

**CEDAR HILLS BOOSTER CLUB**  
**2/19/2017 GUIDELINES & RULES FOR SOFTBALL MINOR LEAGUE**

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### **STANDARD RULES**

The Cedar Hills Booster Club follows the standard rules of the National Federation of High School Associations Rules for softball, except as noted in the following pages. On some pages the section marked “**General softball rules**”; we have restated, for reference only, general softball rules from these rulebooks, to help coaches understand the exact way standard rules are stated. These are meant to help clarify situations we have encountered that are only defined in the standard rule books. Cedar Hills Booster Club (CHBC) will meet in a timely manner to resolve penalty for conduct issues.

### **PRACTICE**

1. No practice sessions are allowed before 5:00 PM on school days.
2. Before the start of games, teams will have scheduled practice times on diamonds that they will play their games on during the regular season. A team with a scheduled practice time will have priority for diamond usage. After games start there are no **league** scheduled practice times.
3. A team will practice on diamonds it will play on during the regular season if possible and will have preference over a team from a league not scheduled to play on those diamonds during the season.
4. Non-scheduled practice sessions on diamonds shall be limited to 30 minutes after notification by another coach that their team wishes to use the diamond. Two coaches may combine their field practice time to scrimmage, but the scrimmage shall not exceed one hour after another coach requests use of the diamond.
5. Conflicts with after school activities should be avoided if possible.

### **FIELDS**

#### **Locations**

Night Games	Jacolyn Park and Hoover Elementary Cherry Hill East #2
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#### **Base distance**

Distance between bases is 50 feet.

#### **Pitching distance**

Pitching distance is 34 feet.

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### GAME

1. All teams are to play a minimum of 12 regular season games if there are 5 or more teams in the league.
2. If there are less than 5 teams in a league the number of regular season games maybe less than 12.
3. Conflicts with after school activities should be avoided if possible.

### Home team

1. Home team is noted on the schedule.
2. Home team will occupy the bench along the third base line.
3. Home team will provide the head umpire with two new and one good used game balls before the start of the game.

### Warm-up

Diamonds are reserved for those teams scheduled to play on that particular diamond one hour prior to game time. All other teams must vacate the diamond for those teams.

### Start time

- 6:00 PM for regularly scheduled games.
- 7:00 PM for Cherry Hill East # 2 night game.

### Forfeit

1. Forfeit time of games will be 15 minutes past the scheduled starting time.
2. A team must have at least seven (7) players at game forfeit time.

### Length

1. All games are to be seven innings, unless shortened by time limit or umpire.
2. Softball Minor time limit to start the unlimited run inning is 1 hour 40mins. The unlimited run inning needs to begin no later than 1 hour 40mins after the start of the game. Example 1: If a game started at 6pm ends the 5<sup>th</sup> inning at 7:35, the 6<sup>th</sup> inning will be the last inning. Example 2: If a 4th inning ends at 7:20, an umpire should assume that each inning is taking 20 minutes and should declare the 5<sup>th</sup> inning the last inning.
3. Umpire note game start time – this establishes the time the unlimited run inning can start.

### Scoring

1. The 4 run rule is in effect for the first 6 innings of each game. When the fourth run scores the inning is over.
2. There is no limit on number of runs scored in the 7th or any following innings, or any inning declared to be the last inning by the umpire. Play continues until the team batting is retired with 3 outs.

### Completed

1. No game will end in a tie.
2. In case of rainouts, bad weather, darkness, or time limit, a game is **complete** after –
  - 4 full innings or
  - 3 1/2 innings if the home team is aheadIf an inning is in progress and cannot be completed, the final score will be the score of the last inning completed. If the final score would result in a tie, the game will be a **suspended** game.
3. In case a team has a large lead, a game is **complete** after –
  - 4 full innings or
  - 3 1/2 innings if the home team is ahead by 15 runs.

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### **Postponed**

1. The Booster Club will determine if games are to be played or rescheduled due to wet grounds or bad weather. The decision will be made by game forfeit time using the following priority of individuals.
  - Grounds Crew**
  - CHBC board member**
  - Head umpire, after consultation with both coaches.
2. If a game has started and is interrupted by bad weather, the head umpire will decide, after consultation with both coaches, to continue, suspend, or end the game. **Then email the CHBC Board President.**

### **Suspended**

A suspended game will be resumed at the exact point of suspension. Any player on the team roster will be eligible to play in continued game. However, any player not at original game must be inserted at bottom of line up. All other rules will apply.

### **Rescheduled**

1. The CHBC board will reschedule games, when notified in advance, if a school activity will cause a forfeit to occur.
2. Postponed, suspended, rescheduled games will be handled by the CHBC board. Games will be played as rescheduled by the CHBC board. A forfeit will be awarded if a team does not appear for the rescheduled game.

### **Tie breaker**

At the start of the 8<sup>th</sup> inning or first inning after the inning declared to be an unlimited run inning the last player that was out will start at second base with no outs. This will continue until the game is untied.

### **EQUIPMENT**

1. **Only balls, bats, catcher's mask, chest protector and shin guards provided by the booster club may be used during a game. Players can use their own equipment, when approved by a board member.**
2. A helmet with strap under the chin should be worn by all batters and base runners. Players caught removing a helmet on the field during a play will be ejected (umpire judgment). If a player wears a helmet without a strap and the helmet comes off, they will automatically be called out. But an umpire will not enforce that one is present.
3. A catcher must wear mask, chest protector and shin guards at all times.
4. A player warming up a pitcher will wear a catcher's mask.
5. Umpires behind home plate must wear mask, chest protector and shin guards.
6. Ball 11" yellow
7. **Bats 26", 27", & 28" will be provided by CHBC to be used at games.**
  - a. **Players may use their personal bats only after approved by a CHBC board member and waiver has been signed.**
  - b. **Any personal bats can be used by other teams.**
- 8.
9. All equipment (bag, gloves, bats, balls) should be kept behind the dugout benches or as close to the fence as possible to avoid interference with a live ball. No equipment should be allowed to leave the playing area.
10. On deck batter's warm-up/practice will be done on the playing field at the far end of the dugout away from home plate during the game.
11. Bat rings are not allowed – they cannot be used in practice or games.
12. All batting helmets must have face mask.

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### **General softball rules**

Oversized mitt can only be used by players at 1st base and catcher.

### **UNIFORM**

1. The cap and shirt furnished by the booster club must be worn for each game, although sponsor may furnish hats for the whole team if desired. The shirts may not be altered. Pitchers and catchers need not wear hats but all other players are required to. Exception: weather related incidents such as windy conditions (umpire judgment).
2. Shorts may be worn by players during a game with a slider pad and long socks. If a slider pad and long socks are not worn than the player must wear pants that are below the knee.
3. Steel spikes are not allowed.
4. Failure to comply will result in player being unable to play. **This is for player's safety.**

### **COACH**

#### **Eligibility**

1. All coaches (head, assistant, base) must be at least (16) sixteen years old.
2. Assigned coaches must be at 75% of player required practices and games.
3. Each team will only have (2) assigned coaches. Assigned coaches may allow parents to help coach after teams are formed. Parents must complete and pass a background check before they are allowed to help coach.

#### **Conduct**

No alcohol or tobacco products shall be permitted by anyone during practice, pregame warm-ups, or the game on the field or in the dugout.

#### **Responsibilities**

1. Coaches issued league shirts must wear them during games.
2. Immediately preceding each game, coaches of opposing teams will present to each other a complete line-up and batting order for their team, listing first and last name of players and shirt number.
3. **Line up should be given to opposing coaches at minimum 5 minutes before game start.**
4. A coach must notify the head umpire and the opposing coach of any players not playing because of injury or disciplinary action.
5. Prior to game time, the home team coach shall designate an official scorekeeper.
6. Coaches need to control their team parents. This must be done even if not pointed out by an umpire.

### **UMPIRE**

#### **Eligibility**

1. Be at least 14 years of age
2. Attend annual training class, pass written and/or on-field exam administered by CHBC board members.

#### **Conduct**

1. Will make calls in a loud and decisive manner.
2. Will discuss rules with designated coaches as needed. Will not argue or raise their voice.
3. Keep the pace of the game and not be a distraction.

#### **Responsibilities**

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1. Determine if a team has enough players to start a game and avoid a forfeit.
2. Note game start time – this establishes the time the last inning can start.
3. After one warning for unsportsmanlike conduct from coaches or parents, a game may be called by the umpire.

### **PLAYER**

#### **Eligibility**

All players present, wearing the proper uniform and who have attended at least 50% of their league scheduled practices are eligible to play in the game. Practices outside of the two scheduled weeknight practices are not considered mandatory.

#### **Conduct**

A player may be suspended for a game by a coach for disciplinary reasons if approved in advance by the CHBC board.

#### **Responsibilities**

1. Each team will be limited to a maximum roster of 13 players.
2. If a player quits the team their name must be turned in to the a CHBC board member immediately.

### **PITCHING**

#### **Eligibility**

All players are able to pitch as long as they are able to meet the limits below.

#### **Limits**

1. A player will be allowed to pitch no more than 3 innings per game. There will be a maximum of three inning pitched per game by any one pitcher.
2. One pitch thrown to a batter constitutes an inning pitched.
3. A pitcher must pitch in consecutive innings; once a player has been removed as a pitcher, that player is not eligible to pitch again in that game.
4. Barring injury time-outs, the second time-out per inning per pitcher called by a defensive coach or his assistant to talk to his players shall mean removal of the pitcher from their position for the game.

#### **Warm-up**

1. A pitcher may have 7 warm-up pitches at the start of the game.
2. A pitcher may have 5 warm-up pitches at the start of each subsequent inning.
3. A substitute pitcher may have 5 warm-up pitches when entering the game.
4. A pitcher injured during the course of play may have 5 warm-up pitches.

#### **Pitching**

1. No fake pitches, hidden ball, or fake tag plays are allowed.
2. A pitcher may use any legal pitching wind-up they desire.
3. Strike zone is from the armpits to the top of the knees.
4. Any pitcher who is consistently throwing wild pitches and places batters in excessive danger of injury will be given a warning. Upon the second warning the pitcher will stop pitching, umpires judgment. Any coach who does not support the umpire's decision will forfeit the game. Any violations of this rule must be reported to the CHBC board by both coaches.
5. Intentional walks are not allowed.

### **General softball rules**

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The pitcher must allow the batter to be ready in the box. Any “quick pitching” by the pitcher will be called a “no pitch”, regardless of contact by the batter. **Over the last few years, softball rules require a pitcher to deliver the next pitch within 15 seconds after the ball is returned.**

### **BATTING**

1. A continuous batting order of all eligible players will be used throughout the game.
2. A late player is one who arrives after the 1st pitch is thrown and will be put at the bottom of the batting order.
3. If a player chooses not to bat their turn in the batting order, an out is recorded, but they can continue to play the game.
4. If a batter is injured while batting and cannot continue batting, the next batter in the lineup will complete the injured batter's turn at bat, assuming the same count of balls and strikes. If the substitute batter gets on base, a pinch runner will be inserted and the batter then takes their original turn at bat. If the substitute batter strikes out or is put out, they then bat again in their original slot. The injured batter may re-enter the game at a later time, umpire's decision.
5. If a batting order error is discovered by the –  
**Offensive team** - they may correct it with no penalty.  
**Defensive team** -
  - a) While the incorrect batter is at bat, the correct batter must take the position and assume any balls and strikes.
  - b) After the “at bat”, but before the next batter has received a pitch or all infielders have vacated the field, the player who should have batted is out.
  - c) After the next batter has received a pitch or all infielders have vacated the field, there is no penalty.
6. Batting practice during games will be done on the playing field (on-deck batter). Equipment will not leave the playing area.
7. Any individual player throwing a bat accidentally must be warned once by the umpire, then called out for later instances. Umpires will enforce this rule.

### **GROUND RULES FOR BATTED BALLS**

#### **All diamonds**

1. If a hit ball hits any part of a tree it is considered a dead-ball.
2. Dead ball area: the area beyond an imaginary line running from the backstop parallel with the foul line to the player's bench extended. On diamonds with a fence on this position, it shall be anything beyond this fence with an imaginary line extended this fence.

#### **Cherry Hill East & Jacolyn Park diamonds**

A fair ground ball hit past the home run fence will be a ground rule triple.

#### **General softball rules**

1. Fair ball - a batted ball shall be judged according to the relative position of the ball and the foul line, including the foul pole, and not as to whether the fielder is in fair or foul territory at the time the fielder touches the ball. It does not matter whether the ball first touches fair or foul territory, as long as it does not touch anything foreign to the natural ground in foul territory and complies with all other aspects of a fair ball.

A fair ball is a legally batted ball that:

- a) Settles or is touched on or over fair territory between home and first base or between home and third base.

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- b) Bounds over or past first or third base, which is in fair territory, regardless of where the ball hits after going over the base.
  - c) While on or over fair territory, touches the person, attached equipment or clothing of a player or an umpire.
  - d) Touches first, second, or third base.
  - e) First falls or is first touched on or over fair territory beyond first, second, or third base.
2. Foul ball -  
A foul ball is a batted ball that:
- a) Settles or is touched on or over foul territory between home and first base or between home and third base.
  - b) Bounds or rolls past first or third base on or over foul territory.
  - c) While over foul territory, touches the person, attached equipment or clothing of a player or an umpire, or any object foreign to the natural ground.
  - d) First hits the ground or is first touched over foul territory beyond first or third base. A caught fly ball is not a foul ball.

**BASE RUNNING**

1. Infield fly rule is **not** in effect.
2. Leading off will be allowed when the ball **leaves the pitchers hand**. **Penalty for leaving early:** the runner is out, it is a no pitch, all other runners return to the base they occupied at the time of the pitch.
3. The batter is automatically out on a dropped third strike by the catcher, but runners may advance at their own risk.
4. Batter drawing a walk will be awarded first base only.
5. Runners to 1st base can turn either way.
6. If the catcher for the next inning is on base, a courtesy runner may be used (to put on catching equipment). The runner will be the player making the last out.
7. If a fielder obstructs a runner's ability to reach a base, the runner shall be awarded the base. (See definition of Obstruction in the rules under the section "Defense").
8. If a ball is in play, any runner may advance as many bases as possible. When the ball is held by the pitcher on the mound, runners must stay on their respective bases.
9. If a base runner passes another base runner the passed runner is out.
10. A defensive player may pursue the runner back to third base.
11. A defensive player is not allowed to block the plate, and a base runner is not allowed to run over a defensive player. Sliding at home is encouraged but not mandatory.
12. A player is **required** to slide at home plate **to avoid a collision if a play is being attempted by the opposing team**. A player failing to slide may be called out, umpire's decision. No bowling over or intentional collision of the base runner into the catcher shall be allowed during a play at home plate. Runner shall be automatically out if rule is not followed. A defensive player will not be allowed to block home plate by moving up the baseline forcing the runner to slide early.

**Stealing**

1. Base stealing is allowed to advance to second base, third base, or home plate. A runner on third base may attempt to steal home on a passed ball or wild pitch. A successfully caught pitch means that a player may not steal home.

**General softball rules**

1. Runner is **not out**:

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- a) When a runner runs behind or in front of the fielder and outside the baseline to avoid interfering with a fielder attempting to field the ball in the base path.
- b) When a runner does not run in a direct line to a base, provided the fielder in the direct line does not have the ball in possession.
- c) When more than one fielder attempts to field a batted ball and the runner comes into contact with the one who, in the judgment of the umpire, could not have made an out.
- d) When a runner is hit with a fair, untouched batted ball that has passed an infielder, excluding the pitcher, and, in the judgment of the umpire, no other infielder had a chance to make an out.
- e) When a runner is hit by a fair-batted ball after it touches, or is touched by, any fielder, including the pitcher, and the runner could not avoid contact with the ball.
- f) When a batter-runner overruns first base after touching it and returns directly to the base.
- g) When the runner stays on base until a fly ball touches a fielder and then attempts to advance.

### **2. Runner is out:**

- a) When running to any base in regular or reverse order and the runner runs more than three feet from the base path to avoid being touched by the ball in the hand(s) of a fielder.
- b) When the batter-runner legally overruns first base, attempts to run to second base and is legally touched while off the base.
- c) When the runner interferes with a fielder attempting to field a batted ball, interferes with a fielder attempting to throw the ball or intentionally interferes with a thrown ball.
- d) When the runner is struck with a fair untouched batted ball while not in contact with a base and before it passes an infielder, excluding the pitcher, or if it passes an infielder and another infielder has an opportunity to make an out.
- e) When a coach intentionally interferes with a thrown ball while in the coach's box, or interferes with the defensive team's opportunity to make a play on another runner. The runner closest to home plate at the time of the interference shall be declared out.

## **DEFENSE**

1. Nine (9) players constitute a defensive team (but can be played with no less than 7 if needed).
2. All eligible players cannot sit out more than 2 consecutive innings and more than two innings in a game.
3. Outfielders must be at least 15 feet beyond the base paths. For safety of the infielders, they may not be more than 5 feet in front of the base path. If both teams have 12 or more players on a team, teams can play with four outfielders. The extra outfielder is to prevent kids from sitting on the bench for too many innings.

### **Substitution rules**

1. All departures or late arrivals must be reported to both teams' scorekeeper. Umpires will enforce this.
2. No defensive changes (except for pitching) may be made after the start of the inning, unless due to injury.
3. If a defensive player is injured, the injured player shall be removed from the field and a substitute may be made from the bench.
4. A player substituted from the bench not due to injury must enter the game for the current pitcher.
5. If a defensive player needs to leave the field for a reason other than injury after an inning has started, they may do so but a replacement player may not take their place.

### **General softball rules**



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### **Out-of-play:**

1. A ball is considered out of play if it is thrown or deflected over the sideline fence, into either dugout or bench area.
2. If the ball is thrown out of play by an outfielder, the base runners or a batter becoming a base runner will be awarded 2 bases from the time of the **throw**.
3. If a ball is thrown or put out of play by an infielder, the base runners or a batter becoming a base runner will be awarded 2 bases according to their position at the time of the **pitch**.

### **General softball rules**

Obstruction is the act of:

A fielder, who is not: (1) in possession of the ball, (2) in the act of fielding a batted ball, or (3) about to receive a thrown ball, which impedes the progress of a runner or batter-runner that is legally running the bases.

### **SPORTSMANSHIP**

1. Unsportsmanlike conduct or inappropriate behavior by coaches, players or parents will not be allowed.
2. **If a board member is called out then the coaches can be forced to forfeit.**
3. Coaches displaying unsportsmanlike conduct or using abusive language will receive one verbal warning from any CHBC board member. A coach will be suspended or asked to resign for subsequent violations. On second offense, the coach must turn in their equipment.
4. Members of a coaching staff may not by their actions influence, distract or intimidate an opposing player or an umpire.
5. Coaches may not go behind the backstop to watch the umpire.
6. A coach may not protest a judgment call made by an umpire.
7. Players are not allowed to dispute an umpire's decision.
8. A player throwing a bat or a helmet in anger may be removed from the game (**umpire judgment**).

### **PROTESTS**

1. A judgment call cannot be protested.
2. Rule interpretations may be protested.
3. The umpire must be notified of a protest before the next pitch is thrown. At this time the plate umpire must note the game situation. Record the balls, strikes, number of outs, innings, base runners, and any other information needed to resume action of this game at a later date.
4. After the protest has been made, the game shall be completed.
5. After the game, the protesting team may drop their protest if they desire.
6. A protest must be presented to any board member in writing within 24 hours of game completion, by the protesting manager or assistant.
7. The CHBC board will rule on the protest. This ruling is final. A CHBC board member who is a coach of a protested game cannot vote on this ruling.
8. If the CHBC board rules in favor of the protest, the game will resume from the point of the protest. If the protest is ruled against, the final outcome to the game will stand.