

WESTERVILLE YOUTH BASEBALL AND SOFTBALL LEAGUE
2023 WYBSL BLUE HAT LEAGUE - FOR GIRLS 17 YEARS OLD AND UNDER
SUMMARY - PROGRAM AND RULES

This league is composed of 14, 15, 16 and 17 year old girls. The league will play fast pitch softball with modifications. The league is organized and supervised by the Blue Hat General Manager, under the direction of the Girl's Program Director and the WYBSL Board of Trustees. Games are played in accordance with National Federation High School rules with the following modifications and clarifications:

1. GAMES, FIELD EQUIPMENT AND CONDITIONS

- A. Prior to the start of a game, only the WYBSL Fields Director (or other Board designee) has the authority to cancel the game. At scheduled game time and throughout the game, the authority to stop play because of darkness, inclement weather or other playing conditions rests with the umpire. Games will be rescheduled by the Board, with final confirmation by the Program Director and Umpire Director.
- B. Weekday games will start promptly as scheduled. The home team will have the field for practice until twenty (20) minutes before game time, with the visiting team practicing after the home team until five (5) minutes before game time.
- C. Games are seven (7) innings in length and will generally be played on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays. Makeup games will not necessarily be played if each team has played a minimum of 10 games. If make-up games are necessary to reach the 10 game minimum, they will be played on Sundays, Mondays, and during the week following the end of the regular scheduled season and will be scheduled as necessary by the Committee, generally starting from the canceled games at the beginning of the regular schedule with the intent of equalizing the number of games each team plays.
- D. The home team coaches shall be responsible to install the bases and if necessary a non-permanent pitching rubber at the required distances prior to start of the game and remove and secure them in the field equipment box at the completion of the game. The home team coaches shall also be responsible to draw prior to the start of the game, and maintain during the game, the eight (8) foot radius pitching circle.
- E. Base distance will be 60 feet and the pitching distance will be 43 feet. The ball used will be a 12" softball selected by the league.
- F. No team may score more than five (5) runs in an inning. A game shall end if the home team is leading by **eleven (11)** or more runs after five innings, or if the home team goes ahead by six (6) runs in the bottom of the sixth (6th) inning. If the visiting team is leading by **eleven (11)** or more runs after five and one-half (5½) or **by six (6) or more runs after** six and one-half (6½) innings, the home team has the option to take their at-bat in the bottom of the inning. If the home team elects to take their at-bat, the game shall end upon completion of the at-bat. **Clarification:** If the home team elects to take their at-bat, the game must end upon completion of the at-bat. Any runs scored would not count toward the final score.

- G. A team must start, play and finish with a minimum of eight (8) rostered players. Loss of a player during the game which results in a team having only seven (7) players will result in a forfeit.
- H. In all cases, a game shall be forfeited only after a grace period of fifteen (15) minutes after the scheduled game time.
- 1) It is a part of good sportsmanship that a Head Coach will notify the General Manager and opposing Head Coach as soon as he/she knows that it will be absolutely impossible for his/her team to appear with the required minimum of players for a scheduled game or make-up game. As a courtesy and in order to save the league umpire charges, we expect this notification to be made as soon as possible – even if it is done days or weeks in advance.
 - 2) Upon such notification, neither team shall appear for the scheduled game. However, this courtesy notification does not automatically trigger a forfeit.
 - 3) Game forfeits will be awarded only after a fifteen (15) minute grace period when weather and/or field conditions at the end of the grace period would normally allow a game to be started.
 - 4) Therefore, even if a team does not appear with the minimum of players, or has notified the General Manager and opposing Head Coach as specified in 1) above, there shall be no forfeit awarded if weather and field conditions fifteen (15) minutes after the scheduled start time would not have allowed the game to be started. However, after a forfeit is awarded, the forfeit will stand – even if weather or field conditions would not have allowed the game to continue.
 - 5) Games less than seven (7) innings are considered **complete** if: 1) they last at least five (5) full innings (four and one-half (4½) innings, if the home team is ahead) and are stopped for any reason. The final score is determined by reverting back to the last complete inning unless the home team is at-bat and ahead when play is stopped. 2) they have reached the two (2) hours and thirty (30) minutes limit, regardless of the number of innings played. Games that are not complete are considered **suspended** games. When continued, play resumes exactly where it left off when play was stopped (batting order, position of any base runners, pitchers, etc.) and all rules apply as if it was one continuous game.
 - 6) No new inning is permitted to begin more than two (2) hours after the start of the game unless the game is not considered complete and in no case may a game continue beyond two (2) hours and thirty (30) minutes. A new inning is defined as beginning as soon as the third (3rd) out is made in the bottom of an inning. If an inning in a **complete** game is not finished because of darkness or inclement weather, the score will revert to the last fully completed inning.
 - 7) Extra innings will be played if, after seven (7) innings, the score is tied and time limits and daylight allow. But, if **complete**, regular season games may end in a tie. If so, each team will receive ½ win and ½ loss in the standings. Post-season tournament and play-off games must be complete and result in a winner. Play will continue past a complete game one (1) inning at a time until a winner is determined.
 - 8) If the paid umpire does not appear for a game, the game shall not be played and will be rescheduled by the Board.

2. PLAYERS

- A. Each player will be given a team shirt and team visor, which the player may keep, prior to the first scheduled game. Each player must provide, at their own expense, team uniform softball pants or team uniform shorts and a fielder's glove. During a game, no player will be allowed to play without wearing the team shirt and, if wearing a head covering, the team visor supplied by the league. During games and practices, when a player is the batter, a base runner or the catcher, the player must wear a helmet with a properly attached protective facemask.
- B. No additions, subtractions or changes may be made in team visors or caps at all; nor in team shirts without the express written permission of the Program Manager (or his/her designee). If such alteration is approved, all coaches and players of the team must wear shirts that are altered as approved. Exception: A player, at her own expense, may have her name added on the back of her shirt above the number. Taping or tying sleeves is not considered an alteration, but cutting sleeves off is not allowed.
- C. No metal spikes or metal cleats may be worn.
- D. Catchers must wear a helmet with face mask and throat protector (a face mask with integrated throat extension may be worn without an additional throat protector), chest protector and shin guards during games and practices and while warming up a pitcher.
- E. Players must not wear jewelry, metal hair ornaments or similar items during practices, scrimmages, or games, for their safety. The 1st offense will result in a team jewelry warning. A 2nd and any additional jewelry offense(s) will result in the player(s) being called out and restricted to the bench.
- F. Every player will play a minimum of three (3) defensive innings per game. No player may sit out for a second (2nd) inning until all players have sat out one (1) inning with the exception of the Pitcher or Catcher. No player may sit out for a third (3rd) inning until all players have sat out two (2) innings, with the exception of the Pitcher or Catcher. A game lasting only five and one-half (5½) innings, because the home team is ahead, does not relieve the coach of the responsibility to play each player for the nine (9) out minimum. A game shortened due to curfew or weather may alter the rule unless the game is rescheduled or continued at a later time. Exception: If a player arrives after the start of a game, each inning that begins without the player in attendance shall be counted as an inning played by that player when counting the number of defensive innings played. Free defensive substitution is allowed.

3. HEAD and ASSISTANT COACHES' RESPONSIBILITIES

- A. Each team shall be issued an equipment bag and equipment box key prior to the start of the season. These must be returned, cleaned, to the General Manager within fourteen (14) days of the team's last game (or by a date specified by the league as the return date) or the coach will be held financially responsible for the value of the equipment.
- B. Adult coaches are not required to be in the uniform of his/her team at the team's games or while acting in any coaching capacity at any time during the game (for example, as a base coach). But, if a coach wears a shirt or head covering with any inscription, words, designs or team logo, it must be the team shirt, cap or visor supplied by the league, unless written approval is obtained from the Program Director (or his/her designee).

- C. It will be the responsibility of the Head Coach to secure an adult volunteer among the parents of his/her team to provide coverage at league-assigned time(s) in the concession trailer. If the Head Coach is unable to secure a volunteer parent or other adult to provide coverage, it shall be the responsibility of the Head Coach to provide such coverage himself/herself. **If no adult from the team provides coverage at a league-assigned time for the team, the Head Coach shall be charged with a one-game suspension, to be served at the Coach's next game following the violation, including the next subsequent season.**
- D. On defense, each team may have two (2) charged conferences during a regulation game. If the two (2) charged conferences are taken in one (1) inning, the pitcher must be removed from the pitching position during the second (2nd) conference. Beginning with the third (3rd) conference in a regulation game, the pitcher must be removed from the pitching position. A conference is not charged if the pitcher is removed or when a player is hurt and must be attended to by a coach. Conferences must be held on the playing field. One (1) additional conference is awarded for each extra inning played.
- E. Both coaches are responsible for reporting the score. The Home Team is responsible for entering the score and if required, the innings pitched or pitch count for the game on the online site. The home team must enter the score within three hours after the start of the game. The Visiting Team must then confirm or challenge the score within three and a half hours of the start of the game but will not be penalized if the Home Team has not entered the score in the required amount of time. For the first score not reported in the above time limit, the Head Coach will receive a warning. **A second violation will result in a one-game suspension for the Head Coach.** Further violations will result in additional penalties.
- F. If a team does not have their Head Coach or one of their Assistant Coaches present at a practice – or for both teams, in case of a scrimmage or game – then the practice, scrimmage, or game shall not be played. A team not having their Head Coach or one of their Assistant Coaches present at a game will constitute a forfeit by that team.
- G. A coach is permitted to use a scorekeeping and/or pitch-counting application on an electronic device. The use of these electronic devices will be limited to the coaches box on the field and dugout, providing the use of such device does not interfere with the progress of the game, as determined by the umpire. Teams however cannot use electronic devices on the field for voice communication, electronic audio, and/or video recording.
- H. Organized chants and cheers are permitted only from the time a pitched ball crosses home plate until the pitcher comes set on the pitchers mound. No chants or cheers are permitted while the pitcher is set on the mound or while the ball is live. No fans, coaches or players may engage in intentional distractions or any artificial noises which would distract players on their field or any other field. This is unsportsmanlike behavior and shall not be tolerated in the WYBSL. Coaches shall be responsible for the behavior of their fans. A first infraction shall be a warning to the coach and player(s) responsible for the infraction. A second infraction shall result in the Head Coach and player(s)'s removal from the field.

4. BATTING AND BASE RUNNING

- A. A continuous batting order will be used. The batting lineup, listing all players present for the game in their batting order, must be given to the opposing coach prior to the start of the game. Any player arriving late must be placed last in the batting order. The opposing coach must be notified of any addition or subtraction.
- B. All softball bats must be factory marked with the ASA 2004 certification logo and with the USSSA 1.2 BPF logo. Prior to each game, it shall be the responsibility of each Head Coach to check all bats to be used by his/her teams' players to assure that only legal bats are used during a game. C. The following rules regarding batting lineups will apply:
- 1) If a player who is not in attendance at the start of the game is listed in the official batting lineup, and is not present to take her place at bat for her first appearance, the batter will be declared out for such first appearance. Her name will then be eliminated from the official batting lineup with no further penalty. If the player subsequently arrives, she must be placed last in the batting order.
 - 2) If a player is in attendance at the start of the game, and subsequently must leave the game (because of school event, work, or other reasonable cause, other than injury), her name shall be eliminated from the official batting lineup with no penalty. A player so removed from the lineup shall not be allowed to play in the game from that point, unless the game is continued on another day. If the game is continued at a later date and the player is in attendance, the player shall be placed in the same place in the lineup as her name first appeared.
 - 3) In a continued game, any player who was in attendance during the first date of play, and is not in attendance at the start of play on the date of continuance, shall be eliminated from the lineup with no penalty. If the player subsequently arrives, she must be placed last in the batting order. If a player was not present at the original game before it was suspended, but is present on the date of continuance, that player is added at the end of the batting order.
 - 4) If a player is injured or becomes ill during a game:
 - a. If the head coach disqualifies the player because of injury/illness for the remainder of the game, the player's name shall be eliminated from the lineup with no penalty. The player shall not be eligible in the case that the game is continued on another day.
 - b. If the head coach does not disqualify the player because of injury/illness for the remainder of the game, an out shall be declared at each instance of the player's scheduled batting appearance when the player is unable to take her place at bat.
 - c. If a batter begins, but cannot complete an at bat due to injury, illness or other reason, she will be declared out. The player may remain in the game unless disqualified by the head coach according to rules provisions above. D. If a player is injured or becomes ill and must be removed as a base runner after reaching base successfully, the last player on the bench (the most recent batter not on base) will be substituted as a pinch runner.

- 1) Notwithstanding any of the above, if a batting lineup contains only eight (8) players, an out shall be declared each time that a ninth (9th) player would have been eligible to bat. If a batting lineup contains nine (9) players and, for any reason (even if listed above in this Rule), a player is not able or eligible to take her place at bat when scheduled, an out shall be declared when such player was scheduled to bat.
- E. There will be only one (1) batter in the batter's box and one (1) player in the warm-up circle, which must be outside of the backstop or bench fence. All other players and offensive team coaches – when not directing the base runners from the coach's box – must remain on their bench or behind their bench fence, except when warming up. No spectators are permitted to be positioned closer than six (6) feet behind the backstop, unless they are using bleachers that have been provided.
- F. Prior to games and/or scrimmages, batting aides (such as; hit sticks, wiffle balls, hitting nets, and hit-a-way devices), may only be used by players in the outfield grass between the foul lines during the time that the player's team is to have the field for warm-ups (see Rule 1.B. above). Batting aides may not be used during a game or scrimmage. After games or scrimmages, batting aides may only be used in the outfield grass between the foul lines on the field which the game or scrimmage was played, and if there is not another game, scrimmage, or practice scheduled to use the field. Additionally, no batting practice, such as "soft-toss" or "flip" drills, causing balls to be hit against backstops or fencing, is allowing at any time, including practices, scrimmages and games. Only bats and devices designed to remain part of the bat, such as weighted bats, batting donuts or wind resistant devices are allowable during games.
- G. If the catcher is on base with two (2) outs, the last player on the bench (the most recent batter not on base) may substitute as a runner for the catcher to expedite putting on the catcher's gear. H. Bunting is permitted.
- I. **Dropped third strike.** A batter becomes a base runner when the catcher fails to catch the third strike before the ball touches the ground when there are fewer than two outs and first base is unoccupied. With two outs, even with a runner on first, the batter may try to advance to first base on a dropped third strike.
- J. The infield fly rule will be in effect.
- K. A coach or player shall not carelessly **throw the bat** which would include the bat hitting the catcher, umpire, or the fence surrounding the field. This event will be treated as a "delayed dead ball" and the runners may advance at their own risk. **Exception:** When the bat interferes with a fielder's attempt at the ball an immediate dead ball shall be called by the umpire and no runners may advance. **Penalty:** At the end of the play, the umpire shall issue a warning to the coach of the team involved and the next offender on that team shall be called out. A third such offense by the same team will result in the batter being called out and a bench restriction of the Head Coach. A second offense by the same batter shall result in the batter being called out, removed from the lineup, and restricted to the bench for the remainder of the game.
- L. Sliding is permitted. In the case of a play at a base or home plate, the runner must avoid contact, whether in the upright position or by sliding, or the runner will be called out. However, no player may block a base or home plate, whether or not a play can be made, or the runner will be awarded the base.

- M. Stealing bases is permitted. Runners are allowed to lead off after the ball is released from the pitcher's hand. If a player leads off or leaves a base early on a pitch, the umpire shall call "dead ball" and the player will be called out. **Continuous walks are a part of the game.**
- N. There shall be only one (1) charged conference between the manager, coach or other team representative and a batter and/or base runner in an inning. Umpires shall not permit any additional conference and shall eject the manager, coach or other team representative who insists upon an additional offensive conference.
- O. Double First Base. A "double first base" will be used. The defense must use the white portion (in fair territory) and the batter-runner the colored portion (in foul territory) when a play is being made on the batter-runner. (See Exceptions below).
- P. Exception 1: The defense can use either the white or the colored portion of the base on a dropped third strike. The batter-runner needs to try and avoid contact with the fielder. When the defense uses the colored portion of the double base, the batter-runner can run in fair territory, and if hit by the thrown ball is not out for interference, as long as it is not ruled intentional interference.
- Q. Exception 2: The batter-runner or runner may touch the white or colored base;
- R. When advancing on balls hit to the outfield with no play being attempted at first base, or when returning to first base.
- S. When tagging up on a fly ball.
- T. When returning to the bases on an attempted pickoff play.
- U. The batter-runner is out for interference when there is a force play and the batter-runner makes contact with the fielder about to catch a thrown ball while on the white portion of the base. The batter-runner is safe if the defense is touching any part of the colored portion while a force play is being made and the fielder makes contact with the batter-runner.

5. PITCHING

- A. The pitching circle dimension shall be a circle with an eight (8) foot radius. It shall be the home team's responsibility to draw a circle (if not done by the maintenance staff prior to the game) and maintain the circle during the game.
- B. Each player is permitted four (4) innings of pitching per game, but in no sequence.
- C. The National Federation rule about the color of fielding gloves used by pitchers shall not be in effect. Pitchers may use any regulation fielding glove while pitching.
- D. National Federation High School fast pitch regulations shall be used.
- E. No intentional walks are permitted. An attempt by a coach to call for a pitch or pitches which would cause an intentional walk shall be considered a violation of Conduct Rule 7.C.
- F. Starting and replacement pitchers, if removed, may reenter the game at any time as a pitcher. This does not limit a player's ability to return to the game in another position.
- G. Warm-up pitches between innings will be limited to three (3). When a pitching change occurs: 1) The first time that a pitcher enters a game as pitcher, the warm-up limit is six (6) pitches; 2) When a pitcher reenters a game as pitcher, the warm-up limit is three (3) pitches.
- H. Pitching rules apply to all games whether completed or not.

6. CONCUSSION RULE

- A. Any player who exhibits signs, symptoms or behaviors consistent with a concussion (such as loss of consciousness, headache, dizziness, confusion or balance problems) must be immediately removed from the game, practice, or scrimmage by the player's coaches, the umpires, or WYBSL officials and shall not return to play that day. Further, the player shall not return to play until cleared with written authorization by a licensed physician which needs to be provided to the Program Director.
- B. When a player is removed from a game, practice, or scrimmage due to signs, symptoms or behaviors consistent with a concussion, his/her team's Head Coach, or Assistant Coach acting as the Head Coach, will notify the Program Director on the date of the occurrence. Additionally if a player is removed during a game, umpires shall make note of the player removed on the umpire card and notify the Umpire Director on the date of the occurrence.

7. CONDUCT –

- A. Unsportsmanlike conduct will not be tolerated in the league. Team coaches are responsible for their conduct and the conduct of their players and fans. A coach, player or fan can be ejected from a game and/or removed from the playing field area by order of an umpire, the General Manager, the Program Director if they violate a league rule of conduct, as follows:
- B. In a game, no coach may utilize any player(s) not currently assigned to his/her team roster by the League. Violation of this rule will result in automatic permanent suspension of the coach(es) involved.
- C. No coach, player or fan shall ever engage in a physical altercation with any player, umpire, coach or fan.
- D. No coach, player or fan shall intentionally violate or refuse to follow any league or game rules.
- E. No coach, player, umpire or fan shall come to the playing field under the influence of alcohol or an illegal drug; and no coach, player or umpire shall use tobacco products at the playing field during a game or practice.
- F. No coach, player or fan shall engage in grossly unsportsmanlike conduct, including, but not limited to, throwing equipment, use of profanity, arguing with an umpire over a call or directing remarks to a player, umpire, coach or fan which are of a degrading or distracting nature.
- G. Only the Head Coach, or his/her designee in the Head Coach's absence, may leave his/her designated area to dispute a judgment call by an umpire. This infraction may be penalized by either restricting to the dugout for the remainder of the game or ejecting the head coach and/or the offending coach.
- H. After each game, in the practice of good sportsmanship, all coaches and players shall form two opposing lines and proceed through a traditional, orderly "handshake line". No coach or player shall avoid participation in this line or exhibit unsportsmanlike conduct in the line.
- I. No Coach, player, parent, or fan, shall at any time, threaten, intimidate, attempt to intimidate, harm or attempt to harm, any umpire, player, coach, WYBSL official, or fan. Any person who violates this rule may immediately be banned from all WYBSL sites and activities for a period of time to be

determined by the Program Director up to and including a permanent ban. This rule shall be applied regardless of where and when the offending conduct takes place.

- J. No player may engage in an intentional act(s) which is reasonably likely to result in damage or defect in any equipment or field fixtures. The first infraction shall be a warning for the team, a second infraction from the same team the player shall receive a strike. Any infractions after the strike shall result in the player being out. Any infractions prior to the start of the game shall result in a warning to the coach, a second infraction prior to the game shall result in the head coach's suspension for that game. Examples of prohibited behavior: a player hitting home plate forcefully with a bat or hitting balls into the field fences. (Does not apply to Pitch, Hit & Run Da
- K. If a coach, player or fan is ejected from a game and/or removed from the playing field area for conduct as described above (or in the case of G. above, does not participate as described), the person shall provide a written statement describing his/her version of the events and/or other explanation to the General Manager within twenty-four (24) hours of the incident, and may not attend or participate in any practice or game until doing so. The General Manager and Program Director shall review the statement and gather any other information from other parties that they deem necessary to determine if a further penalty should be assessed. Such further penalty, if any, shall be assessed before the team's next scheduled game.
- L. Any coach who violates the above guidelines may be immediately removed from his/her position by the Program Director. In the event of such an occurrence, each coach would be provided with the opportunity to appear before the Board of Trustees at its next scheduled meeting in order to describe for the Board his/her version of the events which may exist for reinstating the coach.
- M. **WYBSL, JBBL and JGSL staff, managers, coaches and umpires are expected to enforce this policy at all times.**
- N. **Automatic Penalties** In order to clarify and standardize penalties for violations, the following automatic penalties shall apply:
 - 1) If a coach or player is ejected from a game because of a violation of the Conduct guidelines, or National Federation Rules related to unsportsmanlike acts, malicious contact or similar acts, that coach or player shall be suspended for (and shall not attend) the next game the coach or player would attend, including the next subsequent season.
 - 2) If a coach, player or fan is ejected from a game or removed from the playing field area for violation of Conduct guidelines before, during or after a game, that coach, player or fan shall be suspended for (and shall not attend) the next game the coach, player, or fan would attend, including the next subsequent season.
 - 3) If a coach, player or fan is ejected or removed as described in 1. or 2. above, and fails to comply with this policy, the applicable game shall be forfeited by the offending team.
 - 4) It shall be the offending team's responsibility to enforce this policy.
 - 5) All other provisions of the Conduct guidelines – including provisions regarding additional penalties – and the procedures described therein, shall be in full effect and shall be followed by all coaches, players and fans.
 - 6) A second violation by the same coach, player or fan shall result in further penalty – which may include suspension for the season and/or an extended period of time.

8. RULE VIOLATIONS

- A. No games may be played under protest. However, if rules have been violated, the General Manager and/or the Program Director have the authority to call "no game" and order the game to be replayed - or continued from the point of the rule violation. The complaining coach must notify the umpire and the opposing coach of his/her intention to bring a complaint to the General Manager before the next pitch after the occurrence of the disputed rule violation and must notify the General Manager (or Program Director if the General Manager is not available) of the disputed rule within two (2) hours after the end of the game.