

**WINFIELD GIRLS SOFTBALL**  
**IN-HOUSE LEAGUE**  
**5<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Level**  
*Revised 3/15/09*

League Statement: This league is 100% player pitch fast-pitch softball. Emphasis is placed on developing the fundamentals of the game to include throwing, catching, fielding, batting, rules, regulations, & sportsmanship. The principles of this organization are to have fun while teaching safely without forgetting that "It's all about the Girls."

**1. LEAGUE REPRESENTATIVE:** The League Representative shall be either appointed by the Commissioner or elected by the league coaches. The League Representative shall be named prior to the start of the season. The duties and responsibilities of the League Representative are as follows:

- A) Assist the Commissioner in the administration of the league
- B) Act in the absence of the Commissioner
- C) Communicate with the league coaches on league and program matters
- D) Determine weather cancellations or designate that duty to the coaches
- E) Revise and update Rules and Regulations
- F) Keep standings of the league and handle other administrative duties as necessary to provide an efficient and effective program

**2. AGE QUALIFICATIONS:** The minimum age qualifications for all participants are as follows:

- A) Players in grades 5-8 at the time of registration are eligible to play. At the approval of the coaches, League President and Commissioner, younger players may be allowed to play at this level. Players are eligible to also play on Travel Teams.
- B) Head Coaches must be a minimum of 21 years of age and have agreed to a mandatory background check as required by the Carroll County Parks and Recreation Department.
- C) Assistant Coaches must be a minimum of 14 years of age and have agreed to a mandatory background check as required by the Carroll County Parks and Recreation Department.
- D) Umpires will be provided by the league.

**3. COACHES:**

- A) Teams are not limited to the number of coaches they can have.
- B) Coaches are not allowed on the field with their team during the game.
- C) Coaches are allowed in the first and third base coaches boxes while their team is at bat.
- D) Coaches may make one (1) visit to the pitchers' circle per inning if necessary.
- E) In the event of injury, all restrictions regarding coaches on the field are waived.
- F) At no time are coaches to be inside the limits of the backstop fence while play is under way.
- G) Coaches are responsible for the conduct of their team and parents

to ensure good sportsmanship and positive encouragement are displayed at all times. Failure of the coaches to maintain a positive environment and good conduct will result in the game being stopped and a forfeiture being awarded the other team.

H) Coaches are to be knowledgeable of approved USSSA rules for Fastpitch softball. It is recommended that all coaches obtain a current copy of USSSA rules and regulations for Fastpitch softball.

I) The USSSA rule book is available on line at:

<http://www.ussa.com/sports/Home.asp?Sport=16>

#### **4. LEAGUE SCHEDULE:**

A) Games will be scheduled during the months of May and June. Games will be scheduled for both weeknights and Saturdays. A weekend night game may be scheduled and played for any and all teams. A tournament will be played the last part of June to decide league champion. (Outline of tournament to be determined.)

B) If and when there are any games cancelled due to inclement weather rescheduling of these games will be made by the Organization.

#### **5. LEAGUE AWARDS:**

A) Trophies will be awarded to each player at the Awards Ceremony to be held at the conclusion of the season.

#### **6. FIELD SETUP:**

A) 60 foot base lines will be used. Hollywood style bases will be used when possible.

B) Pitchers' mound will be within a 16 foot diameter circle with the center of the mound being established 40 feet from the rear point of home plate. The closest rubber to home plate is set at 40 feet.

C) The home team coaches are responsible for the lining of the baselines, pitchers' circle, and batters' boxes prior to the start of the game. Also, the home team coaches are responsible for placing the bases at the correct location. The home team is whoever is listed 2<sup>nd</sup> on the field schedule. The home team will take the dugout on the 3<sup>rd</sup> base side. The Away Team coaches are responsible to put away bases and any tools remaining on the field. Generally make sure the area is clean at end of game.

D) Prior to the start of the game, an inspection of the field is recommended by all coaches to ensure a safe playing surface is provided.

#### **7. EQUIPMENT:**

A) The official USSSA approved restricted flight 12 inch softball shall be used.

B) The home team is required to provide one (1) new ball and one (1) good ball for each game.

C) Each player on a team must wear a shirt of the same color. Players not wearing a matching shirt may not play unless mutually agreed upon by both coaches.

- D) Masks and body protection must be worn by catchers as well as catchers' helmet.
- E) All batters and base runners must wear protective helmets. Helmets must have approved face mask.
- F) It is recommended that all fielders wear a visor that matches with the team jersey.
- G) Athletic style shoes and/ or running shoes must be worn by all players. Other styles of shoes are not permitted. No metal cleats are allowed.

## **8. GAMES:**

- A) The number of games scheduled may vary and will be determined by a vote of the league coaches. Every attempt will be made to provide a balanced schedule.
- B) The official starting time for games scheduled on weeknights will be 6:00 PM. The forfeit time extension will be 15 minutes. Games played on Saturdays shall start no earlier than 9:00 AM. Actual game time on Saturday games will be determined by field availability and mutual agreement of the coaches and shall be noted on the league game schedule. For games played on Saturday, no new inning will begin after 10:45am or 12:45pm. This is not a "drop-dead" time limit. As such play will not be terminated at those times, but rather the rule is intended to allow teams to finish or complete an inning or game.
- C) Games will be played under approved USSSA rules for Fastpitch softball except as modified herein. Games will be six (6) innings long. An official game will require completion of 4 innings. It is recommended that no new inning be started after 8:00 PM. This rule will be in effect during the early part of the season. As daylight and weather permits, games may continue beyond 8:00 PM, however, no new inning maybe started after 8:00 PM. Every effort is to be made to play an official game.
- D) A maximum of nine (9) players may be positioned in the field. In the event a team has only 8 players, one outfield position will be eliminated.
- E) Players must play within assigned positions. Infield players may move in a maximum of five (5) feet for weaker hitters. Outfielders must be positioned in the outfield grass and may not be positioned on the infield dirt area.
- F) All players must play a minimum of three (3) innings in the field
- G) Pitching will follow approved USSSA Rule 6 - Pitching Regulations, Section 1-11 for Fastpitch softball. Any variations or deviations to the prescribed pitching rules will be considered illegal and any pitch delivered with an illegal motion will be considered a ball and awarded to the batter. Pitchers can pitch a maximum of three (3) innings per games. If a player makes one pitch in an inning, that will be considered an entire inning. The style of pitching to be used will be of a flat nature consistent of "Fast Pitch" softball, windmill style is not required. Pitchers must be within the limits of the pitchers' circle at the time of delivery. Both feet must remain in contact on the pitching plate/rubber at all times prior to the forward step per USSSA rules. For the safety of the players, pitchers who hit 3 batters in an inning (above-the-knee) shall be replaced immediately following the 3<sup>rd</sup> hit batter occurrence. If the pitcher who previously hit 3 batters in an inning resumes pitching in a subsequent inning and hits 2 batters in an inning, she will be unable to pitch in the remainder of that game.
- H) A strike will be called when the pitch crosses directly over home plate and

between the shoulders and knees of the batter.

- I) A 1/2 inning will be considered over after three (3) outs or five (5) runs have scored. The five (5) run rule is not in effect during the last inning of play. Every player on each team will bat in order, even those not positioned in the field.
- J) A team batting out of order and called after the completion of the player at bat, will be assessed an out and all runners must return to the bases they previously occupied. If the out of order batter is called prior to the completion of the at bat, then the correct batter will assume the count and complete the at bat. In the event that a player cannot bat at their position (injury, need to leave for other commitments) that player will be passed over to next player in the line-up and no out will be given.
- K) The batter is out after three (3) strikes. A foul ball is a strike except after two strikes.
- L) Dropped third strike: Batter may advance to first base if it is not occupied with 1 out or less. With 2 outs, the runner may advance regardless of whether or not first base is occupied.
- M) There will be walks allowed for the batter after four (4) balls.
- N) Batters hit by a pitch will be awarded first base. The umpire makes this call.
- O) The batter will be called out after one (1) warning for throwing the bat. Any batter deliberately throwing a bat resulting in an injury to another player or in an uncontrolled and unsportsmanlike manner will be called out and ejected from the game.
- P) Overthrows: There will be one (1) base allowed on an out of bounds throw. Out of bounds will be beyond the line extended from the bench fence extended or approximately ten (10) feet beyond the base line.
- Q) The ball is considered in play until such time as the umpire calls "Time " or the pitcher has possession and control of the ball while standing within the pitchers' circle. Any ball within the pitchers' circle but not in possession and control of the pitcher will be considered still in play and all runners may advance at their own risk. If play is called and a runner is past the half way point between the bases, the base runner will be awarded the base ahead. If the pitcher standing within the circle elects to make a play with the ball on a runner, then play is considered in and all runners may advance.
- R) All players not actively playing in the field must be sitting on the bench. Only the player at bat and the on-deck batter are permitted to be off the bench. A team wishing to warm up its next pitcher may do so at any time, but upon completion of the warm up, the player must resume their position on the bench. Failure to keep the extra players on the bench will result in an out being assessed against the team.
- S) Bunting and base stealing (upon pitcher's release of ball) will be allowed during games. If a runner leaves prior to the pitchers release the runner is to be called out by the umpire. Stealing home is not allowed except while a play is being made on any runner at any base. However, a throw back from the catcher to the pitcher is not considered a play.
- T) Sliding will be encouraged.
- U) In order to speed up the game. The following will be strictly enforced:
  - 1. Games will start on time.
  - 2. Five (5) warm-up pitches between innings

3. Quick off and on the field by both teams.
4. If the catcher is a base runner and there are two outs, the Coach may put in a pinch runner. The pinch runner will be the last batter who made the second out of the inning.

#### **9. UMPIRES:**

- A) The visiting team will provide the umpire(s) for the game unless an umpire(s) have been assigned by the In-House Representative and / or the Umpire Representative for the league.
- B) Balls and strikes will be called in accordance with rules previously noted.
- C) Base umpires may be used when possible. In the event there are no base umpires, then the home plate umpire will have responsibility for making all calls.
- D) All umpire rulings are final. There will be no appeals.
- E) Umpires are not to be subject to interference and/or prompting by any coaches, parents or players regarding any calls. Any such interference will result in a warning being issued to the team responsible for the interference with a second occurrence resulting in the game being called and a forfeiture win being awarded the non offending team.
- F) Where and when possible, an umpire not having any direct relation to players on either team is to be used.
- G) Umpires must be a minimum of 14 years of age and knowledgeable of fast pitch softball rules.
- H) Both coaches are responsible for reviewing rules with umpire(s) prior to the start of the game. If at any time there is an uncertainty about a specific rule and its application to the game in progress, the umpire will suspend play and discuss with both coaches the correct interpretation to be implemented.

#### **10. GAME CONDUCT:**

- A) Good sportsmanship is to be exhibited by coaches, score keepers, players and spectators at all times. The general philosophy of cheering is to encourage a team and player and not to demean or harass the opposing team or player. See DAAP.
- B) Tobacco Products of any kind and alcohol are not permitted on the playing field or bench areas at any time, as per Carroll County Department of Recreation and Parks.
- C) Coaches are responsible for the conduct of their players and spectators. Failure to maintain proper control at any time may result in forfeiture of the game at the discretion of the umpire. There will be one (1) warning issued prior to termination of the game.
- D) Coaches are responsible for providing the proper encouragement and teaching of their players with the goal being to develop the skills of all players and provide a positive and enjoyable experience for their team members.

#### **11. RULE CHANGES:**

- A) Any rule change requests during the season must be submitted to the League Representative and must be approved by a majority of league coaches.

B) Approved rule changes may be implemented at any time during the course of the season.