

District 11 Spring 2017 Softball Rules Hazlet, Aberdeen/Matawan, and Holmdel

Divisions: Tee ball 4-5 Clinic ages 6-7. Minors ages 8-10. Majors ages 11-14.

Rainouts: Field closings and game cancellation notices will go out electronically. Please sign up for rain out alerts via HYAL website www.hazlethawks.com. Matawan rainouts will be communicated to Hazlet Commissioners who will post alerts.

Game Schedules: Schedules will be posted on the HYAL website under Baseball Rec. and are subject to change. Coaches should be notified of any changes but its good practice to check website regularly.

General Rules & Sportsmanship

Our girls softball program is designed to be a fun, instructional league. We rely heavily on our coaches and our parents to use their best judgment in all aspects of the game and sportsmanship. Each grade division will have rules set to match the level of play and ability of our players. Modifications to Babe Ruth rules have been made to speed up play, help with safety of players or to make the games more competitive. In general, the following rules will apply to all divisions:

- 1) Remember the safety of the players, on and off the field. Many will need to be reminded to watch for the ball and each other – including swung bats in the on deck area.
- 2) Area behind backstop and directly behind dugouts is off limits to everyone**
- 3) Coaches are responsible for their players and parents conduct during a game.
- 4) No more than 4 adults can be in dugout during the game: 1 head coach, 2 asst. coaches, and 1 scorekeeper.
- 5) Coaches should remember the emphasis is on instruction and not running up scores.
- 6) Girls should be reminded of the importance of safe play. Discourage “goofing off” in the field and in general around the bench.
- 7) Any batter on deck should remain behind the screens or designated on deck circles. Safety is the main concern.**
- 8) All batters, on-deck batters and base runners must wear a helmet. A helmet with a face mask is required.**
- 9) Players are NOT permitted to bring cell phones in the dugouts or on the field.
- 10) NO STEALING HOME, IN ANY DIVISION. Overthrow rules apply in each division.
- 11) Any problems should be resolved at the field in a reasonable fashion. If you feel it is necessary, please call the league presidents or town commissioners. The matter will be discussed with both team managers.
- 12) Sliding - Optional but runners must avoid contact when a play is made at 2nd, 3rd, or home or they will be called out. NO headfirst sliding.
- 13) Thunder and Lightning: Please remember – at the first sighting of lightning, or at the first sound of thunder, no matter how far off, play must stop immediately and the field cleared. Everyone shall retire to their cars for at least 20 minutes. If no further lightning or thunder after 20 minutes, play may resume.
- 14) Inclement Weather: If a game is called on the account of inclement weather, it will be considered complete if both teams have batted to 3 outs in the 3rd inning. The coaches will make the call. Coaches will be responsible for rescheduling of the game.
- 15) Darkness: If a game is called on the account of darkness, it will be considered complete if both teams have batted to 3 outs in the 3rd inning. The coaches will make the call. Clean up respective benches following game.
- 16) Teams can use “borrowed” players but only during the regular season. Borrowed players cannot pitch and must bat last in the order.

Division Rules: Tee ball

Field/Equipment

1. Ball Size: 10 or 11 inch, soft
2. Pitching Distance: Batting tee. Towards end of season we may move to coach pitch from up to 35 feet.
3. Base Path Distance: 55 feet. Measured from the back of home plate to back end of the bag.

General Rules

- 1) Coaches will have full authority over the game. This is a developmental league and as such, coaches should play with the intent of teaching the proper forms, rules and sportsmanship of the game. Rules are modified to enable a fun form of play and to reinforce general aspects of the game (for instance, there are no “outs” at first base. Everyone will be safe but we want to encourage throws and runners overrunning the base).
- 2) All players will bat from a tee for at least the first half of the season. We want to encourage proper form and keeping eyes and bats on the ball (it’s ok to draw dots on the balls to mark the hitting spot). Once we get past the midpoint of the season, league president and commissioners to decide if/when coach pitch is allowed.
- 3) Please be mindful of bat throwing after the hit and encourage the girls to overrun first base. We know it’s hard to then convince them not to overrun other bases, but that’s ok. Overrunning first base is what we want to encourage. No extra bases on overthrows.
- 4) We encourage teams to have most of their defensive plays to first base.
- 5) Coaches should encourage proper ground ball fielding, throwing and catching. Don’t worry about teaching much around catching fly balls as we won’t see many but feel free to work on it because our girls love catching them!
- 6) All teams will bat around the order at least once every inning. Girls will not be called “out” at first base. We are not keeping score.
- 7) When the last batter in the line-up hits, the batter will be allowed to run around all 4 bases. All runners on base will run to the next base continuing until they reach home plate.
- 8) The games will last 3 innings or up to one hour.
- 9) First baseman is permitted to wear a batting helmet, per the discretion of the coach.
- 10) One or two players may stand at the pitchers position but must be at least 30 feet away from the batter for safety reasons. All other players shall play infield positions and be spread evenly around the infield. There is no catcher.

Division Rules: (Clinic)

Field/Equipment

1. Ball Size: 11 inch, soft
2. Pitching Distance: Coach pitch from up to 35 feet from home plate
3. Base Path Distance: 60 feet. Measured from the back of home plate to back end of bag.

General Rules

- 1) Coaches will have full authority over the game. Umpires are not required but if there is an umpire, the umpire will have authority.
- 2) Coaches should play with the intent of teaching the proper forms, rules and sportsmanship of the game and maintaining the general ASA rules of play. Rules are modified to enable a fun form of play and to reinforce general aspects of the game (for instance, there is no stealing in this league).
- 3) Maximum of 11 players on the field at one time. 6 infielders (includes pitcher's "helper" and catcher) and 5 outfielders. Outfielders are to be on the grass when the ball is pitched. The players should be learning the positions at this level. You can have a coach in the catcher's position but no additional outfielder. Infielders must play normal infield positions. No creeping in until ball is pitched.
- 4) All teams are required to field a catcher, in full catcher's gear.
- 5) Each batter gets 7 pitches but coaches can discuss certain players that may need more pitches (up to 10). Coaches can move up to pitch and coaches who are best at throwing "hit-able" pitches should be pitching. Girls must hit to get on base. No walks. Each batter will get 1 courtesy foul ball that will count as a pitch but no strike will be called. Each batter will also receive a courtesy foul ball (no strike called) on their last pitch (7th unless they foul, then 8th and so on)
- 6) **No strike outs before the 7th pitch.** Although we want to teach the girls to swing at strikes, we understand they are learning and not all coaches' pitches are accurate. A pitching coach can allow a strike out for his own players if he or she feels the player is advanced enough. This is entirely the batting and pitching coaches decision and may change at his or her discretion. A few players identified to both coaches and umpires before the game may take a few extra swings based on lack of experience but no batter will receive more than 10 pitches unless 10th pitch is a foul ball.
- 7) No bunting.
- 8) No stealing.
- 9) Overthrow of a batted ball - Only 1 base after the base the runner was headed to, including home.
- 10) Innings end when there are 3 outs or last batter has batted in the inning.
- 11) If a batter is injured and cannot bat or must leave the game, team will not be penalized. Next batter will bat and an out will not be called.
- 12) No more than 2 coaches on defensive field to assist players.
- 13) The play is considered over when the ball is held by a player in the vicinity of the pitcher's mound (or within the circle). All base runners shall return to the nearest base at that time.
- 14) Game is 6 innings or 1 hour and 45 minutes. No inning may begin after 1:30 mark **or** 15 minutes before next scheduled game.

Division Rules: (Minors)

Field/Equipment

1. Ball Size 11 inch, hard
2. Pitching Distance: 35 feet from home plate. Girls pitch up to 4 balls, then “batter’s” coaches come in to pitch (up to five pitches) a hit or strike out. Maximum of 3 innings per pitcher.
3. Base Path Distance: 60 feet. Measured from the back home plate to back end of bag.
4. Each team provides a game ball.
5. Time limit: 6 innings or 2 hours. Cannot start an inning after 1:30 mark if there is another game scheduled. If there is no game following, no inning can start after the 1:45 mark. Last inning must be called before the top of the inning.

General Rules

- 1) Umpires will have full authority over the game unless coaches agree otherwise.
- 2) All pitchers may pitch up to a maximum of 3 innings per game. A pitcher may be re-entered to pitch provided they did not exceed 3 innings maximum.
- 3) Should the pitcher reach ball 4 then a coach from the batter’s team will finish the at bat. While the coach is pitching the umpire will continue to call strikes. A batter can strike out looking and swinging. Players must swing, hit or be called out on the 5th coach pitch.
- 4) If a batter is injured and cannot bat or must leave the game, team will not be penalized. Next batter will bat and an out will not be called.
- 5) When a coach comes in to pitch, the pitcher must stay in the pitchers position on either side of the coach.
- 6) Maximum of 10 players on the field at one time. 6 infielders and 4 outfielders. Outfielders are to be on the grass when the ball is pitched. No creeping in until ball is pitched. Infielders must play normal infield positions. Teams can borrow players from the opposing team to get to 9 fielders.
- 7) Teams can play with borrowed players from other teams in their town but they must be registered and playing for another team in that town. Borrowed players bat last in the order and can play any position, but must rotate and cannot play more than 2 t innings at one position. Absolutely no borrowed pitchers. No borrowed players for playoffs.
- 8) Bunting is allowed (no fake bunting) but only when players are pitching. No bunting with coach pitch.
- 9) Stealing will be permitted from 2nd base to 3rd base only. A runner **cannot** advance home on an overthrow in an attempt to throw the runner out or on an overthrow to another base. No stealing when coach is pitching.
- 10) One base beyond the base the player was headed to can be taken, including home, on all overthrows of a batted ball when attempting to make a play in the field. For example the batter hits a ground ball to the shortstop. The shortstop over throws 1st Base and the ball goes into the outfield. The runner can advance to 3rd Base. The same one base on the overthrow holds true for all other base runners as well.
- 11) A player may take a lead only after the ball crosses the batter. Umpires may require runners to go back to a base, if in their judgment, the runner left early on a steal. A runner can also be called out, if in the umpire’s opinion, a runner left early on a batted ball.
- 12) In an effort to speed up play, catchers must use a pinch runner when they are on the bases with two outs. Pitchers have the option. Pinch runners will be last batted out.
- 13) A pitcher will be removed from a game if they hit 2 batters in any one inning or 3 batters in their allotted innings. The hit batters must make an attempt to avoid being hit by the ball. All hit batters will be granted 1st base on any infractions. If a pitched ball rolls or bounces and hits the batter, the batter will not take first base and it does not count as a “hit batter” when considering removal of a pitcher. In case of “soft hit”, team at bat has final authority to

decide whether to hit or take base. Both coaches can discuss whether to count "soft" hits as a hit batter when considering removal of a pitcher.

- 14) Innings end when there are 3 outs or 5 runs. Last inning, which is determined by umpires and both coaches, has unlimited runs.
- 15) The play is over when the ball is held by a player in the pitcher's circle or standing within 4 feet of the pitcher's rubber. It is the base coach's responsibility to use good judgment in advancing runners.
- 16) No coaches will be permitted on the field except to back a catcher up to speed up play. If a base runner is on 2nd base the coach backing up the catcher must not assist in any pass balls.
- 17) A coach may visit the pitcher once per inning. If a 2nd visit occurs in an inning the pitcher must be removed from the inning.

Division Rules: (Majors)

Field/Equipment

1. Ball Size: 12 inch, hard; Bats: Official Softball
2. Pitching Distance: 40 feet from home plate
3. Base Path Distance: 60 feet. Measured from the back of home plate to back end of bag.
4. Rosters will be exchanged prior to the start of the game.
5. Each team provides a game ball.
6. No infield fly or dropped third strike rule. No fake bunting.
7. Time limit: 6 innings or 2 hours. Cannot start an inning after 1:30 mark if there is another game scheduled. If there is no game following, no inning can start after the 1:45 mark. Last inning must be called before the top of the inning.

General Rules

- 1) Umpires will have full authority over the game.
- 2) All pitchers may pitch up to a maximum of 3 innings per game. A pitcher may be re-entered to pitch provided they did not exceed 3 innings maximum. For Example Pitcher A can pitch innings 1 and 2 then come back in to pitch inning 6.
- 3) Maximum of 10 players on the field at one time. 6 infielders and 4 outfielders. Outfielders are to be on the grass when the ball is pitched. No creeping in until ball is pitched. Infielders must play normal infield positions. Teams can borrow players from other teams to get to 9 fielders.
- 4) A pitcher will be removed from a game if they hit 2 batters in any one inning or 3 batters in their allotted innings. The hit batters must make an attempt to avoid being hit by the ball. If a pitched ball rolls or bounces and hits the batter, the batter will not take first base and it does not count as a "hit batter" when considering removal of a pitcher.
- 5) In an effort to speed up play, catchers must use a pinch runner when they are on the bases with two outs. Pitchers have the option. Pinch runners will be last batted out.
- 6) Stealing is permitted for all bases but home. **A runner CAN advance home on an overthrow in an attempt to throw the runner out at any base during live play but not if the overthrow is an attempt to throw out on a steal.** For example, if a girl is on first and the ball is hit to right field. If there is a play to throw the girl out at 3rd base and the ball gets by the 3rd baseman, the base runner can attempt to run to home. As long as the ball is considered still in play, girls can take bases. Plays are over when the ball is out of bounds or is thrown back to a player within the pitching circle (or vicinity of the pitcher's mound if there is no circle). No stealing on catcher's throw back to a pitcher after a pitched ball.
- 7) If a batter is injured and cannot bat or must leave the game, team will not be penalized. Next batter will bat and an out will not be called.
- 8) Pinch runners will be last batted out.
- 9) A player may take a lead only after the ball crosses the batter. Umpires may require runners to go back to a base, if in their judgment, the runner left early on a steal. A runner can also be called out, if in the umpire's opinion, a runner left early on a batted ball.
- 10) Teams can play with borrowed players from other teams in their town but they must be registered and playing for another team in that town. Borrowed players bat last in the order and can play any position, but must rotate and cannot play more than 2 t innings at one position. Absolutely no borrowed pitchers. No borrowed players for playoffs.

- 11) Innings end when there are 3 outs or 5 runs. Last inning, which is determined by umpires and both coaches, has unlimited runs.
- 12) The play is over when the ball is held by a player in the pitcher's circle or standing within 4 feet of the pitcher's rubber. It is the base coach's responsibility to use good judgment in advancing runners.
- 13) No coaches will be permitted on the field except to back a catcher up to speed up play. The coach backing up the catcher must not assist in any pass balls.
- 14) Coaches may only call 2 timeouts per inning consisting of 1 – 2 minutes. Trips to the mound and injury timeouts do not count to this rule. A coach may visit the pitcher once per inning. If a 2nd visit occurs in an inning the pitcher must be removed from the inning.
- 15) Game is 6 innings or 2 hours. Cannot start an inning after 1:30 mark or 15 minutes prior to next game start time. Last inning must be called before the top of the inning.

Commissioners and contacts:

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