

## **2015 HARFORD COUNTY CO-OP SOFTBALL RULES**

**The Harford County Co-op Softball League will use the current ASA Rules for competition in all age groups, subject to the following modifications or clarifications:**

**METAL CLEATS ARE NOT ALLOWED.**

**NO VISIBLE JEWELRY ALLOWED OR YOU CANNOT PLAY.**

**NO ONE IS ALLOWED BEHIND THE BACKSTOPS OR ON EQUIPMENT BOXES.**

### **PITCHING:**

- 1) Pitchers shall be limited to a maximum of 4 innings per game, 3 innings in 9-10. The innings do not need to be consecutive. Add 1 inning per pitcher for extra-inning games.
- 2) One (1) pitch to a batter shall be considered 1 inning pitched.
- 3) In the event a pitcher hits two batters in an inning, the pitcher must be removed from pitching for the remainder of the inning, but may re-enter if the maximum number of innings allowed has not been reached.
- 4) In the event a pitcher hits 3 batters during a game, that pitcher shall be removed from pitching for the remainder of the game, but may play any other position.
- 5) In 9-10, a batter who draws a third consecutive walk in an inning shall remain as the batter and a coach will pitch, result cannot be a walk. The batter will either strike out or hit a ball in play. The batter's pitch count resets when the coach comes in. HBP is considered a walk. If the 3<sup>rd</sup> batter is HBP, she takes her base and the 4<sup>th</sup> hitter hits off the coach. A pitched ball which rolls into the batter should not be considered a HBP.
- 7) Pitching distance for 9-10 is 35 feet, 11-13 is 40 feet and 14-18 is 43 feet.
- 8) In 9-10, runners are not allowed to advance on a catcher's throw back to the pitcher or any other base. Catchers may attempt to pick off runners, however, runners still may not advance.
- 9) Facial gear for pitchers is highly recommended but is not mandatory.
- 10) A standard, optic yellow ball with 375 max compression and .47 COR must be used.

### **BATTING:**

- 1) All players present at the start of the game shall be in the batting order.
- 2) Players arriving after the start of the game shall be placed at the end of their team's batting order.
- 3) The opposing coach and scorekeeper shall be notified as soon as practicable if a player is leaving early. In such an instance, the player shall be skipped in the batting order without penalty.
- 4) There will be no penalty for removal of a player due to injury or illness.
- 5) If a player is ejected by the umpire, then an out shall be recorded whenever the ejected player's place in the batting order comes up.
- 6) If a batter bats out of order, and the error is caught before completion of the at bat, the correct batter shall assume the batter's position and the count in existence.
- 7) If a batter bats out of order and completes the at bat, regardless of the result, an out is to be recorded, and any runners on base will be returned to the base they last had obtained.
- 8) Helmets with face guards are mandatory for all age groups 9-10 and up. In 5-6 and 7-8, if safety balls are used, face guards are not mandatory.
- 9) In 9-10, the dropped third strike rule will not apply.

**BASE RUNNING:**

- 1) Base distances for all age groups will be 60 feet.
- 2) Collisions are to be avoided.
- 3) No head first slides are allowed, *except for a runner diving back to a base.*
- 4) The double (safety) base must be used at first base.
- 5) If there are two out, a courtesy runner can be substituted for the pitcher or the catcher. The courtesy runner is to be the player making the last batted out.

**FIELDING:**

- 1) In age groups younger than 9-10, all players shall play defensively.
- 2) In the 9-10 and 11-13 age groups, 10 players are to be used defensively with 4 players required to be on the outfield grass at the start of the pitch.
- 3) In the 14-18 age group, 9 players are to be used defensively with 3 players required to be on the outfield grass at the start of the pitch.
- 4) If less than the maximum number of players is available in an age group, 9-10 and up then the required number of players in the outfield grass shall be reduced pro-rata, then the coach can decide to play infield OR outfield short.
- 5) *If the infield dirt is larger than the normal area then the outfielders must be in an appropriate distance behind the base lines as determined by the umpire.*

**GAME MANAGEMENT:**

- 1) Games shall start at 6:15 PM *or earlier* during the week and as scheduled on Saturdays or Sundays; forfeit time shall be 15 minutes after the scheduled start.
- 2) Calling games due to darkness or inclement weather and delaying games due to inclement weather shall be at the discretion of the umpire once the game has started.
- 3) Canceling games prior to their scheduled start shall be determined by the home field manager who shall notify the opposing coach and umpire as soon as practicable. In consideration of all participants, notice should be given no later than 5 PM for week day games and at least one (1) hour prior to the start of weekend games.

**4) Length of game:**

- a. 5-6 4 innings
- b. 7-8 4 innings
- c. 9-10 5 innings
- d. 11-13 6 innings
- e. 14-18 7 innings
- f. For extra-innings, the international tie-breaker rule will be used. The player making the last out of the previous inning will be the baserunner on second base to begin the next inning.
- g. *No inning shall start after 8 PM during a week night regardless if school is in session the next day or not.*
- 5) Number of Team at Bats per inning:
  - a. 5-6 age group: the entire team bats each inning regardless of the number of outs or runs scored.
  - b. 7-8 age group: the entire team bats each inning regardless of the number of outs or runs scored. Coaches will pitch. After 5 pitches, the batter will use a tee.
  - c. All other age groups: bats each inning until 3 outs are recorded or the maximum number of runs scored as defined below.

6) Maximum Number of Runs per inning: pertains to 9-10 and up

a. Regardless of age group the play scoring the maximum run shall continue until it reaches its natural conclusion and ALL runs shall count.

b. Maximum runs per inning:

i. 9-10: 4 runs per inning

ii. 11-13 and 14-18: 5 runs per inning.

c. The last inning, either scheduled or determined by the managers and umpire due to time or fading daylight, shall be unlimited. All extra-innings are also unlimited.

**STEALING:**

1) In the 9-10 age group, runners cannot leave the bases until the ball leaves the pitchers hand. Stealing is allowed from 2nd to 3rd , with no advance to home. Runners may not steal from 1st to 2nd or from 3rd to home. No stealing of 3rd when the coach is pitching.

2) In the 11-13 and 14-18 age groups, stealing of any base is permitted, after the ball leaves the pitcher's hand, and may continue to advance if the ball is live.

**ROSTER:**

1) All teams must submit a roster, along with their league fees, by the start of the season. New players can be added to any team up to May 15. At that time the team's roster is locked.

2) Only players listed on the locked roster will be permitted to participate on that team's tournament team.