

Division Specific Softball Rules

XV. SOFTBALL - 7 & 8 year olds (Machine Pitch)

Ages 8 years old and under (cannot be 9 on or before December 31, 2014 and must be a minimum age of 6, as of 1/1/15 to be eligible for this division).

- 1) Pitching machine distance - 40 feet.
- 2) Base distance - 60 feet.
- 3) Pitching machine speed - approximately - 30 mph. **The pitching machine settings are: Power Lever 5, Release Block 4 and Micro Adjustment 3.**
- 4) Regulation game - 5 innings. (3 innings constitute a complete game.)
- 5) No inning will begin 1 hour and 15 minutes after the official starting time regardless of the innings played, except in case of a tie game. The next inning shall begin immediately following the last out of the previous inning. **Tie-breaking procedure** - In the event that the score is tied at the end of the last regulation inning, the following procedure will be used: (1) The first extra-inning shall commence with a base runner being placed at second base. The base runner placed at second base, shall be the last batter from the previous inning. (2) In the event that the score is still tied at the end of the first extra-inning, the second extra inning shall commence with a base runner being placed at both third base and second base. The base runner placed at third base, shall be the next to last batter from the previous inning. The base runner placed at second base shall be the last batter from the previous inning. (3) In the event that the score is still tied at the end of the second extra inning, the game shall be considered at tie game.
- 6) Run limits - There is a 6 run limit per half inning at bat. **Only six (6) runs will count in every inning played (regular and extra), per half inning.**
- 7) Run rule - In games in which a team is leading by at least 10 runs after 3 innings, the game shall be declared a complete game.
- 8) The infield fly rule will not be in effect.
- 9) Free substitution and batting the roster shall apply as defined in Substitution Rules, Section VII. A player shall not remain on the bench more than one defensive half inning at a time. To encourage rotation of players, it is recommended that no player shall remain at the same defensive position more than two innings and no player shall remain in the infield more than three innings.
- 10) A batter is out and cannot run on a dropped third strike.
- 11) A pitched ball is considered a DEAD BALL, for the purposes of determining whether a catcher and/or pitcher may make a play on a baserunner. The ball is dead at all times until it has been put into play by the batter. A runner shall not score from the third base on a passed ball at home plate. The base runner may attempt to advance only on a fair hit, or on a caught fly (fair or foul) after the runner retouches the base (if caught), or if a play is made on the runner at any base. This releases the runner to advance at his own risk, or if a definite play has been made on him. A runner behind a runner at third may not force the runner at third unless the bases are full. The runner is entitled to third base until he is put out or forced to vacate it for another runner entitled to third base. A runner cannot lead

off or steal a base and must remain in contact with the base, until the ball has crossed the front edge of home plate or is put into play by the batter.

12) Balls and strikes will not be called, no walk, balk, or bases for a hit batsman will be granted. The batter will be called out after three (3) swinging strikes or five (5) pitches unless a foul occurs on the 5th pitch or later pitch. If a batter attempts to bunt on the 3rd strike or 5th pitch, the batter is out if the pitch is fouled. Bunting is allowed.

13) There will be five (5) pitches per batter (in the absence of a machine and a coach is required to pitch, seven (7) pitches will be used). The batter will be declared "OUT" on the third (3rd) swinging strike. If after the allotted number of pitches have been thrown and no contact has been made on the last pitch, the batter is out. EXCEPTION: If on the last pitch the batter fouls the pitch off, they will receive another pitch (and subsequent pitches on foul balls) until they put the ball in play, swing and miss or let the pitch go by.

14) The pitching machine will be placed, with the front edge over where the pitching rubber is / would be located (40 feet). The field umpire will operate the pitching machine and make all necessary adjustments. At the discretion of the base umpire, he/she may adjust the micro adjustment screw as often as deemed necessary, to compensate for the height of the batter or wind conditions. At no time, shall the speed of the machine be adjusted. In addition, either umpire has the authority to declare a NO PITCH, at any time that they deem necessary or in the event of a malfunction of the machine. A "no pitch" is defined as a pitched ball that leaves the pitching machine and hits home plate or any area in front of home plate OR any pitched ball that leaves the pitching machine and is completely above the batters head. In the event of a batter swinging at a pitch defined as a no pitch, whether declared or not by the umpire, the pitch, swing and/or play will count. The make, model and speed/settings are determined by the Board of the WHJBSL.

15) A member of the defending team will field in the pitcher's position. He must remain behind the pitching rubber and off to either side until the ball has left the machine. Penalty will be a no pitch unless the ball is put into play.

16) If a batter ball strikes the machine, the ball is dead and the batter is awarded 1st base and all other baserunners are awarded one (1) base.

17) If a thrown ball (intentional or unintentional) strikes either the machine or the base umpire / pitcher (while inside the circle), the ball is dead and play is stopped with the runner(s) going to their base(s) as deemed by the umpire.

18) Five-foot (5') long hash marks will be drawn across the baselines twenty-seven feet (27') past 1st base, 2nd base, and 3rd base. If a base runner is on or past the hash mark when the umpire declares "Time", the runner will receive the next base unless a lead runner negates the advancement. If a base runner is not yet to or on the hash mark when the umpire declares "Time", the runner must return to the last base touched.

19) There shall be a 16' circle (8' in radius) drawn from the center of the pitcher's plate. The line drawn around the pitcher's plate is considered inside the circle. Once the ball is returned to the kid pitcher, who has possession of the ball within the circle, the umpire shall declare TIME. A pitcher fielding the ball in the circle is just another fielder and (1) may attempt to make a play on a runner (with runners advancing at their own risk) or (2) may hold the ball until the umpire declares time. Once the umpire has declared time, the position of the runner / runners in relation to the hash marks, will determine whether they may advance to the next base or must return to the last base touched (see Rule 0).

NOTE: The intent of this rule is to help the players in their decision making. If the player is confused as to where the ball should be thrown, they may throw it to the kid pitcher. However, coaches should be encouraged to teach their players to attempt to make a play on a baserunner(s) when at all possible. Simply teaching/instructing the defensive players to return the ball to the youth pitcher inside the circle in every instance, is poor fundamental coaching and is strongly discouraged. It is also the intent of this rule to help the young umpires make a confident call of TIME when the kid pitcher has the ball inside the circle and is not making a play on a runner(s). Coaches should remember that when TIME is called, it is a judgment call by the umpire and it cannot be argued or challenged.

20) Two (2) adults will be allowed on the playing field during the game, which is limited to 2 offensive base coaches. No defensive coaches are allowed on the field, during play.

21) Two umpires are used (one plate and one base who will also run the machine).

22) At the election of the coach, either team may use a tenth (10th) player as a “rover” in the outfield. Neither team is required to play such a tenth player. Either team may elect to use a tenth player, regardless of whether or not the other team uses a tenth player.

23) **7 & 8 year old softball** - On any overthrow that enters **DEAD BALL** territory, the ball is declared “dead” and the award is one (1) base from the last base touched. On overthrows that remain in live ball territory, the baserunner(s) are allowed to advance a maximum of one (1) base, at their own risk. This includes attempts at 1st, 2nd and/or 3rd base that result in the ball going into the outfield. **COACHES NOTE:** The purpose of this rule is to encourage the players to attempt to make a defensive play on a baserunner and not just return the ball immediately to the kid pitcher and/or be concerned with multiple overthrows. In the event of an overthrow and once a player or players have reached the next base and/or a player or players are retired, the umpire will immediately declare “time” and the play will be ended.

NOTE: It is strongly recommended that coaches should teach their players NOT to set up in the baseline. They are encouraged to instruct their infielders to begin/set-up either two steps in front of or behind the baseline, as described as an imaginary line drawn directly between the bases. Additionally, coaches are encouraged to instruct their outfielders to begin/set-up at least 5 steps behind the baseline, as described as an imaginary line drawn directly between the bases.

Required Equipment: Catcher - Full catchers helmet (NO SKULLCAPS ARE ALLOWED), facemask with throat protector, chest protector and shin guards - (a protective cup is recommended). Batters - Batting helmet with facemask. Baserunners - Batting helmet with facemask. On deck batter – Batting helmet with facemask. Plate Umpire – Facemask with throat protector, chest protector and shin guards (a protective cup is recommended).

XVI. SOFTBALL - 9 & 10 year olds

Ages 10 years old and under (cannot be 11 on or before December 31, 2014 and must be a minimum age of 8, as of 1/1/15 to be eligible for this division).

1) Pitcher distances - 35 feet.

- 2) Base distance - 60 feet.
- 3) Regulation game - 5 innings. (3 innings constitute a complete game.)
- 4) No inning will begin 1 hour and 30 minutes after the official starting time regardless of the innings played, except in case of a tie game. The next inning shall begin immediately following the last out of the previous inning. **Tie-breaking procedure** - In the event that the score is tied at the end of the last regulation inning, the following procedure will be used: (1) The first extra-inning shall commence with a base runner being placed at second base. The base runner placed at second base, shall be the last batter from the previous inning. (2) In the event that the score is still tied at the end of the first extra-inning, the second extra inning shall commence with a base runner being placed at both third base and second base. The base runner placed at third base, shall be the next to last batter from the previous inning. The base runner placed at second base shall be the last batter from the previous inning. (3) In the event that the score is still tied at the end of the second extra inning, the game shall be considered at tie game.
- 5) ASA Fast Pitch rules are in effect.
- 6) Run limits - There is a 6 run limit per half inning at bat. Only six (6) runs will count in every inning played (regular and extra), per half inning.
- 7) Run rule - In games in which a team is leading by at least 10 runs after 3 innings, the game shall be declared a complete game.
- 8) Free defensive substitution and batting the roster will apply. See Substitution Rules, Section VII. It is recommended that each player present and eligible to play should play at least 1 complete inning on defense.
- 9) No infield fly rule in effect.
- 10) A batter is out and cannot run on a dropped third strike.
- 11) Stealing: The baserunner must maintain in contact with the base until the ball has left the pitcher's hand (normal delivery to home plate). The baserunner may advance one (1) base on a steal attempt, unless the ball is "hit" into fair territory, which would allow the baserunner to act as a normal baserunner. A baserunner can only advance to home plate on a bases loaded walk, a ball hit into fair territory or a caught fly ball in either fair or foul territory, after tagging up. NOTE: On a fly ball in fair or foul territory that is caught by a fielder, a baserunner may tag up and advance at their own risk. This situation IS NOT considered "stealing".
- 12) At the election of the coach, either team may use a tenth player as a rover in the outfield. Neither team is required to play such a tenth player. Either team may elect to use a tenth player regardless whether or not the other team uses such a tenth player.

Required Equipment: Catcher - Full catchers helmet (NO SKULLCAPS ARE ALLOWED), facemask with throat protector, chest protector and shin guards - (a protective cup is recommended). Batters - Batting helmet with facemask. Baserunners - Batting helmet with facemask. On deck batter – Batting

helmet with facemask. Plate Umpire – Facemask with throat protector, chest protector and shin guards (a protective cup is recommended).

XVII. SOFTBALL - 11 &12 year olds

Ages 12 years old and under (cannot be 13 on or before December 31, 2014 and must be a minimum age of 10, as of 1/1/14 to be eligible for this division).

- 1) Pitcher distance - 40 feet.
- 2) Base distance - 60 feet.
- 3) Regulation game - 6 innings. (4 innings constitute a complete game.)
- 4) No inning will begin 1 hour and 45 minutes after the official starting time regardless of the innings played, except in case of a tie game. The next inning shall begin immediately following the last out of the previous inning. **Tie-breaking procedure** - In the event that the score is tied at the end of the last regulation inning, the following procedure will be used: (1) The first extra-inning shall commence with a base runner being placed at second base. The base runner placed at second base, shall be the last batter from the previous inning. (2) In the event that the score is still tied at the end of the first extra-inning, the second extra inning shall commence with a base runner being placed at both third base and second base. The base runner placed at third base, shall be the next to last batter from the previous inning. The base runner placed at second base shall be the last batter from the previous inning. (3) In the event that the score is still tied at the end of the second extra inning, the game shall be considered at tie game.
- 5) Run limits - There is a 6 run limit per half inning at bat. Only six runs will count in any one half inning. The 6 run limit will be waived in the 6th inning of a regulation game, and any inning thereafter.
- 6) Run Rule - In games in which a team is leading by at least 15 runs after 3 innings, or 10 runs after 4 innings, the game shall be declared a complete game.
- 7) Free defensive substitution and batting the roster will apply. See Substitution Rules, Section VII. It is recommended that each player present and eligible to play should play at least 2 complete innings on defense.
- 8) 4th outfielder IS NOT permitted.

Required Equipment: Catcher - Full catchers helmet (NO SKULLCAPS ARE ALLOWED), facemask with throat protector, chest protector and shin guards - (a protective cup is recommended). Batters - Batting helmet with facemask. Baserunners - Batting helmet with facemask. On deck batter – Batting helmet with facemask. Plate Umpire – Facemask with throat protector, chest protector and shin guards (a protective cup is recommended).

XVIII. SOFTBALL - 13, 14 & 15 year olds

Ages 15 years old and under (cannot be 16 on or before December 31, 2014 and must be a minimum age of 12, as of 1/1/15 to be eligible for this division).

1) Pitching distance - 40 feet.

2) Base distance - 60 feet.

3) Regulation game - 7 innings. (4 innings constitute a complete game.)

4) No inning will begin 2 hours after the official starting time regardless of the innings played, except in case of a tie game. The next inning shall begin immediately following the last out of the previous inning. **Tie-breaking procedure** - In the event that the score is tied at the end of the last regulation inning, the following procedure will be used: (1) The first extra-inning shall commence with a base runner being placed at second base. The base runner placed at second base, shall be the last batter from the previous inning. (2) In the event that the score is still tied at the end of the first extra-inning, the second extra inning shall commence with a base runner being placed at both third base and second base. The base runner placed at third base, shall be the next to last batter from the previous inning. The base runner placed at second base shall be the last batter from the previous inning. (3) In the event that the score is still tied at the end of the second extra inning, the game shall be considered at tie game.

5) Run limits - There is a 6 run limit per half inning at bat. Only six runs will count in any one half inning. The 6 run limit will be waived in the 7th inning of a regulation game, and any inning thereafter.

6) Run rule - In games in which a team is leading by at least 15 runs after 4 innings or 10 runs after 5 innings the game shall be declared a complete game.

7) Each coach may use the re-entry rule or bat the roster with free substitutions as defined in the Substitution Rules, Section V11 or use the ASA DP/FLEX option. The Coach must declare the option under which they are playing to the plate umpire prior to the commencement of the game as well as to the official scorekeeper. Once the coach announces the option and play commences, that team must continue to play the entire game under that option. Each coach may choose whichever option they want. It is recommended that no player shall remain on the bench for more than one defensive inning at a time.

Required Equipment: Catcher - Full catchers helmet (NO SKULLCAPS ARE ALLOWED), facemask with throat protector, chest protector and shin guards - (a protective cup is recommended). Batters - Batting helmet with facemask. Baserunners - Batting helmet with facemask. On deck batter – Batting helmet with facemask. Plate Umpire – Facemask with throat protector, chest protector and shin guards (a protective cup is recommended).