



Radnor Wayne Little League "RWLL"

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## SOFTBALL RULES - Minors

This document should be reviewed thoroughly by all volunteer coaches. All questions pertaining to the rules found within this document should be directed to the Softball Commissioner for Radnor-Wayne Little League via the contact information provided at the end of this document.

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### General Rules

- a. **Rules:** Radnor-Wayne Little League (RWLL) establishes these local rules which supplement and support the Official Little League Softball Rules. Coaches must follow these combined rules as they apply to the various leagues. Coaches are not permitted to interpret, modify or change these published rules. The RWLL rules committee reviews these rules each year in the off-season, considers any changes, clarifications or written suggestions, and makes changes to the local rules as needed. League directors can help explain the rules as written and can submit suggestions to the rules committee at the end of the season. Questions about the rules should be directed to the appropriate league commissioner, softball commissioner, or RWLL President.
- b. **Field Preparation:** The home team will utilize the benches/dugouts on the 1st base side of the field.  
The home team is responsible for preparing the field for play prior to every game.
  - This includes dragging the field, installing the bases (double base on 1st), and chalking the batter's box, the pitcher's circle, and foul lines.
  - No infield practice or warm up on field after the field has been prepped.

The visiting team is responsible for post-game clean-up and storing any equipment after the game unless needed for an immediately following game. When removing bases, please replace the bases with a base plug (if applicable). Lastly, rake any ruts in the infield, in the pitcher's circle, and the batter's box.
- c. **Out-of-play lines** will be established prior to the game, running parallel to the base lines on the playing field and 3 feet where possible (umpire's discretion) in front of the team benches. Spectators should be asked to remain behind the out-of-play lines. A batted or thrown ball that hits a fence along the out-of-play line is live and in play.
- d. **Safety / Equipment: *Equipment***
  - Protective face masks are REQUIRED for all players.
  - All bats and batting helmets must comply with Little League International standards (bats must include a current 1.20 bpf stamp), with face mask.
  - Metal cleats are prohibited
  - All play will be with a standard 11" regulation softball; which has maximum compression of .375 and a maximum COR of .47
- e. **Keep your cool:** There will be times when calls will go against your team. Don't set a bad example for the kids. RWLL reserves the right to remove coaches from their teams, ban them

from coaching, or ban them from LL fields if situations arise demanding action be taken. Similarly, parents can also be removed or banned from games.

- f. **Schedules:** Postponed games must be made up in the same order as originally scheduled, normally within 1 week of the postponement, as per instructions of the league director.
- g. **Catchers:** All catchers must wear a helmet with a mask, chest protector, and shin guards.
- h. **Thrown Bat:** If a bat is thrown for any reason, except an accidental slip while swinging at a pitched ball, the umpire shall issue 1 warning per player. On any subsequent offense, the batter will be called out.
- i. **Sliding / Baserunning:** Runners should be encouraged to slide into bases (except 1<sup>st</sup> base) and to avoid contact with the defensive player if there is a play at the base the runner is attempting to reach. (LL Rules 7.08(a)(3)) Head-first slides are prohibited while the runner is advancing to the next base (runner is out). If the runner interferes with, obstructs, hinders, or confuses any defensive player attempting to make a play even without possession of the ball, the runner is out and the ball is dead. Also, a runner is out when intentionally trying to knock the ball out of the possession of the defensive player. (LL Rules - definition of Interference) If the defensive player has possession of the ball, and is waiting to make the tag at a base (or home plate), the runner must either slide or attempt to get around the defensive player. Obstruction should be called by the umpire if the defensive player, while not in possession of the ball or not fielding a batted ball, blocks a base or impedes the progress of the runner. (LL Rules 7.08(a)-(c), 7.06 and definition of Obstruction)
- j. **Warming up of pitchers:** A child must be in full catcher's gear to "warm-up" a pitcher. An adult is permitted to "warm up" a pitcher and should use their discretion as to using safety equipment.
- k. **Umpires**
  - Student umpires are used in this division.
  - Start each game with a friendly conference with the umpire and the other manager. Agree on the ground rules, strike zone, and any issues that are likely to come up.
  - It is NEVER acceptable to argue with the umpires.
  - If there are negative or derogatory comments about the umpiring coming from the crowd, it is the responsibility of the manager/coaches to address the issue and put an end to it.
  - Umpires can call for the removal from the field/park to a coach, a player, or parent in the crowd at their discretion.

## I. Minors Rules

- a. Official Little League Softball Rules (Minor League) apply including the rules set forth in this section.
- b. A regulation game is 6 innings (5½ innings if the home team is ahead).
- c. A game is complete after 4 innings have been played (3½ innings if the home team is ahead).
  - i. The game is over if one team has a lead of more than 10 runs at any time after the end of 4 innings, 3½ if the home team is ahead.
  - ii. A new inning is not to start after 1 hour and 45 minutes have elapsed
  - iii. If 1 inning has not been played, the game is a "no game" and will be replayed from the beginning. If a game is called after the 1st inning, refer to LL Rules 4.10 and 4.11.
- d. A half inning ends when the offensive team has scored 5 runs or when 3 outs are made by the defensive team, whichever comes first. The most runs a team may score in a half-inning are 5.
- e. Last inning is NOT unlimited runs.

- f. Every regular roster player attending the game must play a minimum of 4 full innings in the field (or 12 outs) or 3 innings (or 9 outs) if the home team does not bat in the 6th inning, unless the game is called before the 6th inning.
- g. A defensive player removed from the game must sit out at least 1 inning (or 3 outs).
  - i. PENALTY: Forfeiture of game.
  - ii. EXCEPTIONS: In case of injury, illness, ejection, called game or for disciplinary reasons approved in advance by the league director or commissioner.
- h. All players attending the game will bat in order regardless of whether they are playing in the field.
- i. All players attending the game must play in the infield for at least two innings, subject to the length of the game and whether or not the home team bats in the 6<sup>th</sup> inning.
- j. No player may sit out a second time before all other players have sat out at least once.
- k. Players arriving after they have missed their 1st turn at bat will be placed at the end of the order. The number of the innings that she arrives in will be subtracted from the 4-inning mandatory play rule, e.g. a player who arrives in the 3rd inning only has to play 1 inning.
- l. A runner can only be removed due to injury, illness or ejection and the substitute runner must be the player who last batted and is not on base.
  - i. EXCEPTION: In the interest of pace of play, RWLL is encouraging teams to use a courtesy runner for girls who are on base with 2 outs in an inning and will be catching the following inning. The courtesy runner should be the player who last batted and is not on base.
- m. A maximum of 10 players will be used in the field: pitcher, catcher, 4 infielders in the normal positions, and 3 or 4 outfielders.
  - i. **Outfielders must stay on grass to start each play**
- n. For regular season games, both teams must have 6 players on their bench or on the field before the game begins (10 min. delay allowed) otherwise the team with less than 6 players will forfeit the game. After the 1st inning, a team will also forfeit if that team (a) fails to put at least 6 players in the field, or (b) has a batter bat again before 5 other batters have batted.
- o. For playoff games, both teams must have 8 rostered players (no call ups permitted in the playoffs) on their bench or on the field before the game begins (10 min. delay allowed) otherwise the team with less than 8 players will forfeit the game.
- p. Pitching rules: LL Rules 8.01 to 8.07. Pitching distance: 35 feet (LL Rule 1.07)
  - i. Minors players may pitch no more than 2 innings per game
  - ii. A single pitch constitutes having pitched in an inning, even if the game is called.
  - iii. A pitcher who is removed, substituted or relieved may return as a pitcher anytime in the remainder of the game.
    - 1. Exception – if the pitcher is replaced and removed from the field of play during an inning, the pitcher may not return until the next inning.
  - iv. Hit By Pitch - A HBP is equivalent to a base on balls. If a player does not make a reasonable attempt to avoid the pitch as determined by the umpire, a base may not be awarded.
    - 1. A pitcher must be removed as a pitcher for the remainder of the game after hitting 3 batters in the game.
    - 2. A pitched ball that hits the ground first and then hits the batter does NOT count as a hit by pitch. If the batter does not swing at it, it will count as a ball.
  - v. Pitchers must use proper pitching technique. Prior to pitching a ball, the rules require pitchers must have their pivot foot in contact with the pitcher's plate. The pitcher then needs to bring her hands together for 1 to 10 seconds, before releasing the ball. Prior to taking a forward step, the pivot foot must stay in contact with the pitcher's rubber. Prior to the pitch, a pitcher may also not take a step backward (although they may start with the non-pivot foot behind the pitcher's plate), from the pitching rubber – a backward step will also constitute an illegal pitch. If a pitcher makes an illegal pitch, she will be first

issued a warning. After a second infraction, the batter will be awarded a ball in the count. **Note that penalties would not be expected to be called unless the pitcher is clearly gaining an advantage through the illegal pitch.**

- q. Coach pitch:
- i. Coach pitching is invoked when a 4<sup>th</sup> ball is thrown by the player pitcher (no walks – BB).
  - ii. The count will continue and carryover to coach pitcher.
  - iii. Coach pitches should be at similar velocity to the player pitcher and from the pitcher's plate.
  - iv. Coach has a maximum of 3 coach pitches.
  - v. Coach pitches will be counted as strikes.
  - vi. Pitches on the ground or in the air do not count as a HBP if the batter is hit with a coach pitched ball.
- r. Dropped 3<sup>rd</sup> strike rule is not in effect; to be clear, the catcher does not need to catch a called third strike or a swing and miss third strike for the batter to be out.
- s. Bunting is permitted (except no bunting during coach pitch). No fake bunts allowed followed by a swing during the same pitch. No slap/slug bunting
- i. If a batter does not pull bat out of strike zone while in bunting position: AUTOMATIC Strike
- t. Any runners who are between bases when the pitcher has possession of the ball in the pitcher's circle must immediately return to the last base reached successfully or advance to the next base if that base is not occupied. If a runner does not immediately advance or return to a base, then that runner will be declared out. Once time is called (signaled) by the umpire, the ball is "dead" and runners may not advance. (LL Rule 7.08(a)(5) Note 2)
- u. When the ball is live, runners can advance until the umpire calls (or signals) "time". The umpire will call time at their discretion when (a) the defensive team has stopped the runners by defensive play, or (b) the pitcher has possession of the ball in the pitcher's circle
- i. EXCEPTION if the defense attempts another play on another runner (a fake throw is considered a play). Any runners who are between bases when time is called will be directed by the umpire to the last base reached.
  - ii. Live ball example – play is attempted at first base, but it is an overthrow, the runner can advance to second as this is a live ball, NOT a steal.
  - iii. One base on an overthrow
- v. Coaching the bases may be done by adult coaches or by players who must wear a batting helmet. If a base coach touches a runner while the ball is live, the runner is out (LL Rule 7.09 (h)).
- w. Stealing/Leads/Overthrows:
- i. Baserunners are permitted to take secondary leads after the ball crosses the plate.
  - ii. If a runner leaves the bag before the pitched ball is released by the pitcher, the runner is out.
  - iii. Stealing of 1st to 2nd and 2nd to 3rd base is permitted. One base per runner per batter is allowed (multiple runners do not need to steal on the same pitch).
  - iv. No stealing is allowed on overthrows.
  - v. No stealing is permitted during coach pitching.
  - vi. In the event of an overthrow by the catcher (on a steal), the runner will not be permitted to advance.
- x. A base runner that is struck by a batted, fair ball will be declared out by the umpire. However, if a fair ball goes through, or by an infielder and touches a runner after being deflected by the fielder, the ball remains in play and the runner is not declared out.
- y. All teams will compete in the playoff series for the league championship. The team with the better record in the regular season / better seed will be the home team. Tie-breaker rules apply if 2 or more teams have the same win-loss records. Teams will be seeded according to the

regular season standings. With a 6 team league, the teams that finish the regular season 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> will receive a bye. 3 will play 6 and 4 will play 5. The 1 seed will play the winner of the 4-5 game and the 2 seed will play the winner of the 3-6 game.

- i. The home team will utilize the dugouts on the 1st base side of the field. The home team is responsible for preparing the field for play prior to the game and for clean-up and storing any equipment after the game unless needed for an immediately following game.

## II. TIE BREAKER RULES

- a. The following rules apply to all tie breaker situations.
- b. The rules are applied in the order listed below until the tie is broken:
  - i. Best win-loss record (% won) over the entire regular season.
  - ii. Results of the regular season series between the 2 teams in question or among the 3 or more teams in question.
  - iii. Winning run differential in the regular season games played between the 2 teams or among the 3 or more teams.
    1. In applying this rule to 3 or more teams, the results are considered in pairs until one or more teams break the tie. Then, the remaining teams repeat the tie breaker rules.
  - iv. Winning run differential over the entire regular season for the teams in question.

NOTE: RUN DIFFERENTIAL IS DEFINED AS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE TOTAL RUNS SCORED AND THE TOTALS RUNS ALLOWED. A MAXIMUM RUN DIFFERENTIAL OF 10 RUNS WILL APPLY TO ANY SINGLE GAME. ANY FORFEITED GAMES WILL HAVE A SCORE OF 6-0

## **CONTACT INFORMATION**

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### **RWLL Softball Commissioner**

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