

The official rules for Arcadia Little League division play for Softball are covered in the handbook entitled "Official Regulations and Playing Rules" of Little League Softball (also known as the "Orange Book"). All managers and coaches will be given this handbook and are required to become knowledgeable about the rules. The following is intended to clarify key regulations and provide additional guidelines for Arcadia Little League division play.

GENERAL RULES (Applicable to All Divisions)

Section 1 – Field/Game Set Up.

1(a). The Home team is responsible for setting up and taking down the field and equipment, and for keeping the official score in divisions where scoring is kept. The Visiting/ Away team is responsible for dragging the field after the game.

1(b) The Home team will occupy the third base dugout. The Visiting/ Away team will occupy the first base dugout.

1(c). As may be permitted due to other scheduled games, each team will have exclusive use of the field for 10 minutes for warm-up before each game. The visiting team's warm-up period shall begin 25 minutes before game time. The home team's warm-up period shall begin 15 minutes before game time.

1(d). Each team is responsible for cleaning its dugout after the game. The home team is responsible for general field cleanup, the return of equipment, and the adjacent spectator areas.

1(e). Each manager is responsible for the behavior of his/her team's parents and spectators as well as that of his/her team's players and coaches at all times while at Little League games (see ARL Code of Conduct).

1(f). Use of an on-deck circle is prohibited. All offensive players other than the batter and any base runner shall remain in the dugout. This rule does not apply to defensive players, who include a pitcher and catcher engaged in pitching warm-up activities in a bullpen, as may be expressly permitted by other rules.

1(g). A continuous batting order shall be utilized for all divisions. If a player arrives late for a game, she shall be placed at the bottom of the order. All players, while at bat or on base, shall wear a batting helmet.

1(h). All players, while at bat or on base, shall wear a batting helmet.

1(i). All players shall remain on the playing field or in the dugout at all times during a game.

1(j). Sliding headfirst is prohibited.

JUNIOR VARSITY (5-6)

Section 2 – Game Rules

2(c). Score shall not be kept. Standings will not be kept.

2(d). The half-inning duration shall be concluded only when one (1) full rotation of the batting roster has occurred.

2(e). The three (3) out rule does not apply. Halfway through the season, the runner will be called out if the play deems it necessary.

2(f). The game ends after three (3) innings, or one (1) hour and fifteen (15) minutes, whichever occurs first.

2(e). All players may occupy the field at one time. The manager shall use his/her best efforts to arrange the players effectively to teach both infield and outfield positions.

2(f). All players on the roster will bat in rotation.

2(h). A Runner may not advance on an overthrow to any base.

Section 3 – Coach Pitching

3(a). Coach Pitch: Coach shall pitch to his or her team during their turn at bat. The pitch shall be underhand and have a flat arc. The distance from the pitching plate to home plate shall be twenty-five feet (25'). Each batter will get five (5) pitches to hit. If the batter has not put the ball in play after five (5) pitches, then a tee will be used. A batter cannot strike out.

3(b). A coach may offer assistance to the batter, and then only regarding positioning the batter relative to the plate (i.e., the coach may only direct the batter to move closer to the plate, or further from the plate, or deeper in the batter's box, or forward in the batter's box).

3(c). The pitching coach is responsible for ensuring the catcher is ready to receive the pitch before it is delivered.

VARSITY (7-8)

Section 2 – Game Rules

2(a). Managers are encouraged to fill out a game roster before the start of the game. The roster should show the batting order and defensive positions for each player. The purpose of the roster is to assist the coaching staff in planning substitutions before the start of a game to ensure that

rules 2(b) and 2(c) are met. The roster can be changed as necessitated by changing circumstances (e.g., player injury, illness, early departure) during a game.

2(b). Score shall be kept. Standing will not be kept.

2(c). Games shall be five (5) innings or approximately one hour and 30 minutes in length. No new inning may be started after one hour 15 minutes. Any inning started shall be completed.

2(d). A half inning shall consist of three (3) outs or five (5) runs scored, whichever occurs first.

2(e). The coaches on the field will act as umpires as needed. A coach for the offensive team will pitch to his or her team (the “pitcher-coach”) and call balls and strikes. During the kid pitch portion of the game, the pitcher-coach will be positioned behind the pitcher. The coach closest to a play will have the final decision on a call, unless he or she defers to another coach with a better view. No appeals or protests of a call are allowed due to the instructional nature of the Varsity Division. When in doubt, plays are to be decided in favor of the defense.

Section 3 – Playing Rules - Defense

3(a). The defense shall consist of not more than ten (10) players: a pitcher, catcher, first baseman, second baseman, shortstop, third baseman, left fielder, left-center fielder, right-center fielder, and right fielder. If a team is unable to field 10 players, the team may play with nine players, using three (3) outfielders. To field a team of eight (8) players only, a temporary additional player(s) from the opposing team may be used. Before the pitch, the outfielders shall start with their feet on the outfield grass.

3(b). Every player shall play one of the first four (4) innings in the infield. No player may play a third inning in the infield until all players have played two (2) innings in the infield. For purposes of this rule, the infield positions are: pitcher, catcher, first base, second base, shortstop, and third base.

3(c). No player shall sit out two (2) defensive innings until every player has sat out one (1) defensive inning. No player shall sit out three (3) defensive innings until every player has sat out two (2) defensive innings.

3(d). During the coach-pitch portion of the game (see Section 4 below), the pitcher may stand to the left or right of the coach-pitcher, but shall be within 3 feet of the coach-pitcher and no closer to the batter than the coach-pitcher.

3(e). Defensive players must play one set position per inning (i.e., defensive players cannot switch positions during an inning), except in cases of a pitching change, injury, illness or disciplinary action.

3(f). The catcher must wear (i) a catching helmet and mask with a hard throat protector; (ii) a chest protector; (iii) shin guards; and (iv) use a catcher's or regular mitt.

3(g). While on defense, a team may station no more than two coaches in the field of play and one coach immediately outside the team's dugout entrance.

Section 4 – Playing Rules - Offense

4(a). All players on the roster will bat. If a player arrives late, he/she will be placed at the bottom of the batting order.

4(a). A batter may not bunt the ball.

4(b). A player who throws a bat during a game will receive a warning from a coach/umpire. A player who throws a bat for a second time during a game after having received a warning will be declared out.

4(c). Base stealing is not permitted. Base runners will not leave the base until the ball has been put in play by the batter.

4(d). A batter and/or base runners may advance one base only on a batted ball hit that remains in the infield. A batted ball that clears the outfield fence on a bounce is a ground rule double. All base runners advance two bases.

4(e). A batter and/or base runners may advance one or two bases on a batted ball that ends up in the outfield grass, unless the ball is hit on the fly over the outfield fencing and is declared a home run. The outfield is the grass area beyond the infield dirt. For example, a runner on first may advance on a hit that ends up in the outfield no further than third base. Play shall stop, and the ball shall be declared dead when the base runners have advanced two bases.

4(f). Base runners will not advance on a thrown pitch not put into play by a batter (i.e., a wild pitch or a passed ball).

4(g). In the event of an overthrow, a runner may advance at her own risk to the next base only. There is no penalty to the defense if the defensive player attempts to throw out the runner advancing to the next base due to the overthrow. For example, with a runner on first, the batter hits the ball to the second baseman, who attempts to throw out the batter at first. The ball is overthrown, so the runner starting on first advances to second on the hit and may try, at her own risk, to advance to third on the overthrow. The batter, having reached first base, may attempt to advance to second on the overthrow. The defensive player may try to throw out either advancing runner with no further penalty because the runners cannot advance more than one extra base. A dropped ball, a bobbled ball, or a ball that stays within approximately three feet of the defensive player covering the base is not an overthrow.

4(h) A half inning is over after five (5) runs are scored. If a team has scored four (4) runs (or fewer) and there are runners on the bases, and a batter hits the ball over the fence, then all runs will count. If a batter hits a ground rule double, all runs will count. At that point, the half inning is over. The offensive team may have scored more than five (5) runs during that half inning as a result of the home run or ground rule double.

4(i). In the final inning, the visitor team may score up to five (5) runs or take up to a five-run lead, whichever is more. The home team may score as many runs as they can. In no inning, including the last inning, will any player be able to hit more than once. The inning is over after an entire lineup has hit.

4(j) Advancement of the base runners is stopped when an infielder has possession of the ball in hand or glove and is positioned inside the real or imaginary lines connecting the bases of the infield diamond (ultimately, the determination of this line is at the discretion of the coach/umpire). The base runner may still be put out while attempting to advance or retreat with no risk of error by the defensive team. If the base runner is deemed by the umpire to have advanced beyond the midpoint between bases when the infielder gained possession of the ball, the base runner may advance only as far as the next base past the midpoint, but at his own risk of being put out by the defensive team and with no risk of error by the defensive team. If the umpire finds that the base runner had not advanced beyond the midpoint between bases when the infielder gained possession of the ball, the base runner is still at risk of being put out while advancing or retreating with no risk of error by the defensive team, and may not advance to the next base past the midpoint. However, in any event, the baserunner is allowed to advance one base from an original starting point regardless of infield control. For example, if there is a runner on third base and the ball is hit to an infielder and controlled, this base runner may still advance one base (to home) even if he has not passed the midpoint before infield control. The exception to this is in 3(d). The batter and/or any base runners will be awarded one base on any overthrow at first base that leaves the field of play (including entering the dugout). The base runners may advance one additional base only with the liability of being put out on an overthrow at first base that remains in the field of play. The defense may attempt to put the runner out without penalty for a bad throw, missed catch, or missed tag.

4(k). Feet-first sliding is allowed. Head first sliding is not.

Section 5 - Pitching Rules

5(a). The front of the pitching plate will be 35' from the back point of home plate. Pitchers must have their throwing side foot placed on the pitching rubber and deliver a pitch as approved within the Little League rulebook (i.e., must deliver the ball underhand with a windmill motion).

5(b) Pitching Structure

(i) During the first half of the season, two (2) players will pitch the first two (2) innings only. After the first two (2) innings, play will continue for the remainder of the game using coach pitch, as described below. The pitcher will pitch to the first seven (7) batters of the inning. After the initial seven (7) batters, if three (3) outs have not occurred or five (5) runs have not scored,

the Coach will pitch the balance of the inning until either three (3) outs or five (5) runs have scored. These seven (7) batters pitching cap rule applies for the entire season.

(ii) During the second half of the season, two (2) or three (3) players will pitch the first three (3) innings only. After the third inning concludes, play for the remainder of the game will be by coach pitch as described below.

(iii) In the 1st half of the season, A player may pitch only one (1) inning in a game. Delivery of a single pitch in any inning constitutes pitching one (1) inning. During the second half of the season, a player may pitch two (2) innings with another player pitching the 3rd inning.

5(c). During player pitch, there will be no walks. If the count reaches four balls or a batter is hit by a pitch, the pitcher-coach shall pitch to his or her batter. The batter retains the number of strikes left in the strike count. For example, four (4) balls and no strikes, then three (3) strikes remain, four (4) balls and one (1) strike, then two (2) strikes remain; four (4) balls and two (2) strikes, then one (1) strike remains. The coach-pitcher shall pitch to the batter until the batter puts the ball in play, strikes out, or the Coach has thrown five (5) pitches to said batter (see 4d below for further explanation). The coach-pitcher shall call balls and strikes. Coach pitches that are strikes shall be called as such. Coach pitches that are balls shall be called as such and disregarded. As a general rule, the strike zone is from the chin to the knees and a few inches on either side of the plate

5(d). After the player-pitch innings conclude, the remainder of the game will be played by coach pitch. A coach-pitcher shall pitch to his or her team. Each hitter has five (5) pitches to put the ball in play. A player can strike out swinging (in less than five (5) pitches). If the player doesn't swing at the 5th pitch, then she is out. A player may receive more than five (5) pitches (at and after the 5th pitch) if she fouls off pitches that are missed. The coach-pitcher may declare "no pitch" any time he or she delivers a pitch that cannot be hit (e.g., so high that it is at or about the batter's head height, or so low that it hits in front of home plate, or hits home plate). The pitch is declared "dead." In the event the batter puts a pitch declared "dead" into play, the hit shall not count, and the batter must repeat the at-bat. A "no pitch" will not be counted toward the five (5) pitches allowed.

5(e). The coach-pitcher is responsible for ensuring that the catcher is ready to receive a pitched ball before each pitch.

5(f). Any time a batted or thrown ball comes into contact with a coach in the field of play, the ball shall be declared dead, and each runner shall be awarded the next base.

5(g). Pitches from the coach-pitcher shall be underhand and have a flat arc. The coach-pitcher shall pitch with at least one (1) foot touching the pitching plate and not move closer to the plate to shorten the distance of the pitch.

Section 6 Tournament IN PROGRESS

MINORS (9-10) Section 2 – Game Rules

2(a). All Little League rules in “Official Regulations and Playing Rules” of Little League Softball (also known as the "Orange Book") shall apply.

2(b). Managers are required to fill out a batting lineup card before the start of the game. The lineup card is exchanged with the opposing manager, along with an extra copy, which shall be provided to the official scorekeeper before the first pitch.

2(c). A half inning consists of three outs or a maximum of five (5) runs. If the batter hits a home run over the outfield fence, all runs are counted, including the batter’s run. During the top half of the last inning, the visiting team is allowed to score enough runs to tie the current score, plus at most five (5) more runs. During the bottom half of the last inning, the run rule is waived, allowing the home team to tie or win the game. During the Regular Season, the last inning shall be declared by the Umpire and agreed to by both Managers before the start of said inning.

2(d). Regular-season games will be decided by six (6) innings or by a time limit.

(i) For games played Monday through Thursday, or Sunday, no new inning may be started after one hour and 30 minutes. Any inning started shall be completed.

(ii) For games played Friday or Saturday, no new inning may be started after one hour and 45 minutes. Any inning started shall be completed.

2(e). The home team shall be responsible for keeping score in the League’s official scorebook/ Game Changer App. Each team is required to maintain a game score and an inning count log for each pitcher for inclusion in the League inning count log book. Delivery of a single pitch in any inning constitutes pitching one (1) inning. During the Regular Season, a pitcher may pitch no more than two (2) innings during a game. During the End of Season Tournament, a pitcher may pitch no more than three (3) innings during a game.

2(f). Any pitcher who hits three (3) batters in an inning or four (4) batters in a game will be removed from the circle.

2(g). Any infielder and pitcher must wear a protective face mask. The umpire will enforce this during the regular season and playoffs.

Section 3 – Playing Rules (Offense)

3(a). A runner may not lead off from a base. A runner may not leave a base until after the pitched ball has crossed home plate. If a runner leaves before crossing home plate, that runner will be called out. Headfirst slides are prohibited.

3(b) No advancing to third or home plate on overthrows by the catcher who/is throwing. Halfway through the season, the rule will be “advance at your own risk” on overthrows from the catcher.

Section 4 - Regular Season Roster Guidelines

4(a). During the Regular Season, Managers will provide every player with the opportunity to play an infield position for at least one (1) full inning during every game. This guideline is in place to ensure that every player in the Minor Division has the opportunity to play multiple defensive positions throughout the season to learn new skills and gain a more enjoyable Little League experience. It is not acceptable for Managers in this League to execute game strategies that do not include player rotations that meet the spirit of this guideline.

4(b). During the Season, a player should not sit out two defensive innings until every player has sat out one defensive inning. No player will sit out three defensive innings. No player shall sit out three defensive innings until every player has sat out two defensive innings.

Section 5 – End of Season Tournament

5(a). End-of-Season Tournament games shall be five (5) innings in duration and have no time limit. In the event of a tie after five (5) innings, then extra innings will be played to determine a winner. During the End of Season Tournament, a pitcher may pitch no more than three (3) innings during a game. During the End of Season Tournament, a team leading by 10 or more runs after the completion of the 4th inning will be declared the winner, and the game will end.

MAJORS (11-12) Section 2 – Game Rules

2(a). All Little League rules in “Official Regulations and Playing Rules” of Little League Softball (also known as the "Orange Book") shall apply.

2(b). Managers are required to fill out a batting lineup card before the start of the game. The lineup card is exchanged with the opposing manager, along with an extra copy, which shall be provided to the official scorekeeper before the first pitch.

2(c). A half inning consists of three (3) outs or a maximum of five (5) runs. If the batter hits a home run over the outfield fence, all runs are counted, including the batter’s run. During the top half of the last inning, the visiting team is allowed to score enough runs to tie the current score, plus score five (5) more runs maximum. During the bottom half of the last inning, the run

rule is waived, allowing the home team to tie or win the game. During the Regular Season, the last inning shall be declared by the Umpire and agreed to by both Managers before the start of said inning.

2(d). Regular-season games will be decided by six (6) innings or a set time limit.

(i) For games played Monday through Thursday, or Sunday, no new inning may be started after one hour and 30 minutes. Any inning started shall be completed.

(ii) For games played Friday or Saturday, no new inning may be started after one hour and 45 minutes. Any inning started shall be completed.

2(e). The Home team shall be responsible for keeping score in the League's official scorebook/ Game Changer App. Each team is required to maintain a game score and an inning count log for each pitcher for inclusion in the League inning count log book. Delivery of a single pitch in any inning constitutes pitching one (1) inning. During the Regular Season, a pitcher may pitch no more than three (3) innings during a game. During the End of Season Tournament, a pitcher may pitch no more than four (4) innings during a game.

Section 3 – Playing Rules (Offense)

3(a). The runner may not lead off the base. The runner may steal a base at her own risk; however, the runner may not leave the base until after the pitcher has released the pitched ball.

3(b). Any infielder and pitcher must wear a protective face mask. The umpire will enforce this during the regular season and playoffs.

Section 4 End-of-Season Tournament

4(a). End-of-Season Tournament games shall be six (6) innings in duration and have no time limit. In the event of a tie after five (6) innings, then extra innings will be played to determine a winner. During the End of Season Tournament, a pitcher may pitch no more than four (4) innings during a game. During the End of Season Tournament, a team leading by 10 or more runs after the completion of the 4th inning will be declared the winner, and the game will end.