

## **WESTERVILLE YOUTH BASEBALL AND SOFTBALL LEAGUE**

### **2026 WYBSL 8U (COACH-PITCH) BASEBALL LEAGUE**

#### **SUMMARY – PROGRAM AND RULES**

This league is composed of 8U players and approved 6-year-old players. The league will play with the "Reduced Injury Factor 5" Baseball and, although scores and standings will be kept, the main emphasis will be on skills and a basic understanding of the game. The league is organized and supervised by the Coach-Pitch Baseball General Manager, under the direction of the Baseball Program Director and the WYBSL Board of Trustees. Games are played in accordance with National Federation High School rules which would be applicable to 8U (Coach-Pitch), with the following modifications and clarifications:

#### **1. GAME PROCEDURES**

- A. Games are six (6) innings in length and will generally be played on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays. 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 & Sundays 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. Scores shall be kept and standings will be posted at this level of play.
- C. Each offensive inning shall consist of **three (3) outs** or **five (5) runs**, whichever comes first. 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. There will be no "Run Rule." If the home team is ahead in the bottom of the 6th, the game is over. Games may also be complete if All Rules 1E applies.
- E. Games less than six (6) innings are considered **complete** if 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. 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 in the outfield grass before each pitch. When a team is required to play with nine (9) players, the team will play with three

- (3) outfielders and six (6) infielders (including a pitcher and catcher). When a team is required to play with eight (8) players, the positions of pitcher and catcher are required. 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 three (3) defensive innings per game. A 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 inning. This will ensure the player a minimum of nine (9) defensive outs. No player may sit out for a second (2nd) inning until all players have sat out one (1) inning. No player may sit out for a third (3rd) inning until all players have sat out two (2) innings.
  - C. Prior to the start of each game, each team **MUST** exchange their defensive player rotation plan and batting order with the opposing team. During a game, each team **MUST** also notify the opposing team of any change in the defensive plan or batting order. If a game goes into extra innings, the player rotation plan will revert back to the rotation plan in effect at the beginning of the game.
  - D. 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.
    - i. If the catcher is on base with two (2) outs, the last batter 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.
  - E. 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.
    - i. Knowledge of the rules is helpful. Head Coaches are responsible for explaining the rules to their own team volunteers.
    - ii. Both volunteers should go over the rules with both coaches prior to the start of the game to eliminate any misinterpretation of the rules.
    - iii. A volunteer shall not act as a coach when performing duties on the field and, as such, may not make any coaching calls or moves to encourage or instruct a batter, base runner, or fielder.
    - iv. 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 60 feet. The pitching rubber shall be positioned 42 feet from the rear point of home plate. The ball used will be a "Reduced Injury Factor 5" 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.

### 4. OFFENSE

- A. As a safety measure, only the batter may take practice swings and they must be inside of the **BATTER'S BOX**. **There will be no practice swings by "on-deck" or other batters.**
- B. Each coach-pitcher will pitch to his/her own team's players.
- C. The coach-pitcher must pitch from the pitching rubber.
- D. The coach-pitcher must pitch overhand to all players from a standing position.
- E. Each batter will receive a maximum of **seven (7)** pitches. If, after the seventh pitch, the batter has not hit the ball into fair territory or struck out, the batter will be called out. However, in the case of a foul ball on the seventh pitch, the batter shall receive additional pitches as long as the batter continues to hit foul balls and is not called out. There shall be no walks. The "delay by batter" rule will not be in effect.
- F. A batter who swings and misses three (3) times is out (three strikes). A foul tip is considered a strike, including the third strike. A foul ball is considered a strike except on the third strike or as described in Rule e above; however, if a foul ball or foul tip, which goes above the batter's head, is caught by the catcher or any other fielder within the field of play before the ball touches the ground, the batter shall be called out.

**Clarification:** If the catcher catches a foul tip on a third strike the batter is out.

- G. 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, that batter will be called out. Warnings will be noted by the opposing coach. In all cases, a dead ball will be declared, and no runners may advance.
- H. If a batter is hit by a pitched ball, no base will be awarded.
- I. 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 given one warning and told to return to the base by the adult parent/family volunteer; if the player leads off again during the same time as a base runner, the player will be called out.
- J. Sliding is not encouraged. However, if a runner does slide, the runner will not be called out.
- K. As soon as a ball is hit by a batter, 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 and the pitch will be replayed. The coach-pitcher may return to the pitching area only after a dead ball or the play is completed.
- L. The coach-pitcher shall make every effort to avoid contact with a batted or thrown ball in fair territory to avoid inhibiting a defensive play. However, if accidental interference occurs in fair territory, the adult parent/family volunteer will call a dead ball and the pitch will be replayed.
- M. The coach-pitcher is not a base coach and, as such, may not make any coaching calls or moves to encourage or instruct a base 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 and in possession of any infielder (outfielder running ball into infield will not stop play). 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. No player, including the catcher, may block a base or home plate from a base runner, whether or not a play can be made. The penalty for a violation of this rule shall be the award of the base to the runner.
- D. **Players.** No fielder can be positioned closer than 42 feet to home plate and the player designated as the pitcher must remain within three feet, to the right or left of the pitching rubber until the ball is hit. The player designated as pitcher may not step in front of or obstruct the coach who is pitching.
- E. **Coaches.** No more than two (2) defensive coaches shall be allowed on the field. These coaches must remain behind the outfielders at all times and may not interfere with the play of the game. They may not touch or interfere with the ball at any time; if the ball is touched or interfered with by either of these coaches, it will be considered in play and base runners shall advance at their own risk.