

## GIRL'S SOFTBALL RULES

(Teams will participate in the City of Gastonia softball Leagues)

City of Gastonia Rules will apply

### General Playing Rules

1. USSSA Fast Pitch Softball Rules not in conflict with the rules set by the Recreation Department will govern all league play.
2. Pitching Distance
  - a. 10 & Under – 35 Feet
  - b. 12 & Under – 40 Feet
  - c. 14, 16 & 18 Under – 43 Feet
3. Ball:
  - a. 8 & Under – 11 inch – Soft Touch Flexi Core – game balls will be provided by the Recreation Department
  - b. 10 Under – 11 inch – COR 46.25 +/- 0.75 – Maximum Compression: 375#
  - c. 12, 14, 16, & 18 Under – 12 inch - COR 46.25 +/- 0.75 – Maximum Compression: 375#
4. Game time limit is 1 hour and 30 minutes. If the home team is losing, the complete inning must be played regardless of the game time limit. No game should be called if any time is remaining in the game time limit. If there is time left, another inning should be started unless the run rule is in effect.
5. There will be a 10 minute grace period for the first game only.
6. **Tiebreaker Procedure:** After the completion of game, innings and/or when time limits have expired, the tiebreaker procedure will be used. (There is no exception to this rule)
  - a. The last batter of the previous inning, whose turn at bat had been completed, assumes a position on 2<sup>nd</sup> base. The procedure will be done at the beginning of each half inning, until a winner is declared. A substitute may be used.
7. **Courtesy Runner** – a team may use a courtesy runner for the pitcher and/or catcher any time after they reach base. The same runner may not be used for both positions in the same inning. If a team does not have a legal courtesy runner the team must use the last batted out.

8. The catcher must wear a facemask with extended throat protector, a protective helmet, a chest protector and shin guards during the game and while warming up the pitcher. Failure to use protective equipment will require the removal of that catcher from the catching position. If a hockey style NOCSAE approved catchers helmet is used, a separate throat protector is not needed.
9. It is mandatory for the batter/base runner to wear a batting helmet with a protective face mask/guard.
10. The home team will provide at least one new ball and one good used ball to start the game.



#### **14 & Under Playing Rules**

1. Games will consist of 7 innings. If a team is ahead of its opponents by 10 at the end of 5 innings it shall be considered a game and stopped by the umpire. If a team is ahead of its opponents by 15 at the end of 4 innings it shall be considered a game and stopped by the umpire.
2. The batter may advance if the catcher fails to catch the 3<sup>rd</sup> strike when there are less than 2 outs and 1<sup>st</sup> base is unoccupied or anytime there are 2 outs.
3. A team failing to have 8 players to start the game must forfeit. The absent player shall be listed in the ninth (9) batting position and the team will be required to take an automatic out in the ninth position in the batting order.
4. Teams may use up to (two) Additional Players (AP). The maximum # of players in the line-up is 11.

5. Teams will **not be allowed** to use a **DP/FLEX**.
6. **Playing Short:** A team shall be allowed to play with one batting position unfilled. The batting position the team cannot fill shall be designated as the absent player. When the absent player is scheduled to bat, an out shall be declared for each turn at bat.
  - a. **A team may continue a game with one less player than is currently in the batting order whenever a player leaves the game for any reason other than ejection and no substitutes are available.**
    - i. **If the player leaving the game is the batter or a runner, they shall be declared out. Exception: If the injury is caused by a rule violation by the defensive team (for example batter hit by pitch, obstruction, malicious contact), the player may be replaced by the player not currently on base who had the last completed time at bat. This rule does not apply to any future turns at bat.**
  - b. A team may begin the game with eight (8) players in a 9 player lineup. The absent player shall be listed in the ninth (9<sup>th</sup>) batting position and the team will be required to take an automatic out in the ninth position in the batting order. Under no circumstances will a team be allowed to have less than eight (8) players in the batting order.
  - c. A team may not play short if there is an eligible substitute available. If an eligible player arrives they must enter the game immediately.
  - d. Under no circumstance shall a team be allowed to have less than eight (8) players in the batting order.
7. Teams will only be allowed to score 7 runs per inning or 3 outs whichever comes first. **7<sup>th</sup> inning unlimited runs will be allowed.**



## **12 & Under Playing Rules**

1. Games will consist of 6 innings. If a team is ahead of its opponents by 10 at the end of 4 innings it shall be considered a game and stopped by the umpire. If a team is ahead of its opponents by 15 at the end of 3 innings it shall be considered a game and stopped by the umpire.
2. The batter may advance if the catcher fails to catch the 3<sup>rd</sup> strike when there are less than 2 outs and 1<sup>st</sup> base is unoccupied or anytime there are 2 outs.
3. A team failing to have 8 players to start the game must forfeit. The absent player shall be listed in the ninth (9) batting position and the team will be required to take an automatic out in the ninth position in the batting order.
4. Teams may use up to (two) Additional Players (AP). The maximum # of players in the line-up is 11.
5. Teams will **not be allowed** to use a **DP/FLEX**.
6. **Playing Short:** A team shall be allowed to play with one batting position unfilled. The batting position the team cannot fill shall be designated as the absent player. When the absent player is scheduled to bat, an out shall be declared for each turn at bat.
  - a. **A team may continue a game with one less player than is currently in the batting order whenever a player leaves the game for any reason other than ejection and no substitutes are available.**
    - i. **If the player leaving the game is the batter or a runner, they shall be declared out. Exception: If the injury is caused by a rule violation by the defensive team (for example batter hit by pitch, obstruction, malicious contact), the player may be replaced by the player not currently on base who had the last completed time at bat. This rule does not apply to any future turns at bat.**
  - b. A team may begin the game with eight (8) players in a 9 player lineup. The absent player shall be listed in the ninth (9<sup>th</sup>) batting position and the team will be required to take an automatic out in the ninth position in the batting order. Under no circumstances will a team be allowed to have less than eight (8) players in the batting order.
  - c. A team may not play short if there is an eligible substitute available. If an eligible player arrives they must enter the game immediately.
  - d. Under no circumstance shall a team be allowed to have less than eight (8) players in the batting order.

7. Teams will only be allowed to score 7 runs per inning or 3 outs whichever comes first. **6<sup>th</sup> inning unlimited runs will be allowed.**



### **10 & Under Playing Rules**

1. Games will consist of 5 innings. If a team is ahead of its opponents by 10 at the end of 4 innings it shall be considered a game and stopped by the umpire. Teams will be allowed to score a maximum of 7 runs per inning or 3 outs whichever comes first.
2. 3 complete innings will constitute a game.
3. The catcher shall not be required to catch the 3<sup>rd</sup> strike, except for a foul tip. The batter shall be called out and cannot advance to 1<sup>st</sup> base. The ball remains live for the purpose of throwing advancing base runners.
4. A team failing to have 9 players to start the game must forfeit. The 10<sup>th</sup> player may be added to end of the batting lineup once the game has started.
5. Additional Players: Up to two (2) additional players can be used to increase the batting lineup to 11 or 12 batters. The 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> player(s) or AP's may not be added to the batting order once the game has started. The batting order can be dropped from 12 to 11, from 11 to 10 and from 10 to 9 with penalty being an out each time the dropped players slot comes up in the batting order.
  - a. **A team may continue a game with one less player than is currently in the batting order whenever a player leaves the game for any reason other than ejection and no substitutes are available.**

- i. If the player leaving the game is the batter or a runner, they shall be declared out. Exception: If the injury is caused by a rule violation by the defensive team (for example batter hit by pitch, obstruction, malicious contact), the player may be replaced by the player not currently on base who had the last completed time at bat. This rule does not apply to any future turns at bat.**
6. There will be 10 players on defense with six (6) players on the infield at the point of the ball being released to the batter by the pitcher. NOTE: The catcher and pitcher will be counted as infielders to satisfy this rule.
7. All outfielders must be at least 10 feet behind the bases at the point of the ball being released from the pitcher.
8. Teams may NOT use a DP/FLEX player.
9. Starting players must play complete 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> innings and remaining players must play complete 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> innings. Starters may re-enter in the 5<sup>th</sup> or extra innings provided they occupy the same batting order.

#### **10. Kid Pitch Rules**

- a. All innings will begin with a kid pitching. After a pitcher has walked 4 batters during an inning, the offensive team's coach shall pitch for the remainder of the inning. (A hit batter will count as a walked batter when a kid is pitching.)
    - i. A pitcher removed from the mound under this rule may return to the mound in the next inning and may continue to pitch until such time as her coach removed her for circumstances other than what is covered in this rule. All pitches must be underhanded (fast pitch motion)
  - b. A pitcher removed from the pitching position but remains in the game in another defensive position shall be allowed to return to the mound one time during the game.
  - c. The pitcher must play around the mound area when a coach is pitching.
    - i. 35 feet minimum.
    - ii. The pitcher may not move up for the ball until the ball is hit.
11. No bunting will be allowed.
12. The infield fly rule will not be in effect.

#### **13. Base Running**

- a. A base runner may take a lead off the base as soon as the ball leaves the pitchers hand.

- b. A batter receiving a 4<sup>th</sup> ball cannot advance beyond 1<sup>st</sup> base on the walk.
- c. Base runners starting at 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> base may steal one base per pitch. Base runners on 3<sup>rd</sup> may not steal home. Runners are liable to be put out if not in contact with the base.
  - i. A base runner attempting to advance beyond the one base she is entitled to advance or steal, may be put out while not in contact with a base.
  - ii. If a base runner occupies a base beyond the one she is entitled to advance or steal, after all play ends and ball becomes dead by the umpire, the base runner will be returned to the correct base without liability to be put out.

#### **14. Coach Pitch Rules**

- a. Each batter shall be thrown a maximum of 5 pitches.
- b. The batter may strike out before the maximum number of pitches are thrown and therefore constitute an out. Balls and strikes will not be called, only the number of pitches and swings.
- c. If a player fouls off the 5<sup>th</sup> pitch additional pitches will be thrown until the batter strikes out or reaches base or is out as in regular ball.

#### **15. Adult Pitcher Rules**

- a. The adult pitcher can instruct the batter as long as the game is not being delayed. The adult pitcher cannot instruct the base runners.
- b. When the batter hits the ball, the adult pitcher must make every effort to avoid interfering with any ball put into play. If, in the judgment of the umpire, the adult pitcher intentionally interfered with the play, the penalty shall be that the batter is out and the ball is dead. All base runners must return to the last base they legally occupied. If, in the judgment of the umpire, a coach unintentionally interfered with the play the ball is dead and the pitch replayed.
- c. Pitches must be underhanded and the adult pitcher must pitch from the 35' pitching rubber.
- d. The adult pitcher may wear a glove for protection and balance.
- e. The ball must be returned to the player playing the pitching position prior to being received by the adult pitcher.



## **8 & Under Playing Rules**

1. Offensive Lineup
  - a. The coach must submit a batting order to the umpire and scorer before the game. All players must be listed in the batting order. All players must bat in numerical order for the entire game. In the event a player is injured (umpire will justify), scorer will be notified and said player will be skipped for the remainder of said game with no penalty in the batting order.
  - b. Teams may start with as few as 9 players. Additional players may be added to the end of the batting order as needed.
2. Teams must have a minimum of 10 players and a maximum of 14 players on their roster.
3. Defensive Positions
  - a. There will be 10 defensive players on the field, but no more than 6, including the catcher, can be positioned inside the infield baselines.
4. No player may sit in the dugout two straight innings.
5. Ten players are allowed on defense and each player must play at least every other inning in the field.
6. All outfielders must be positioned at a similar radius. A short fielder will be allowed.
7. A maximum of five runs, ten batters or three outs will constitute an offensive inning.

8. Games shall consist of five (5) innings. If after four (4) innings a team has a 10 run lead, the game shall be called by the umpire. The losing team shall have equal number of bats.
9. 3 complete innings will constitute a game.
10. No intentional bunting is allowed.
11. No walks will be allowed.
12. No infield fly rule.
13. No base stealing will be allowed. A runner leaving the base before the ball reaches home plate will be removed from the base and an out will be declared.
14. Base runners that miss touching a base will be called out by the umpire upon completion of the play. No appeals on missed bases will be allowed.
15. The catcher must be in full gear behind the plate.
16. Pitches will be pitched from a distance of 35 feet. An offensive coach will pitch to his/her own team and he/she must pitch in an under-handed "softball" motion from within the 8 foot circle.
17. The defensive pitcher (player) will be allowed to play on either side of the adult pitcher.
18. A fair ball hitting the pitcher shall be declared dead and ruled a single. All base runners will advance one base.
19. Each batter will be allowed six (6) pitches to hit. A batter may strike out before the 6<sup>th</sup> pitch as in regular ball. If a player has not hit a fair ball by the 6<sup>th</sup> pitch, the batter will be declared out. Not limit on number of fouls on the 6<sup>th</sup> pitch.
20. A team may use a **courtesy runner for the catcher at any time**. The runner used as a courtesy runner will be the player that made the last out.
21. Defensively, only the player with the ball can call timeout (must be verbal) and the player must be inside of the chalked base line and with control of the ball.
  - a. Umpires judgment will rule on defensive player being inside base path to call time and whether the player (base runner) may advance or return to the last base touched when time was called.

## 22. Coaches

- a. Only 5 adult coaches will be allowed in the dugout at any time during the game.
- b. Offense
  - i. **One coach to pitch**
  - ii. One coach at third base
  - iii. One coach at first base
  - iv. One coach behind the catcher to assist with passed balls but will not be allowed to coach from this position.
  - v. One coach in the dugout for player control.
- c. Defensive
  - i. One coach may be in the outfield for player direction but may not touch a player or the ball during a live ball play. If a coach was to touch a player or ball during a live ball play the result would be a **Dead Ball; all players advance on base.** **Umpire has the authority to eject coaches for interfering after one warning.**

## 23. Playing Field

- a. The distance between all bases shall be 60 feet.
- b. The distance from the point of home plate to the front of the pitching plate shall be 40 feet.
- c. A chalk line must go to all bases. There shall be a chalk mark between all bases just like from home to first and third to home. The ball must be inside the chalked lines to call time.
- d. There shall be a chalked hash mark  $\frac{1}{2}$  the distance between 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> base,  $\frac{1}{2}$  the distance between 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup>,  $\frac{1}{2}$  the distance between 3<sup>rd</sup> and home plate. This hash mark shall determine whether a player may advance to the next base or return to the previous base at the time of dead ball.

## 24. Adult Pitcher Rules

- a. The adult pitcher can instruct the batter as long as the game is not being delayed. The adult pitcher cannot instruct the base runners.
- b. When the batter hits the ball, the adult pitcher must make every effort to avoid interfering with any ball put into play. If, in the judgment of the umpire, the adult pitcher intentionally interfered with the play, the penalty shall be that the batter is out

and the ball is dead. All base runners must return to the last base they legally occupied. If, in the judgment of the umpire, a coach unintentionally interfered with the play the ball is dead and the pitch replayed.

- c. Pitches must be underhanded and the adult pitcher must pitch from the 35' pitching rubber.
- d. The adult pitcher may wear a glove for protection and balance.
- e. The ball must be returned to the player playing the pitching position prior to being received by the adult pitcher.