

# **WESTERVILLE YOUTH BASEBALL AND SOFTBALL LEAGUE**

## **2024 WYBSL 9U (Green Hat) BASEBALL LEAGUE**

### **SUMMARY – PROGRAM AND RULES**

**THE GREEN HAT LEAGUE HAS MODIFIED PITCHING RULES THAT ENCOURAGE ACCURACY OVER SPEED!**

This league is composed 9U and approved 7-year-old players. The league will play baseball with modifications. The league is organized and supervised by the General Manager, under direction of the Baseball 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 AND CONDITIONS**

- A. Games are six (6) innings in length and will generally be played on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Saturdays. Make-up 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, 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.
- B. No team may score more than five (5) runs in an inning. There will be no "Run Rule." If the home team is ahead in the bottom of the sixth (6<sup>th</sup>) inning, the game is over. Games may also be complete if Rule 1C applies.
- C. Games less than six (6) innings are considered **complete** if: 1) they last at least four (4) full innings (three and one-half (3½) 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 and one-half (2½) hours 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.

#### **2. COACHING**

- A. Normal defensive alignment consists of nine (9) players – three (3) outfielders and six (6) infielders. All three (3) outfielders must be positioned in the outfield grass before each pitch.
- B. Every player will play a minimum of three (3) defensive innings per game. No player may sit out for a second (2<sup>nd</sup>) 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 (3<sup>rd</sup>) inning until all players have sat out two (2) innings, with the exception of the Pitcher or Catcher.
- C. At the end of each half inning, the first pitch must be pitched within two (2) minutes, unless the catcher is the final out, when the time limit will extend to three (3) minutes. If the defensive team is not ready to pitch at the listed time limit, a ball will be called at 30 second intervals, until the first (1<sup>st</sup>) pitch to a batter is delivered.

- a. If the catcher or pitcher are 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 or the pitcher.
  - D. If the paid umpire does not appear for a game, the Head Coaches will search for an acceptable volunteer(s). The volunteer(s) will make calls at the bases, call balls/strikes, and foul/fair balls and may position themselves either behind home plate or behind the pitcher. If no acceptable volunteer(s) can be found or agreed upon, the game will not be played and will be rescheduled by the League.
  - E. On defense, each team may have two (2) charged conferences during a regulation game. One (1) additional conference is awarded for each extra inning played. Conferences may be held on the playing field. If the two (2) charged conferences are taken in one (1) inning, the pitcher must be removed from the pitching position during the second (2<sup>nd</sup>) conference. Beginning with the third (3<sup>rd</sup>) 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.
3. **EQUIPMENT**
- A. Base distance will be 60 feet and the pitching distance will be 46 feet. The baseball used will be an official League baseball selected by the league.
  - B. The National Federation rule for bats shall not apply. All Non-wood bats used in this league shall bear the appropriate factory-marked "USABaseball" logo and shall not be more than thirty-three (33) inches in length; nor more than 2 5/8 inches in diameter, and if wood, not less than fifteen-sixteenth (15/16) inches in diameter (7/8 inch for bats less than 30") at its smallest part. Solid one-piece wood barrel bats do not require a "USABaseball" logo. Prior to each game, it shall be the responsibility of each Head Coach to check all bats to assure that only legal bats are in use during the game.
  - C. No metal spikes or metal cleats may be worn.
  - D. 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.
  - E. 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, shin guards and a **protective cup** during games, practices and while warming up a pitcher.

#### 4. **OFFENSE**

- A. 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 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.
- B. Bunting is permitted.
- C. "Slug Bunting" (fake bunt and swing) is not allowed. A batter may not bring his bat to a bunt position, withdraw it and make a swing on a single pitch, regardless if contact with the ball is made. The batter shall be declared out and the ball declared dead at the time of the infraction.
- D. A batter cannot advance to first (1<sup>st</sup>) base on a dropped third (3<sup>rd</sup>) strike.

- E. The “delay by batter” rule will not be in effect.
- F. 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 (3<sup>rd</sup>) such offense by the same team will result in the batter being called out and a bench restriction of the Head Coach. A second (2<sup>nd</sup>) offense by the same batter shall result in the batter being called out, removed from the line-up, and restricted to the bench for the remainder of the game. A fourth (4<sup>th</sup>) and any additional offense will result in the player(s) being restricted to the bench.
- G. 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.
- H. Leadoffs are not allowed. Base stealing is allowed, after a pitched ball crosses home plate. If a player leads off or leaves a base early on a pitch, the umpire shall call “dead ball” an issue 1 (one) team warning. Any additional offenses by that team will result in a “dead ball” and the runner will be called out. However, there shall be no stealing of home plate, nor advancement to home plate on an attempt to put out a runner who is attempting to steal second or third base.

## 5. DEFENSE

- A. There is no infield fly rule.
- B. Any player on the roster is permitted to pitch.
- C. Pitchers may use any regulation fielding glove, except those containing gray or white, while pitching.
- D. Each player is permitted 55 pitches a game with a maximum of 100 a week. The pitcher can finish pitching to the batter he/she is pitching to once the 55 and 100 maximum limits have been reached.
- E. Once removed as a pitcher, a player may not return in the same game as a pitcher. Exception: The starting pitcher may be removed and return to the game one (1) time. His pitch count before his removal and after his return shall be added together to determine his total number of pitches thrown.
- F. A pitching week runs from Monday through Sunday.
- G. The balk rule will not be enforced.
- H. Strike zone: Over the plate between armpits and top of knees in batter’s normal batting stance.
- I. Any pitcher hitting three (3) batters in a game must be removed from the game as a pitcher.
- J. 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 five (5) pitches; 2) when a pitcher reenters a game as pitcher, the warm-up limit is three (3) pitches.
- K. Pitching rules apply to all games whether completed or not.
- L. There shall be no walks. Upon a count of four (4) balls to any batter, a coach-pitcher from the offensive team will enter the game and continue to pitch to the batter. The player-pitcher shall remain on the field to play defense and shall remain even with the pitching rubber, no more than three feet to the right or left of the pitching rubber.
  - 1) The strike count on the batter will begin the same as before the coach-pitcher’s entry.

- 2) The coach-pitcher must be ready to pitch at all times when his/her team is at bat, must pitch in accordance with all pitching rules above and shall be limited to a maximum of three (3) pitches.
- 3) When the coach-pitcher is pitching, the batter continues to bat with the same strike count as when the player-pitcher was pitching. The strike count will continue to increase with each strike as called by the umpire.

**Clarifications:**

A. A batter with 2 strikes can get up to 3 pitches:

On the 1<sup>st</sup> pitch:

- 1) If the batter swings and misses, it's strike 3, batter's out.
- 2) If the batter takes the pitch and the umpire calls a strike, it's strike 3, batter's out.
- 3) If the batter takes the pitch and the umpire calls a ball, the batter gets a 2<sup>nd</sup> pitch.

If there is a 2<sup>nd</sup> pitch:

- 1) If the batter swings and misses, it's strike 3, batter's out.
- 2) If the batter takes the pitch and the umpire calls a strike, it's strike 3, batter's out.
- 3) If the batter takes the pitch and the umpire calls a ball, the batter gets a 3<sup>rd</sup> pitch.
- 4) If there is a 3<sup>rd</sup> pitch:
- 5) If the batter swings and misses, it's strike 3, batter's out.
- 6) If the batter takes the pitch, it's strike 3, batter's out.

B. A batter with 1 strike can get up to 3 pitches:

On the 1st pitch:

- 1) If the batter swings and misses, it's strike 2, batter gets a 2<sup>nd</sup> pitch.
- 2) If the batter takes the pitch and the umpire calls a strike, it's strike 2, batter gets a 2<sup>nd</sup> pitch.
- 3) If the batter takes the pitch and the umpire calls a ball, the batter gets a 2<sup>nd</sup> pitch.

If there is a 2<sup>nd</sup> pitch:

- 1) If the batter swings and misses, and it's strike 2, batter gets a 3<sup>rd</sup> pitch.
- 2) If the batter swings and misses, and it's strike 3, batter is out.
- 3) If the batter takes the pitch and the umpire calls a strike, and it's strike 2, batter gets a 3<sup>rd</sup> pitch.
- 4) If the batter takes the pitch and the umpire calls a strike, and it's strike 3, batter is out.
- 5) If the batter takes the pitch and the umpire calls a ball, the batter gets a 3<sup>rd</sup> pitch.

C. If there is a 3<sup>rd</sup> pitch:

- 1) If the batter swings and misses, it's strike 3, batter's out.
- 2) If the batter takes the pitch, it's strike 3, batter's out.
- 3) A batter with 0 strikes gets 3 pitches.

- 4) In all cases, on the 3<sup>rd</sup> pitch if the batter hits foul balls, the batter continues to hit until he either puts the ball in play or strikes out.
- D. The coach-pitcher will continue to pitch until either a hit ball is put into play, the batter strikes out, or the number of allowable pitches is exhausted.
  - E. When the coach-pitcher can pitch only one (1) more pitch, the batter must swing at the pitch. If the batter does not swing, or if the batter swings and misses the pitch, the batter is out, and a strike out is recorded. If this pitch is fouled, a replacement pitch is awarded.
  - F. When a batter hits a coach-pitcher's pitch, the coach-pitcher shall immediately move from the pitching area toward the foul line in a direction away from any play. If he/she does not do so, the ball will be considered a dead ball, the batter shall be declared out and any runners will not be allowed to advance.
  - G. The coach-pitcher shall make every effort to avoid contact with a hit or thrown ball or inhibiting a defensive play. If he/she does make accidental contact with a hit or thrown ball or accidentally inhibits a defense play, the play will be considered a dead ball. Any/All runners will not be allowed to advance, and the pitch will be replayed. If in the umpire's judgment there was not an attempt by the coach-pitcher to avoid a hit ball, thrown ball, or inhibiting a defensive play, the play will be considered an immediate dead ball, the batter will be declared out, and any runners will not be allowed to advance.
  - H. During the coach-pitcher's time pitching, there will be no stealing or bunting allowed. Additionally, no "hit by pitch" call will be made.

**Clarifications:**

1. When a coach has to come in to pitch, the pitch count for the player that is pitching is paused and then re started at the beginning of the next batter.