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8U DIVISION RULES

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1. OFFICIAL RULES:

- a. Official NSA Fastpitch rules will be followed with the exceptions contained within these rules.

2. EQUIPMENT:

- a. League approved, eleven (11) inch, synthetic or leather covered ball “Optic Yellow” in color.
- b. League approved fastpitch softball bat with NSA approved logo.
- c. NOCSAE approved batting helmet and face guard.
- d. NOCSAE approved Catcher’s gear consisting of Hockey Style Catcher’s Mask, Chest Protector, and Shin Guards.
- e. ALL UNIFORMS WILL BE, LIKE IN COLOR. THIS INCLUDES UNIFORM SHIRTS, SHORTS, BASEBALL PANTS, OR SWEATPANTS, SOCKS AND VISORS/HATS.

3. FIELD SET-UP:

- a. MANAGERS AND COACHES FROM BOTH THE HOME AND VISITING TEAMS ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR BOTH THE SET-UP AND CLEANUP OF THE FIELD PRIOR TO AND AFTER GAME. (Refer to Manager/Coach Responsibilities)
- b. Playing surfaces must be prepared in the following manner prior to the start of every game:
 - i. Bases will be positioned at sixty (60) feet apart.
 - ii. The pitcher’s mound will be placed at thirty-five (35) feet from Home Plate.
 - iii. An eight (8) foot radius circle will be placed around the Pitcher’s mound, measured from the front of the mound.
 - iv. There will be a chalk line placed half the distance between 1st and 2nd base, 2nd and 3rd base, and 3rd base and Home plate.
 - v. The orange and white “Safety Base” must be used at 1st base with the orange part in foul territory.
 - vi. A Coach’s box, fifteen (15) feet in length and three (3) feet wide, measured from the Home Plate side of 1st and 3rd base, towards Home Plate and run parallel to, but eight (8) feet away from the 1st and 3rd base foul lines.
 - vii. A line is drawn parallel to and three (3) feet from the 1st base foul line, starting at a point half the distance between Home Plate and 1st base.

4. THE GAME:

- a. A regulation game for the 8U Division will consist of six (6) innings, four (4) innings if there is a ten (10) run margin, or one (1) hour and thirty (30) minutes, whichever comes first.
- b. If an inning is in progress, it must be completed regardless of the time limit expiration; however, NO new inning will begin after regulation time has elapsed unless there is a tie score. An inning begins immediately after the 3rd out in the bottom of the previous inning unless time has expired.
- c. In the event the game is tied at the end of regulation time or innings, the **INTERNATIONAL TIE-BREAKER RULE** will take effect and the game will continue.
- d. A team must start a game with ten (10) players, when available; however, a team may play with no less than seven (7) players.
- e. A team will be given five (5) minutes from the scheduled start time to have at least seven (7) players present and prepared to play before a forfeit is called.
- f. **Pitcher and 3rd Base is required to wear a fielding mask at all times on the field. It is highly recommended that all girls wear a fielding mask.**

5. PITCHING:

- a. Official NSA Fastpitch rules will be followed.
- b. Pitchers must use a legal pitching motion required by Official NSA Fastpitch rules. An illegal pitch will result in a conference, but no penalty to the pitcher.
- c. Manager or Coach must "Coach Pitch" from the pitchers plate or rubber.
- d. The same coach must coach pitch the entire game.
- e. The pitcher must position herself to either the left, right, or behind the pitching plate and within the pitching circle, while the opposing team's coach is pitching to his/her batter.
- f. Anyone under the age of eighteen (18) years of age MUST wear a catcher's mask or batting helmet while warming up a pitcher.
- g. Pitchers can pitch two (2) consecutive innings, with a maximum of 3 innings per game.
- h. One pitch thrown constitutes an inning pitched.
- i. **Hit by Pitch (HBP) if the batter is HBP it will be counted as an automatic ball 4, the coach will come in and pitch the remaining strike count.**
- j. If the pitcher hits 3 batters in an inning, she cannot pitch for the remainder of that inning, but may return to pitch in another inning. The pitcher can re-enter in a different inning. After re-entry, if two (2) batters are hit, pitcher is removed for remainder of game.
- k. Any Pitcher may pitch an International Tie breaker, regardless of innings pitched, unless the pitcher was removed for hit batters.

6. BATTING:

- a. Each player on a team's roster and present for the game will be listed on the batting order and bat for the entire game. If a player arrives after the game has started, she will be placed at the end of the batting order.
- b. No more than ten (10) players will bat in a half inning. After ten (10) players have batted in the same half inning, that inning is over, regardless of the number of outs, once the pitcher has control of the ball and is in the circle.
- c. A team may only score seven (7) runs per half inning, at which time the half inning is considered over.
- d. Official NSA **Fastpitch** rules are followed with the exception of the **BASE-ON-BALLS**. When the batter has a count of four (4) balls, the batter will keep her strike count and will receive the amount of pitches from her manager/coach that remain on her strike count. The manager/coach, who will assume the pitching role, will be limited to a member of the team's coaching staff for that game, and must remain the same person throughout the game. **The umpire will continue to call balls and strikes and the batter will have the liability of being struck out.** However, if at the end of the manager/coach pitch, if the batter has not hit the ball or been struck out on pitches, then the batter is considered to be "struck out".
- e. The field will be marked as reflected in #3 Field Set-up. The opposing pitcher must remain on the field and must position herself per section 5 subsection d. Once the manager or coach is designated as the pitcher, he/she will assume that role for the entire game. (Exceptions will be made for an emergency situation.) Foul balls **do not** count on 3rd strike.
- f. **When a manager/coach is on the field, pitching to his/her batter, the manager/coach is allowed to coach only the batter. The manager/coach will not be allowed to coach any of the runners and once the batter becomes a runner, the manager/coach can no longer coach that player from the pitching circle. The manager/coach MUST remain on the field, in the pitching circle until the play is over or rule dead.** The manager/coach will become part of the playing field and if hit with or comes in contact with the ball, the ball will remain a live ball and in play. The manager/coach is required to leave the field once the play is over. The manager/coach will then resume their normal coaching positions.
- g. When a pitched ball hits a batter, and in the umpire's judgment the batter made a good faith effort to avoid being hit with the pitch, the batter will be awarded 1st base. **This excludes pitches thrown by coaches.**
- h. **BUNTING IS NOT ALLOWED!!**
- i. A batter must maintain control of her bat at all times. A batter who, in the opinion of the umpire, throws her bat will be subject to the following:
 - i. 1st offense, umpire warns batter and Score Keeper notes score book.
 - ii. Each subsequent offense by same batter results in batter being out.

- j. All batters/runners **MUST** keep their helmets on while outside of dugout. A batter who fails to keep her helmet on will incur following penalties:
 - i. 1st offense is a warning to both benches.
 - ii. Each subsequent offense will result in batter taking an automatic out for her next at bat. Umpire will direct the score keeper to note this in the score book. An exception is if this out would be the 3rd out of the half inning, then the batter will not be out, however she will be “skipped” in the batting.
- k. There will be no dropped third strike or infield fly rule used during this game.

7. BASE RUNNING:

- a. An out may be made at any base; however, all play stops after the pitcher has control of the ball and is in the pitching circle. Until that time, the base-runners may advance at their own risk, unless they are put out.
- b. Runners are allowed to “Lead-off” & “Steal” bases with the following restrictions:
 - i. Runners may only advance one base at a time per pitch at their own peril.
 - ii. Runners may not steal home.
 - iii. Runners will be subject to “Hesitation” and “Leaving Early” calls by Umpires.
 - iv. Sliding is allowed and recommended to avoid collisions.
 - v. Leading off and stealing is not allowed during coach pitch.
- c. Managers/coaches are to remain in the coach’s box while the ball is in play. The first offense will result in the manager/coach being warned. The second offense will result in the manager/coach being ejected.
- d. If the pitcher is inside the pitching circle and has control of the ball, base-runners who have not reached the hash marks located half the distance between 1st and 2nd base, 2nd and 3rd base, or 3rd and Home, must return to the base from which they came. If the base-runners have reached the hash marks, they may advance to the next base. However, the lead base-runner will determine the positioning of the trailing base-runners. **All play stops when the pitcher has control of the ball and is in the pitching circle.**
- e. An overthrow is defined as any ball hit into the infield and play attempted at any base. Any ball hit into the outfield once returned into the infield and a play is then made at any base.
 - i. Any ball kept in front of the player is not considered an overthrow.
 - ii. Any ball that is caught and dropped, or falls out of the fielder’s glove is not considered an overthrow.
- f. On a hit ball into the infield and an overthrow occurs at 1st, the batter is awarded 1st base only.

- g. On an overthrow to any other base the runners are only awarded the advancing base.
- h. An overthrow to any base will result in the ball being declared dead and all runners being awarded the base that they are closest to at the time of the overthrow. The hash mark located halfway between each base will be used to determine closest base.
 - i. Example 1: Bases Empty – Play at First: The batter will be stopped at first base.
 - ii. Example 2: Runner on First – Play at Second: The runner on first will be stopped at second base and the batter will be stopped at first base.
 - iii. Example 3: Runner on Second – Play at Third: The runner on second will be stopped at third base and the batter will be stopped at first base.
 - iv. Example 4: Runner on First – Play at First: A fielder throws the ball to first base with a fast base runner advancing to second. The base runner rounds second and passes the hash mark before the overthrow occurs. The batter is awarded first base and the runner is allowed to advance to third.
- i. The only exception to any overthrow rule is the pitcher in the pitching circle. There is no overthrow rule when throwing the ball to the pitcher in the pitching circle.

8. SUBSTITUTION:

- a. EPs and subs must be substituted into the defense every other inning after the 1st inning.
- b. A violation of the above could result in the ejection of the manager.

9. INJURY/ILLNESS:

- a. In the event a player is injured or becomes ill during the game, one of the following will occur:
 - i. If the removal of the injured/ill player leaves the team with nine (9) or more players, the player is skipped in the batting order with no penalty.
 - ii. If the team is left with less than seven (7) players, the game is ruled a forfeit.