

# WESTERVILLE YOUTH BASEBALL AND SOFTBALL LEAGUE

## 2026 WYBSL 17U (BLUE HAT) SOFTBALL LEAGUE

### SUMMARY - PROGRAM AND RULES

This league is composed of 17U and approved 12-year-old girls. The league will play fast pitch softball with modifications. The league is organized and supervised by the 17U 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, FIELD EQUIPMENT AND CONDITIONS

- A. Games are seven (7) innings in length and will generally be played on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays. 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 Saturdays and Sundays 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.
- 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 seventh (7<sup>th</sup>) inning, the game is over. Games may also be complete if Rule 1C applies.
- C. 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.

#### 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 unless the only player that has not sat one inning is the current 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, unless the only player that has not sat two innings is the current Pitcher or Catcher.
- C. At the end of the 3<sup>rd</sup> out of each half inning, the first pitch must be pitched within 2 minutes, unless the catcher is the final out, when the time limit will extend to 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 1<sup>st</sup> pitch to a batter is delivered.

1. 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, typically the last out) may substitute as a runner.
- D. If the paid umpire does not appear for a game, the game shall not be played and will be rescheduled by the Board.
  - E. Organized chants and cheers are permitted only from the time a pitched ball crosses home plate until the pitcher comes set on the pitcher's 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.

### 3. EQUIPMENT

- A. 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.
- 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.

### 4. OFFENSE

- F. 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 the bench fence and located so as not to interfere with game play or pose a safety risk. 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.
- G. Bunting is permitted.
- H. **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.
- I. 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.

- J. 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.
- K. 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.**
- L. 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).

**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.

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. The infield fly rule will be in effect.
- 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. Any player on the roster is permitted to pitch. Each pitcher is permitted four (4) innings of pitching per game and six (6) innings of pitcher per week.
- D. 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.
- E. A pitching week runs from Monday through Sunday.
- F. National Federation High School fast pitch regulations shall be used.

- G. Delivery of a single pitch in an inning constitutes having pitched a full inning.
- H. 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.
- I. 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.
- 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.