

# Huntertown Lions Softball

## Girls Seniors Fastpitch (Ages 14-18)

The Senior 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.

IHSAA rules apply except when superseded by those noted below...

### Standards of play

- Games are played on Diamond 1st Huntertown ballpark. Team practices are at the discretion of each coach.
- Base distance is 60 ft; pitching distance is 43 ft.
- USSSA bat rules are used; 12" 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, rubber cleats/metal spikes, athletic pants, and team uniform must be worn.
- 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, protective masks and any team bats issued.

### General Game Rules (Whenever not explicitly addressed, Indiana High School rules apply)

- Up to 8 runs may be scored each half inning. No exceptions for the final inning. No mercy rule.
- All present non-injured players are to be in the batting lineup and play at least 6 defensive outs. 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 an injured/ill, a player skipped in the batting lineup does not result in an out. However, they cannot re-enter the game.
- Up to 9 players are positioned on defense (no defensive shifts)
- If fewer than 9 players are available, the team will bat all available rostered players and will "borrow" opposing players to play the outfield only to get to 9. May not exceed 9 players total in this situation.
  - In the 1st inning, opposing players will be from the bottom of the batting line up.
  - Beyond the 1st inning, the opposing players being used will be the batter from the last out.
  - If the opposing team bats through the line-up, the opposing player(s) that is(are) fielding will be replaced by the lead-off batters for that inning.
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- A team with less than 7 players must forfeit (final score is tallied as 0-1). If that occurs, players should be shared so that a game can still be played for fun. If neither team has 7 players, it is a mutual forfeit (tallied as 0-0).
- Games end after the earlier of 7 innings or 90 minutes. No new inning begins after 75 mins.
- The next half inning begins upon the third out being recorded. Each inning will be played in its entirety – unless entering the bottom of the inning and the home team has the lead and you have reached the 90 min. time limit.
- 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.
- Coaches may make one mound visit per pitcher. A second visit to that pitcher will result in a required pitching change. One non-pitching change visit by a coach is allowed per game/per pitcher (except in the event of injury).
- While on the field of play, batting helmets must be worn by any player not occupying a defensive position.
- Pitchers may warm up in OF foul territory to an equipped catcher

**Huntertown Lions Softball – 260-267-5538 – [htlionsclub@gmail.com](mailto:htlionsclub@gmail.com)**

- No warmups are allowed on the infield prior to the game. Use the outfield, foul territory, or batting cages.
- The Lions club/head umpire will suspend all games in the event of unsafe playing conditions. Four innings (3 ½ if home team is ahead) constitutes a complete game. The book 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 only.

#### Batting

- The strike zone will be approximately from the kneecaps to just below the shoulder.
- Dropped 3<sup>rd</sup> strike – if the catcher fails to catch the ball on a third strike, and first base is open, or there are already 2 outs, then the batter becomes a runner.
- A "foul tip" caught by the catcher is a strike and remains a live ball (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 was not positioned in the strike zone (and the pitch was called a strike),
  2. The batter did not swing at the pitch attempting to make contact, and the ball did not make contact with the bat first (batter's hands are not considered part of the bat)
  3. If the ball bounces or the batter does not attempt to avoid the ball, they are still awarded 1<sup>st</sup> base.
  4. In the event of an injury resulting, the player recording the last out may courtesy run without substitution.
- Catcher Interference may result in a dead ball with first base awarded to the batter in lieu of the play's result.
- Bunting is allowed. This includes slapping and slashing.
- A team gets one warning per game if a bat is thrown. Subsequent occurrences may be an out.

#### Pitching

- There will be no more than 2 warm-up pitches thrown between innings, unless a new pitcher enters then 5 pitches.
- The starting pitcher may re-enter the game one time at that position. No other pitcher may re-enter at that position.
- Intentional walks are not allowed. The pitcher must try to throw strikes to each batter.
- Pitcher is required to wear a face mask.

#### Baserunning

- No lead offs until the pitch is released by the pitcher. After one warning, runners leaving early will be out.
- Runners at any base may attempt to steal or advance on any pitch, past ball, or defensive play.
- 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 is when an offensive player impedes a fielder attempting to execute a play. This results 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 in order to nullify the impact of the obstruction.
- It is recommended that all slides arriving at any base 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 or 6 runs scored 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. Courtesy runner may be used for the pitcher at any time - Same courtesy runner rule applies.
- The infield fly rule is in affect with less than 2 outs and runners at first and second.

### Civility & Team Courtesy

- Batting line-ups are to be given to the opposing team before the game starts. Include a name and NUMBER.
- 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 Hometown 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.**