

2017 (10U) DIVISION RULES

This is a quick reference sheet for use in the 10u softball league. This document lists a combination of PONY, IESA/IHSA and “house” rules.

“The purpose of the program shall be to implant in the youth of the community ideals of good sportsmanship, honesty, loyalty, courage and reverence, so that they be finer, stronger, and happier young people who will grow to be good, clean, healthy adults ... bear in mind at all times that the attainment of exceptional athletic skills or the winning of games is secondary and that the molding of future citizens is of prime importance.”

1.) DIMENSIONS OF THE GAME

- a. Bases shall be 60 feet apart.
- b. The pitching rubber shall be 35 feet from the back point of home plate. A pitching circle, 8 feet in diameter, shall be drawn or imagined around the rubber.
- c. The game ball shall be an official 11” softball (optic yellow). The HOME team shall furnish two new or like-new game balls for each game.

2.) REGULATION GAME

- a. A regulation game lasts no more than six (6) innings.
- b. Games should last no more than 90 minutes (one hour, 30 minutes). On fields where a second game is scheduled, umpires should not start a new inning after 75 minutes (one hour, fifteen minutes). This should be announced at the pre-game conference between head coaches and the umpire(s).

3.) EXTRA INNINGS

- a. If a game is tied at the end of SIX innings, ONE extra inning will be allowed if time and scheduling permit. You may **NOT** delay the start time of a later game for extra innings.
- b. A game may end in an official tie if time and scheduling do not allow for the extra inning.
- c. The extra inning will have NO run limit.

4.) RUN RULES

- a. A maximum of six (6) runs may be scored per at bat. If a ball is hit and multiple runners score on the play and exceed the six run limit, only the runs up to six (6) will count towards the team total.
- b. There is NO MERCY RULE.

5.) **PITCHING/BATTING**

- a. All available players on the roster shall be placed in the batting lineup. A team with less than 10 players will NOT take an out for any empty batting slot.
- b. Pitchers will be limited to THREE innings pitched per game. This is an instructional league and players should be given the opportunity to develop. Innings pitched will only be measured in FULL innings. Once a pitcher throws a pitch, the full inning is counted. (It is possible for more than one player to pitch in an inning; a full inning will be counted against each pitcher's limit.)
- c. Both feet of the pitcher must be in contact with the pitching rubber with allowing one step back to deliver the pitch.
- d. A pitcher cannot walk more than three (3) TOTAL batters in a half inning.
- e. Once the pitcher has allowed three (3) walks in the half inning, the following procedure is used: After the pitcher has thrown FOUR (4) balls to a batter, the ball-strike count is wiped out and a coach from the team of the batter comes in to throw THREE (3) more pitches to the batter.
 - i. If the batter does not put the ball into play, the batter is out.
 - ii. A foul ball on the third pitch will allow the batter to continue until the ball is put into play, a swing and a miss occurs, or the batter fails to make contact.
 - iii. A batter cannot be awarded a base by walking or being hit by a pitch thrown by the coach-pitcher.
 - iv. A "hit by pitch" is classified when the ball actually strikes the batter. If the ball hits the dirt or base first and then strikes the batter, the ball is declared a "dead ball" and the batter will not be awarded a base.
 - v. Coach-pitcher just needs to be inside the circle.
- f. A batted ball striking the coach-pitcher is a LIVE-BALL (just as a ball striking an umpire is). A ball that is inadvertently caught by the coach-pitcher (e.g., a "self-defense" catch on a line drive directly at the pitcher) is declared a dead-ball; the batter is awarded first base and any base-runners advance one base. If, in the umpire's judgment, the pitcher-coach deliberately interferes with the play, the umpire shall call the batter out and all runners shall return to their starting position on the bases.
- g. A ball in play (thrown) that strikes a coach pitcher shall be declared a dead ball and all base-runners will stop at the next base. If the interference was deliberate (in the umpire's judgment) the umpire shall declare the lead base-runner out.

5.) **PITCHING/BATTING (cont.)**

- h. Batters are not allowed to throw the bat. If the umpire feels a thrown bat is deliberate or a hazard, the umpire shall issue a warning to the batting team's manager. Once the team has been warned about a thrown bat, any further hazardous or deliberately thrown bats will result in the batter being called out. Base runners cannot advance when a batter is called out for a thrown bat.

6.) **DEFENSE**

- a. Teams shall field 10 defensive players; the tenth player plays in the outfield ("outfield" is to be defined in the grass NOT in the dirt).
- b. Every effort must be made to play all roster players in the field for a minimum of two innings.
- c. No player (other than the pitcher and catcher) may be within 45 feet of home plate until the ball is hit. The umpire should ensure this is enforced on every pitch.

7.) **BASERUNNING**

- a. LEAD-OFFS and STEALING
 - i. Runners may take an appropriate lead off of the base once the pitcher releases the ball. Runners may NOT steal upon the pitcher's release.
 - ii. Runners may steal if the catcher does not catch the pitch.
 - iii. If any runner leaves a base early for a lead off or breaks a lead-off early to steal:
 - 1. On the first TEAM offense: If the pitch is NOT hit, all runners shall be returned to their starting position. If the pitch IS hit, play will continue as normal and all outs made under these conditions shall be charged against the offensive team. When play stops, the batter (if not out) will be returned to first base and any runner(s) may advance no further than forced by the batter (now at first base). If the batter is put out on the play, the runner(s) will be returned to their positions prior to the ball being hit.
 - 2. On subsequent offenses, the runner shall immediately be called out and the ball shall be ruled dead.
- b. Stealing is allowed at every base except HOME PLATE. If a "pick-off" play is made on a runner at third base, the runner may attempt to advance home at her own peril.

7.) **BASERUNNING (cont.)**

- c. Runners may advance at their own peril on an overthrow on a fielding play or steal attempt at any base, including third base. Runners may NOT advance on an overthrow from the catcher to the pitcher. Overthrow advancement is only one (1) base and must be the next immediate intended base.

8.) **SAFETY EQUIPMENT**

- a. Batting helmets with face guards are mandatory for all players at bat, on the bases, and in the on deck circle. (A chin strap is NOT required.)
- b. Intentionally removing the batting helmet while on the field of play during a live ball will result in the offending player being declared out.
- c. A base coach under the age of 18 must have a protective batting helmet on.
- d. Players must wear an appropriate catcher's helmet, mask, and throat protector (attached or built into the mask) at any time that they are catching. This rule includes warming up the pitcher before an inning and warming up a pitcher in the bullpen.

9.) **CALL-UPS/ ROSTER SHORTAGES**

- a. Teams may "call up" younger players to fill roster shortages.
- b. Teams may NOT use: players too old for league play, players on another (10u) league roster, or players who are not registered with the league. (Note: Every effort shall be made to allow players to play. Coaches may agree to exceptions to this rule in order to allow the game to be played. If this occurs, the game may be played, but shall be an un-official game and recorded as a loss for the offending team.)
- c. "Call up" players shall not play in place of players on the team roster. A "call up" should be placed at the bottom of the batting order, but should not be playing defense if a roster player is available. The two-inning requirement does not apply to call-up players.

10.) **COMMON RULES NOT USED**

- a. The INFIELD FLY RULE, DP/FLEX and EXTRA PLAYER, DROPPED THIRD STRIKE, and INTERNATIONAL TIE BREAKER are NOT used.
- b. No BUNTING, CHOPPING, or deliberate SOFT-SWINGING is allowed. The batter shall be called out.

11.) **GAME SCHEDULING:**

- a. Teams will be given an average of 12 to 14 games per team, when possible. Games will be split by half (when possible) of away and home games.
- b. Scheduling accommodations of games will be made as best as possible in the event the team in its entirety cannot play (Graduations/School Trips/Etc.)
- c. Scheduling accommodations will be made second in priority if a coach has a conflict that only directly affects them. An Assistant Coach(es) should be able to play the game scheduled.
- d. Game cancellations will only be allowed if a majority of the team or a majority of the coaches on the team cannot play. Otherwise, the game will be forfeited. If it is a lack of players, coaches should “borrow up” from the younger division (8U) to play the game. You are not allowed to “borrow” players from other teams in the same age division as your team. Refer to Rule #9, as shown above.
- e. All rainouts within the week will be scheduled on that immediate Saturday following, when possible (holidays/field availability pending).
- f. All rescheduled games must be played where originally scheduled unless a “Gentlemen’s Agreement” between teams/league admins has been made.

Above all else, please remember: this is a recreational game. The players are children. The coaches, umpires, and administrators are volunteers. We are all human and errors will be made. Please treat the game and all participants with respect. If you have suggestions on how we can improve next year, please share them in an appropriate manner.