

# Huntertown Lions Softball

## Girls Minors Fastpitch (Ages 8-10)

The Minors Softball division is intended to teach players the fundamentals of the game, foster good sportsmanship, and initiate team play. In keeping with this theme, game scores and team records will not be kept.

### Standards of play

- Games are played on Diamond 2 at Huntertown ballpark. Team practices are at the discretion of each coach.
- Base distance is 60 ft; pitching distance is 35 ft.
- USSSA bat rules are used; 11" optic yellow Fastpitch Softballs
- Coaches should arrive 30 mins before their game (i.e. warmups, game may start early, help with field prep, etc.)

### Equipment

- Players must have a fielder's glove, tennis shoes/non-metal cleats, and team uniform must be worn. Catchers must wear full safety equipment.
- All infielders must wear a protective face mask
- Catchers must wear full safety equipment.
- Batting helmets must have a face guard.
- Each coach is responsible for the care, proper storage, and eventual return of team equipment - team bag, practice softballs, catcher's gear & glove, batter helmets, and any team bats issued.

### General Game Rules (Whenever not explicitly addressed, USSSA rules apply)

- The inning ends after the earlier of a scored run limit of 6 runs per half inning or 3 outs recorded.
- All present non-injured players are to be in the batting lineup and play at least 6 defensive outs through the first 3 innings. Free substitution is used for all positions except for pitcher.
- Players arriving late may be added to the bottom of the lineup without penalty. If injured/ill, a player skipped in the batting lineup does not result in an out and may re-enter the game only if the injury/illness is resolved.
- Up to 10 players are positioned on defense (4 outfielders) Players should be rotated routinely, all positions.
- Non-rostered players may not play in an official game.
- If a team presents less than 7 players, players should be shared so that a game can still be played for fun.
- Games end after the earlier of 5 innings or 70 minutes. At 70 minutes last batter is called and batter at the plate is the last batter of the game. No new inning begins after 60-minutes.
- The home team uses the third base dugout and takes the field on defense in the top of the first inning.
- A dead ball is called: Due to injury (at the umpire's discretion), a foul ball not caught, or a hit batter.
- To provide better instruction to players, two coaches are allowed on the field while their team is on defense.
- While on the field of play, batting helmets must be worn by any player not occupying a defensive position.
- No warmups are allowed on the infield prior to the game. Use the outfield, foul territory, or batting cages.
- The head umpire will suspend all games in the event of unsafe playing conditions. Three innings (2 ½ if home team is ahead) constitutes a complete game. The book status is frozen and used if resumed at a later date.
- Umpires have discretion to interpret any ambiguity in the rules and apply game calls in a reasonable manner.
- When the game starts a warmup ball for the infield and/or outfield may only be used in the first inning.

## Batting

- The strike zone will be approximately from the kneecaps to just below the shoulder and just off the plate.
- Any batter receiving a dropped third strike is automatically out (i.e. no dropped 3<sup>rd</sup> strike).
- A "foul tip" caught by the catcher is a strike (batter is out if it's the third strike).
- A batter will be awarded first base if they are hit by a pitch, subject to the following:
  1. The batter made an attempt to avoid being hit by the pitch.
  2. The batter was not positioned in the strike zone (and the pitch was not called a strike)
  3. The batter did not swing at the pitch attempting to make contact.
  4. The ball did not make contact with the bat first (batter's hands are not considered part of the bat)
  5. In the event of an injury resulting, the player furthest away from batting may run.
- Catcher Interference may result in a dead ball with first base awarded to the batter in lieu of the play's result.
- Bunting is not allowed.
- A team gets one warning per game if a bat is thrown. Subsequent occurrences may be an out at the umpires discretion.

## Pitching

- Pitcher is required to wear a face mask.
- Any player may pitch at most 2 innings per game.
- If a player throws a pitch to even one batter then that counts as one of their innings.
- There will be no more than 3 warm-up pitches thrown between innings. 5 pitches for a new pitcher.
- Once a pitcher is removed from the mound they can not return to the mound for the remainder of that game.
- Intentional walks are not allowed. The pitcher must try to throw strikes to each batter.
- Balks are not enforced.
- No bases will be awarded for walks.
- No bases awarded for a hit-by pitch with bases loaded.
- Considerations for coach pitching:
  - Player to pitch until count reaches Ball 4. No bases will be awarded for walks. Batting teams coach pitches when ball 4 reached.
  - If a coach takes over, no walks/hit by pitch will be issued. The only allowable outcome when a coach is pitching is a strike or a hit ball. As always strike 3 is an out.
  - After the batter finishes their bat, the pitcher will resume pitching to the next batter.
  - Coaches should try to avoid throwing slow/high arching pitches.
  - Coaches should be pitching from the rubber with player standing on either side of them.
  - If at anytime the coach does not have any other pitcher available, the coach will pitch.

## Baserunning

- Runners may only advance on a hit, hit-by-pitch, catcher's interference - when all trailing bases are occupied, a play attempted on them, or a play attempted on another base runner. They may not advance on a wild pitch, or upon the catcher errantly returning the ball to the pitcher.
- Runners may advance at their own risk up to 1 base on a passed ball during that live ball period. (I.E. Multiple passed balls/over throws do not equal multiple bases)
- Runners may and are encouraged to lead off once the pitch crosses the plate, there is no risk.
- Base stealing is allowed after week 2 games.
- The play is over when the ball is returned to the pitcher circle (8ft radius around the pitcher's plate).
- Collision Avoidance Rule: Applies to any runner, at any base, where the fielder is in possession of the ball and is attempting to make a tag on the runner. In this instance, the runner must slide or attempt to avoid a collision with the fielder. If not, the runner is to be called out and the play is dead. Collisions should be avoided!
- Interference and Obstruction calls should only be made when they've made an impact on the play.
  - Interference is when an offensive player impedes a fielder attempting to execute a play. Result in an out.
  - Obstruction occurs when a fielder, while not making a play on the ball, impedes the progress of a baserunner. The umpire will use discretion in placing any baserunners to nullify the impact of the play.
- All slides arriving at any base must be feet first. A player may dive back to a base hands first.
- A courtesy runner for the catcher of record **is required** when there are 2 outs in the inning but optional at any other time. The courtesy runner will be the last out or last run scored, whoever is furthest from hitting again.
- The infield fly rule will not be enforced.

## Civility & Team Courtesy

- Batting line-ups are to be given to the opposing team before the game starts.
- The home team is responsible for keeping & reporting the official score and staffing the scoreboard.
- All players must clean up the dugout and surrounding area after the game or practice.
- Players, coaches and spectators are expected to exhibit good sportsmanship and show courtesy at all times.
  - **The league has ZERO tolerance for anyone acting in a threatening nature at any Huntertown Lions event.**
  - Any player, coach, or spectator who violates the above, or who acts or speaks in a socially inappropriate manner (e.g. derides, baits, harasses, intimidates, etc.) to anyone, including the umpire, may be ejected from the game and expelled from the property. **The Club investigates all incidents and further disciplinary action may be imposed.**