attempt by a coach to intentionally interfere with a fielder, batter, or runner while the ball is in play will result in the coach's Immediate dismissal from the field of play and they must remain in the dugout for the remainder of the game.
- 5.1.3.5- IF the coach refuses to leave the field of play, they will be dismissed from the ballpark, to the parking lot. They may return for the next game. If the violation is deemed to be excessive, the coach will be removed for the remainder of the tournament.

### 5.1.4- BATTING-

- 5.1.4.1- Batters and runners on the field of play must wear helmets with full Face Guards at all times.
- 5.1.4.2- Bunting and Slap Bunting Will be Allowed. **(Players are not allowed to Show bunt and pull back and do a full swing.)**
- 5.1.4.3- DROP 3<sup>rd</sup> STRIKE is in effect. Meaning, If a 3<sup>rd</sup> strike is not caught by the catcher, and 1<sup>st</sup> base is unoccupied with less than 2 outs, the Batter may attempt to achieve 1<sup>st</sup> base before being tagged or thrown out. If 2 outs have been recorded, 1<sup>st</sup> base may be attempted whether it is occupied or not but 1B Runner must vacate to attempt to steal the next base so that there is somewhere for the Batter-runner to go. If bases are loaded then all base Runners must advance.
- 5.1.4.4- Stealing will be allowed, as the ball exits the Pitcher's Hand. As Long as the runner Continues a forward motion, with no stops or pauses, there is no limit on how many bases can be Stolen.
- 5.1.4.5- Infield Fly Rule Shall be in effect. (An infield Fly is a fair FLY BALL; not off a bunt, and does not include line drives; which Can be caught with reasonable effort by an infielder; while either 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> base are occupied or bases are loaded with less than 2 outs. IF such a hit occurs The batter shall be called out whether the ball is caught or not. Runners may advance at their own risk or stay )

### 5.1.5-GAME BALLS-

- 5.1.5.1- An USSSA stamped, Fastpitch, 12 inch, Leather Ball must be provided by each team for game play. (LEAGUE PLAY ONLY color of stitch does not matter but must have a stamp showing 375 Compression and .47 COR) Tournament play Must have a USSSA BLUE STITCH 11” Ball.

### 5.1.6- GAME BATS-

- 5.1.6.1- All Game bats shall adhere to the USSSA Fastpitch Bat Regulations. No Tball or Baseball bats may be used during Gameplay.

## **5.1.7- PROTESTS-**

- 6.1.2-THERE WILL BE NO PROTESTS IN LEAGUE PLAY. Unless a team Suspects unrostered player on another team. Such a Protest must be made before the end of the game. Please do not protest every roster every game. If this is abused I will start charging a fee for a protest.
- 6.1.3- Tournament play- \$100 cash non refundable protest fee paid, UIC AND/OR Tournament Director will Rule on the Protest.

## **~ADMINISTRATIVE~**

### **6.1- AGE CLASSIFICATION:**

**~FOR SPRING into SUMMER 2025: January 1<sup>st</sup> Birthday Cutoff. ~**

~~~As of August 31<sup>st</sup>, 2025, NOC Softball will be adhering to the USSSA Guidelines for Age divisions. This means any child who's birthday lands on or before January 1<sup>st</sup> to August 31<sup>st</sup>. (ie. A child whose birthday is August 19<sup>th</sup>, 2012 will need to move to 14u for the fall of 2025.) Those whose birthday lands from Sept 1<sup>st</sup> to December 31<sup>st</sup> may remain in the age group. (IE. A child with a birthday of September 19<sup>th</sup>, 2012 may remain in 12u thru the Spring.) ~~~

Players may play up in a higher age group, by 1 year, with written consent of the parents, but no players shall play below their appropriate Age Group.

### **6.2-INSURANCE COVERAGE:**

6.1.3.1-The NOC Secretary must be notified within 48 hours of an Accident, for a claim to be processed. Any incident must be recorded on an incident form that will be available on file in the office.

### **6.3-Uniforms**

- 6.1.4.1-All uniforms will consist of a jersey, pants, socks, and a hat.
- 6.1.4.2-. Each player's uniform must have a number on the game jersey prior to the first league game. Each number must be unique for that team; no duplicate numbers are allowed.
- 6.1.4.3- A jersey or tee shirt must be worn under a sleeveless vest.
- 6.1.4.4- Cold weather attire can be worn under a jersey as long as the jersey number Shows.
- 6.1.4.5-Pitchers may not have anything on their pitching arms, hands, wrists. If present, those must be removed before they are allowed to pitch.
- 6.1.4.6- Visible jewelry of any kind must be removed or tucked in.
- 6.1.4.7- No player will be allowed to use a cell phone or any electronic devices during the games.

### **6.4- GAME SCHEDULES-**

- 6.2.1- League Schedules are final once posted.
- 6.2.2- IF a Schedule change needs to occur after the Schedule has been released, the requesting team must pay a \$20 reschedule fee. And put in a request to the

opposing team's Head Coach and the Director. At which time Alternative options will be presented.

## **6.5- EJECTIONS-**

6.3.1- Any Person ejected from a game, must immediately leave the ball park. Failure to leave the ball park will cause their team to forfeit.

6.3.1.1- Players may remain in the dugout if controlled by a Rostered Coach.

6.3.2- At the completion of the game, all ejections from a game will be heard by the UIC and Director and all umpires from the field. (Note: Person having been ejected at this time may re enter the ball park to present their case.)

## **6.6- PLAYER PARTICIPATION: LEAGUE PLAY ONLY**

6.4.1-THIS IS REC LEAGUE PLAY- Every player must play at least one inning in every league Game, unless they are not present. An inning consists of being in the lineup for offense, and in the field at least 1 inning. Each coach should make every effort to see that all players participate in every game.

6.4.2- Player Disciplinary Restrictions may reduce the amount of game play time. This does not include player performance.

6.4.3- Failure to comply will result in the suspension of the Head Coach.

6.4.4- The Team Manager or Head Coach is required to Maintain a record concerning player participation to be used to determine compliance with 6.4.1. This can be a Paper Score book or Game changer.

## **6.7- FIELD MAINTENANCE-**

6.5.1- Coaches are responsible for cleaning out the dugout after each game and ensuring that all trash and equipment is removed.

6.5.2- Any fields/areas that are seen to pose a safety concern, should be reported to the age group coordinator or the director so that it may be passed along to the grounds crew.

6.5.3- ANY AREAS THAT ARE SEEN TO NEED IMPROVEMENT, THE OBSERVER MAY COMPLETE A CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT FORM AND FILE IT WITH THE BOARD FOR REVIEW AND DISCUSSION.

# **COACHES, PARENTS, SPECTATORS, SCOREKEEPERS, AND UMPIRES EXPECTATIONS**

## **7.1- Managers and Coaches-**

7.1.1- All Head Coaches, Assistant Coaches, and/or Dugout Parents are required to pass and annual background check, and have it on file with Norman Optimist Club.

7.1.2- The use of tobacco, vape, or e-cigarette products by ANY INDIVIDUAL is prohibited inside the ball park.

7.1.2.1- First offense- will be given a warning, any failure to comply after will result in the offending team to forfeit the current game being played.

7.1.3- The Use of profanity, alcoholic beverages, non-prescription drugs, illegal

substances, will result in an automatic removal from the ball park.

7.1.3.1- Any Coach or Assistant Coach found to be in violation of this rule shall be suspended from all NOC Activities indefinitely.

7.1.4- All Managers and Coaches are expected to play fairly and show good sportsmanship to their players and the opposing team thru their example and conduct themselves appropriately during practice and game play.

7.1.4.1- Any Coach found to have actions that would be damaging for their Team or NOC in general shall be suspended pending a board review.

7.1.4.2- All Coaches are responsible for knowing and abiding by the rules listed in this rule book.

7.1.5- ALL COACHES ARE RESPONSIBLE for the conduct of their players, parents, and spectators while inside the ball park. Whether it is dealing with umpires or damages to grounds, the coach is responsible for maintaining a professional manner and will abide by the Coaches Code of Conduct that was agreed upon during registration.

7.1.6- COACHES MUST WEAR ATTIRE MATCHING THEIR TEAM AND IDENTIFYING THEMSELVES AS A COACH. No flip flops, tank tops, or clothing that advertises alcohol or tobacco products of any kind.

VIOLATION OF ANY OF THE RULES LISTED IN THE SECTION ABOVE COULD RESULT IN THE SUSPENSION OF THE COACH AND FORFEITURE OF ANY GAMES PLAYED DEPENDING ON THE VIOLATION.

## **8.1 Parents or Spectators**

8.1.1- All parents, having guardianship of a child playing in the NOC league, must sign and abide by the Parents Code and Parents and Coaches Behavior Policy. Not signing the Parents Code of Ethics does not exclude Parents or guardians from abiding by its policy.

8.1.2- Every individual, whether a non-guardian relative, family friend, etc. (spectators) attending an event at Reaves will abide by the Parents Code of Ethics and Parents and Coaches Behavior Policy.

8.1.3- Parents and spectators will not interfere with the opposing teams players by shouting comments like, he can't hit, don't worry he can't run, or countermanding a Coaches instruction. Example: a Coach yells for a player to throw the ball to second, and opposing team's spectators yell throw to third.

8.1.4- If a team believes this has occurred, the Head Coach will notify the Home Plate Umpire. The Home Plate Umpire will attempt to monitor these outbursts.

8.1.5- A second violation will result in a team warning to the offending team's Head Coach.

8.1.6- A third violation will result in forfeiture of the ball game by the offending team.

8.1.7- Any parent or spectator caught violating this rule will be ejected from the ballpark and must leave the premises immediately.

8.1.8- The use of tobacco and e-cigarette products by any person is prohibited anywhere in the ballpark.

8.1.9- Music will be allowed at ballpark provided following conditions are met:

- Music must be kid friendly and contain no vulgarity or disparaging



remarks.

- Volume must be at a respectable level as to not disrupt other teams or other fields.
- Music cannot be played during live ball action. May be played as walk up music as long as music is turned off prior to at bat play starting.
- Umpires on field, UIC and the Director have the authority to ask a team to turn music down or off. First offense will be a warning; Second offense will be termination of music rights for that game; third offense will be termination of music and ejection of Head Coach.

## **9.1-Scorekeepers**

9.1.1-All Scorekeepers are expected to be knowledgeable of the score keeping procedures.

9.1.1.1-When players are substituted, the inning must be annotated by the player's name, since the score book will be used in reference to the one inning per game rule.

9.1.2- The home team score book is the official record of the game.

9.1.3- All Scorekeepers must sit where the umpire can easily find them.

## **10.1-Umpires**

10.1.1- All Umpires will be coordinated by and responsible to the Norman Optimist Club appointed UIC. The UIC is directly responsible to the NOC Board of Directors.

10.1.2- Umpires shall wear approved attire including black shoes, Charcoal pants/Shorts; Collared shirts as instructed by the UIC, Solid Black umpire Cap; For ages 10U and up, Home plate umpire must wear appropriate facemask, Chest protectors, shin guards.

10.1.3- Umpires will be expected to have a good working knowledge of USSSA Fastpitch Softball Rules, Norman Optimist Club Softball Park Rules, and mechanics of good umpiring.

10.1.4-Umpires can be expected to receive fair treatment from coaches, players and spectators. They shall have the support from the Board of Directors when enforcing the rules set forth by the NOC and USSSA.

10.1.5- Umpires will have full charge of the game 15 minutes prior to the scheduled starting time. They shall make judgments concerning field of play conditions, equipment, and questions regarding play of the game.

10.1.5.1- After games have started, the UIC and Directors will make all decisions concerning games affected by weather. (IE Lightning Delays, rain delays, rain outs)

10.1.6- Umpires are expected to conduct themselves in a sportsmanlike manner that will display their knowledge of softball rules and fair play.

10.1.7- The Use of profanity, alcoholic beverages, non-prescription drugs, vapes, or illegal substances is strictly prohibited.

10.1.7.1-The UIC and the League Director will automatically suspend any umpires suspected of being under the influence of illegal substances or alcoholic beverages, pending investigation.

10.1.8- The Use of Cell Phones or other electronic devices during the game, including inning breaks, will not permitted unless communicating directly with the UIC

regarding the game being played.

10.1.9-While officiating a game, if an Umpire is involved in a physical altercation with a coach, player, spectator, or parent, the umpire will not complete the game, nor will the umpire be allowed to officiate another game until the UIC, League Director, Executive Board Member, and Board Member on Duty have reviewed the altercation.

10.1.9.1- Upon review it will be determined if the umpire involved will be suspended or allowed to return to their schedule.

10.1.10-Umpires shall report any major disturbances, protests by coaches, or questions regarding their duties to the UIC. The UIC Shall in turn report to the League Director and, if needed, the Executive Board member, and board member on duty.

10.1.10.1- ALL complaints concerning an umpire's Ability to officiate a game must be submitted in writing to the board of directors AFTER 24 HOURS have passed. The UIC and the Board of Directors shall handle any questions regarding abilities of any umpire.

**10.1.11- IF AN UNSCHEDULED FORFEIT OCCURS, THE UMPIRES SCHEDULED ON THE FIELD SHALL BE PAID BY THE TEAM CAUSING THE FORFEIT. THEY WILL ONLY BE PAID IF THEY ARE ASSIGNED TO THE FIELD WHERE THE UNEXPECTED FORFEIT OCCURRED. UMPIRES MUST STAY AND OFFICIATE IF FORFEITED GAME TURNS INTO A SCRIMMAGE.**

10.1.12- If the UIC has been notified more than 2 hours in advance that a game has been cancelled, No Umpire fees will be paid for that game.

**THE 2024 USSSA FASTPITCH  
RULEBOOK WILL GOVERN ALL  
OTHER RULES NOT SPECIFICALLY  
ADDRESSED ABOVE.**

**Updated: 2/2025**