

## Official FVBL Playing Rules

### MUSTANG LEAGUE

#### AGE 8: (2<sup>nd</sup> Grade)



**PURPOSE: Non-competitive, instructional league to learn the basic skills of baseball; i.e., positions, hitting, running, defense and sportsmanship. A safety ball (flex-ball) will be used throughout the season.**

#### 1. GENERAL GAME RULES:

- A. One coach from the defensive team can be located in the outfield during the game for instructional purposes. During the instructional period a coach from the offensive team will be on the mound calling balls and strikes.
- B. The pitching team will place one coach with two additional game balls behind the catcher to keep the game moving.
- C. **INSTRUCTIONAL PERIOD (1<sup>st</sup> four (4) games of season):** Walks are not awarded and batters will not be given first if hit by a pitch (unless the player is noticeably distressed by the pitch).
  - a. Once Umpires are present on the field, walks are awarded two (2) per inning upon the third (3) walk and any walk after that batter shall stay in the box and receive pitches from the coach.
  - b. Three (3) strikes for a strike out, including called strikes.
  - c. A hit by pitch is also considered a walk.
  - d. At the Mustang level the strike zone is slightly expanded.
- D. Once Umpires are present on the field, a coach is welcome and encouraged to be behind the catcher. However, this coach is to be seen and not heard. I.e. the coach cannot speak and influence an umpire pitch call.
- E. An inning consists of all team members batting one time or three (3) outs, or if 5 runs are scored, whichever occurs first. Players will bat in continuous rotation. An inning stops when the last batter is called-out or reaches base, or the 5<sup>th</sup> run is scored, whichever occurs first. If the last batter reaches second base, it will be considered a ground rule double. Any other base runners will advance that number of bases allowed for a ground rule double, which is two bases.
- F. No inning will start 1.5 hours after the start of the game. All attempts shall be made to play as many innings per game as possible within the time guideline.
- G. The pitching rubber shall be 40 feet from the furthest point of home plate to the front of the pitching rubber. Bases are to be 50 feet apart.
- H. A player will pitch to each batter until there are four (4) called balls. Once four (4) balls have been called, an adult will throw four (4) additional pitches. When the coach comes in to pitch and the count goes back to 0-0.
- I. Balls and strikes are called by a coach of the hitting team positioned behind the pitcher. This coach is to be the coach pitcher as well.



- J. No bunting is permitted in games; however, bunting will be included in practices for instructional purposes.
- K. No advancing to the next base on any overthrow, regardless if it is out of play.
- L. All players must rotate positions throughout the season. Please consider safety when placing a player to catch or play 1<sup>st</sup> base.

## 2. PITCHING:

- A. This is an Instructional League with an emphasis on skill development. All players that want to pitch will be given an opportunity to pitch during the season. All players should be taught the proper pitching techniques and encouraged to try to pitch.
- B. Only one (1) player per game can pitch more than one (1) inning, including extra-inning games. Other pitchers must be limited to 1 inning to promote pitcher development.
- C. During all six (6) innings a pitcher is allowed two (2) walks per inning. If after two (2) walks by the pitcher in an inning, that pitcher throws four (4) balls to another batter, then the coach will step in to pitch to the batter, since no more walks are allowed in that inning. After the batter has either gotten on base or gotten out, then the coach will step off the mound and return to the dugout and the pitcher will then pitch to the next new batter. This way, the pitcher pitches to every batter in the inning. The purpose of this league is to develop pitchers, so we need to have the kids pitching, not the coaches. We also need to keep the game moving. Each half inning will be limited to either three (3) outs or five (5) runs with the following exceptions. There is no limit to runs in the fifth (5th) or sixth (6th) innings. Pitching will proceed this way for the remainder of the season and into tournament play. Umpires will continue to call the game.
- D. **Pitching Helmet Agreement.** All players pitching in the Mustang League are required to wear a batter's helmet fitted with a caged face mask or sign the waiver to permit them to pitch without the helmet. Each manager will provide a Mustang Pitching Helmet Agreement listing the team roster. The parent must select a 'Yes' or 'No' option to wear or not wear the helmet when pitching. Parents may also choose to keep their player off the mound altogether by selecting the 'Do Not Pitch' category. Either way, the parent's signature is required. All completed forms must be returned to the League Commissioner prior to the start of the first game played.

## 3. BASE RUNNING:

- A. Base stealing (including passed balls) is not allowed at this level. This includes wild pitches and balls thrown from the catcher to the pitcher.
- B. When the ball reaches the infield and is SECURED by an infielder from any outfielder, all runners must stop at the closest base. ABSOLUTELY UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES MAY YOU TAKE HOME ON AN OVERTHROW. For example, if there is a runner at 2nd base, and there is an overthrow to 1st base, the runner on 2nd base would only advance to 3rd base. If there is a play at 3rd base resulting in an overthrow at 3rd base, the runner may NOT score home. The runner must stay on 3rd base. The runner may NOT take home on an overthrow. YOU MAY NOT GO HOME TO SCORE A RUN ON AN OVERTHROW.



- C. **Half-way baserunning:** When a ball is hit to the outfield, runners may advance as many bases as they can. However, if the runner is not more than half-way to the next base when the ball is thrown into infield and secured by an infielder, including a catcher, the runner can continue to his forward base and can be played on and be put out. If the runner safely advances, the umpire shall call time and move runner back to the previous base. ONCE THE BALL IS IN SECURED POSSESSION by the infielder, the half-way rule is in effect. It is important to teach players to take care of the ball! If an infielder, picks up a ball in infield and plays on a runner. That runner if more than half-way can stay at that base but cannot advance any further because the ball was secured by the infielder throwing the ball. NO OVERTHROWS.
- D. Note: A ball thrown in from outfield cannot be considered an overthrow.