



# **Civitan Open Division Baseball**

## **General Rules and Procedures**

*Presented by the*  
**Civitan Club of Hendersonville, TN**  
**Civitan Baseball Committee (CBC)**

**Spring 2026 Season**

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# Open Division

## Specific Rules and Procedures

### RULE I

#### Rules Particular to Civitan & Hendersonville Parks

**1.01** Tobacco of every kind is banned from Drakes Creek Park and Veteran's Park. This is a city law and a state law.

**1.02** Profane language at the parks and practice locations (by anyone) will not be tolerated.

**1.03** The home team will occupy the third base dugout. Visitors will occupy the first base dugout. Umpires will supply game balls.

**1.04** No team shall take infield practice on the dirt in fair territory before the game starts. Use the outfield grass and foul territory in front of your dugout.

**1.05** **TIME LIMITS:** **8U:** 1 hour, 30 minutes (no new inning may start after 1 hour, 25 minutes)  
**9U- 11U:** 1 hour, 45 minutes (no new inning may start after 1 hour, 40 minutes)\*

A new inning officially starts when the 3<sup>rd</sup> out is made in the bottom of the previous inning (or when the 7th run is scored). Game starts will not occur past 8:30 Sunday through Thursday, with 15 Minute intervals between games. Note, the committee may consider disciplinary action against any coach suspected of stalling during games.

\*If there are two games scheduled on the same field and on a school night, both games will be shortened to 1 hour, 30 minutes (no new inning may start after 1 hour, 25 minutes)

**1.06** **COURTESY RUNNERS:** A courtesy runner may be used for the pitcher and/or catcher of record at any time during the inning. Coaches are encouraged to use this rule to speed up the game and increase participation.

- The courtesy runner must be a player not in the lineup.
- If all players in the lineup, then the last recorded out shall become the courtesy runner.

Note: Using the wrong courtesy runner is an appeal play and may result in the courtesy runner being called out.

**1.07** **INJURY/ILLNESS RULE:** If a player is forced to immediately leave the game (before continuance of play), the umpire shall be notified, and the player will be skipped in the batting order for the remainder of the game and no out shall be recorded.

If the player is a base runner, the last recorded out will be used as a replacement runner. Teams may finish a game with no less than 8 players.

**1.08** **LATE ARRIVALS:** When coaches meet with the UIC at home plate and turn in the lineup cards, those cards are final. Any player listed on the lineup card that is not present when it is his/her turn at bat will be counted as an out one time for the first missed at bat and no further penalty will be enforced. Coaches are encouraged to emphasize this rule to parents and players prior to the start of league play. Late players who are not on the lineup card may join a game in progress but will be placed at the bottom of the batting order. Both Head Coaches may agree prior to the start of the game during the umpires' meeting to forgo this rule and no out shall be taken for the first missed at bat.

**1.09** In the event of a tie, there will be one extra inning to attempt to break the tie. The extra inning will start with a runner on 2<sup>nd</sup> base. If the game remains tied after one extra innings the game will end in a tie. This rule applies to all age divisions. Tournaments do not apply; games will continue with extra innings until there is a winner during tournaments.

**1.10** At Drakes Creek Park, batting practice using a hard baseball is always prohibited outside the fenced-in field areas. Outside the fence, only soft or plastic balls may be used. Exception: Hard baseballs may be used in the permanent batting nets. Hitting a ball of any kind against a fence is prohibited (soft, hard, tennis, golf, etc.).

**1.11** **MALICIOUS CONTACT POINT OF EMPHASIS (CAL-RIPKEN CONTACT RULE):**  
Whenever a tag play is evident, the runner(s) must slide or seek to avoid contact with the fielder. Malicious contact shall supersede all obstruction penalties.  
**Penalty:** Runner shall be called out and may be ejected from the game at the umpire's discretion.  
**Comment:** The umpire should judge the runner's intent. If the umpire feels that the contact was unintentional, then the runner should only be declared out. If the umpire feels that the contact was intentional and/or malicious, then the runner should be declared out and ejected.

## RULE II *Playing Rules*

2.01

### **8U SPECIFIC RULES**

- A. Innings will consist of three (3) outs or seven (7) runs, whichever comes first.
- B. Mercy Rule- 15 run lead after 4 innings, 10 run lead after 5 innings. **The run maximum rule will be lifted from the 5<sup>th</sup> inning on.**
- C. No intentional walks permitted.
- D. No infield fly rule.
- E. Bunting is permitted. **Fake & slash (faking a bunt and then swinging) is NOT permitted. The batter attempting to fake & slash will be called out and the head coach will be ejected from the game, even if the batter doesn't contact the ball.**
- F. Each batter will receive no more than 5 pitches or 3 swinging strikes, whichever comes first. A foul ball on the "last pitch" keeps the at bat alive. Any swing will negate a "no pitch" call by the umpire.
- G. Either umpire is allowed to declare "no pitch" on any pitch in the at bat. To be deemed "no pitch" the ball should hit the dirt in front of the plate or be deemed over the head of the batter and unhittable. **This is a JUDGEMENT CALL and can't be questioned by the coaches.**
- H. Coaches will pitch from 40 feet.
- I. If a batted ball hits the coach- pitcher and the umpire judges that the coach- pitcher had no opportunity to avoid the ball, the batter is awarded 1<sup>st</sup> base, and runners advance only if forced to do so. If the umpire judges otherwise, the batter is declared out.
- J. Coach-pitcher must move into foul territory once a ball is batted into fair play and remain until time is called.
- K. The coach- pitcher may not give verbal instruction to the batter once the ball is pitched, until the ball is hit. **Penalty:** ball is dead, and a warning is issued against the coach pitcher. On the 2nd offense, the coach pitcher is restricted to the dugout for the remainder of the game.
- L. On defense, a coach is not allowed on the field during play.
- M. Defense will consist of 4 outfielders and 6 infielders. Outfielders must start past the imaginary 20-foot line. (This means 20 feet behind the bases regardless of dirt or grass lines.) Catchers must wear a cup.
- N. Infielders may not begin closer than 5 feet inside the base paths (imaginary lines between 1B & 2B, and 2B & 3B), and may not move any closer until the ball is hit.
- O. Player pitchers must wear helmets (with facemasks) or a fielding mask without helmet and chest protectors (Shirts with chest padding built-in are always acceptable).
- P. The Player Pitcher must have one foot in a circle with a 5 ft. radius behind the machine and remain stationary until the ball is hit. Civitan spring baseball will enforce the Cal Ripken rule for a player pitcher that leaves the circle early.
- Q. **The penalty for defensive violations is an immediate dead ball, and all runners are awarded the base to which they are advancing at the time of the violation. At a minimum, the batter is awarded 1st Base, and all runners advance one base from the time of the pitch.**
- R. Leading off and stealing is not allowed. Rules will follow Cal Ripken rules if they are deemed to have left early. See below:  
The violation by one runner shall affect all other runners.
  - a. When any base runner leaves the base before the pitched ball has reached home plate and the batter hits the ball within the infield, no run shall be allowed to score. If three runners were on the bases and the batter reached first base safely, each runner shall advance to the base beyond the one they occupied at the start of the play except the runner who occupied third base, which runner shall be removed from the base without a run being scored. **NOTE:** See exception following the rules.
  - b. When a base runner leaves the base before the pitched ball has reached home plate and the batter hits the ball to the outfield, the base runner or runners are permitted to continue. If a play is made and the runner or runners are put out, the out or outs stand. If not put out, the runner or runners must return to the original base or bases or to the unoccupied base nearest the one left. In no event shall the batter advance beyond first base on a single or error, second base on a double or third base on a triple. The umpire-in-chief shall determine the base value of the hit ball.

**NOTE:** When there is a base running violation, the umpire should signal such infraction by indicating a delayed dead ball.

**EXCEPTION:** If at the conclusion of the play there is an open base, paragraphs (a) and (b) will apply.

- S. Umpires will call "time" after every play and declare the ball dead. "Time" should be called when the defensive team stops the lead runner, or runner abandons the effort to advance. Once play has been stopped, no other runners may advance past the last base tagged.
- T. Keeping the **Official Score Book** is the responsibility of the **Home Team**. **If the designated home team cannot keep the official scorebook for any reason, the visiting team shall be asked to do so and may then opt to become the home team. The visiting team will be responsible for the operation of the scoreboard. GAME CHANGER app will be used for official scoring.**

**9U, 10U & 11U SPECIFIC RULES:**

- A. All catchers must wear a protective cup.
- B. Innings will consist of three (3) outs or seven (7) runs, whichever comes first.
- C. Mercy Rule- 15 run lead after 4 innings, 10 run lead after 5 innings. **The run maximum rule will be lifted from the 5<sup>th</sup> inning on.**
- D. Only a certified, rostered coach can visit the pitcher. If a non-rostered coach visits the mound, the Head Coach will receive a warning. A second offense shall result in the ejection of the Head Coach. When a team is charged with its second trip to the mound in an inning, to the same pitcher, the pitcher must be removed from the pitching position for the remainder of the game. The pitcher may be moved to another defensive position. Mound visits are limited to a maximum of 3 per inning and 6 per game. In the event of extra innings, a team is given an additional two mound visits for the remainder of the game.
- E. The **Official Score Book** will be the home team's responsibility. Pitch counts will be tracked by both home and visiting teams using the **GAME CHANGER** app. The home team will also update the pitching statistics and scores at the conclusion of each game on the Civitan website. The Head Coach or his/her designee must report pitching changes to the scorekeeper for accurate record keeping. The Head Coach or designee are the only individuals permitted to discuss situations or discrepancies with the scorekeeper. If the Head Coach or designee disagrees with the scorekeeper, it must be addressed with the umpire. Coaches or parents will NOT attempt to resolve disputes directly with the scorekeepers. Violation of this rule will result in disciplinary action. The visiting team will be responsible for the operation of the scoreboard.
- F. **Civitan Baseball** will follow the Cal Ripken pitch limits. There are two purposes behind these pitching limits. One is to protect the young arms from overuse injuries. The other is to encourage more development and participation at the pitching position.

CIVITAN PITCHING MAXIMUMS AND REST REQUIREMENTS				
AGE	DAILY MAX (PITCHES IN A DAY)	REST PERIOD		
		0 Days	1 Day	2 Days
<b>9U &amp; 10U</b>	75	1-40	41-65	66+
<b>11U</b>	85	1-40	41-65	66+

- G. **Intentional Walks** - Coach must tell the UIC and point to first base. No pitch must be thrown.
- H. **Lineups:** Each team **MUST** prepare a written line-up, listing first names and numbers of all players/subs that are available prior to each game. Players' numbers on the line-up card submitted at ground rules **MUST** match the players' numbers participating. Team must also choose their line-up option and note it on line-up card. Line-ups must be given to the home plate umpire at ground rules.
  - Batting Order Options: (9U – 11U). For 8U, the whole team will bat.**
  - 1) Nine (9) batters
  - 2) Nine (9) batters with a (DH), batting 9
  - 3) Ten (10) batters with an (EH), batting 10
  - 4) Continuous batting order, with free defensive substitution (bat everyone)

When batting a continuous batting order, if a player must leave the game due to an injury/illness and cannot return to the game, he/she will **NOT** be penalized by taking an out in his/her spot in the batting order.

**LATE ARRIVALS:** When coaches meet with the UIC at home plate and turn in the lineup cards, those cards are final. Any player listed on the lineup card that is not present when it is his/her turn at bat will be counted as an out one time for the first missed at bat and no further penalty will be enforced. Coaches are encouraged to emphasize this rule to parents and players prior to the start of league play. Late players not on the lineup card may join a game in progress but will be placed at the bottom of the batting order.

2.03

**GENERAL PENALTIES:**

- I. In any "per inning" or "per game" violation, if the situation is corrected once brought to the attention of the umpires, the pitcher is removed from the mound if applicable, and the game continues. The game is finished under protest from the point of the alleged violation. Penalty for violation is the coach is suspended for the next game and full seven-day rest for the pitcher in violation. He/she may pitch on the eighth day after violation, for example, if the violation occurred on a Thursday, the pitcher is not available to pitch until the following Friday. If violation occurred during playoff or tournament play, the result will be a forfeited game.  
Any accusation of a "weekly" or "rest" violation is a protest item only. Umpires or opposing coaches may not force a pitcher to be removed in this case but may play under protest.
- J. For defining any appearance by a new pitcher, once a player has toed the rubber on the mound and throws one (1) warm-up pitch, he is declared the new pitcher.
- K. A pitcher who hits three batters in one inning (where the batters were awarded 1st Base) must be removed immediately from the pitching position for the remainder of the game. Any pitcher who hits 5 batters in one game (where the batters were awarded 1st Base) must be removed immediately from the pitching position for the remainder of the game.
- L. A pitcher removed from the mound (for any reason) may not return to the position of pitcher in the same game.
- M. The pitcher is allowed to finish the current at bat even if the at bat causes them to exceed the daily pitch max with no penalty.

2.04

**BORROWING PLAYERS WHEN SHORTHANDED:**

If a team has **less than 10 players** (8U- 11U) for a game, substitute players can be utilized using this order:

- A. Players from the same age teams within the same organization.
- B. Players from other teams and same age teams within the league.
- C. Players from lower age teams within the same organization.
- D. Players from the Community Division.
- E. When borrowing players from another team, the borrowed players are required to hit in the last spot(s) in the lineup. They are permitted to play any defensive position but can not pitch.

**RULE III**

**Uniforms & Equipment**

3.01

A catcher's helmet must have a face mask and either a built-in extended throat guard (hockey style) or a separately attached throat guard.

3.02

All-wood bats are eligible for use in the league; however, bats must not exceed 33". Any other bats that are not all-wood shall not be more than 33" and must have the USA or USSSA 1.15 BPF stamps. For the 11U and 12U divisions, players are permitted to use BBCOR bats.

**RULE IV**

**All Stars Tournament Teams**

4.01

**ALL-STAR TOURNAMENT TEAM:**

- A. There will be Tournament Teams created in each age division. The **Tournament Team Coordinator** will assist each of these teams with all necessary details involved in managing these teams' seasons.  
**Note:** The CBC reserves the right to expand or eliminate the number of Tournament Teams in any age division.
- B. If a Head Coach cannot field a team from this list because of a lack of availability or interest, he must next choose from the alternates available. Beyond that, he may choose other players approved first by the CBC.
- C. The Head Coach and his Assistants will determine the goals and time commitment required by each player for their team. Together, they and the Tournament Team Coordinator will customize a Commitment Letter to be signed by the parent(s) of each player selected. Each team will be required to compete in the State Championship at the appropriate level.
- D. The cost to play for an All- Star Tournament Team will be approximately \$350 per player. Sponsorships and fundraising are permitted to help with player costs. All fundraising activities require Civitan approval.
- E. If a player breaks his commitment to the team for any reason deemed illegitimate by the Head Coach and his Assistants, the player will be declared ineligible for All Stars and a Tournament Team for the following year at a minimum. This player may not be added to any other Tournament Team under the Civitan Baseball umbrella. Such action requires CBC approval.
- F. If for any reason the Head Coach wishes to replace a Tournament Team player (e.g., injury, illness, unforeseen conflict), he must first contact both the Commissioner and the Director to receive approval.

## **PROTEST PROCEDURES**

A **protest** is defined as **written documentation** of an incident in a game claiming that an umpire misapplied a rule. A **judgment call may not be protested**. If such an incident occurs, the Head Coach must ask for time out and, in an orderly manner, question the ruling before another pitch is delivered and before another play is attempted. He may request that the umpires confer with each other. If no change is made, and if the Head Coach then wishes to protest, he must announce it to the UIC. The game then **continues under protest**.

The Head Coach must complete the **Protest Form** (p.7) and deliver it to his commissioner **within 24 hours** of the incident. A \$100 fee (cash) must accompany the form. A response will be returned within 48 hours of receipt of the form & fee. If the protest is won, the fee will be refunded. If lost, the fee will go into a CBC general fund. If won, the CBC will next determine if the misapplied rule may have influenced the outcome of the game. If yes, then the game shall be replayed precisely from the point of the protest. If the misapplied rule is determined to have had no effect on the outcome of the game, the game result shall stand. This is right in line with MLB protest procedures. (OBR 4.19)

For protests over a league rule (as opposed to a normal baseball rule) there is no deadline or fee required (use the same form). These protests may be made by the offended coach or by any member of the CBC. These include, but are not necessarily limited to, the following:

- A team using an ineligible player or using a borrowed player improperly
- A team violating a pitching limitation rule
- A team failing to meet the playing requirements for all players
- A team using an ineligible coach (including one who has been suspended)

Any such "league rule" protests will be handled by the Director and/or CBC, and if found to be valid, may be ruled as a forfeit of the game in question, suspension for the Head Coach, or both.

The Head Coach shall submit concerns or complaints regarding game officials in writing to both his Commissioner and to HOA (Hendersonville Officials Association). A response will be returned within 48 hours of receipt of the document. (Email is acceptable.)

If it is determined by the CBC that a coach's conduct does not adhere to the Civitan General Rules & Procedures, that coach could receive disciplinary action from the CBC up to and including dismissal as a coach. If a Head or Assistant Coach is suspended by Civitan, the terms of the suspension at a minimum are identical to a Parks Department suspension (see CIV 3.03). Any coach found in violation that may result in suspension or dismissal will be notified by the CBC and have three days to respond before the final decision is rendered. All decisions will be rendered within seven days of said violation notification date.

## PROTEST FORM

(To be submitted to your commissioner with \$100.00 cash)

I, \_\_\_\_\_, Head Coach of the \_\_\_\_\_, Age Div \_\_\_\_\_ Team Name \_\_\_\_\_

believe that a rule was misinterpreted and misapplied by the umpires in a recent game, and I am therefore lodging a protest.

Game Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Game Start Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Opponent: \_\_\_\_\_

Umpires: \_\_\_\_\_

Description of the Incident:

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Signature

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Date