Ponder Baseball 5U T-Ball Rules

I. Official Game

The game shall be two (2) innings with a fifty five (55) min time limit. No inning will start with five (5) minutes or less left in game time. If the game is tied and time has expired, then the game shall be declared a tie. The only exception is a playoff game, in this case, another inning shall be played and so on until a winner has been declared.

1. A game shall become official after one inning has been completed or after 1-1/2 innings if the home team is ahead.
2. A team may start and end a game with nine (9) players. If a team is unable to field nine (9) players the game will result in a forfeit.

II. Game Regulations

1. The run-rule shall be 12 runs or more after one (1) inning.
2. Every player must play at least one (1) inning (offense and defense). Violation will result in the forfeit of that game.
3. Each team must furnish one (1) new M ball per game. The game ball will be given to the umpire before the game begins and will be returned at the end of the game.
4. During the regular season, the home team is determined by the online schedule.
5. During playoffs, the top seed is the home team.
6. All players must have a numbered team jersey and cap by the third week in the season.
7. Lineup cards must reflect the player's full name (first and last) plus jersey number.
8. At the start of the game, the coaches will declare the number of players batting during the game. If there is an uneven number of players on either team, the team having fewer players will continue to bat the roster up to the same number of batters for the opposing team.

III. Batting Rules

1. Batters can only bat once per inning unless permitted by rule 8 in-game regulations. No bunting is allowed. All players on the line-up will bat each inning.
2. All bats must be T-ball bats and should have the USA logo or USSSA thumbprint displayed.
3. Bats thrown or carried completely outside the home plate circle; batter will be declared out. Bats thrown or carried partially outside the circle will also be ruled out. Bats should be dropped immediately after contact and not thrown to the side.
4. Each batter is allowed three (3) strikes for an out.
5. The umpire will determine whether a ball is put into play once the bat is swung. If a ball is hit into fair territory, whether the ball was swiped at and hit the rubber part of the tee to put into play or hit with the tee falling to the ground, the umpire will be the only one to declare a fair ball.
6. Each time the team at bat makes three (3) outs, the bases are cleared of any base runners. The score will continue until the offense has run through the line-up.
7. Batters have 20 seconds (umpires discretion) from the time the umpire calls the dead ball, on the previous play, to attempt to put the ball into play.

IV. Base Running Rules

1. Tagging up is not allowed on a fly ball. The infield fly rule does not apply in this division. The ball is live until the umpire calls "time out or time".
2. A base runner is out for leaving the base before the ball is hit. Stealing is not allowed.

3. Coaches that touch a runner while the ball is live; runner will be declared out and removed from the base. Do not push a player towards the next base or the player will be declared out. Use your voice.
4. The runner headed to first will be considered safe if he/she touches either of the two painted bases at first prior to the ball arriving or declared out if the defensive player touches either of the two bases before the runner. It is preferred that the runners are instructed to tag the outside first base to avoid a collision at first.
5. Sliding is not allowed at all on Ponder 2 (turf field), runners will be immediately called out for this.

6. On a batted fair ball, all players will advance at their own risk. The runner making the hit, plus runners
on base, may take as many bases as possible until the ball is returned to the home plate.
7. Out-of-Play: If a throw goes out of play, one base will be awarded to the runners on base if the throw comes from the infield, 2 bases if it comes from the outfield.
8. A dead ball is declared when the catcher has maintained possession of the ball. When a dead ball occurs, base runners less than half the distance between two bases must return to the base last touched. Base runners MORE than half the distance between two bases must advance to the next base.

V. Coaches

1. **The coach that meets at home plate with the umpire before the start of the game is determined to be the HEAD coach for that game. Only the HEAD coach will be allowed to approach the umpire to discuss a call.**
2. On offense: only THREE (3) coaches are allowed on the field.
3. In the dugout, only FOUR registered (4) coaches ((1) scorekeeper and THREE (3) coaches) plus two team moms or dads, are allowed. All registered team staff must be in uniform shirt and cap and **ONLY tennis shoes.**
4. FOUR (4) defensive coaches will be allowed in the outfield to direct fielders **(the coaches must stand behind the outfielders).** The use of voice directions is allowed but the coach may not touch or physically position a player until a ball is declared dead. For safety reasons, players may not sit on the field in the outfield nor be held in the arms of the coaches. No time-outs will be allowed to position players. The scorekeeper must remain behind the fence as well as the dugout team moms.

VI. Fielding Rules

1. The game must be played with six (6) infielders and the rest of the line-up as outfielders. All players must play assigned positions. The remaining players on the line-up will fill in places in the outfield.
2. All players must be taught to throw the ball properly instead of rolling it, throwing underhand or sidearm to their teammates. Any ball rolled/ thrown underhand or sidearm; runner will be declared safe. An attempt must be made to throw the ball properly.
3. All players on the field will play one position per inning and cannot switch to another position until the next inning. Example: The shortstop can only play that position for the inning and only move to another position either after the inning or if a player is hurt and

substitution is in place. The shortstop may make the play at second base but may not cross over to the first base side to do so.

4. During a play at home, the catcher who is positioned within the circle at home plate must make the play and not another assigned positioned player.
5. Players must play five (5) feet apart from each other and must play their designated position or area. Hence, the second base cannot play shortstop or pitcher at the same time. Infielders may play no deeper than three (3) feet into the outfield.
6. Pitchers must remain in the pitcher's circle behind the painted white mark until the ball is hit. Pitchers can only be used as a backup for any player on a base or at home plate. Pitchers cannot remain near the home plate after a hit ball. The catcher must always cover the home plate.
7. Any play at home must be made by the catcher within the circle. If a runner is advancing to home and the ball is in the possession of the pitcher or third baseman, either player may tag the player running down the third baseline. If the tag is not made and the runner enters the circle at home, the catcher must make the play.

Additional Rules:

1. If a fielder is blocking the baseline and does not have clear possession of the ball, any contact (other than deliberate contact by either player) shall be ruled obstruction; and bases shall be granted accordingly.
2. When the fielder, base runner, and ball arrive simultaneously at a base, the umpire will rule on any illegal or unnecessary contact that may occur. In any case, no player may initiate deliberate contact without being subject to position.
3. According to Ponder Baseball rules: If a team uses tactics that are noticeable to delay or hasten the playing of a game a forfeit may result. This means coaches, time delays like huddling and then instructing players with time still running or constant arguing judgment calls of the umpire will result in forfeit of the game. Remember each forfeit by a team result in a fine of $25 per incident to be payable before the next scheduled game or a suspension of three games for that coach if payment is not received.
4. For players to be eligible to play in playoff games at the end of the season, they must play at least 50% of the regular-season games.

Clarification: Aforce out in tee ball (and baseball) happens when a runner is legally required to run to the next base because the batter hit the nall and a runner is behind them. To make a force out, a fielder simply needs to hold the ball and touch that base before the runner arrives.

A non-forced out (or a tag out) happens when a runner is not required tp move (such as when they are safely staying on their base or retreating), meaning a fielder cannot just touch base--they must physically touch the runner with the ball or the glove holding the ball.

To be clear: When a batter hits the ball off the tee into fair territory the batter MUST run to first base.

The "Force" occurs if there was already a runner on first base, that runner is "forced" to run to second base because two runners cannot occupy the same base. A fielder does not need to chase or tag the runner.They just catch or pick up the ball and step on the base. If first base is without a runner, the first baseman just obtains the ball before the runner makes it to first and steps on the base for the forced out. same with any of the other bases or home.