

LAKE COUNTRY YOUTH BASEBALL LEAUGE

AAA Division RULES

ELIGIBILITY/REGISTRATION

WHO IS ELIGIBLE?

Boys and Girls who are in the 5th or 6th grade at the time of spring registration.

ARE EXCEPTIONS MADE

Any requests to waive the eligibility requirements must be approved by the Lake Country Youth Baseball Program Coordinators prior to registration. Requests will be handled on a case-by-case basis. All decisions made by the board are binding and final.

DO I NEED TO REGISTER BEFORE I CAN PLAY?

Yes. Please also note that once teams are filled to capacity, no more registrations will be accepted, and a waiting list will be started in the event players drop out.

WHAT TEAM WILL I BE ON?

Based on the number of participants registered will determine the number of teams formed for this division. Head coaches from each team will assemble before the season starts and will draft their teams from the participant list. Players may request to be teammates but there is no guarantee that each participant will be drafted by the same team. The formation of teams in AA, AAA, and Majors is not the same as the lower K and A divisions.

CAN I PLAY WITH MY OLDER BROTHER IN HIS DIVISION?

No. However, with the approval of the Lake Country Youth Baseball Program Coordinators, a player may be assigned to a different division if exceptional or unusual circumstances warrant such an assignment. Requests will be handled on a case-by-case basis. All decisions made by the board are binding and final.

WHAT HAPPENS IF MY TEAM PLAYS WITH AN INELIGIBLE PLAYER?

Teams will forfeit all games in which this ineligible player participated in.

CAN MY COACH KICK ME OFF THE TEAM IF I MISBEHAVE?

No, unless the coach gets prior approval from the Lake Country Youth Baseball Board of Directors.

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EQUIPMENT

TELL ME ABOUT THE CATCHER'S GEAR

Teams will be furnished with shin guards and straps, chest protector, catcher's face mask, helmet and a catcher's glove. No player may play the catcher's position without the use of all this equipment; however, a player or team may substitute its own catching equipment for the equipment supplied by the league. If any equipment is needed during the game, it needs to be borrowed from the other team. It is highly recommended that all players playing the catcher's position wear all necessary protective gear. Boys who are playing the catcher's position should wear a protective cup; it is for their safety. This is optional for girls. Parents and coaches are responsible for enforcing this, not the league.

TELL ME ABOUT THE BALLS AND BATS

Teams will be furnished with practice and game balls. Each home team needs to supply 2 new game balls for each game. Bats are not supplied by LCYBL and need to be supplied by players. Bats should follow these rules:

- NO cracked, splintered or altered bats may be used
- NO softball bats are allowed
- Wooden bats are allowed but cannot be broken or splintered

TELL ME ABOUT THE HELMETS

Players will supply their own helmets. During games, batters, on-deck batters and base runners are required to wear a helmet. Players who intentionally remove their helmet during base running can be called out at the discretion of the home plate umpire.

TELL ME ABOUT THE UNIFORM

Players will be supplied with a team uniform, which typically includes a shirt, hat and socks. Players must wear the uniform as provided by the league at each game. Please note that for those parts of the uniform not provided by the league such as baseball pants, players are free to wear whatever they'd like; however, we do recommend players wear white, gray, or black baseball pants. Shorts may be worn however we recommend all players play in proper baseball pants.

CAN I WEAR SHOES WITH METAL SPIKES?

No. Players who are found or identified wearing shoes with metal spikes will not be allowed to play. Players who deliberately wear these types of shoes can be ejected from a game at the discretion of the home plate umpire.

CAN I WEAR WRISTBANDS?

Yes. Please note that pitchers cannot wear wristbands on their throwing hand or wear any article of clothing or jewelry that can be distracting to a batter. The home plate umpire will ask pitchers to remove clothing or jewelry he deems distracting to a batter.

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BEFORE THE GAME

THE RULES

All league games will follow the current National Federation of High Schools rulebook with the exceptions listed in this rulebook <http://www.nfhs.org>.

THE COACHES

Head coaches must be 18 years of age or older, and a **minimum of 2 unrelated coaches must be present at all practices or activities**. See application for assistant coaches between the ages of 16-18. Coaches are not allowed to use tobacco related products or alcoholic beverages during practices or games.

THE UMPIRES

The home team will supply the plate umpire. The home team coach will be provided with funds to pay the umpire prior to the start of the game. The amount of payment will be detailed by the summer league Coordinator when distributing the funds. If umpire does not show up, the home team head coach will be expected to make arrangements for an alternative umpire (e.g. parent). This individual must be acceptable to both head coaches. Such games are official league games. Home team will forfeit the game if no umpire is provided.

All judgment calls by the umpires are final and no argument will be allowed. If an argument occurs, a warning will be given. If arguing continues, the player or coach is subject to ejection, at the discretion of the umpire.

THE SCORERS

Each team shall furnish a scorer who should check with the home plate umpire and the scorer from the other team after each inning to ensure they agree. The home plate umpire will settle any dispute relative to the score. The HOME TEAM is responsible for entering all final scores within 24 hours of completion of game in LCYBL website. This is mandatory to ensure all standings and scoring are up to date and entered while the game is fresh in the coaches mind.

MOTHER NATURE

Only a LCYBL representative may postpone a game. Please note that games will not be postponed due to shortages of players. In the event a game is postponed, an announcement will be made via the LCYBL Website at least one and one-half hours before the scheduled start of the game (i.e. 4:30 pm for a 6:00 pm start). In the absence of such an announcement, it shall be assumed that all games will be played as scheduled. If weather conditions deteriorate fields within the 90 minutes before the game, the home team head coach shall check on the field conditions and communicate with the other team's head coach to decide game status.

In the event of adverse playing conditions at game time or after the game has begun, the decision to play or continue playing will be made by the home plate umpire.

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STARTING TIME

Games will begin at the exact time designated on the schedule, to be enforced by the home plate umpire. The home plate umpire is the official timekeeper for each game. If a team does not show up or does not have enough players to play within 10 minutes after the scheduled starting time, this team will forfeit the game. If for some reason, both teams do not show up for a game or do not have enough players, the home plate umpire will declare the game a no-contest, no wins, no losses, no ties, and the game will not be made up.

Before the official start of each game, the home plate umpire will discuss any ground/field rules and other pertinent information to both head coaches.

THE LINEUPS

Each team shall field up to 9 players but may play an official game with a minimum of 7 players. Use of non-roster players will constitute a forfeit unless approved by the other team's head coach. Players from other teams in the division or a lower division may help fill a roster up to 9 players but players substituting cannot pitch or play catcher and must bat at the bottom of the order for the team. Select players or players from try-out teams are not eligible to for play in the summer league. If a select or try-out team player is found playing in a summer league game, that team will automatically forfeit the game. No variation of this rule will be accepted.

If a team starts with 9 players or more and goes under 9 players, that spot(s) will not be an automatic out(s) each time through the lineup. If a team starts with only 7 players, automatic outs are not assessed for spots 8 and 9. If a team starts with only 8 players, an automatic out is not assessed for spot 9. The only exceptions will be for players that are ejected, when their spot comes up in lineup, an automatic out will be assessed.

Teams must supply a batting order to the opposing team. Players who arrive after the game has begun will be inserted into the bottom of the batting order.

All divisions will use a continuous batting order.

When playing 9 players, a minimum of 3 players must be positioned in the outfield.

If both coaches choose to play an unofficial game due to one/both teams not having the minimum number of players, this is allowed but the official winner will be the team who had the minimum number of players at the start of the game.

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DURING THE GAME

GAME LENGTH

7 innings or 2 hours

A new inning will not start after the time limit has elapsed. In the event of a tie after 7 innings and time still remains, additional innings may be played until a winner is determined or time limit expires. Any inning started prior to time expiring must be completed.

WHEN A GAME IS OFFICIAL

If a game is stopped because of inclement weather or darkness, and the game is not yet considered official, the game will resume after the last full inning completed.

If weather or darkness interferes with play so that a game is called by the umpire, it is a regulation game:

- a. If 5 full innings have been played or if home team is ahead after 4.5 innings
- b. If 60 minutes have been played
- c. Note - If a game is stopped because of inclement weather or darkness, and the game is not yet considered official, the game will continue from the last full inning.
- d. Note - If the time limit or maximum number of innings is reached and the game is tied, it will be considered a tied game

WHEN A GAME IS SUSPENDED

The home plate umpire has the authority to suspend (stop) a game in progress because of inclement weather, darkness or other conditions as deemed by the home plate umpire. The time during which a game is suspended shall not be considered as part of the time limit.

PLAYING TIME & SUBSTITUTIONS

Each AAA player is required to play a minimum to 3 innings in the field. The only exception to this rule is if a player can bat only but unable to play the field due to injury. The head coach needs to inform opposing team of this situation. In the case of disciplinary reasons, the opposing coach must be notified first.

Free substitutions during play will be allowed, however, players must bat in their assigned batting position. We ask that coaches not abuse this rule and utilize it in a fair and responsible manner.

PITCHING GUIDELINES

No player may pitch more than 3 innings per game and a total of 6 innings per week. The total of 6 innings per week applies to all leagues which the player may participate in, not just Lake Country Youth Baseball. Any one pitch will count as a full inning pitched. Once a pitcher is removed from pitching, he may not pitch again in the same game. For purposes of LCYBL, a week is defined as Sunday through Saturday. The pitcher's foot must be touching the rubber when delivering a pitch. If the foot leaves the rubber during the wind-up before the ball is pitched, it is a dead ball and no pitch. If more than 2 games are scheduled to be played in a given week, maximum innings will be increased to 9 innings for that week.

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ON DECK AREA

An on-deck area may only be inside the fenced area of the ball diamond. Players should not swing bats on the fan side of the fence. Coaches and umpires should designate deck areas prior to the game beginning. A team cannot have more than one player in the on-deck area at a time. A player who is on deck must wear a batting helmet. All other players should remain in dugout for their own safety.

FIRST BASE DOUBLE BAGS

LCYBL uses two (2) bags at first base for the stated purpose of the player's safety. On plays at first base, the runner must only use the outside or orange base while the fielder must only use the inside base closest to second base.

CALLING TIMEOUT

Any player on the field or any coach may request time out from an umpire; however, only an umpire may grant time out (by calling "TIME OUT" or "TIME") and play shall continue until an umpire grants time out.

BAT THROWING

Any batter in any level who throws a bat when leaving the batter's box will get one warning per game. Thereafter, if the player continues to throw their bat, the batter will be called out.

LEADING OFF/STEALING

Stealing is allowed in AAA division. A runner may leave a base only after the ball crosses the plate. The runner will be called out for leaving early and the pitch will not be allowed.

No stealing of home on wild pitches or passed balls. The only way a runner at 3rd base can advance home is if the ball is put into play by the batter or if the catcher makes a play on the base runner via a throw OR an errant throw back to the pitcher.

SLIDING

- There is no headfirst sliding in AAA division. Otherwise, the sliding rules are the same as the NFHS rule book.
- Any runner who is in a force play must either slide directly into the base or run themselves out of the play avoiding contact with the fielder. If this is not done, this is considered interference and the runner is out and the batter is automatically out for a double play, and all other runners must go back to the base that they occupied at the time of the pitch. A runner may not "take out a fielder in order to break up a double play".
- If the runner slides, it must be a legal slide according to the book rule and if the fielder is on the bag and runner makes a legal slide into the bag and there is contact, interference shall not be called.

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PLAYS AT HOME PLATE & OTHER BASES

The player covering home plate cannot block home plate without having a play. If the player covering home plate has a play, runners who intentionally ram the player covering home plate will be called out. This call is at the discretion of the umpire. Contact made while sliding into home plate is permissible. It is highly recommended that coaches and umpires discuss plays at the plate prior to the game. This rule is in place to protect a catcher from being run over as well as to discourage home plate collisions. A player that, in the opinion of the umpire, intentionally collides with the catcher will be called out. A fielder that does not have a play must not be blocking the plate/base or standing on the plate/base if no play is going to take place. **No player shall be forced to slide, including home plate. However, the runner must avoid contact with the fielder at any base. If there is contact, the runner will be called out. If the umpire deems the contact to be malicious, the player will be called out and ejected from the game.**

SPORTSMANSHIP

Umpires have final say on ALL game situations. Arguing, yelling or swearing at umpires will not be tolerated. The umpire may eject any player, coach or fan for conduct they consider to be extreme. Anyone ejected will automatically be suspended for the next game. This is a MINIMUM punishment, and the board may impose additional sanctions if deemed appropriate for the infraction. Anyone ejected for a second time during the season will be suspended for 2 games. If anybody gets ejected from a game for a 3rd time, they will be removed from the league permanently. Ejected coaches will not be allowed to attend another game until their conduct has been reviewed by the LCYBL Board of Directors. Multiple ejections may result in a complete ban from LCYBL activities.

Parents or coaches ejected must leave the vicinity of the playing field area including the stands immediately and may not attend the subsequent game(s) that they are suspended.

It is strongly recommended that any player serving a suspension, attend the game, out of uniform, and support their team from the bench.

The LCYBL Board will, upon written documentation presented to the summer league commissioner, consider an appeal. The board reserves the right by virtue of their position to uphold the decision of the umpire or overturn the suspension.

It is also recommended that any questions or clarifications of calls or situations be made with the umpire at home plate and not from the dugout or base paths. This is a recreational league whose purpose is to teach sportsmanship, among other things, and we must set a good example for the players. Only the head coach shall address the umpire with any questions.

ALL COACHES ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE CONDUCT OF THEIR TEAM!

PROTESTS

Protests must be made at the time of the incident by notifying the home plate umpire and the opposing team's head coach. A notation must be made on the game report indicating the inning the protest was made, the batter, the base runners, the number of outs, grounds for the protest and all circumstances relevant to the protest, indicating any differences of opinion between the opposing managers and/or umpires. All protests must be filed with the LCYBL Summer League Coordinator within 24 hours. The LCYBL Board shall decide the protest unless his/her team is involved in the game protested. Judgment calls are not a proper matter to protest. All protested games will be played to completion at time of protest. Protests are not allowed on judgement calls.

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AFTER THE GAME

GAME REPORTS

The home team coach is responsible for delivering the final score of the game to their LCYBL Program Coordinator. It is recommended that scores are submitted immediately to make sure all scores and standings are accurate. The LCYBL Program Coordinator will provide information on who to contact for game reports.

RESCHEDULING A CALLED GAME

For games that are called before they are official the home team's head coach must notify the LCYBL Coordinator within 24 hours. The league shall reschedule said game subject to the following guidelines:

- LCYBL will attempt to provide a field for a makeup game. Field scheduling may not be able to accommodate all games. Only one date/time will be given for a makeup game.
- Both coaches are required to notify LCYBL of their team's availability at least 48 hours prior to the makeup game. If BOTH coaches do not notify LCYBL of their team's availability, the game is cancelled. This is to avoid late notifications to parents and umpires of a cancelled game.
- If both coaches have confirmed their availability within 48 hours, the game will proceed as scheduled. Cancellation by a team within 48 hours will result in a forfeit.

SPECIAL AAA DIVISION RULES

THE BASICS

- Minimum # players in the field is 7, while the maximum # players in the field is 9
- Maximum # players in the infield area (including the catcher and pitcher) is 6
- Base length is 70 feet and the pitching distance is 50 feet
- Infield fly rule is enforced.

The infield fly rule in baseball states that the batter is out if they hit a fair fly ball that can be easily caught by an infielder with ordinary effort. This rule is in place to prevent defensive teams from intentionally dropping fly balls to force a double play.

When does the infield fly rule apply?

- There are fewer than two outs
- There are runners on first and second base, or first, second, and third base
- The fly ball is not a bunt or line drive
- An infielder can catch the ball with ordinary effort

What happens when the infield fly rule applies?

- The batter is out, even if the ball is not caught
- The baserunners can advance at their own risk
- The ball remains live and is treated like any other fly ball

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COURTESY RUNNER

A courtesy runner may be used at any time for the pitcher of record or the catcher of record. A courtesy runner for the catcher is mandatory after 2 outs. The player making the last out *must* be used as the courtesy runner for either the pitcher or catcher, but not for both in the same inning.

Pitcher or catcher of record means the player in those positions the previous defensive inning. In the case of the visiting team, in the 1st inning, it is the player who will pitch or catch in the bottom of the inning.

DROPPED THIRD STRIKE

The batter is automatically out, even if the catcher drops or cannot control a third strike. Players may not advance on a dropped 3rd strike.

NO SLASH BUNTS

For safety reasons, slash bunts are prohibited at the AAA division. A slash bunt is when the batter shows bunt then pulls back and swings away or slaps at the ball. The batter will be called out and no runners may advance.

AAA DIVISION 7 RUN RULE

The maximum number of runs a team can score in each half inning is 7. The **ONLY** exception to the 7-run limit is a team who enters their last at-bat behind by more than 7 runs. In this specific scenario, the team can score as many runs in order to win the game. This applies to **ONLY** the last inning.

AAA DIVISION 10 RUN RULE

If a team is behind by 10 or more runs after five innings of play, the game is official and considered a completed game. Coaches are encouraged to continue to play through the time limit or the 7th inning.

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FREQUENTLY MISUNDERSTOOD RULES

A batted ball that hits home plate and goes fair is a fair ball.

The strike zone is the area over home plate that begins at the top of the batter's knees and ends halfway between the waist and the shoulders when the batter is in a natural bat swinging position. Any part of the ball that touches the strike zone is a strike.

Any base runner that interferes with a fielder that is attempting to make a play on batted ball is automatically out.

Any runner struck by a batted ball while running the bases is out and play is dead with batter stopping at first base unless the out was the third out

Any fielder that is not making a play on a batted ball must not interfere with a base runner in any way. This is obstruction. The obstructed runner must be awarded at least one base beyond the last one that was legally touched.

A ball that starts foul and then goes fair before reaching first or third base is a fair ball.

Coaches can visit the mound only once per inning per pitcher unless the visit is a result of an injury to the pitcher. The second non-injury visit shall require a pitching change

The pitching distance is measured from the back of home plate to the front of the pitching rubber.