

# **WESTERVILLE YOUTH BASEBALL AND SOFTBALL LEAGUE**

## **2024 CO-ED TEE-BALL LEAGUE - 4 & 5 YEARS OLD**

### **SUMMARY – PROGRAM AND RULES**

This league is composed of 4 & 5 year old boys and girls (Co-Ed). The league is non-competitive with the emphasis placed upon learning baseball or softball skills in all positions. This league is organized and supervised by the Baseball and Softball Program Directors, under the direction of the WYBSL Board of Trustees. Games are played in accordance with National Federation High School baseball rules which would be applicable to Tee-Ball, with the modifications and clarifications below. The rules below are subject to change at the discretion and approval of the WYBSL Board of Trustees.

#### **1. GAMES PROCEDURES**

- A. Games will normally be played on Wednesday, Thursdays 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 score shall be taken and no standings will be posted at this level of play. Each player will receive a participation trophy at the end of the season.
- C. Ten (10) players shall be allowed to bat in an offensive inning, regardless of the number of outs. The batting order will continue with the next person in the batting order at bat for the next inning. You may not start the batting order all over each inning.
- D. Games will be four (4) innings in length. Games less than four (4) innings are considered complete if they last at least three (3) full innings and are stopped for any reason. 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, etc.) and all rules apply as if it was one continuous game.
- E. No new inning is permitted to begin more than one and one-half (1½) hours after the start of the game. A new inning is defined as beginning as soon as the last batter has completed their at-bat.
- F. A team must start, play, and finish with a minimum of seven (7) rostered players. If a team begins with, or at any time during the game has less than seven (7) players, the game is considered complete and shall not be rescheduled. The opposing team will supply players in order to complete the game.

#### **2. COACHING**

- A. Defensive teams consist of ten (10) players – four (4) outfielders and six (6) infielders. All outfielders must be positioned in the outfield grass before each swing of the batter. When a team is required to play with nine (9) players, the team will play with only three (3) outfielders and six (6) infielders (including a pitcher and catcher). When a team is required to play with eight (8) players, one (1) outfielder and the catcher are eliminated. When a team is required to play with seven (7) players, two (2) outfielders and the catcher are eliminated. Defensive players shall not be substituted for or switched in the middle of an inning except because of injury or sickness.

- B. Every player will play a minimum of two (2) defensive innings per game. Every player must play an infield position and an outfield position during each game, and may play no more than one (1) inning at any position. **For the purpose of this rule, the infield position is defined as any infield position other than catcher.** A player must enter the game no later than the defensive third (3<sup>rd</sup>) inning. 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.
- C. Prior to the start of each game, each team shall exchange their defensive player rotation plan and batting order with the opposing team. During a game, each team shall also notify the opposing team of any change in the defensive plan or batting order.
- D. Each team will provide an adult parent/family volunteer to count pitches, call foul balls, and call safe/out at the bases. Volunteers should be recruited by each Head Coach. Each team should have two designated volunteers; however, only one from each team will be used during the game. When a team is on defense, that team's volunteer shall be located behind home plate and will count pitches and call plays at third base and home plate; when a team is on offense, that team's volunteer shall be positioned to call plays at first and second base. The volunteers will change positions after each half-inning.
- Knowledge of the rules is helpful, but not essential. Coaches are responsible for explaining the rules to their own team volunteer.
  - Both volunteers should go over the rules with both coaches prior to the start of the game to eliminate any misinterpretation of the rules.
  - Prior to the start of the game, the volunteer will draw an arc between the foul lines, approximately three (3) feet from the center of home plate. A hit ball must land beyond the arc; otherwise it is a foul ball.
  - A volunteer shall not have the authority to eject a player, coach, or spectator from a game. A volunteer should report any observed unsportsmanlike behavior to the coaches and to the Program Director for review.

### 3. EQUIPMENT

- A. Base distance will be 45 feet and the pitching rubber shall be positioned 30 feet from the rear point of the home plate attached to the batting tee.
- B. The ball used will be a "*Reduced Injury Factor 1*" baseball selected by the league.
- C. Prior to the start of a game, an adult parent/family volunteer will draw an arc between the foul lines approximately three (3) feet from the center of home plate. A hit ball must land beyond the arc, otherwise it is a foul ball.
- D. Any bat that is factory-marked "Tee-Ball", "USABaseball", or "Softball" (Spring Girls, Fall Co-Ed) may be used. Bats used in this league shall not be more than thirty-three (33) inches in length. 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.
- E. A batting tee shall be used at home plate for all batters. Either the adult parent/family volunteer or a coach shall put the ball on the tee for the batter to hit. The batting tee will be removed by the adult parent/family volunteer prior to a play at home plate.
- F. No metal spikes or metal cleats may be worn.

- G. Players must not wear jewelry, metal hair ornaments or similar items during practices, scrimmages, or games, for their safety.

#### 4. OFFENSE

- A. As a safety measure, only the batter may take practice swings and they must be inside the field of play. There will be no practice swings by “on-deck” or other batters.
- B. A strike is defined as a foul ball or a swing and miss of the ball. There will be a maximum of three (3) foul balls on the third (3<sup>rd</sup>) strike. If a player has two (2) strikes and then fouls the ball three (3) times, the batter will be called out.
- C. A batter who throws the bat will be verbally warned by the adult parent/family volunteer **one (1)** time. If the same batter again throws the bat during that game, that batter will be called out. Warnings will be noted by the coach. In all cases, a dead ball will be declared and no runners may advance.
- D. No bunting, stealing or leading off is permitted at this level of play. If a player leads off, the adult parent/family volunteer shall call “dead ball” and the player leading off will be told to return to the base by the adult parent/family volunteer.
- E. Sliding is not encouraged. However, if a runner does slide, the runner will not be called out.
- F. Runners may not advance once the ball has been returned to the infield. A runner who leaves a base after the ball is dead must return to the base. At the time of a dead ball, if a runner has passed a base and is advancing to the next base, the runner will be awarded that base. This is determined by the adult parent/family volunteer.
- G. A coach may not touch a base runner in order to aid or restrict movement. If a base runner is touched, the base runner will be called out.
- 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.

#### 5. DEFENSE

- A. A batted ball hit into fair territory is a live ball. A ball is considered dead when a thrown ball is returned to the infield. In the case of an overthrow at a base or home plate, the ball will be considered dead whether the fielder catches it or not.
- B. There is no infield fly rule.
- C. The pitcher must maintain contact with the pitching rubber until the ball is hit. If the pitcher leaves the rubber before the ball is hit, the batter is safe and all runners will be awarded one base.
- D. **Players.** No fielder can be positioned closer than 30 feet to home plate – and the pitcher must remain in contact with the pitching rubber – until contact is made by the batter.
- E. Catchers must wear a batting helmet when playing this position.
- F. For safety, catchers will stay outside the hitting area until the ball is hit. Once the ball is hit, the catcher may assume the catching position.
- G. **Coaches.** There will be no more than two (2) defensive coaches allowed on the field. Coaching positions will be behind the infielders in such a way that they do not interfere with play.