

WESTERVILLE YOUTH BASEBALL AND SOFTBALL LEAGUE

2024 WYBSL 9U (Green Hat) SOFTBALL 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 fast pitch softball with modifications. The league is organized and supervised by the General Manager, under the direction of the Softball 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/or during the week following the end of the regular scheduled season and will be scheduled as necessary by the league, 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 (6th) inning, the game is over. Games may also be complete if Rule 1 "E" 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 (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.

2. COACHING

- A. Normal defensive alignment consists of ten (10) players - four (4) outfielders and six (6) infielders. All outfielders must be positioned at least 20 feet behind the base paths in the outfield before each pitch. On some fields this will be in the grass while on other fields this may be within the infield dirt area.
- B. 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.

- 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 (1st) 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. 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.

3. EQUIPMENT

- A. Base distance will be 60 feet and the pitching distance will be 35 feet. The ball used will be an 11" softball selected by the league.
- B. All softball bats must be factory marked with the ASA 2004 certification logo or USA softball certification 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. 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. Organized chants and cheers are permitted only from the time a pitched ball crosses home plate until the pitcher comes set on the pitches 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. 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 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 the bleachers that have been provided.
- B. Bunting is permitted.

- C. A batter cannot advance to first (1st) base on a dropped third (3rd) strike.
- D. 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 line-up, and restricted to the bench for the remainder of the game.
- E. A player hit by a pitched ball is awarded first base provided the player makes a visible effort to avoid being hit. Visible effort is regulated by the umpire.
- F. 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.
- G. Lead offs are allowed only 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. Base stealing is only allowed to second base and to third base. If there is a runner on first base during a steal, the runner on first base may not advance. If a ball is overthrown to second base or third base on an attempted steal, the runner cannot advance to the next base. However, in all cases, a runner tagged with a live ball when not on a base shall be out.

Clarifications:

1. Lead offs may take place when either the player-pitcher or coach-pitcher is pitching.
2. A runner can be called out for leaving a base early (before the ball leaves the pitcher’s hand) when either the player-pitcher or coach-pitcher is pitching.
3. If during an attempted steal of third base by a runner the catcher’s throw to third base goes out of the field of play, the runner cannot advance to home.
4. After receiving a pitch from either the player-pitcher or the coach-pitcher, a catcher may throw to first or third base in an attempt to get a runner out before they return to the base (attempt to “pick-off” the runner). If the ball is overthrown or underthrown past the fielder covering the base, the runner cannot advance, nor may any other runners advance that might be on other bases. If the overthrown or underthrown ball goes out of the field of play, no runners may advance.
5. Player-pitchers that catch the ball being returned to them by the catcher, may throw to any of the bases in an attempt to get a runner out before they return to the base (attempt to “pick-off” the runner). If the ball is overthrown or underthrown past the fielder covering the base, the runner cannot advance, nor may any other runners advance that might be on other bases. If the overthrown or underthrown ball goes out of the field of play, no runners may advance.

6. During the coach-pitcher's time on the field pitching or preparing to pitch, no throws to any of the bases may take place by either the player-pitcher or coach-pitcher in an attempt to get a runner out before they return to the base (attempt to "pick-off" the runner).
 7. Runners may not advance on balls overthrown or underthrown from the catcher to either the player-pitcher or the coach-pitcher.
- H. 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 Exception below).

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.

Exception 2: The batter-runner or runner may touch the white or colored base:

- 1) When advancing on balls hit to the outfield with no play being attempted at first base, or when returning to first base.
- 2) When tagging up on a fly ball.
- 3) When returning to the bases on an attempted pickoff play.
- 4) 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. DEFENSE

- A. There is no infield fly rule.
- B. 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.
- C. A batted ball that is hit into fair territory is a live ball. The ball is dead when in possession of the pitcher within the pitching circle, unless the pitcher is making a play on a base runner. Exception: If, in the judgment of the umpire, a ball is in the possession of a defensive player at a base (including home plate) and there is no attempt by any base runner to advance, the umpire may call "time out"; in such case, the play shall be considered complete, and the ball shall be dead.
- D. Any player on the roster is permitted to pitch. Each player is permitted two (2) innings of pitching per game, but in no sequence, and a maximum of four (4) innings per week. Any pitcher hitting three (3) batters in an inning or five (5) batters in a game must be removed from the game as a pitcher.
- E. 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.
- F. Delivery of a single pitch in an inning constitutes having pitched a full inning.
- G. National Federation High School regulations shall be used with the following modifications:
 - 1) The pitcher shall take a position with the pivot foot in contact with the pitching rubber; the non-pivot foot can start on, behind or in front of the pitching rubber as

long as it remains partially within the length of the pitching rubber. The hands shall be separated. The ball can be in either hand.

- 2) The pitcher must bring her hands together for at least one (1) second, but not more than 10 seconds before releasing the ball.
 - 3) After the required pause, the pitch starts when any motion that is part of the pitcher's wind-up takes place.
 - 4) A legal delivery is one which:
 - i. The ball is delivered in an underhand motion at any speed, and
 - ii. The hand is at least as close to the body as the elbow, and
 - 5) No attempt to deceive the batter in any manner shall be allowed; this includes the intentional delivery of pitches at different speeds or with different arcs by the same pitcher. In the judgment of the umpire, if an attempt to deceive has been made by a pitcher, one (1) warning will be issued by the umpire to the pitcher; a second (2nd) violation will result in the removal of the pitcher from the pitching position for the remainder of the game.
- H. 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.
- I. 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.
- J. 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) **Clarification:** The coach-pitcher must pitch underhand and attempt to have no arch on the ball to all players.
 - 4) 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.
 - 5) **Clarifications:**
 - 6) A batter with 2 strikes can get up to 3 pitches:
 - 7) On the 1st pitch:
 - a. If the batter swings and misses, it's strike 3, batter's out.
 - b. If the batter takes the pitch and the umpire calls a strike, it's strike 3, batter's out.
 - c. If the batter takes the pitch and the umpire calls a ball, the batter gets a 2nd pitch.
 - 8) If there is a 2nd pitch:
 - a. If the batter swings and misses, it's strike 3, batter's out.

- b. If the batter takes the pitch and the umpire calls a strike, it's strike 3, batter's out.
 - c. If the batter takes the pitch and the umpire calls a ball, the batter gets a 3rd pitch.
 - d. If there is a 3rd pitch:
 - e. If the batter swings and misses, it's strike 3, batter's out.
 - f. If the batter takes the pitch, it's strike 3, batter's out.
- K. A batter with 1 strike can get up to 3 pitches:
- L. On the 1st pitch:
 - 1) If the batter swings and misses, it's strike 2, batter gets a 2nd pitch.
 - 2) If the batter takes the pitch and the umpire calls a strike, it's strike 2, batter gets a 2nd pitch.
 - 3) If the batter takes the pitch and the umpire calls a ball, the batter gets a 2nd pitch.
- M. If there is a 2nd pitch:
 - 1) If the batter swings and misses, and it's strike 2, batter gets a 3rd 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 3rd 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 3rd pitch.
- N. If there is a 3rd 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 3rd pitch if the batter hits foul balls, the batter continues to hit until she either puts the ball in play or strikes out.
- O. 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.
- P. 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.
- Q. 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. The coach-pitcher may return to the pitching area only after a dead ball or the play is completed.
- R. 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.

- S. During the coach-pitcher's time pitching, there will be no stealing or bunting allowed. Additionally, no "hit by pitch" call will be made.
- T. **Clarification:** If a runner on second base attempts to steal third base while the coach-pitcher is pitching and the ball is NOT hit into play by the batter, the umpire will require the runner to return to second base. The pitch will count toward the amount of pitches allowed to be thrown to the batter.
- U. 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.
- V. Pitching rules apply to all games whether completed or not.