

8U DIVISION

All Michigan High School Athletic Association ("MHSAA") Softball Rules and Regulations apply with the following exceptions listed below or as stated in the General Rules.

1.0 – Field Rules

1.1) Bases – Bases will be at 60 feet. There will be hash marks at 30 feet between first and second base, second and third base and between third base and home plate.

1.2) Pitching Machine – The pitching machine will be at 35 feet. The pitching machine speed for the season will be at 35 miles per hour. An eleven (11) inch ball will be used. The pitching machine may be adjusted for accuracy at any time during the game if the managers both agree. The pitching machine may also be adjusted if six (6) consecutive no-pitches are deemed with an umpire's timeout.

1.3) Pitcher's Circle – A sixteen (16) foot diameter circle will be made around the pitching machine.

2.0 – Player Equipment / Uniform Rules

2.1) Uniforms – Players must wear the uniform provided. Only league issued visors are allowed and should be worn as intended with the bill forward (if applicable).

2.2) Jewelry – No jewelry (including ear rings, necklaces or watches) are allowed while a game is being played. The only exception to this rule is for medical devices.

2.3) Spikes – Metal spikes are not allowed.

2.4) Catchers – Catchers must wear catcher's mask with helmet, chest protector and shin guards. A throat protector for catcher's mask is required.

2.5) Pitchers – Players in the pitcher's position shall wear a batting helmet with a facemask. Pitchers must play on the left side of the pitching machine and can not advance their position until the ball crosses home plate.

2.6) Safety Rules – Helmets must always be worn by batters, on-deck batters, runners and non-adult base coaches. Facemasks for safety purposes are required for all players playing in the infield. No exceptions to this rule will be made.

3.0 – Game Rules

3.1) Game Length – A regulation game will consist of six (6) innings. Four (4) innings shall constitute a complete game or three-and-a-half (3 ½) innings, if the home team is ahead for the purpose of games called due to darkness, weather, mercy rule or time limit. Game length rules for double headers will also apply.

3.2) Extra Innings – If only one game is scheduled on a field and there is a tie after regulation, both teams may choose to play up to two (2) extra innings in an attempt to break the tie, regardless of the time limit regulations.

3.3) Time Limit – No new inning shall be started after one hour and thirty minutes (1:30) if a single game on a field is scheduled. If two (2) games are scheduled on the same field, back-to-back, no inning of the first game shall begin after one hour and twenty minutes (1:20), as long as the game is deemed official.

3.4) Run Limit – A maximum of five (5) runs in each half inning; except the last designated inning, which has unlimited runs allowed.

3.5) Mercy Rule – Any game will be over if one team is ahead by fifteen (15) runs after three (3) innings (2 ½ innings if the home team is ahead), ten (10) runs after four (4) innings (3 ½ innings if the home team is ahead) or twenty (20) runs at any point during the game. Mercy rules will also apply during double headers.

3.6) Make-Up Games – All make-up games shall be made up as the schedule permits. Games may be postponed due to weather or poor field conditions. Only a Head Umpire or Park Director may cancel games. It will be the home team's responsibility to schedule make-up games, including arrangements for the umpires. Please advise your Softball Director with any and all scheduling changes.

4.0 – Fielding Rules

4.1) Fielding Positions – Ten (10) players will play at one time on the field. That will consist of one (1) pitcher, one (1) catcher, four (4) infielders and four (4) outfielders. Outfielders may be positioned anywhere in the outfield grass area. An official game may be played with eight (8) or nine (9) players; however, if only eight players are present, an out will be recorded for the ninth batting position unless both managers agree to waive this rule. Umpires must be notified before the start of the game.

4.2) Position Rules – At the time that the pitch is delivered, no defensive players may be forward of the pitching machine. Players in the outfield shall be standing on the outfield grass until the ball crosses home plate.

4.3) Infield Fly Rule – The infield fly rule will not be played.

4.4) Field Coaches – The defensive team may have two (2) coaches on the field. Coaches will be positioned in the outfield grass area and shall not interfere with play. Coaches who interfere with play will be subject to being removed from the field for the remainder of the game.

5.0 – Batting Rules

5.1) Batters – All players on the roster will bat.

5.2) Batting Order – Before each game, the coach/scorekeeper shall give the batting order to the opposing team's coach/scorekeeper. The same batting order is to be followed for the entire game. Players not present at the time the batting order is submitted may be added at the end of the batting order when they arrive. It is the responsibility of the coach/scorekeeper to inform the opposing team's coach/scorekeeper of any and all lineup changes.

5.3) Injuries – If a player is injured during the game and is unable to bat, their position in the batting order will be skipped without penalty as long as eight (8) players remain.

5.4) Ejections – If a player is ejected for any reason during a game, their spot in the lineup may not be replaced by another player and an out will be recorded for their spot in the lineup.

5.5) Pitching Machine – A ball hitting or rolling under a pitching machine will result in a dead ball and everyone advances one base (if forced) and the batter will receive first base. A batted ball striking a coach or official will still be considered a live ball.

5.6) Bunting – “Intentional Bunting” is allowed twice (2) per inning.

5.7) Dropped Third Strike – The dropped third strike rule will not be enforced.

5.8) Thrown Bats – Players are to drop, not throw, their bats. Each team will receive one warning per game for a thrown bat. Second and subsequent offenses by the same team will result in the batter being out.

5.9) Balls and Strikes – Each batter will receive three (3) called strikes per at-bat. Umpires, at any time, may call a “no pitch”, which results in neither a ball nor a strike. No intentional walks are allowed.

6.0 – Base Running Rules

6.1) Overthrows – Runners will only receive the base they are going to plus one on an overthrow to a base if ball is thrown out of the field of play. Dead ball territory will be agreed on before the start of the game with both coaches and umpires present.

6.2) Stealing – There will be no stealing. There will be no advancement of runners on passed balls by the catcher, nor on errant throws back to the pitcher.

6.3) Leaving Base – There will be no leading off. Base runners must remain on the base until contact with the ball has been made. If a runner leaves early, they will be sent back to the previous base. A second offense by the same runner shall result in that runner being called out.

6.3.1) If the player left early and the pitch results in a hit, the runner must return to the nearest open base.

6.4) Advancing – Play will stop when the pitcher gains possession of the ball with two feet inside the circle. The umpire at the machine will determine when the play is over and the position of each runner. A runner who is past the hash marks will advance to the next base. If a runner has not advanced past the designated half way mark when the pitcher gains control of the ball with both feet in the pitchers circle, the runner must go back to their previously occupied base unless a force out is in effect.

6.4.1) Runners may attempt to advance one base on an errant attempt to get an out at any defensive base. Play is then declared dead, unless the ball remains in the outfield or another attempt is made at a defensive base.

6.4.2) If a player attempts to get the ball back to the pitcher in order to stop the play (via Rule 6.4) and it becomes an errant play, runners between bases may continue to the next base unless Rule 6.4.1 is already in effect.

6.5) Sliding – Head first sliding is not allowed into any base. If a player slides head first, it will result in an automatic out. A player may slide head first going back into a base. If a fielder has the ball and is in position to make a play on the runner, the runner must attempt to slide or stop to avoid a collision. If the runner intentionally collides with the fielder, they will be called out; umpire's discretion.

6.6) Blocking Home Plate – A catcher is not allowed to block home plate without the ball. Catchers blocking home plate without the ball will be called for fielder interference and the runner will be called safe.