

YYBSA / OBSA

Softball – Major Division Rules – Spring 2016 (2016-02-15)

11-13 years old

A. Coaching and Game Conduct:

1. The intent of this league is to teach the players the rules, fundamentals, and spirit of the game of softball. This will be done in a safe, enjoyable, and competitive environment.
2. Games cannot be protested for any reason.
3. The head coach, on non-judgment calls only, may ask for rule interpretations at the half-inning only.
4. Smoking, chewing tobacco, snuff, and/or alcoholic beverages are not allowed at or around any playing field or practice field.
5. At the completion of the games, the teams are to line up at home plate to shake hands with and congratulate the other team.
6. Defensive coaches are not allowed to be in the field of play to direct and coach their players. Defensive coaches must remain in their team's dugout, and be off of the field of play.
7. The offensive team will have only two base coaches. The base coach cannot touch the offensive player until they reach base safely or they are put out. The offensive coach cannot physically push or stop the base runner from advancing or retreating. Violation of this rule will result in the offensive player being called out. All other offensive team's coaches must remain in their team's dugout, and be off of the field of play.
8. Each team is responsible for keeping an accurate score book. Both managers must send the score to both YYBSA and OBSA League Directors within 24 hours of the game. If there is a discrepancy in the scorebook, the home team holds the official scorebook.
9. Head coaches are expected to attend all coaches meeting, clinics, and events. Assistant coaches are strongly encouraged to attend as well.

B. Equipment and Playing Field:

1. The diamond will have sixty (60) foot baselines and a pitching mound distance of forty (40) feet from the front of the rubber to the back of home plate.
2. A 12" softball will be used.
3. All batters, runners, and on-deck batters must wear batting helmets that have a safety cage at all times while on the field. On-deck batters are required to warm up on the side of the field to the back of the current batter.
4. All catchers must wear catchers gear at all times even during practice.
5. All players must wear protective face masks (pitchers, infielders, and outfielders).
6. All bats must be ASA Certified with a maximum diameter of 2 ¼".
7. Metal spikes are not allowed. However, rubber cleats may be worn.
8. The league supplied uniform must be worn for all games. No shorts are allowed. Players are not allowed to add lettering or names to the back of their jerseys. No modifications to, such as tearing and cutting of the uniform are allowed. Players who modify their uniform will be required to purchase a new one at their own expense.
9. In the event of cold weather, sweat shirts or light jackets may be worn over the jerseys. Players should attempt to match the outerwear color with the color of their jersey as much as possible.
10. Jewelry is prohibited with the exception of medical bracelets or necklaces. Soft friendship bracelets are allowed. Stud earrings with tape around them are also allowed.
11. The home team is responsible for providing game ball(s). The Home team shall occupy the 3rd base dugout and the Visitor will occupy the 1st base dugout.
12. Sunglasses are allowed to be worn by any player.

C. Fielding the Team:

1. A team must field a minimum of eight (8) players at the field and able to play at game start time and throughout the game or the game will be considered a forfeit. There is no penalty of an out for the missing ninth batter. If a missing player shows up after the start of the game, they shall be placed at the bottom of the order and can enter the game at any time.
2. When a team knows that it will not have nine (9) players, they may bring up to three (3) Minor league players to reach nine (9) players prior to the game start time. The Minor league players must be no younger than 10 years old. The opposing coach and League Commissioner must be notified prior to the start of the game. No TRAVEL Team players can be brought in during these situations. There are no restrictions as to what position a player can play.
3. Each defensive team will have nine (9) players in the field. Having a "short" center fielder behind 2nd base is not allowed.
4. Each player must play at least three (3) innings defensively on the field prior to the end of the Fifth Inning, of which all players must play a minimum of (1) inning in the infield. If a game is shortened for any reason, those players not able to play the required (3) innings will, without exception, play the required amount of time in the very next game. Players must not sit out back-to-back innings.
5. A player may be removed from the field at any time in an inning and replaced with a substitute player. However, the removed player may not re-enter a game defensively during the inning in which they were removed.
6. Only players registered with YYBSA or OBSA are allowed to play.

D. Game Time and Length:

1. All weekday games must begin by 6:00pm. Weekend games may be scheduled to begin between 9am and 6pm with the exception of night games or doubleheaders
2. The game consists of six (6) innings. No new inning may begin after the **1 hour 50 minute time mark** (if the visiting team is up to bat at the 1 hour 50 minute time mark, the home team gets to bat if they are trailing.) Head coaches from each team should confirm the "official" start time of the game with the umpire. **Playoff games are also be subject to this time limit.**

3. In the event the game is called due to weather, darkness, or time limit, a game will be official after four (4) full innings. It will be the umpire's discretion as to darkness. An official game (more than four (4) innings played) called due to weather, time, or darkness and having a tied score will result in a tie game. If the completion of a full inning is not possible due to darkness or weather, and the game is an official game (more than four (4) innings), the score will revert back to the end of the last full inning completed. If a game is called before it reaches the "official" status, the game shall resume from the point of interruption. If an "official" game is halted due to weather or darkness and is tied, the game shall be counted as a tie. An "unofficial" game that is halted due to weather or darkness that is tied shall resume from the point of interruption. Any game resumed from the point of interruption shall resume in the same inning, with the same pitch count, number of outs and runners on base.
4. If after the time limit or after six (6) innings have been played and the score is tied, then one (1) tiebreaker inning will be played. If the game is still tied after the one (1) extra inning is completed, the game ends in a tie. Playoff games cannot end in a tie.
5. A 6-run "slaughter rule" is in effect after five complete innings.
6. If lightning is seen or the lightning warning system siren sounds, please clear all players off the field and away from the benches, fence, dugouts, etc. Players should be sent to their cars in the parking lot. After thirty (30) minutes, if no additional lightning is seen, the game or practice can resume. If lightning is seen within the thirty (30) minute time period, the timer will reset to another thirty (30) minutes. After forty-five (45) minutes of waiting, the game will be suspended and will be resumed at a later date. If the game is past the 5th inning, it will be considered an official game.

E. Batting:

1. Continuous batting order (all players are in the batting order line up.)
2. When a batter is hit by a pitch, the batter will be awarded first base unless one of the following: (1) the batter swings, in this case it is a strike; (2) the ball is in the strike zone when it hits the batter, in this case it is a strike.
3. If a player throws her bat, the team gets one warning. A second offense, at the discretion of the umpire, will result in the batter being out. Teach your players to drop the bat. The safety of our players is a priority.

4. Five (5) runs maximum per inning throughout the entire game
5. Mercy Rule. If a team is up by six (6) runs after the losing team has batted in the fifth (5) inning the game will be declared over.
6. In-field fly rule is not in effect.
7. Dropped third strike rule applies. When the catcher fails to catch the third strike before the ball touches the ground when there are less than two outs and first base is unoccupied or anytime there are two outs. This is called the dropped third strike rule. The ball is in play and the batter becomes a batter-base runner with the liability to be put out.

Examples:

- A. No runners on base, less than two outs, and batter "A" has two strikes. The next pitch touches the ground in front of home plate and bounces through the strike zone. Batter "A" swings at the pitch and misses. The catcher secures the ball in her mitt after the first bounce. Batter "A" advances to first base while the catcher holds the ball. Batter "A" is not out if she beats the throw to first base.
 - B. Runner "B" on 1st base, less than two outs, and batter "A" has two strikes. On the next pitch, batter "A" swings at the pitch and misses. The catcher drops the ball out of her mitt. Batter "A" advances to first base while the catcher holds the ball. Batter "A" is out because 1st base was occupied with less than two outs. Runner "B" may advance at her own risk.
 - C. Bases loaded, two outs, and batter "A" has two strikes. On the next pitch, batter "A" swings at the pitch and misses. The catcher drops the ball out of her mitt. Batter "A" advances to first base while the other base runners advance one base as well. The catcher can secure the ball and step on home plate to force the runner from 3rd base out.
7. Bunting and slapping is allowed. Absolutely no slashing is allowed (slashing is pretending to bunt, and then taking a full swing once the pitcher delivers the ball) and will, at the discretion of the umpire, result in the batter being out.
 8. One (1) charged conference to either a batter or base runner per inning is allowed. Subsequent requests for a conference will be denied by the umpire.

F. Base running:

1. The runner may leave the base only after the ball leaves the pitcher's hand. If the umpire feels the runner left early, she will be called out. If a player reaches any base safely they may advance to the next base with the possibility of being put out. However, the base runner shall not advance to the next base if the defensive player has possession of the ball and is inside the pitcher's circle. This rule will be within the judgment of the umpire and cannot be protested.
2. If a pitcher is on the pitcher's rubber, all base runners must be in contact with their occupied base until the pitch leaves the pitcher's hand.
3. Runners may steal one base at a time. However, if a play is made (**this includes a throw made to a runner at 3B**), and the ball is misplayed, the runner may advance at their own risk. All other base runners are eligible to advance to the next available base at this time.
4. When a play is made on a runner leading off any base, the runner does not have to return to the base. If the ball is misplayed, the runner may attempt to steal at her own risk. The runner may steal one base only. If there is a runner on third base, that runner is eligible to steal home at their own risk.
5. Runners are allowed to steal home or advance home on a wild pitch or passed ball.
6. Designated runners are not allowed, unless the catcher is a base runner, a substitute runner may be used to replace the catcher at anytime. The player who made the most recent batted out shall be used as the substitute runner. Substituting for the catcher is to allow the catcher to begin preparing for their next time in the field. In the event of an injury, the player who made the most recent batted out shall be used as a substitute runner.
7. Sliding into a base is optional. However, if a play is made on a player at a base, the runner must slide. If the runner does not slide, at the discretion of the umpire, she WILL be out. The defensive player may not block the baselines. Please teach your players the proper way to slide. The safety of our players is a priority. This rule will be within the judgment of the umpire and cannot be protested.
8. The look-back rule is in effect. Please see the addendum for the complete USSSA rule.

G. Pitching Rules:

1. No pitcher shall pitch more than three (3) innings. The starting pitcher only may re-enter as a pitcher once, but never in the same inning in which they were relieved. One pitch in an inning constitutes a full inning pitched.
2. The defensive team's coach can make up to two (2) trips to the mound in any one inning. On the second trip, the pitcher must be removed from the game for that inning.
3. A pitcher can walk a batter and intentional walks are allowed. However, the ball is live during an intentional walk in fast pitch. All defensive players must be in fair territory until the pitch is released, except the catcher, who must remain anywhere in the catcher's box, and the pitcher who must be in a legal pitching position at the start of each pitch. If they do not position themselves in fair territory, an illegal pitch should be called for each pitch thrown while any member of the defense is standing in foul territory. In fast pitch, all four pitches must be thrown to the catcher.
4. Three (3) hit batters, at the discretion of the umpire, will result in a pitcher being removed for that inning.
5. At least one pitcher from the younger age group (11 year olds) must record a minimum of three outs during the first four innings in the course of regulation play (i.e. the first 6 innings of play.) Teams may utilize more than one pitcher from the younger age group for the purpose of complying with this rule, and the outs recorded by the younger age group pitcher(s) do not need to be consecutive. A violation of this rule will result in a forfeit of the game.
 - A. A team will be considered to have complied with this rule if a pitcher(s) from the younger age group pitches the entire inning in which the maximum allowable runs are scored by the opposing team before three outs have been recorded in the half inning or the maximum allowable walks per inning are recorded by a single pitcher.
 - B. If a game is suspended before it becomes "official", and a team has not yet fulfilled the younger age group pitcher(s) requirements, the team will be required to comply with the rule when the game is resumed.
6. Pitching procedures:
 - A. Both feet must start in contact with the pitching rubber. Both feet must remain in

- contact with the pitching rubber and the pivot foot must remain motionless at all times before the start of the pitch. Shoulder shall be in line with the first and third bases.
- B. The hands should be separated. The pitcher may have the ball in the glove or the hand. While in this position, she shall take or simulate taking a signal from the catcher.
 - C. After completing “B” above, the pitcher must bring hands together for not less than 1 second and no more than 10 seconds before release.
 - D. The pitch officially starts when the hands are separated after they initially come together.
 - E. The pitcher may not put hands together once they have separated.
 - F. The pitcher must not make more than two revolutions of the arm on the windmill pitch. Delivery must be underhand with the hand below the hip and wrist not farther from the body than the elbow.
 - G. A step must be taken forward and be within the 24” pitching rubber. The pitcher must push off with the pivot foot but the release does not have to be prior to the push. The pivot foot must remain in contact with the ground at all times. A “push and drag” technique is recommended.
 - H. The pitcher has 20 seconds to pitch once she had received the ball.
 - I. The pitcher shall not be considered in the “pitching position” unless the catcher is in position to receive the pitch.
 - J. The pitcher may not take the “pitching position” on or near the pitcher’s rubber without having the ball in her possession.
 - K. A ball that hits the ground prior to reaching the plate is a live ball.
 - L. The pitcher may not wear anything (in the umpire’s judgment) on the pitching hand, wrist, forearm, elbow, or thigh that may be distracting to the batter.
 - M. If the ball slips out of the pitcher’s hand during the pitch it is considered a ball.
 - N. Five (5) warm-up pitches will be allowed in the first inning and for new pitchers entering the game. Three (3) warm up pitches will be allowed in between innings.

H. Addendum:

The following is an excerpt of the "look-back" rule from the USSSA Fast Pitch Rules dated 02/09/2016. The latest full set of rules can be found at www.ussa.com/fastpitch.

RULE 8. BASE RUNNING

Sec 2. The LOOK-BACK RULE is in effect when the ball is live, the batter-runner has touched first base or has been declared out, and the pitcher has possession of the ball (e.g. has the ball in their hand, glove, under arm or chin, between their legs) within the 16-foot circle.

Any runner(s) in motion may continue without stopping or may stop once, Any runner who is stopped or stops their motion must immediately move directly back to the last base touched or attempt to advance to the next base.

Once the runner stops at a base for any reason, they may not move off that base.

A batter-runner who overruns first and does not without delay attempt to advance to second is committed to return to first and stop.

The runner, off base, may not stand motionless.

There does not need to be any motion or recognition by the pitcher.

Failure of the runner to respond as indicated shall cause the Umpire to signal the runner out. The ball shall be declared dead.

If the pitcher no longer has possession of the ball within the 16-foot circle, the pitcher makes an attempt on any of the runners or a fake throw is made, this rule does not apply.

Being in the 16-foot circle is defined as both feet within or partially within the line. The feet may touch the line and extend outside the line. When the pitcher is in the pitcher's circle and a runner(s) is off the base, the pitcher is considered to be playing on the runner(s) when the throwing arm is raised or any forward movement of the body is made toward the runner. Movement of the head is not considered an attempt play.

EFFECT: Ball is dead and runner is out.