



## Division Rules - 2023

(as of 4/11/2023)

### Softball – Seniors

1. **Players:** Seniors players include the following:
  - a. Girls in 6<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> grade, who meet 12U and 14U age requirements.
  - b. Any other participants require WBSI, LHBSA, RYSI and SHBC board approval.
2. **Game Schedule/Length** – Seniors League games will consist of six innings, unless called due to darkness, weather and subject to the rules below:
  - a. Official game: A game is considered official when the home team is ahead and three and one half inning innings have been completed. When the visiting team is ahead, a game is considered official when four innings have been completed.
  - b. Time Limit: No new inning can begin after 1 hour and 45 minutes from the scheduled game time or when the umpire is ready to play. Example: If a game begins at 8:00pm and the bottom of the fifth inning completes after 9:45pm, the sixth inning cannot begin. If the inning begins, that inning is played until completion (unless the home team is winning after the visiting team completes its turn at bat).
  - c. Start time: Will be the schedule game time or when the umpire is ready to play.
  - d. Mercy Rule: There is no mercy rule in effect.
  - e. All playoff games must be played to completion. Time limits do not apply.
3. **Coaches on the field**
  - a. A coach shall be allowed to request time and visit the mound. A second trip by a coach to the mound in an inning shall require a pitching change.
  - b. Base coaches must be adult coaches.
  - c. Coaches are not permitted to stand on field at any time unless coaching a base.
4. **Equipment**
  - a. Players must wear team uniforms.
  - b. Steel/metal cleats are not allowed.
  - c. Any player warming up a pitcher on or off the field or playing catcher during warmups shall wear a catcher's mask, or faceguard helmet.
  - d. Both teams shall maintain scorebooks for each game. Both teams must report the final score to the League Commissioner after each game.
  - e. All players shall be required to wear a faceguard helmet while at bat.
  - f. Face masks for fielding must be worn by all infielders at all times. All outfielders are encouraged to wear them as well. Note to coaches: All girls will

need to have a mask as this is Rec and generally girls will play both infield and outfield.

- g. No player will wear any jewelry, including watches, earrings or any chains.

## **5. Game Rules**

- a. A maximum of 10 players on defense (4 players in the outfield)
- b. Every player present must participate in the field and must bat.
- c. All players must play at least three innings on defense, and cannot sit for more than 1 consecutive inning (e.g., free substitution).
- d. A minimum of eight (8) rostered players (from your team) are needed to play if you have 11 or more active players on your roster. If you only have 10 active players on your roster (e.g. you started season with 11 players, and one broke a limb and is out), a minimum of seven (7) players is needed.
- e. There are no replacement players. If the minimum number of rosters players are not available within 15 minutes of the scheduled game start time, the game will be considered a forfeit (and be recorded as a 6-0 final score). The two teams are encouraged to play a scrimmage game in this scenario.
- f. A player who arrives after the start of play is inserted at the end of the batting order. In the event a team began play with eight (or fewer) players, a player arriving late can enter the game immediately.
- g. If a rostered player leaves the game and will not return (e.g., leaves for another commitment), the team shall skip that player's turn at bat in the batting order and not be penalized.

## **6. Pitching**

- a. A player shall not pitch more than three innings in a game.
- b. Throwing one pitch shall count as an inning for the purpose of determining how many innings a player has pitched.
- c. Modified pitching and windmill are allowed.
- d. This is a fastpitch league; therefore, no arc pitching is permitted.
- e. The umpire will determine if a pitch will be disallowed.
- f. Pitcher's foot should be in contact with the pitching rubber when ball is released.
- g. Pitching distance is 40 feet.
- h. If pitcher hits three batters, she must be removed from that position for the remainder of the game.
- i. A pitcher may only re-enter once to pitcher.
- j. Once the pitcher has control of the ball in the pitcher's circle, play is dead, including the last batter when a team has batted around.
- k. No intentional walking is allowed (e.g. rolling the ball, throwing ball high in the air).
- l. There will only be five warmup pitches for each pitcher between innings. A new pitcher may have 8 warmup pitches.

## **7. Batting**

- a. Each team bats the number of players playing that game.
- b. In an inning, a team can bat a maximum of the number of players playing that game or the number of players the opposing team is playing that game (if one

team has more players than the other team, the higher of the number of players shall be used for both teams). A maximum of **five** runs are allowed for one inning.

- c. These rules/limitations do NOT apply to the last inning, for which there are no restrictions to the number of batters or the number of runs scored.
- d. Bunting is allowed. Batters are not allowed to fake a bunt and then swing at a pitch.
- e. Only one player at a time shall be allowed in the designated on-deck area.
- f. The dropped ball third strike rule is in effect (will be re-evaluated by the administrators at the end of April 2023)
- g. A catcher interference with the batter shall result in a warning from the umpire to the defensive team manager and the replaying of the pitch (unless it is to the batting team's advantage to allow the result of the play to stand). A second offense by the same catcher will result in a dead ball and the batter will be awarded first base.
- h. If a player does not bat in the batting position, the player is considered out unless the player is injured or needed to leave the game. The injured player may return to the original batting order.

## **8. Base Running**

- a. Runners advancing to next base must avoid contact with fielder if there is a play at the base, with the exception of first base. The judgment call as to whether or not a player should have slide will be decided by the umpire and is final.
- b. No headfirst slides (no warning, runner will be called out). However, when player is returning to a base, player may dive back headfirst.
- c. Sliding into first base is not allowed.
- d. If the ball is in play, runners may advance.
- e. Baserunners may leave the base as the ball is released by the pitcher.
- f. If less than two outs, if a play is made at a base other than home, run counts if the runner on 3<sup>rd</sup> base crosses home plate. If a runner was on 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> base, and is more than halfway to home plate (in the umpire's discretion), before the ball goes back to the pitcher's circle, that run shall count also.
- g. Decoy tags for the purpose of delaying a base runner are not allowed. A second offense shall result in the objection from the game of the offending player.
- h. To expedite play, with two outs, a courtesy runner for the catcher and pitcher shall be permitted; said runner shall be the player who made the last out.
- i. Stealing is allowed. Runner may only steal one base per batter. After stealing a base, the runner must wait for the next batter before attempting another steal. Runners may steal home.

## **9. Conduct Code:**

- a. Umpires should be at least two years older than the age group for which he/she is umpiring.
- b. A judgment call (fair, foul, safe, out, strike or ball) by an umpire is final. Coaches may not challenge judgment calls.

- c. Interpretations of rules may be appealed. The coach challenging an interpretation must be in possession of an Official Rule Book and cite the correct interpretation. Rule interpretation is final by the umpire.
- d. Unsportsmanlike language and/or behavior by players, coaches or spectators shall not be allowed. After one warning to the coach of the offending team, the umpire shall disqualify the player, manager or coach from the game, or in the case of a spectator, shall require that the spectator leave the game area.

**10. Stoppage of Play:**

- a. In the event of an injury, the play immediately stops. The play stands. The umpire may stop play in order for the player to received attention.
- b. In the event of an injury resulting in a stoppage of play, the player must leave the playing field, but may return.

**11. Changes, modifications, alterations**

- a. There shall be no changes, modifications or alterations of these aforementioned rules without the specific and expressed action of the WBSI, LHBSA, RYSI and SHBC.