

CAYSA Coach's Handbook

Intro:

Welcome to our CAYSA organization and thank you for volunteering. You will find that working with these young athletes can be some of the most satisfying times of your life. Whether you are an experienced coach or a parent with little experience wanting to become more involved, you are very appreciated by our organization.

CAYSA Mission Statement:

The mission of the Capital Area Youth Softball Association (CAYSA) is to create a positive learning experience for all participants that promotes good sportsmanship, teamwork and discipline in a safe environment, while striving to improve the softball skills of the participants as an USA Softball Association (USA Softball) affiliate.

League Objectives:

- To teach the importance of good sportsmanship.
- To create a positive environment at practice and games to promote the enjoyment of the game for all participants.
- To improve the skills and confidence of participants during the course of the season.
- To insure that the programs and equipment are safe.
- To insure that the facilities are clean, safe, well-maintained and a source of pride.
- To have all coaches/managers promote learning the value of team play, while giving as much individual attention to all participants as possible.

General Policies:

In the following sections, CAYSA sets forth its intent regarding the several divisions of play. General policies are set forth first, followed by individual specialized policies for each division.

Divisions are set up on a two-year basis. For instance, T-Ball consists of 5 & 6 year olds; 8U consists of 7 & 8 year olds and 10U consists of 9 & 10 year olds.

Finally, there is an important section on team responsibilities, including coach and parent obligations.

Coaches:

**All Head Coaches and Assistant Coaches for each House Team are required to pass the USA Softball Background Check and SafeSport Certification. ACE Certification is recommended for all but not required at this time. This background check and certification is obtained online at www.registerusasoftball.com. Coaches need to submit a copy of the a "Cleared" background check and SafeSport Certification to info@caysa-me.org ASAP prior to practicing with the team or opening

day whichever is first. This verification will be logged and maintained in the CAYSA Document Library for reference as needed. *****THIS IS REQUIRED*****.

Uniforms:

Uniforms are NOT to be cut or altered in any way.

Jewelry:

No jewelry is to be worn at practice or during games. In the case of piercings, if the piercing cannot be removed for practice and games, the player will need to put tape on the piercing to completely cover it and prevent it from being hooked on anything.

Draft:

Each year T-Ball Players are simply placed on teams. Returning players are typically drafted or placed on teams in such a way to spread the talent out across all teams to balance the teams out.

For 8U and 10U, there is a placement draft for all players prior to the season. Every effort is made to balance the teams, with emphasis on an equitable distribution of demonstrated or potential pitchers and catchers.

Game Participation:

All players in attendance at game time will be placed in the batting order and play. Players arriving late will be placed at the end of the batting order without penalty.

To ensure participation and diversity of experience, all players must play at least three innings (Game Permitting), including at least one inning in the infield & outfield. Pitchers and catchers for the game are not subject to this requirement (Please see division specific rules related to pitchers and catchers).

All players present must receive at least one at-bat.

Players must keep their shirts tucked in at all times. In cold weather, we encourage players to wear warmer clothing under their uniforms. In extreme conditions, they are allowed to wear clothing over their uniforms. Pitchers must not wear white or yellow long-sleeved shirts or have anything white or yellow (equipment, accessories, logo's or iron-on's etc) on or around their legs/knees.

For 10U **and** 12U, a team should have at least 8 players to start a game. Once started, a game may continue provided each team has at least 7 players at all times during a game. (Due to roster sizes, this rule may be modified to allow less as rosters dictate. Fielding teams may utilize players from the batting team to fill in field positions if not enough rostered players are present during the game).

Game Length (during regular season):

- T-Ball games are 1 hour long, beginning at the scheduled start time.

- 8U and 10U and 12U games have a drop-dead time limit of 1 hour 45 minutes from the scheduled start time (not from first pitch time). New Innings begin at the time. **The 3rd out of an inning is considered the start time for the next inning.** No new inning may begin after the 1:30 time limit, but innings in progress may be completed up until till the 1hr 45minute drop-dead stop time. Leagues with playoffs will be allowed to complete the championship game without stated time limit.
- *Extra innings may be played if there is no game scheduled on the same field after the game, otherwise tied games may be called as tied. Will need to get approval from ump if they are to remain after the allotted time. If ump needs to leave, the remaining time may be played with a coach standing in for the ump if mutually agreed upon by both teams.

Mercy Rule:

Given CAYSA's time limits and its desire for girls to learn the game, we will not use the ASA mercy rules. However, if a game becomes excessively one-sided, with mutual consent of the coaches, the scoreboard may be turned off and/or, in extremes cases, the game may be called.

Playoffs:

The 10U **and 12U** will have a single-elimination postseason playoff. All the USA and CAYSA league rules that were used throughout the season will apply, with the following exceptions:

- Playoff games will not have drop dead time limit.
- There will not be any new inning after 1 hour 30 minutes from start time **unless the score is tied. It after the 1 hour and 30 minute mark (of playoff game) the score is tied, the next inning will start and the run rule will be lifted.**
- The time limit for the championship game is waived.
- Seating in playoffs will be determined by a drawing. The regular season will not determine playoff seating because we want to encourage developing players during the regular season. Teams will not be penalized for developing players or for giving players an opportunity to play a different position throughout the season. This is House League.

Reporting Games (optional):

The winning manager is responsible for calling the Kennebec Journal Sports Desk (623-3811) before 10 P.M. to report the outcome of the game.

You generally will need to know the team names, score, winning pitcher and the top three hitters for each team.

T-Ball Division

CAYSA stresses the development of the individual player as a team player in the learning of softball skills. At this level, our primary focus is teaching the fundamentals of softball.

We also strive to instill self-respect and self-esteem, confidence, and a sense of fair play into these beginning softball players.

CAYSA has purposefully chosen not to over-regulate this division. We discourage the counting of runs scored and emphasize the learning part of the program. Parents are encouraged to participate, particularly at home by playing catch, etc.

Simply put, our goal at this level is to introduce girls to the game, teach them the basic skills and let them learn and enjoy the game of softball and have fun playing it.

Helmets: Batters must use helmets and masks in order to hit.

Defensive Coaching: Defensive coaches are allowed to be on the field to facilitate coaching players in the field. They must avoid interference with the base runners and/or base coaches.

8U Division

Game length: 6 innings or 1 hr 45 min. drop-dead time based on scheduled game start time (not based on time of first pitch) so please be ready to go at game time. **The 3rd out of an inning is considered the start time for the next inning.** No new inning may begin after the 1:30 time limit, but innings in progress may be completed up until till the 1hr 45minute drop-dead stop time.

Coaches: Coaches are encouraged to participate on the field for instruction.

Pitching: Coaches will start the season pitching to the players but will integrate player pitching as pitchers develop. When players are ready, coaches will step in to pitch when a player pitcher has thrown 3 pitches without a hit to a batter.

Batting: All girls will bat. Teams will change offense and defense when 3 outs are recorded, or a team has gone through their line-up. Each batter will receive 5 good pitches to get a ball in play. For the first 2 weeks, use of a hitting T is acceptable for younger players if needed. After the first two weeks, if they have not hit a ball in play, an out will be recorded. A foul on pitch number 5 will constitute an additional pitch.

Bunting: Bunting is not allowed.

Base Stealing: Base stealing is not allowed. Taking a lead from a base once the ball has passed

Home Plate is allowed.

Dropped third strike/Passed Ball: Dropped third strike rule and passed ball does not apply.

Fielding: All players will be in the field and rotated.

Advancement on hit ball: for 8U, for the first 2 weeks of the season, a player can advance one base at a time off a hit ball. Third week till end of season coaches can decide pre-game if they want to have full on advancement rules in place. This is done to allow players to focus initially on making defensive plays and to advance to thinking ahead during game situation.

Generally accepted rules: This division focusses on development so if there are rules that are mutually agreed upon by both coaches (teams) before the game, these adjustments can be made as long as they don't cause increased risk of harm to the players. NO coach will be forced to accept a modification from the printed rules. If no agreement is made, the written rules remain in effect.

The 8U division plays by ASA Rules & Guidelines, except as noted above to benefit the CAYSA house league.

10-U Division

Game length: 6 innings, or 1 hr 45 minutes drop-dead time based on scheduled game start time (not based on time of first pitch). **The 3rd out of an inning is considered the start time for the next inning.** No new inning will start after 1 hr and 30 minutes from **scheduled** start time so please be ready to go at game time.

(Refer to Game length Section **above**)

Coaches: Only 3 coaches **and** a bookkeeper per team during the game. The bookkeeper is to remain in the dugout. The other coaches are asked to stay close to the dugout during game play.

10U Pitching: No one pitcher can pitch more than 3 innings in one game. Since this is a developmental league, CAYSA encourages coaches to introduce creative ways to enhance the development of players. Therefore, if the coaches agree before the start of the game, they can put in play and relay changes to the umpires. They should also make every attempt to inform the parents of said changes for the day so there is little confusion when something new happens.

Batting/Inning Run Rule: All girls bat in the rotation. 3 outs or **5** runs scored by the batting team ends the half inning.

Bunting: Bunting is allowed.

Passed Ball: A passed ball is a pitched ball that is not caught by the catcher and gets a step or more away from the catcher.

Runner Advancement on Bases: (Base stealing not allowed).

- Each play ends when the pitcher possesses the ball in the pitching circle. At this time, the runners have to make a decision and either remain where they are, or if runner is between bases, they need to either try to advance to the forward base or try to return to the previous base. If the runner makes decision (stay, advance, or return) and then changes mind after and acts on that change, they can be considered out by the ump. The pitcher can make an attempt to throw runner out if they choose. The play returns to alive if the pitcher attempts to throw to make a play on a runner. If there is an error on the play, the runners can decide to try to advance or not while ball is still in play. Once Pitcher has ball in circle and is not attempting to make a play on a runner the play ends and again the runners need to make the decision to stay, advance, or return.
- Runner is **ONLY** allowed to attempt to advance to the next base if the pitch is dropped **AND** goes beyond the reach of the catcher.
- Teams are only allowed 2 attempts per inning (successful or not) to advance from 3rd to home on a passed pitched ball.
- A player cannot leave the base until after the pitched ball has left the pitcher's hand (on pitcher's release of the pitched ball).
- A player caught leaving her base before the pitch has been released from the pitcher's hand will be called out.

Advancing to home on pitched ball: Teams may **ATTEMPT** to score/advance on (2) **passed balls** per inning from 3rd.

Dropped third strike: The dropped third strike rule does not apply in the 10U division.

Infield Fly Rule: Infield Fly Rule does apply.

Fielding: Every player must play at least 1 infield & 1 outfield position per game. Moving all players around defensively is strongly encouraged.

5 Run Rule: An inning ends after a team scores **5** runs.

The 10U division plays by ASA Rules & Guidelines, except as noted above to benefit the CAYSA house league.

12U Division

To be posted shortly.

Team Responsibilities

Concession Stand: It is intended that the concession stand be open whenever there is a game at Beaudoin Park (BP), for T-Ball through 14/16U. Each Home Team at BP Field will provide 2 parents to help in the stand. **Children (players or siblings) are not allowed to hang out inside the concession stand while it is in operation.**

A coach or team parent (Mom or Dad) will be responsible for scheduling 2 parents to run the stand for each game: one money handler and a cook. For the stand to be profitable & an asset to CAYSA, we need your support.

The league reserves the option to delay the start of the game where there are inadequate stand volunteers. Any delay will be deducted from game length.

Equipment: Bags should contain, catching gear and practice balls. Please do not take and keep helmets for the season. They should be taken from & returned to BP blockhouse, or Patriot Field storage lockers promptly after each game or practice. Bases must be stored at their respective fields.

New Balls: For 10U through 14/16U, each team will get 12 new balls. 8U will get 6 new balls. Bring one to each game and keep for practice balls afterward.

Dragging and Lining Fields: This is the responsibility of the Visiting Team, but sharing of the work is encouraged. PLEASE use the 2" setting on the chalking machine for line width.

Cancellation Policy: It is the responsibility of the board (or president) to determine if a game will be cancelled or postponed due to weather or insufficient players.

Our goal is to play ball, so a little damp weather shouldn't stop a game. But do consider field condition and safety. As noted, games can start with 8 players per team.

Postponements due to shortage of players, if known ahead of time, should be rescheduled. A shortage of players is different than not having all of your most skilled players! A shortage only found at game time may be called a forfeit, but mutual agreement to share players or allow pickup players of same league age or younger can be allowed if agreed upon by both teams. Playing games at 10U and younger is more important than having full roster. And since season stats don't count towards playoff standings, the forfeiture really doesn't count/matter for anything – Keep the girls playing if possible.

A delay of 10 minutes past game time will be allowed for arrival of players before a shortage is determined. Game length will be shorted by any delay up to 10 minutes. In the spirit of “play ball” teams may mutually agree to share players in order to field teams for a given game.

Notification of Umpires: If a game is cancelled or postponed but the umpire shows up because he has not been notified by us, we are obliged to pay him.

Therefore, the board member cancelling or postponing a game are responsible for notifying the scheduled umpire as soon as possible, at least 1 ½ hours before game time.

Rescheduled Games: For teams, contact the **CAYSA Scheduler (Jim Murphy jmurfie@gmail.com)** to schedule a field or the BP batting cage for practice, or to schedule a make-up day, time and field for a game that has been previously cancelled/postponed. This year we are trying to lock in specific weeknights for teams to have their practices consistently throughout the season. Games will take priority over practices when there is a conflict.

For 10U through 14/16U, umpires for the rescheduled game must be scheduled through the **CAYSA Scheduler (Jim Murphy – jmurfie@gmail.com)** at least 3 days before the new game date.

The need to reschedule games takes precedence over practice times, which may be cancelled or adjusted as needed. This includes Travel Team practices, but not previously scheduled Travel Team tournaments.

Generally, Saturday afternoons, Sundays and a few days in the latter part of the season are available for make-ups, as well as off-site fields can be scheduled if desired.

Beaudoin Park Scoreboard: An additional parent or responsible teenager/sibling is acceptable to run the scoreboard.

The remote to run the Beaudoin Park scoreboard is kept in and must be returned to the BP concession stand immediately after the game.

Don't expect concession volunteers to operate the scoreboard.

Patriot Field Scoreboard: An additional parent or responsible teenager/sibling is acceptable to run the scoreboard.

The remote to run the scoreboard is in the first base storage room. It is on top of the electrical panel. Please return the remote to this location immediately after the game.

Keys and Combination Locks: Keys to the Beaudoin Park dugout storage doors are located in a lockbox in the 3rd base dugout and on a nail to the left of the Beaudoin Park electrical panel. Keys to the Patriot Field dugout storage doors are located in a lock box in Patriot Field's third base dugout. Please return the keys immediately after you use them and lock the lockbox. The combinations to the locks to Beaudoin Park concession building, the tractor storage building, the Patriot Field lock box and the batting cage/batting cage storage building will be issued to CAYSA personnel at the beginning of the season. **Please do not share these combinations with anyone.**

Lining the ball field: Chalking machine, chalk, string and batting box template is located in the

dugout storage on both Beaudoin Park and Patriot Field. Use the 2" setting for the chalking machine. Use the batting box template to draw lines around home plate. Remove the template and chalk over the drawn lines. Tie the string to a nail or screwdriver and set in the ground at the point at the back of home plate. Stretch the string down the 3rd base line making sure it lines up to the dugout side of 3rd base. Chalk over the string from the batter's box to the outfield grass. Swing the string over to the 1st base line with the string going the center of the 1st base safety base. Chalk over the string from the batter's box to the outfield. **The pitching rubber is set at 43 feet from the back of home plate to the front of the pitching rubber for 14/16U, 40 feet for 12U and 35 feet for 10U.** Tie the string to a nail or screwdriver set in the ground midway in front of the pitching rubber. Measure 8 feet and mark an 8ft radius circle around the pitching rubber. Chalk that line. Optional: You can chalk 2ft 6in radius On Deck circles between each dugout and home plate.