

# **WESTERVILLE YOUTH BASEBALL AND SOFTBALL LEAGUE**

## **2021 SPRING TEE-BALL LEAGUE - BOYS & GIRLS (Co-Ed) 6 YEARS OLD AND UNDER**

### **SUMMARY – PROGRAM AND RULES**

The Spring league is composed of 4, 5, and 6 year old boys and girls (Co-Ed). The leagues are non-competitive with the emphasis placed upon learning baseball or softball skills in all positions. Spring leagues are organized and supervised by the Boy's Tee-Ball General Manager, under the direction of the WYBSL Commissioners and the Boy's Program Director, and the Girl's Tee-Ball General Manager, under the direction of the Girl's Program Director. The Spring league is organized and supervised by the WYBSL Fall Ball Committee (the "Committee"). All leagues are 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, FIELD EQUIPMENT AND CONDITIONS**

- A. Prior to the start of a game, only the WYBSL Fields Director (or other Board designee) has the authority to cancel the game. At scheduled game time and throughout the game, the authority to stop play because of darkness, inclement weather or other playing conditions rests with the Head Coaches, or if present, the General Manager (Spring), a Committee member (Fall), or Board member. Games will be rescheduled by the Board, with final confirmation by the Program Director.
- B. All games will start promptly as scheduled. Make-up games will be rescheduled by the Board.
  - 1. **Make-up Games:** will normally be played on the next available Saturday or Sunday, but may be scheduled based upon field availability and/or other previously scheduled make-up games.
- C. The home team will have the field for practice until twenty (20) minutes before game time, with the visiting team practicing after the home team until five (5) minutes before game time.
- D. The home team coaches shall be responsible to install the bases and if necessary a non-permanent pitching rubber at the required distances prior to start of the game and remove and secure them in the field equipment box at the completion of the game.
- E. 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.
  - Spring Boys and Fall Co-Ed:** The ball used will be a 9" "*Reduced Injury Factor*" ball selected by the league.
  - Spring Girls:** The ball used will be a 10" "*Reduced Injury Factor*" ball selected by the league.
- F. No score shall be taken and no standings will be posted at this level of play. Each player will receive a trophy at the end of the season.
- G. 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.
- H. 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.

- I. 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.
- J. It is a part of good sportsmanship that a Head Coach will notify the General Manager (Spring)/the Committee (Fall), and the opposing Head Coach as soon as he/she knows that it will be absolutely impossible for his/her team to appear with the required minimum of players for a scheduled game or make-up game. As a courtesy, it is expected this notification to be made as soon as possible – even if it is done days or weeks in advance.

Upon such notification, neither team shall appear for the scheduled game. However, this courtesy notification does not automatically trigger a “no game”.

A “no game” will not be awarded when the weather and/or field conditions would not allow a game to be started. In such a case, the game will be re-scheduled as a make-up game at a future date.

## **2. HEAD and ASSISTANT COACHES' RESPONSIBILITIES**

- A. Each team shall be issued an equipment bag and equipment box key prior to the start of the season. These must be cleaned and returned to the General Manager (Spring) or the Committee (Fall) within fourteen (14) days of the team's last game (or by a date specified as the return date) or the coach will be held financially responsible for the value of the equipment.
- B. Adult coaches are not required to be in the uniform of his/her team at the team's games or while acting in any coaching capacity at any time during the game (for example, as a base coach). But, if a coach wears a shirt or head covering with any inscription, words, designs or team logo, it must be the team shirt or cap supplied by the league, unless written approval is obtained from the Program Director (or his/her designee)
- C. It will be the responsibility of the Head Coach to secure an adult volunteer among the parents of his/her team to provide coverage at league-assigned time(s) in the concession trailer. If the Head Coach is unable to secure a volunteer parent or other adult to provide coverage, it shall be the responsibility of the Head Coach to provide such coverage himself/herself. **If no adult from the team provides coverage at a league-assigned time for the team, the Head Coach shall be charged with a one-game suspension, to be served at the Coach's next game following the violation, including the next subsequent season.**
- D. 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.
- E. **Defensive 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.
- F. If both coaches are responsible for reporting the score. The Home Team is responsible for entering the score and if required, the innings pitched or pitch count for the game on the online site. The home team must enter the score within three hours after the start of the game. The Visiting Team must then confirm or challenge the score within three and a half hours of the start of the game but will not be penalized if the Home Team has not entered the score in the required amount of time. For the first score not reported in the above time limit, the Head Coach will receive a warning. **A second violation will result in a one-game suspension for the Head Coach.** Further violations will result in additional penalties.

- G. Head Coaches, or designated Assistant Coaches, shall have responsibility for all matters that take place on, and in the vicinity or, the field in which a game, practice, or scrimmage is taking place. This includes assuring that all WYBSL rules and policies are followed and adhered to. If a General Manager (Spring), Committee member (Fall), or Board member is present during a game, practice, or scrimmage they may intercede if they deem it necessary.
- H. If a team does not have their Head Coach or one of their Assistant Coaches present at a practice – or for both teams, in case of a scrimmage or game – then the practice, scrimmage, or game shall not be played.
- I. A coach is permitted to use a scorekeeping and/or pitch-counting application on an electronic device. The use of these electronic devices will be limited to the coaches box on the field and dugout, providing the use of such device does not interfere with the progress of the game. Teams however cannot use electronic devices on the field for voice communication, electronic audio, and/or video recording.

### 3. PLAYERS

- 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. Each player will be given a team shirt and team cap, which the player may keep, prior to the first scheduled game. Each player must provide, at their own expense, a fielder's glove. During a game, no player will be allowed to play without wearing the team shirt and team cap supplied by the league (if the player does not have his/her team cap, no head covering may be worn on defense). During games and practices, when a player is the batter or a base runner, the team cap must be replaced or covered by a batting helmet.

No additions, subtractions or changes may be made in team shirts and caps without the express written permission of the Program Director (or his/her designee). If such alteration is approved, all coaches and players of the team must wear shirts and/or caps that are altered as approved. Exception: A player, at the player's own expense, may have the player's name added on the back of the team shirt above the number.

- C. No metal spikes or cleats may be worn.
- D. Catchers must wear a batting helmet when playing this position.
- E. 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.
- F. Players must not wear jewelry, metal hair ornaments or similar items during practices, scrimmages, or games, for their safety.
- G. 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.

- H. **Defensive 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.

#### 4. BATTING AND BASE RUNNING

- A. A continuous batting order will be used. Each player in attendance is listed in the batting order and bats in that order throughout the game. If a player is late for a game, the player's name is placed at the bottom of the batting order.
- B. 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.
- 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. 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.
- G. Prior to games and/or scrimmages, batting aides (such as; hit sticks, wiffle balls, hitting nets, and hit-a-way devices), may only be used by players in the outfield grass between the foul lines during the time that the player's team is to have the field for warm-ups (see Rule 1.D. above). Batting aides may not be used during a game or scrimmage. After games or scrimmages, batting aides may only be used in the outfield grass between the foul lines on the field which the game or scrimmage was played, and if there is not another game, scrimmage, or practice scheduled to use the field. Additionally, no batting practice, such as "soft-toss" or "flip" drills, causing balls to be hit against backstops or fencing, is allowing at any time, including practices, scrimmages and games. Only bats and devices designed to remain part of the bat, such as weighted bats, batting donuts or wind resistant devices are allowable during games.
- H. 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.
- 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 told to return to the base by the adult parent/family volunteer.
- J. 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.

- K. There is no infield fly rule.
- L. Sliding is not encouraged. However, if a runner does slide, the runner will not be called out.
- M. 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.
- N. 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.
- O. 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.
- P. 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. PITCHERS**

- A. 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.

## **6. ADULT PARENT/FAMILY VOLUNTEERS**

- A. Each team will provide its own adult parent/family volunteer to count batters, 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 offense, that team’s volunteer shall be located behind the plate and will count batters, call fair/foul balls, and call plays at third base and home plate; when a team is on defense, that team’s volunteer shall be positioned to call plays at first and second base. The volunteers will change positions after each half-inning.
- B. Knowledge of the rules is helpful, but not essential. Coaches are responsible for explaining the rules to their own team volunteer.
- C. Both volunteers should go over the rules with both coaches prior to the start of the game to eliminate any misinterpretation of the rules.
- D. 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.
- E. 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.

## **7. CONCUSSION RULE**

- A. Any player who exhibits signs, symptoms or behaviors consistent with a concussion (such as loss of consciousness, headache, dizziness, confusion or balance problems) must be immediately removed from the game, practice, or scrimmage by the player’s coaches or WYBSL officials and shall not return to play that day. Further, the player shall not return to play until cleared with written authorization by a licensed physician which needs to be provided to the appropriate Program Director.



B. When a player is removed from a game, practice, or scrimmage due to signs, symptoms or behaviors consistent with a concussion, his/her team's Head Coach, or Assistant Coach acting as the Head Coach, will notify the appropriate Program Director on the date of the occurrence.

**8. CONDUCT.** Unsportsmanlike conduct will not be tolerated in the league. Team coaches are responsible for their conduct and the conduct of their players and fans. A coach, player, or fan can be ejected from a game and/or removed from the playing field area by order of a General Manager (Spring), a Commissioner (Spring), a Committee member (Fall), or WYBSL Board member if they violate a league rule of conduct, as follows:

- A. In a game, no coach may utilize any player(s) not currently assigned to his/her team roster by the League. Violation of this rule will result in automatic permanent suspension of the coach(es) involved.
- B. No coach, player or fan shall ever engage in a physical altercation with any player, adult parent/family volunteer, coach or fan.
- C. No coach, player or fan shall intentionally violate or refuse to follow any league or game rules.
- D. No coach, player, adult parent/family volunteer or fan shall come to the playing field under the influence of alcohol or an illegal drug; and no coach, player or umpire shall use tobacco products at the playing field during a game or practice.
- E. No coach, player or fan shall engage in grossly unsportsmanlike conduct, including, but not limited to, throwing equipment, use of profanity, arguing with an adult parent/family volunteer over a call or directing remarks to a player, adult parent/family volunteer, coach or fan which are of a degrading or distracting nature.
- F. Only the Head Coach, or his/her designee in the Head Coach's absence, may dispute a judgment call by an adult parent/family volunteer. Disputes at this level should be rare and should be handled by a discussion involving **only** the adult parent/family volunteer and Head Coaches.
- G. After each game, in the practice of good sportsmanship, all coaches and players shall form two opposing lines and proceed through a traditional, orderly "handshake line". No coach or player shall avoid participation in this line or exhibit unsportsmanlike conduct in the line.
- H. No Coach, player, parent, or fan, shall at any time, threaten, intimidate, attempt to intimidate, harm or attempt to harm, any umpire, adult parent/family volunteer, player, coach, WYBSL official, or fan. Any person who violates this rule may immediately be banned from all WYBSL sites and activities for a period of time to be determined by the appropriate Program Director (Spring) or the Committee (Fall) up to and including a permanent ban. This rule shall be applied regardless of where and when the offending conduct takes place.
- I. No player may engage in an intentional act(s) which is reasonably likely to result in damage or defect in any equipment or field fixtures. The first infraction shall be a warning for the team, a second infraction from the same team the player shall receive a strike. Any infractions after the strike shall result in the player being out. Any infractions prior to the start of the game shall result in a warning to the coach, a second infraction prior to the game shall result in the head coach's suspension for that game. Examples of prohibited behavior: a player hitting home plate forcefully with a bat or hitting balls into the field fences. (Does not apply to Pitch, Hit & Run Day)
- J. J. Chants/intentional distractions/loud noises (natural or artificial) directed at the opponent's pitcher prior to her pitching, or the batter getting ready to hit, or a fielder getting ready to make a play is not good sportsmanship. We should strive to have our young players play to the best of their ability and let their natural talent be the barometer of their success. This is unsportsmanlike behavior and shall not be tolerated in the WYBSL. Umpires, coaches, players and fans need to work

together for the benefit of the softball players. The positive values that are learned at the softball diamond will serve the young players long after their season ends.

If a coach, player or fan is ejected from a game and/or removed from the playing field area for conduct as described above (or in the case of G. above, does not participate as described), the person shall provide a written statement describing his/her version of the events and/or other explanation to the General Manager (Spring) or Committee (Fall) within twenty-four (24) hours of the incident, and may not attend or participate in any practice or game until doing so. The General Manager and appropriate Program Director (Spring) or Committee (Fall) shall review the statement and gather any other information from other parties that they deem necessary to determine if a further penalty should be assessed. Such further penalty, if any, shall be assessed before the team's next scheduled game.

Any coach who violates the above guidelines may be immediately removed from his/her position by the appropriate Program Director (Spring) or Committee (Fall). In the event of such an occurrence, each coach would be provided with the opportunity to appear before the Board of Trustees at its next scheduled meeting in order to describe for the Board his/her version of the events which may exist for reinstating the coach.

**WYBSL, JBBL and JGSL staff, managers, coaches and umpires are expected to enforce this policy at all times.**

**Automatic Penalties.** In order to clarify and standardize penalties for violations, the following automatic penalties shall apply:

- A. If a coach or player is ejected from a game because of a violation of the Conduct guidelines, or National Federation Rules related to unsportsmanlike acts, malicious contact or similar acts, that coach or player shall be suspended for (and shall not attend) the next game the coach or player would attend, including the next subsequent season.
- B. If a coach, player or fan is ejected from a game or removed from the playing field area for violation of Conduct guidelines during a game, that coach, player or fan shall be suspended for (and shall not attend) the next game the coach, player, or fan would attend, including the next subsequent season.
- C. If a coach, player or fan is ejected or removed as described in 1. or 2. above, and fails to comply with this policy, the applicable game shall be forfeited by the offending team.
- D. It shall be the offending team's responsibility to enforce this policy.
- E. All other provisions of the Conduct guidelines – including provisions regarding additional penalties – and the procedures described therein, shall be in full effect and shall be followed by all coaches, players and fans.
- F. A second (2<sup>nd</sup>) violation by the same coach, player or fan shall result in further penalty – which may include suspension for the season and/or an extended period of time.