



2026 Gopher State Baseball League

RULES MANUAL

16U-19U

The following rules and regulations will govern play in the Gopher State Baseball League (GSBL) for the 2026 regular season and the all-inclusive playoffs. The list of rules and regulations is **NOT** intended to cover all of the playing rules, but rather highlight areas that are referenced most often by the coaches and players. In general, the GSBL has adopted the National Federation of State High School Associations baseball rules except where modified or clarified below.

I. PLAYER REGISTRATION/ELIGIBILITY

- A. Players in their respective age groups must not reach the next age before May 1, 2026. It is permissible for a player to play up from their designated age division, but they may not play down. For example, a 15 year old may play in the 17 year old division, but an 18 year old may **NOT** play in the 17 year old division. (USA Baseball, the national governing body for baseball, has adopted this age determining date for all national programs.)
- B. A player may **ONLY** be rostered on one team in the GSBL. There is a roster limit of 20 players per team. Rosters must be complete online no later than **May 26, 2026. The roster deadlines will be strictly enforced!**
 - 1. Any requests to add players after the roster deadline must be communicated to the GSBL by the association/community Travel Director and must be approved by the GSBL Board of Advisors.
 - 2. Temporary substitute player requests must be due to injury or absence only **AND** only if the injury or absence causes the team roster to drop below 10 players. Potential substitutes must be from a team of an equal or lower classification within your association, regardless of age. The roster modification must go through your association's Travel Director and/or President, who must communicate the change to the MYAS/GSBL baseball office. Once approved, the association must roster the player on the new team and remove them from their old team. NOTE: For the GSBL Playoffs, along with adhering to all of the criteria above, the substitute player may only come from a team that is no longer active in the GSBL (i.e. has been eliminated from further play).

II. RESIDENCY

The Gopher State Baseball League is a community-based program. GSBL teams are comprised of players who are from the community in which their parent or legal guardian resides or in which they attend school. The GSBL will recognize a team if they are derived from a bona fide association (consisting of multiple teams of perpetual nature) or a school program within their boundaries according to their bylaws. Generally, association boundaries are based on a city's limits or a high school district attendance area. **The GSBL will not knowingly allow renegade and/or all-star teams to participate in the league.** PLEASE NOTE: Isolated cases do arise at 16U-19U, where a group of players from one community or school need to merge with a group of players from another community or school in order to form a team. These rules are established to maintain a community-based orientation. The GSBL Board of Advisors reserves the right to rule on any questionable situations.

III. LEVELS OF PLAY FOR 2026

It is the responsibility of each GSBL member association to uphold the integrity of each level of play offered within the league by properly classifying their teams.

AAA: This is the highest competitive level in Minnesota. This level of play consists of teams that are comprised of the top players within a local traveling association.

AA: This is the intermediate level of play. The AA level is intended for teams from baseball associations that have already provided teams at the AAA level. AA may also (in some cases) be defined as a level for traveling teams that are not currently able to compete at the AAA level.

IV. FIELD DIMENSIONS FOR COMMUNITIES

- A. The following base length is required: 90 feet
- B. The following pitching distance is required: 60 feet, 6 inches

V. EQUIPMENT

- A. **Shoes:** Players are allowed to wear metal spikes.
- B. **Baseballs:** Each team must supply one new baseball for the start of each game (additional baseballs to be supplied alternately as needed). The official baseball for the MYAS/GSBL is Diamond and they are available for sale at www.myas.org.



- C. **The Official Bat:** Please see pages 3 & 4 for the Gopher State Baseball League Bat Standards and Penalties.

16-19 year olds

In diameter at the thickest part: 2 $\frac{5}{8}$ " or less

In length: 36" or less

In weight: A bat shall not weigh, numerically, more than **three ounces** less than the length of the bat (for example, a 33 inch long bat may not weigh less than 30 ounces).

V. EQUIPMENT (continued) - LEGAL BATS

The following describes the legality of bats for all MYAS/Gopher State programs:

All 15u-17-19u programs will follow the bat standards adopted by the National Federation of State High School Associations.

MYAS/Gopher State will continue its policy for 15-19 year olds in following the bat standards adopted by the NFHS. Therefore, if a bat is legal under the NFHS rules (1-3), it is legal in all MYAS/Gopher State programs. If not legal for NFHS play, it is not legal for MYAS/Gopher State play.

NFHS BASEBALL RULES

Rule 1-3-2: The bat which may be a wood or non-wood product shall be a smooth implement, from the top of the cap to the top of the knob. All non-wood bats shall meet the Batted Ball Coefficient of Restitution (BBCOR) performance standard, and such bats shall be labeled with a silk screen or other permanent certification mark.

Listed below are bat specifications for 16-19 year old teams participating in any MYAS/Gopher State baseball programs. All bats must include the qualified BBCOR bat and also **MUST** follow the size and/or weight differential listed in the chart below.

<i>Age</i>	<i>Maximum diameter @ thickest part</i>	<i>Length</i>	<i>Weight Differential</i>	<i>Example</i>
16U & 17-19U	2⁵/₈"	36" or less	-3	32-inch bat cannot weigh less than 29 ounces

The official bat for league must conform to the NFHS bat limitations including a length to weight ratio no greater than negative three (-3) ounces).

Example of a bat with a BBCOR stamp:



PENALTY FOR USING ILLEGAL BAT

First Offense:

If the umpire discovers that the bat does not conform to USSSA Rule 7.01C until a time during or after which the bat has been used in play, 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 the 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.

Second Offense:

If a team is found in violation of this rule a second time, then the manager will be ejected in addition to the First Offense.

VI. GENERAL RULES

- A. There is a 10-minute mandatory warm-up for infield practice
 1. Home team will take the infield at 30 minutes before game time.
 2. Visiting team will take the infield at 20 minutes before game time.
 3. The last 10 minutes is for pitchers to get ready and for coaches and umpires to have a pregame.
 4. The outfield will be used for batting practice with whiffle balls or fly balls for outfielders.
- B. The home team will keep the official GSBL scorebook.
- C. All field preparations, which include line markings and bases, are the responsibility of the home team. **The home team is expected to have the field prepared at least one hour prior to the start of the game.**
- D. "Uniforms of all team members should be of the same color and style" (NFHS Rule 1-4-1).
- E. Each team's lineup will list a minimum of nine players to start a game. A game will be forfeited to the offended team when a team is unable to provide nine players to start the game or cannot provide eight players to finish the game (NFHS Rule 4-4-1f).
- F. **Bench Personnel:** The number of coaches on the bench are limited to a **Head Coach, Two Assistants** and a **designated Scorekeeper**. These coaches must be listed on your "hard copy" official roster throughout the season.

VII. SUBSTITUTION RULES

- A. **Pitcher:** If a starting pitcher is withdrawn from the game, they may re-enter the game once. For games that are being played with free substitution and continuous batting, ANY pitcher may re-enter the pitching position once.
- B. **Starting Players:** Any of the starting players may withdraw and re-enter once, including a player who was the designated hitter, provided said player occupies the same batting position whenever they are in the lineup. A substitute who is withdrawn may not re-enter.

Exception: Replacement of injured players and/or courtesy runners. If an active player sustains an injury that requires them to leave the game and their team has used all of its available substitute players, the coach may substitute for the injured player with the first player on the bench who had previously lost their eligibility via the re-entry rule. Teams will not be penalized should a player be removed due to illness or injury. **(Please refer to the NFHS rule book in Rule 3:1.)**

NOTE: The Senior Leagues will have the option to use free substitution and continuous batting. This must be declared to the umpire and the opposing head coach prior to the start of the game and will continue for the remainder of that game.

Each team's lineup must list a minimum of nine players to start a game. A game will be forfeited to the offended team when a team is unable to provide nine players to start the game or cannot provide eight players to finish the game (NFHS Rule 4-4-1f).

1. A "rostered" player may be placed at the end of your lineup if he/she is not present at the start of the game (this applies to teams that start a game with nine players).
 2. An injured batter or runner that cannot continue to participate will be replaced by the last player to be put out. This will end the injured player's participation for the remainder of the game.
 3. An out will be called at that spot in the batting order ONLY if a team drops below nine players.
- C. **Courtesy Runners:** The team at bat may, at any time, use a courtesy runner for the pitcher and/or the catcher. Players who have already participated in the game in any other capacity are ineligible to serve as courtesy runners until all players have participated. **Exception:** Should an injury, illness or ejection affect the courtesy runner, another courtesy runner for the pitcher or catcher may run. **(Please refer to the NFHS rule book for suggested speed-up rules.)**

VIII. PITCHING RESTRICTIONS

(Please refer to Rule 6 of the NFHS Rule Book)

- A. 17-19U leagues: A pitcher may pitch a maximum of **105 pitches per game**. The number of calendar days of required rest until the pitcher is allowed to pitch again is dependent upon the number of pitches thrown in their previous outing.

Pitch Count (16u, 17-19u)	Calendar Days of Rest Required After Pitching
1-30	0
31-50	1
51-75	2
76-105 or more	3

Example: If a player throws 60 pitches on Monday, the earliest they may pitch again is on Thursday. If a player reaches their maximum number of allowed pitches during an at-bat, they may finish pitching to that batter but then must immediately be removed from the pitching position.

Penalties for Violation of Pitch Count Rule:

1st Offense: If the violation is caught during a game, the head coach is suspended for the remainder of that game and the team's next GSBL regular season or playoff game. If the violation is caught after the completion of the game, the suspension will be in effect for the team's next GSBL regular season or playoff game.

2nd Offense in the Same Season: The game in which the violation occurred is forfeited. The head coach is suspended immediately after the violation is caught and for the remainder of the GSBL regular season and playoffs, pending an appeal of the team's association board.

- B. Submit pitch count of ***OPPOSING TEAM***. Coaches must submit/input the jersey number and number of pitches for each player of the OPPOSING TEAM who pitches during a regular season league game. **Simply input the number of pitches of the OPPOSING TEAM in the MYAS Portal within 24 hours after each game is completed.** This information will become public information and will be available immediately in the league schedule and standings.

NOTE: Stresses on a pitcher's arm are caused from overuse, lack of conditioning, improper mechanics of pitching and lack of understanding of proper recovery time.

IX. GAME LENGTH

(Please refer to Rule 4 of the NFHS Rule Book for proper procedure)

- A. Completed games are **FINAL** after seven innings. In the event of a tie, extra innings will be allowed based on weather conditions, field conditions and daylight (NFHS Rule 4-2).
- B. Ties will stand after curfew or darkness. Try to make every effort to complete the game but do not risk injury due to darkness. To insure the playing of the full seven innings, hustle between half innings and retrieve all foul balls in a timely manner. It is ultimately the judgment of the umpire to determine if the game should be completed or allowed to continue.
- C. The 10-run rule will take effect after 4½ innings if the home team is ahead, or after five innings if the visiting team is ahead.
- D. If weather or darkness interferes with play so the game is called by the umpire, it is a regulation game (NFHS Rule Book 4-2-3 and also under Lightning Disturbances on page 78):
1. after 4½ innings if the home team is ahead, or after five innings if the visiting team is ahead.
 2. if more than five innings have been completed.

IX. GAME LENGTH (continued)

- E.** If a game is called when the teams have not had an equal number of completed terms at bat, the score will revert to the score at the end of the last completed inning unless the home team, in its half of the incomplete inning, scores a run(s) and equals or exceeds the opponent's score. In that case, the final score will be recorded as the score when the game is called (NFHS Rule 4-2-3).
- F.** If weather or darkness interferes with play so the game is called by the umpire but does not reach a regulation game, then it is considered an incomplete game and it will be completed at a later date. The game must be **rescheduled** 24 hours after it was suspended. Please remember that the umpire's final decision on weather or darkness cannot be questioned and is a judgment made by them alone with no persuasion from a coach (NFHS Rule 4-2).
- G.** Any forfeited game must be reported to the league office within 24 hour of the forfeit. The game in question will be recorded as a 7-0 score on the schedule.

X. UMPIRES

A top level MYAS trained umpire is scheduled and supplied by the GSBL, unless your community has chosen to supply their own umpires or is outside the GSBL assigning range.

NOTE: When assigning umpires for 16-19U league games, the GSBL requires that each association/community assign individuals who:

1. are a minimum of four years older than players on the teams they are umpiring.
2. have completed a background check and the state mandated concussion training prior to being assigned a game.



These requirements are the responsibility of the Association President and/or Travel Director.

Every home coach needs to verify each game with the game's umpire assignor.

Only the head coach will contact the assignor to verify each home game.

Umpire training is available for all Gopher State area umpires. Please check out the MYAS website under the Officials Corner.

XI. STANDINGS

- A.** The Gopher State Baseball League will maintain current standings, schedules and all pertinent league information online. League information will accessible on the GSBL portion of the website as well as on your individual team's profile/site on Register Play.
- B.** Both coaches must submit/input their completed game scores online via Register Play. **Simply input scores and opposing team pitch counts within 24 hours after each game is completed.** The system helps ensure an accurate score for each completed game.
- C.** **Teams will be contacted if scores are not reported and will be assessed a \$50.00 penalty if non-reporting occurs more than once. It is imperative that both coaches report their scores within 24 hours of the completion of each game.**

XII. REGULAR SEASON POINT SYSTEM AND TIE-BREAKERS

Ties in the standings following the completion of the regular season will be broken by the following procedure:

- 1) Head to head competition
- 2) Best winning percentage (games won divided by games played)
- 3) Least runs allowed
- 4) Most runs scored
- 5) If still tied, a one-game playoff will determine the winner (time permitting)
- 6) Coin flip

XIII. ALL-INCLUSIVE PLAYOFFS

A. Playoff Format:

1. GSBL will form Tiers of no more than 8 teams in each playoff bracket for 2023 based on regular season performance.
2. Tiers will be divided into multiple Sections based on geographic area, if necessary. GSBL will use the same format that the MSHSL uses for playoff sections to eliminate travel. Division Champs will be the highest seeds regardless of record.
3. GSBL will allow for flexibility when determining where to place teams.

Seeding for the GSBL playoffs will be determined based on the league standings as of **July 13, 2026 at 11:59pm** for all teams. Any games played or reported after this date will not count toward the playoff standings.

NOTE: If a team's season is not completed by the final play date, each un-played game will be counted as a loss and only one point will be awarded toward the season point total. This ensures that all teams will be seeded into the playoffs accurately by having the same number of games played. **Forfeits will only be awarded when both teams agree upon the forfeit.**

Seeding and playoff matchups will be available on our website by 4:00pm on July 14, 2026. If you feel there is a problem with the playoff matchups and/or seeding, please contact the league office. **If you are a higher seeded team in the playoffs, please be available for a phone call or receive an email** from the GSBL/MYAS headquarters on July 15th or your playoff game will not be scheduled.

B. Playoff Dates—Playoffs will begin on July 16th.

Teams will be placed into Playoff Tiers based on record and any tie-breaker scenarios. All Playoff brackets will be single elimination. **Age levels with 30 or more teams will first be split into "Sections" based on geographics and then into Tiers based on their records. Section Champions will be crowned in these situations.**

C. Playoff Game Times: All playoff games will begin at 6:00pm unless lights are available. Games need to be finished the night of the game.

D. Playoff Locations: Games will be played at the site of the highest seed pending field availability. Because of time constraints, if the higher seeded team cannot provide a home field for the assigned days for play, the opposing team will be given the opportunity to host that particular game if they can supply a field.

Please see the full **Playoff Timeline** for dates, times and locations at www.myas.org.

XIV. BENCH AND FIELD CONDUCT

- A. Upon enrollment of teams and rostering of players & coaches, any and all participating in GSBL agree to abide by the **MYAS Code of Conduct** prior to the start of their respective season. All participants in GSBL will be held responsible for their actions during league play.
- B. All players, coaches and spectators are to behave in a manner that reflects the positive fun associated with the game of baseball. **Unsportsmanlike conduct will not be tolerated, and includes but is not limited to (modified from the NFHS Baseball Rules Book, Rule 3-3):**
* Verbal abuse * Arguing umpire judgment calls * Physical aggression * Profanity* Tantrum-like acts
- C. Any player, coach or spectator ejected from a game will immediately be removed from the game and must exit the vicinity of the ballpark. Failure to comply with the ejection in a timely manner will result in the game being forfeited. **Note: If a player, coach or spectator is ejected from a game the head coach of that team will be ejected as well. Any coach, player, bench personnel or spectator ejected from a game will be immediately suspended for the remainder of the 2026 season, pending an appeal to the Youth 1st Alliance - Conduct Review Committee, an independent group for review and recommendations. The committee will be activated following any violation of the Minnesota Softball/MYAS-Gopher State/Youth 1st Conduct Policy.**
1. A Head Coach ejected due to a player, assistant coach or spectator's conduct will be considered an "Indirect Ejection." Indirect Ejections do not automatically trigger a season long suspension and will be reviewed on a case by case basis initially by their local association Board of Directors.
 2. The umpire involved and individual(s) ejected from the game **MUST** notify Lance Klinkhammer, league commissioner, at lance@myas.org AND report the incident online to our Conduct Review Committee ([link](#)) within 24 hours of the incident.

NOTE: If any unsportsmanlike conduct is displayed during a league game by a coach, player or spectator, please notify your association's Travel Director. This must be done before contacting the GSBL.

XV. PROTESTS

- A. Protests must be made verbally with the umpire by the offended team at the time of the play and before the next pitch. A fee of **\$100.00** cash (refunded if upheld) must accompany the protest. All decisions of the GSBL/MYAS and the GSBL Board of Advisors are final.
- B. No protests will be allowed in matters involving solely the official's judgment. Only decisions involving the misinterpretation or misapplication of a rule may be protested.

XVI. GAME CHANGES/CANCELLATION SYSTEM & PROCEDURE

Any game changes or cancellations reported to the GSBL via e-mail at baseball@myas.org on weekdays by 3:15pm will be marked as Postponed on the Register Play site. It is the responsibility of the home team coach to notify the visiting team of the cancellation. If the league office is not notified of a cancellation of a game, it will be assumed that the game is still on as scheduled.

Failure of the home team coach to notify the visiting team coach, your umpire assignor and/or the GSBL office of a weather related cancelled game will result in a \$50.00 league fine assessed to the home team and must be paid before that game can be rescheduled.

2026 GSBL 16-19 & Under Baseball Rules Summary

GSBL Rule

- 5-C 17-19u teams will use a -3 length to weight ratio, with a max diameter of 2 $\frac{3}{8}$ ".
- All 15u-17-19u programs will follow the bat standards adopted by the National Federation of State High School Associations. (Rule 1-3).**
- 6-A A 10-minute infield warm-up is mandatory for both teams starting at 30 minutes prior to the start of the game.
- 6-E Each team's lineup must list a minimum of nine players to start a game. A game will be forfeited to the offended team when the offending team is unable to provide nine players to start the game or cannot provide eight players to finish the game.
- 7-B Starting Players (player/DH/pitcher) may re-enter the game once, provided said player occupies the same batting position whenever they are in the lineup.
- 7-B **NOTE: The Senior Leagues will have the option to use free substitution and continuous batting.**
- 7-C A courtesy runner may be used at any time for the pitcher and/or the catcher. **Projected substitutions are not allowed.**
- 8-A Pitch count will be used to determine how long a player can pitch per day and how long of rest period before they can return to the pitching position.
- 9-C The 10-run rule will take effect after 4-1/2 innings if the home team is ahead, or after five innings if the visiting team is ahead.
- 11-B Both coaches must report their completed game scores and pitch counts online within 24 hours of a completed game.
- 15-A **All players and coaches must agree to abide by the MYAS Code of Conduct per their participation in GSBL.**
- 14-C **Any coach, player, bench personnel or spectator ejected from a game will be immediately suspended for the remainder of the 2026 season, pending an appeal to the Conduct Review Committee, an independent group for review and recommendations. The committee will be activated following any violation of the MYAS-Gopher State Conduct Policy.**
- 15 Protests must be made verbally with the umpire by the offended team at the time of the play and before the next pitch. No protests will be allowed in matters involving solely the official's judgment.
- 16 Any game changes or cancellations need to be reported to the League office via e-mail at baseball@myas.org on weekdays by 3:15pm.

Failure of the home team coach to notify the visiting team coach, your umpire assignor and/or the GSBL office of a weather related cancelled game will result in a \$50.00 league fine assessed to the home team and must be paid before that game can be rescheduled.