

# 5th and 6th Grade Softball

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## 1. Season and Playoffs

- . a) All teams will qualify for the playoffs. The seeding for the playoffs will be determined by a random drawing held at the end of the season. During the playoffs, the home team will be determined by a coin toss. Playoffs will start after the regular season.
- . b) The regular season somewhat akin to a pre-season, where the emphasis is more on player development than merely on winning games. Every team makes the play-offs and formal regular season standings will not be kept.

## 2. Game Time & Limits

- . a) Innings: A game shall consist of [at most] six (6) innings, though a complete game can be as low as 4 innings, or 3 1/2 innings if the home team is ahead.
- . b) Run Limits: Five (5) run limit per inning, except for the "last" inning where each team will be limited to batting around. The number of players on the team with the greater number determines how many can bat in "last" inning.
- . c) During the regular season, extra innings will not be played; a game may end in a tie. Tie games will not be resumed.
- . d) Rainouts, including lightning cancelled games, will not be made up.
- . e) Scheduled game time is start time. Have your team ready to play at the assigned and scheduled time. Official start time will be by the umpire's time piece and may be delayed due

to certain circumstances such as but not limited to weather, field conditions, or prior softball games.

- . **f) Time Limits:** No new inning will begin after 1 hour 45 minutes from the official start of the game by the umpire's time piece. 1 hour 30 minutes for games that have been delayed for more than one half hour. An additional "last inning" will not begin after 1:45 if last inning has not been called. Managers will check in with the Umpire near the 1:30 mark to determine when it is appropriate to call a "last inning". No new inning may start at or after 10 p.m. Exception: Games on Friday and Saturday nights may follow the 1hour 45minute rule. *Incoming managers / coaches must converse with the managers / coaches that have delayed games in progress to come to an agreement on the start time of the next game*

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### **3. Suspension and Forfeitures**

- . a) A team must have a minimum of 6 players from its own roster and a minimum of 7 players including replacement players at the start of the game. Game time is start time. The umpire will call the game time and the teams will have 15 minutes after the official start to field a team. Any late arrivals that miss their turn at bat shall be placed at the end of the batting order.
- . b) Where fewer than 9 players are available, there will be no automatic outs. It is encouraged to fill any vacant outfield positions with players from the opposing team. These

players will be taken from the bottom of the batting order in that inning.

- . c) In case of a forfeit, managers should attempt to play a practice game using the umpire.
- . d) No regular season game will be automatically canceled for lack of an umpire. On agreement from both managers a parent volunteer may umpire from behind the pitcher.
- . e) Protests are not allowed.

#### **4. Use of Coaches**

- . a) Only offensive coaches are allowed on the playing field during "live ball" situations. These coaches shall occupy the "Coaches Boxes" at the 1st and 3rd base positions.
- . b) The 1st and 3rd base coaches **may not** physically assist the base runners under live ball conditions. Only verbal instructions are permitted.
- . c) While a team is in the field for defense, that team's coaches are not allowed on the field of play, unless you have requested and received a time out from the umpire, or there is an injured player on the field.
- . d) A maximum of three coaches / team helpers will be allowed in the dugout at any one time.
- . e) Coaches are expected to know all playing rules for our league.

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## 5. Use of Players

- . a) A team will field at the most 9 defensive players.
- . b) All players on a team's roster will bat in consecutive order. A player arriving after the game starts shall be added to the end of the batting order. The opposing manager must be notified.
- . c) All players must play a minimum of half a game. (3--innings of a 6--inning game)
- . d) A player cannot be on the bench for consecutive innings.
- . e) No one can sit out twice until everyone has sat out once. Thus, no one can sit out three times until everyone has sat out twice.
- . f) If a player needs to leave the game for any reason, their spot in the batting order will be skipped without penalty.
- . g) Each player per game must play a minimum of 2 innings in the infield during a full 6 inning game. Catcher & pitcher are infield positions.
- . h) Any violations of the use of players shall be reported to your commissioner / league president.

## 6. Replacements

- . a) If a team loses a player for the season, the manager must notify the league commissioner. The League, at its discretion, will provide a substitute player.
- . b) In order to field a full team for a specific game, a team may "borrow" players from another team in the division during

the regular season. All borrowed players must be communicated to the opposing team prior to the game starting. During the playoffs-- borrowed players may only be added from a 'younger' division.

- . c) No borrowed player is allowed to pitch. They may play outfield and other infield positions.
- . d) The borrowed player(s) must bat at the bottom of the batting order.
- . e) The borrowed player(s) can continue to play until nine rostered players arrive. The sub(s) can remain in the batting order but may not play a defensive position.

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### **GAME PLAY RULES**

With the exception of these stated local rules, standard ASA U12 Fast Pitch rules are in effect.

#### **7. Base Running**

- . a) Stealing:
  - i. A runner may steal one base at a time.
  - ii. Multiple runners can steal bases at the same time if they all leave the base at the same time.
  - iii. A team may successfully steal home one time per half-inning. Multiple attempts to steal home can occur until a run is scored. If a base runner successfully steals

home and then realizes that they represent the second steal of home during that inning, then the play shall be declared dead and the runner shall return to third base (the runner can't be tagged out if they successfully steal home.

- iv. A delayed steal of 2<sup>nd</sup> base, 3<sup>rd</sup> base, or home on the catcher's release is not allowed unless the catcher's throw to the pitcher is not caught. This situation is considered stealing and is subject to the rules above.
- v. Base runners can attempt to advance to any base, including home, if the catcher's throw isn't caught by the pitcher. This situation is considered stealing and subject to the rules above.
- vi. Ball four is a live ball and stealing may occur if a base runner is not in a force situation. If a base runner has a runner or hitter behind them (force situation), they would automatically receive the next base on ball four, even if they start to steal before ball four is called.
- vii. The base runner cannot advance on **pickoff plays** that result in an over throw by the catcher to any base.
- viii. No leadoffs: The base runner must stay on the base until the ball is hit or has crossed the plate. Leaving early will result in one warning per team. Subsequently the next runner to leave early for that team will be called out.
- ix. The umpire has full authority on stealing situations and all umpire decisions are final.

- . b) Overthrows: The base runner can advance on overthrows to any base by anyone other than a Catcher during an attempt to steal. When an overthrow occurs, the runner may continue to advance if the ball remains in play.
- . c) End of a Play: The play ends when the pitcher has control of the ball within the marked pitching circle (or near the pitching mound if no circle is marked). If a runner is over halfway to the next base at this point, they may continue to advance or if less than halfway they must go back – umpire’s discretion. If the ball goes out of play, runners may advance one extra base.

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- . d) Courtesy Runners: A courtesy runner may be used when: --- The next inning’s catcher is on base with 2 outs. --- The next inning’s Pitcher is on base with 2 outs. --- A player on base is injured. The courtesy runner shall be the player who made the preceding out.
- . e) Contact: Any runner approaching any base except first will be required to avoid contact with the defensive player. If, in the opinion of the umpire, the runner affected the outcome of the play by not sliding, that runner will be called out. Thus, not all runners who don’t slide will be called out. The umpire’s decision is final.
- . f) Safety Bases: Safety bases will be used at 1st base. Runners must use the orange base and the 1st baseman must use the white base if there is a play at 1st base. Plays pulling the defensive player to the foul side of the base shall cause this

situation to "flip." The umpire has final authority on this play.

- . g) Advancing to 2<sup>nd</sup> Base: Base runners who overrun 1<sup>st</sup> base and make an attempt to advance to 2<sup>nd</sup> base can be tagged out unless they safely return to 1<sup>st</sup> base or advance to the next base. The umpire has final authority on this play.
- . h) Taunting the pitcher: No "taunting"! Once the ball is in the hands of a fielder in the imaginary circle of the pitchers mound, a base runner must return to the base she just came from or advance to the next base. The base runner may not taunt the fielder/pitcher in the imaginary circle in the base path.

## 8. Batting

- . a) The strike zone shall be shin to chin and the width of home plate plus a softball on either side of home plate. The idea is to encourage girls to swing at balls close to the strike zone. Umpires are instructed to use a large strike zone.
- . b) Infield Fly: The infield fly rule **does** apply at this level, protecting runners from an easy double play. It applies when there is a FORCE AT THIRD, LESS THAN TWO OUTS. In these situations, if a fair fly ball is hit that the umpire believes is catchable by an infielder with ordinary effort, the umpire will yell, "Infield fly, batter's out!" or "Batter's out!" and the batter is out regardless of whether the ball is caught in flight. THE BALL IS LIVE! If the infield fly is **caught**, the runners must **tag up** before they advance. If the infield fly is not caught, runners do not need to tag up. In either case, since the batter is out, the force play on other runners is removed. ADVANCING RUNNERS MUST BE TAGGED OUT.



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c) **Dropped Third Strike:** The dropped third strike rule **DOES APPLY** at this level. The STEAL OF HOME rule does not apply to a dropped third strike. Hitter can advance as far as first base. All other runners eligible to advance one base. When is dropped third strike in play:

- i. Less than 2 outs and First Base is not occupied prior to the pitch
- ii. When there are 2 outs, regardless of First Base being occupied, or not.
- iii. NOTE: If First Base is occupied with less than 2 outs;
  - 1) Batter is automatically out
  - 2) See rule 7b for overthrows to a base by a catcher if a throw is made to a base occupied by a runner in a dropped third strike situation.

### 9. Pitching

- a) A windmill, slingshot or modified fast pitch is allowed. Emphasis is placed on the Manager to encourage the pitcher to pitch in the strike zone by either method. There is no penalty for an illegal pitch. A "No Pitch" will be declared unless the illegal pitch hits the batter.
- b) 3. USA Softball rules will be in effect for the pitching motion. A pitcher may have both feet on the pitching

rubber, OR the pivot foot on the rubber and the other foot behind the pitching rubber, when presenting the ball and at the start of her motion. She may not lick her fingers and then directly put them on the ball. A backward step may be taken before, simultaneous with or after the hands are brought together. The pivot foot must remain in contact with the pitcher's plate at all times prior to the forward step.

- . c) No "Crow Hops": The pivot foot must start on the rubber and stay in contact with ground until release of the pitch, where the foot leaves the ground before the pitch is released. This is to encourage that proper pitching form be developed.
- . d) There is a three (3) inning limit per game for pitchers. These do not have to be consecutive innings. Throwing One (1) pitch in any inning constitutes an inning pitched.
- . e) New pitchers get as many warm-ups as the umpire deems required.
- . f) Managers and coaches may warm up pitchers. Players may warm up pitchers but must be properly wearing catcher's protective equipment.
- . g) Hit by Pitch: A batter hit by a ball pitched by a player pitcher will be awarded first base. An attempt must be made by the batter to avoid being hit by the ball. The umpire will make the final call as to whether a hit by pitch occurred. The batter can decline the first base award and continue batting, but the Hit by Pitch will still be charged to the pitcher.
- . h) If a pitcher hits two (2) batters in one (1) inning she will retire from pitching for that inning, but be allowed to come back into other innings to pitch to complete her three innings. If a

3rd batter is hit she will retire from pitching for the entire game.

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- . i) Intentional walks are not allowed.
- . j) During regular season games only: When a player pitcher throws four balls when the bases are loaded, a coach pitcher will enter the game. The batter will have a total of 3 extra pitches from the coach pitcher regardless of the count. A foul ball will not end the at bat, and the batter will not be awarded first base if hit by a pitch delivered by a coach.

### **10. Defense**

a) A centerfielder may not cover second on a force out or steal, teams must have their second baseman or shortstop covering any plays at 2<sup>nd</sup> base. Centerfielders are allowed to field a batted ball and tag 2<sup>nd</sup> base.

### **11. Injuries**

- . a) If a player is injured while playing, the umpire will call time and play stops. A runner may advance to the next base only if that runner was advancing prior to the umpire's call of time out. The dead ball rule applies.
- . b) An injured player may be returned to her original spot in the batting order and original position in the game. The opposing Manager and scorekeeper should be notified of the change before the player bats or returns to the field.

- . c) Courtesy runners are allowed for injured players per the rules above.

## **12. The Field**

- a. ASA 12U field dimension rules will prevail unless specified in these rules --- The playing field will have 60 foot bases. --- The front edge of the pitching rubber shall be 40 feet from the point of home plate
- b. The team listed as the home team shall occupy the 3rd base dugout.
- c. Each team must clean up their dugout after the game. This is the manager's responsibility.
- d. The use of Tobacco products on or near any field is prohibited.

**13. Equipment** a) Bats: The barrel of the bat may not exceed 2 1/4" and must be an official softball bat

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- . b) Helmets: All batters shall wear a batting helmet that meets NOCSAE requirements and guard. Any helmet provided by any player must also conform to this requirement. NO EXCEPTIONS.
  - . c) Team uniforms should be properly worn by all. Players are encouraged to participate with shirts tucked into pants.
  - . d) ASA Rules prohibit players from wearing any type of jewelry.

This will be **strictly** enforced. **EXCLUSION:** Medical alert bracelets worn as a medical warning to emergency technicians.

- . e) **Pitchers must wear a protective defensive mask while pitching. STRONGLY ENCOURAGE FACE MASKS FOR ALL DEFENSIVE PLAYERS.**
- . f) Catchers must wear all protective equipment properly.
- . g) Metal spikes are not allowed; only molded spikes or tennis shoes are allowed.
- . h) A 12" ball conforming to ASA Fast Pitch Rules for this age group will be used. The home team will supply the game ball.

#### **14. Sportsmanship**

- a) Encourage Good Sportsmanship at all times:
  - i. Managers are accountable for the actions of their coaches and parents.
  - ii. Treat our umpires with respect. There is to be no questioning of calls or balls/strikes. There is to be no influencing of calls – coaches and parents should not give any visual or verbal signals before the ump makes the call.
  - iii. Managers are accountable for the actions of their coaches and parents.
  - iv. Parents should not be standing around the outside of the backstop fence – this can distract the pitcher, players and umpire.

- v. Artificial noise makers such as cow bells, horns, clackers and the like, will not be permitted at any time.
- vi. Any actions deemed inappropriate by the umpire or BYB&S official will result in a

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. b) The

. c) Any

game forfeiture and further action by BYB&S.

use of profanity by coaches, players, and parents is prohibited

manager or coach ejected from the game will automatically be suspended. The League Commissioner/President shall be notified of the incident and the ejection will result in review of the coach's status by the Executive Board of their League.

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- . d) Respect all umpires decisions. If you need to question a rule (not an umpires judgment call), you must discuss it in a respectful way.
  - . e) If there is a problem with a coach or parent that is out of control, the umpire may go into the concession stand and call the local authorities. Please remain calm at all times.

## **SEVERE WEATHER? SEE LEAGUE WEBSITE FOR UPDATES AND POLICY**

The use of tobacco products and / or alcoholic beverages of any

kind, are prohibited while on the grounds of the FOD facilities, Barrington Park District facilities or any facilities that are in use by BYB&S. There are no exceptions.