

# **GIRLS SUMMER SOFTBALL**

## **HOT SHOTS SPORTS / WILMETTE PARK DISTRICT**

### **RULES**

#### **Section A**

Each player is required to play a minimum of two innings per game in a defensive position. This recommendation is made in the interest of fair play and providing a softball experience for every girl. All players will be placed in the batting order and bat each time their position comes up in the order. Batting orders should be rotated each game. Each player must play at least one inning at an infield position. No player should sit out for two innings until all players have sat out for one inning.

#### **Section B**

Teams must field at least 6 players at the start time of a game or face forfeit. A game that has been forfeited can still be played as a practice game and the score will be recorded as 5-0. A five-minute forfeit time will be allowed from the scheduled start time of the game.

#### **Section C**

- (a) Grade 3/4/5 teams will play with an 11" "Softie".
- (b) Grade 6/7/8 teams will play with a 12" hard yellow ball.

#### **Section D**

No awards will be given at the end of the season. The emphasis should be on having fun and learning the game!

#### **Section E**

Games will be played on Mondays at Howard Park in Wilmette. All make-up games will be attempted to be rescheduled on Thursdays in place of practice.

#### **Section F**

- (a) Sixty-foot base lines will be used in all leagues
- (b) The home team will occupy the third base dugout.

#### **Section G – Defense**

- (a) In Grade 3/4/5, 10 defensive players are allowed on the field.
- (b) In Grade 6/7/8, 9 defensive players are allowed on the field.
- (c) Players must be positioned at all infield positions (1st baseman, 2nd baseman, shortstop and 3rd base) before and during each pitch.
- (d) No infielder may be positioned closer than 40 feet from home plate while the ball is being delivered home by the pitcher.
- (e) Players may react immediately to the batted ball.
- (f) Outfielders must be positioned in outfield positions and are not allowed to cover a base on the initial play and subsequent throw of a fairly batted ball. A base runner will be ruled safe if an outfielder violates this rule.
- (g) In Grade 3/4/5 play, a fourth outfielder is allowed. That fourth player is an outfielder and must follow the defensive guidelines of other outfielders.
- (h) All outfielders must have their heels in the grass (or be at least 10 feet behind the infield) when playing their respective positions.

#### **Section H**

All players present must appear in the batting order, even if they are not starting defensively.

#### **Section I**

- (a) Bunting is not permitted in Grade 3/4/5 and will result in batter being called out by the umpire.
- (b) Infield fly rule will not be enforced at any grade level.

#### **Section J**

Free Substitutions: Players may return to the field in any spot defensively.

### **Section K – Pitching Distance**

- (a) Pitching distance is thirty five feet (35') for Grade 3/4/5.
- (b) Pitching distance is forty feet (40') for Grade 6/7/8.
- (c) Adjustments can be considered as deemed necessary.

### **Section L – Pitching**

- (a) The pitcher may release the ball in any manner as long as the follow-through motion of her pitching hand is below the hip and is released on the same side of the body as the pitching arm. One foot must be in contact with the pitching rubber as the ball is released.
- (b) The pitcher must start with one foot on the rubber.
- (c) The pitcher must deliver the ball in an underhand motion with the ball and the palm of the hand facing the batter.
- (d) One foot must remain in contact with the rubber until the release of the ball to the batter and the normal follow-through causes the foot to come off the rubber.
- (e) The pitch will be a strike if the ball crosses the plate between the shoulders and the knees.
- (f) Speed of the pitch does not influence whether the pitch is a ball or a strike.
- (g) Pitchers may still use a high arc pitch, but the ball must cross the plate between the shoulders and the knees to be a strike. No backward or sideways spin will be allowed. Spin caused by a legal throwing motion will be considered normal and acceptable.

### **Section M – Pitching / Hit Batters**

#### **Grade 3/4/5:**

- (a) If a pitcher hits a batter, the coach will immediately begin pitching and inherit the strike count.

#### **Grade 6/7/8:**

- (a) If a pitcher hits two (2) batters in a single inning, she must be removed from pitching for the remainder of that inning. The inning will still count toward her total innings pitched for that game.
- (b) If the pitcher has not yet reached her maximum of three (3) innings pitched, she may return to pitch in a later inning, provided she remains eligible under all other pitching rules and guidelines.

### **Section N - Pitching Limits**

At all age levels, a pitcher is allowed to pitch a total of 3 innings and then a pitching change must be made. One pitch constitutes an inning. The pitcher may be substituted in and out as long as she does not exceed the inning limit as indicated above. Once a pitcher reaches the limit, she is no longer allowed to pitch in that game. If a player is a pitcher in travel softball, that player may only pitch a total of 2 innings and then a pitching change must be made. Coaches are expected to enforce this rule in an effort for fair play.

### **Section O – At-Bats:**

#### **Grade 3/4/5:**

- (a) A pitcher pitches to a batter until 1) the batter hits the ball into fair territory; 2) the batter strikes out; 3) the count reaches **four** balls 4) the pitcher hits a batter.
- (b) Batters cannot receive a base on balls.
- (c) When the count reaches four balls, a coach from the hitting team will pitch.
- (d) The coach must pitch from 35 feet (the pitching rubber).
- (e) The strike count will remain the same, and the coach will have a maximum of three pitches until the ball is put into play or the batter strikes out. If a batter fouls off the third pitch or any pitch thereafter, she will continue her at-bat until she puts the ball into play, swings and misses or takes a pitch. Otherwise, the batter is out after the third pitch.
- (f) The coach/pitcher is not a defensive player and cannot field or otherwise interfere with a batted ball or any ball in play. If, however, a batted ball inadvertently strikes the coach/pitcher, the ball is in play and the defense should react accordingly.

### **Section P – Base Running**

Base runners may not take a leadoff from a base until the ball has been hit or crosses home plate. Leaving the base too soon will result in the runner being **sent back to the base and the play dead**. If the runner leaves early, both the base runner and team get a warning. The next violation will result in the base runner being called out.

#### **Grade 3/4/5**

- (a) On a batted ball that remains in the infield, all base runners are entitled to attempt to advance one base.
- (b) Base runners may not advance an additional base on any overthrow to any base.**
- (c) On a batted ball that is hit beyond the infield (goes past an infielder or beyond the imaginary plane of the infield), the batter and all base runners may advance on the base paths until the ball returns to the infield (a throw breaks the imaginary plane of the infield or a fielder runs the ball back into the infield). The ball must only break the plane. It does not need to be caught or fielded cleanly. When the ball returns to the infield, the play is dead and a base runner that is between bases may continue to the next base.

#### **Grade 6/7/8**

- (a) Base runners may advance as far as possible on any batted ball, including balls that travel into the outfield.
- (b) Base runners may attempt to steal 2nd base and 3rd base. A baserunner may not leave the bag until the pitch has crossed home plate.
- (c) Runners may advance to second or third on any misplay in the infield, including the exchange between catcher and pitcher.
- (d) Runners may advance to second or third base on any attempt by a defensive player (including the catcher) to throw “behind” the runner.
- (e) Exception: When the ball is received by any defensive player within a 10-foot radius of the pitching rubber. The play is dead and a base runner that is between bases may continue to the next base.

### **Section Q - Scoring**

A team may score a maximum of five runs in an inning unless they are losing, then they can score enough runs to tie the game, with a maximum of 10 runs able to be scored per at bat. If a team is losing by more than five runs, they may not overtake a lead. A team’s time at bat ends when they have scored 5 runs, scored 6, 7, 8, or 9 runs to tie the game, or scored 10 runs.

### **Section R – Game Time Limit**

Game time limit will be one hour and twenty-five minutes from the scheduled start time or six innings, whichever comes first. No new inning will begin after one hour and twenty minutes. Umpire will be the determining factor in enforcing this rule. **If in the middle of an inning, the inning will be completed.** If the game is tied at the end of the inning, the score will stand and the game will be recorded in standings as a tie.

### **Section S**

In any situation not covered by the aforementioned rules, the official rulebook, entitled ASA Official Guide published by the Amateur Softball Association of America, will be used as reference.