

# **DOUGLAS COUNTY GIRLS SOFTBALL 2015 RULES & REGULATIONS**

APPROVED 11/24/14 for the 2015 Season

## **I - ELIGIBILITY**

A. League age cut-off date is January 1st; (whatever the player's age is on the cut-off date the player is eligible to play that age all year.)

B. Acceptable proof of age will be by birth certificate or school records, however, a copy of the birth certificate must be submitted prior to the start of league play or the player will not be allowed to play in regular season and tournament games until such birth certificate is produced. (Proof of age is the responsibility of the coach.)

C. Complete team roster with verification of proof of age must be turned in to the area representative for their park prior to the beginning of league play. Any team failing to turn in an acceptable roster to the Area Representative will forfeit each scheduled league game until an acceptable roster is turned in. On April 1st all county team rosters will be frozen and no additions may be added with out first having a meeting of the Board of Directors of the Association. The Area Rep is to forward each team's roster with complete names to League Secretary by April 1<sup>st</sup> via personal delivery or email.

D. No player, coach or team will be accepted in the league unless they come through the representative of their area, abide by league rules and are approved by league officers and area representatives.

E. Teams from outside of Douglas County may register to play in the Douglas County Girls and Women's Softball League Inc if such teams are approved by the Board of Directors. Teams outside of Douglas County approved to play in the League must abide by League rules.

F. Players whose primary permanent residence is in Douglas County are eligible to be frozen or drafted to a team at any of the participating organizations. Players whose primary permanent residence is outside of Douglas County may be frozen or drafted to a team at any of the participating organizations with the provisions that this does not cause a player whose primary permanent residence is inside of Douglas County not to have a place to play.

## **II - CONDUCT**

A. All League Officials, Team Officials, Players, Parents and Patrons will follow the League's Code of Conduct as contained in the By Laws. Any League Official, Team Official, Player, Parent or Patron that violates the Code Of Conduct may be punished by reprimand, suspension or expulsion from the league (to include regular season, tournament and post play). This misconduct includes coaches who knowingly break league rules or make decisions that are deemed detrimental to the physical or mental well being of the players.

B. Jeering and un-sportsmanlike conduct by anyone will not be permitted during a game, including regular season, tournament and post season play. Team Officials or Players who violate this rule will be removed from the game, suspended from league play and/or subject to disciplinary action by the association. Team Managers will have one opportunity to correct the misconduct of a Parent or Patron that can be reasonably associated with his team – if the offender continues in misconduct the Team Manager will be removed from the game, further misconduct by the offender will result in a forfeit in favor of the team not involved in the misconduct.

C. In-Game Ejection: When any Team Official or Player is ejected from a league game or league tournament, an incident report must be filed by the umpire or League Official and the Team Official involved within two (2) working days. In the event of a Player-ejection, the Player's Team manager will file the report on the player's behalf. NOTE: Being restricted to the dugout for violations of the playing rules is not considered an "In-Game Ejection".

- 1) All in-game ejections result in an additional suspension for the offender to consist of the next game that the offender would have participated in and a Probation Period of one (1) year per paragraph D of this section .
- 2) The League's Disciplinary Committee will review all In-Game Ejections of Members. See Article VI, Section 2(d).

D. Any Team Official suspended by the Association may be allowed to return to participating in League Events after satisfactorily serving their suspension. After being reinstated by the Association, his/her first year back as a Team Official will be on a probationary basis. If while on probation a Team Official is guilty of any infraction of the Code of Conduct or rules governed by this Association, he/she will be suspended for an indefinite period of time with a minimum suspension of Six (6) Games (regular season and/or League sponsored tournament). He/she may apply to the Board of the Association to be reinstated. A majority of the Area Representatives must vote favorably to reinstate the Team Official.

E. Any official complaints, (in writing – to include letters and emails), against Team Officials will be handled by the Board unless the Board asks for the complaint to be handled at the participating organization level.

F. Coaches who intentionally violate League rules will be suspended by the Association for a period of not less than one (1) year. The presence of a suspended Team Official at a league event where his team is participating will cause the suspended coach's team to forfeit the game. If the suspended coach is found to be at a League Event by a Board Member, the Board Member will have the umpire stop the game.

G. Any League Official who if found in violation (when acting as a League Official, Team Official, Parent or Patron) of the Code of Conduct by the Board must resign their position as a League Official. If the League Official is an Area Representative, the participating organization must appoint a replacement Area Representative.

### **III - GENERAL RULES**

A. Each game will be played under rules of the Douglas County Girls and Women's Softball League, Inc. using the A.S.A. sanctioning body's rules as a guideline, with the exceptions noted herein.

B. Games will be as stated in each age group.

C. A game will be forfeited 15 minutes after the scheduled starting time, if a team cannot field a team according to the rules of that age group. However, teams may borrow a player from another DCGS team, in their same age division, to bring their minimum players up to the legal minimum number of players required. (Example: The minimum number of players required in a 10U game is 8. There are only 6 girls available. The team may borrow 2 girls to bring their team up to the minimum requirement.)

Notes:

A borrowed player may not be used in postseason play.

A borrowed player may not pitch or catch for the team, unless agreed to by the other team.

A borrowed player does not have to wear a matching jersey.

Borrowed players must bat at the bottom of the lineup.

A borrowed player may play for the same team a maximum of two times per season.

D. The practice and coach's requirements should be explained to the players and their parents in advance. When a girl is not allowed to play, the reason should be explained to her in advance of the game. All complaints regarding this rule should be given in writing to the Area Representative.

E. Area Representatives will vote on League Game protests. Decisions will be final. Protests must be filed with the umpire at the same time of rule infraction and turned in to the Area Representative in writing the first working day after the protested game. Protests will be handled according to guideline body's rules. There will be a \$25.00 fee for a protest to be turned in to the Area Representative along with the written protest. This fee will be refunded in the event the protest is upheld.

F. An Illegal Player is a player that has violated a non-game rule. For example a 12 year old player on a 10&U team is an Illegal Player, a player that attempts to steal home base in a 10&U game is not. Any player judged to be Illegal for any reason will not be allowed to play in League Games. All League Games played with the Illegal Player will be forfeit.

G. Rule changes that need to be made to correspond with any revision initiated by the ASA will be made whenever necessary.

H. It will be the responsibility of the coach to see that each girl plays half of a game and that all players that are able are on the batting roster and must bat. If a player that is present is not able to play because of injury, illness or team discipline the umpire must be notified prior to the game. If a coach is found guilty of not playing all of his/her team in a league season game or the end of the season county tournament, the game will be forfeited. Only players injured, ill or ineligible because of team discipline will be allowed not to play in a league season game.

I. If a player is unable to bat, she will drop out of the line-up and be skipped with no out charged. An out will be charged to the team on the 2nd missed at bat and she will not be allowed to return to the line-up and her position on the line up will be an out each time she would have come up to bat.

J. Distance between the bases will be 55' for 6&U and 8&U, 60' for all other Age Divisions and the pitching distance will be as stated in the 6, 8 and 10&U Divisions and forty (40) feet for 12&U and older.

K. No game will begin after 8:00PM for 6&U and 8&U, 8:30pm for 10 & under or 9:15pm for 12 & under and older age groups on a school night.

L. Free substitutions will be used.

M. Run rules will be in accordance with the Douglas County Girls Softball: 15 after 3 innings, 11 after 4 innings, 6 after 5 innings. Note for all Age Divisions where Run Limits exist: If time has expired and the away team is six (6), or more, runs behind OR the home team is six (6) or more runs behind, the umpire will call Ball Game as the losing team is mathematically unable to tie or win due to the 5 Run Limit. Due to this the Home Team may not get "last at bat". In regular season play, if both team managers agree, play will continue until the game clock expires or there is ten minutes to the next scheduled game. The official score of the game will remain the score at the time one of the teams was run-ruled. This is to allow for additional game experience for the players.

N. Coaches on the Field of Play. Except as allowed in the 6&U and 8&U rules no offensive coaches shall be on the field of play ("inside the fence") other than 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Base Coaches unless there is a timeout for an injury or that coach's team has called for a time out. This does not apply to the Coach performing as a Pitching Coach in 10&U. In 10&U and older one defensive coach is allowed on the field in foul territory in front of his team's dugout to call pitches. All Base Coaches must be at least (3) feet outside the foul line while the ball is in play. EFFECT: Violation will result in the coach being confined to the team area (dugout) for the duration of the game. Second violation will result in the coach's removal from the game.

O. At least one (1)-scheduled umpire must be present or the game will be rescheduled.

P. Manager/Head Coach is the only authorized person to discuss a rule interpretation with the umpire.

Q. Game Equipment: One (1) new ball will be provided by the Home team and the Visiting team will provide one (1) new or used ball that is acceptable to the umpire and the coaches, except in 6&U, all softballs must be optic yellow, have raised seams and have a visible ASA stamp. All other equipment must be A.S.A. approved. A bat that has been removed (banned) from ASA's approved list shall not be used in a DCGS game. Shoes with metal cleats will not be allowed.

R. It is mandatory that all players in all age divisions 8&U and older participating in any activity sponsored by the Association wear batting helmets with face guards and chin straps (properly secured) when batting, base running or performing as a player coach. This includes both the league and tournament play, both inside and outside of Douglas County. If a player on offense removes a Batting Helmet prior to entering the team area shall get one warning (delivered to the team's manager) - a second offense by the same player will result in the ejection of the player. This warning will not remove the liability for being declared out due to deliberate acts of helmet removal interfering with the defense.

S. It is mandatory that all catchers wear a catchers helmet (built in face mask & throat protector) - a batting helmet is not acceptable. Except in 6&U and 8&U, a chest protector and protective leg gear is required. A Catcher's Mitt and "Knee Savers" are recommended in fastpitch.

NOTE: Failure to have the appropriate gear for the catcher will result in a \$25.00 fine assessed to the team for each game the equipment is missing. The umpire will notify the Umpire in Chief or League Board Member of the fine within one (1) business day. If the fine is not paid within five (5) business days the fined-team's manager will be suspended (non-disciplinary) from participating in League Events until the fine is paid to the League.

T. All players in the pitcher's position in ALL AGE DIVISIONS are required to wear a protective mask such as the Game Face.

U. In 10 and Under and up a Courtesy Runner will be allowed: A Courtesy Runner may only be used one time per inning. The Courtesy Runner may be any player on the Team's roster. The Courtesy Runner will be in the batting order. The Courtesy Runner may be entered at any time. Once a base runner is replaced by a Courtesy Runner, the original player cannot return as the base runner. If the Courtesy Runner's position in the batting order comes up while the Courtesy Runner is still on base the spot in the batting order will be an out that half inning (you can walk the batter(s) in front of the Courtesy Runner's spot in the order to get to the out). While on base, if the Courtesy Runner becomes injured and cannot resume play, the Courtesy Runner is out.

V. Double bases will be used at First Base, when available. NOTE: On the initial play on the batter-runner, the colored base should be used by the offense, and the white base should be used by the defense. There are some exceptions to this whereby they can (but are not required to) switch, such as when the play is coming from foul territory. After that initial play, the two bases are treated as one big base, and both sides are usable by both teams. Failure to touch the orange base when required is a live appeal play, and it must be made before the runner returns to 1st base. If the defense does not appeal, the runner got away with one. See ASA Rules.

W. No Jewelry of any kind will be allowed except that newly pierced ears must be covered by a "Band-Aid" or tape.

X. In the interest of safety, all players must be instructed not to 'sling the bat' (using intentional or unintentional excessive force in placing the bat on the ground). If a batter in any age group causes the bat to make contact with any Defensive Player a Dead Ball Out shall be called and the batter shall be out, no runners can advance.

6&U, 8&U,: If in the opinion of the Umpire a Batter slings the bat without contacting an Defensive player; the first time the umpire will issue a warning to the team's manager for the offending player. Each additional time that player slings the bat while batting within that game, she will be out. The scorebook will be marked by the scorekeeper to record which player was warned. When the out is called, it is an immediate dead-ball situation, no runners can advance.

10&U, 12&U, 14&U: If in the opinion of the Umpire a Batter slings the bat without contacting an Defensive Player; the first time the umpire will warn the team's manager. Each additional time any Batter on that same team slings the bat within that game, the Batter will be out. The scorebook will be marked by the scorekeeper to record that the team was warned. When the out is called, it is an immediate dead-ball situation, no runners can advance.

16&U: If in the opinion of the Umpire a Batter slings the bat without contacting an Defensive Player, the player will be out. When this is called, it is an immediate dead-ball situation, no runners can advance.

Y. There is to be no intentional contact between the offensive and defensive players. The following ASA Softball Rules are here as a partial reference:

*RULE 8 - BATTER-RUNNER AND RUNNER*

*Section 7. THE RUNNER IS OUT.*

*J. When a runner interferes:*

- 1. With a fielder attempting to field a batted fair ball or a foul fly ball, or*
- 2. With a fielder attempting to throw the ball, or*
- 3) With a thrown ball.*

*EFFECT: If this interference, in the umpire's judgment is an attempt to prevent a double play and occurs before the runner is put out, the immediate trailing runner shall also be called out.*

*4. Intentionally with any defensive player having the opportunity to make an out with the deflected batted ball.*

*EFFECT: The ball is dead and the runner is out. All other runners must return to the last base touched at the time of the interference.*

*Q. When a defensive player has the ball and the runner remains upright and crashes into the defensive player.*

*EFFECT: The ball is dead. The runner is out. All runners must return to the last base touched. If the act is determined to be flagrant, the offender shall be ejected.*

Z. Obstructing the runner by the defense is a violation of the Rules. The following ASA Softball Rules are here as a partial reference:

*RULE 8 - BATTER-RUNNER AND RUNNER*

*Section 5. RUNNERS ARE ENTITLED TO ADVANCE WITHOUT LIABILITY TO BE PUT OUT.*

*B. When a fielder not in possession of the ball or not in the act of fielding a batted ball, obstructs the progress of a runner or batter-runner.*

*EFFECT: When obstruction occurs a delayed dead ball is ruled.*

*NOTE 1: Obstructed runners are required to touch all bases in proper order.*

*EFFECT: Delayed dead ball, the runner is called out if properly appealed*

*NOTE 2: Should an act of interference occur following any obstruction, enforcement of the interference penalty has precedence.*

*1. An obstructed runner may not be called out between the two bases where obstructed*

*Exceptions:*

- a. when an obstructed runner, after the obstruction, safely obtains the base they would have been awarded, in the umpire's judgment, had there been no obstruction and there is a subsequent play on a different runner,*
- b. an act of interference, or*

c. if passing another runner.

*EFFECT a-c: The obstructed runner is no longer protected between the bases where obstructed and may be put out*

d. missing a base

e. leaving a base before a fly ball was first touched

*EFFECT d/e: The obstructed runner is out if properly appealed.*

2. If the obstructed runner is put out prior to reaching the base which would have been reached had there not been obstruction,

*EFFECT: A dead ball is called and the obstructed runner and all other runners shall be awarded the base or bases which would have been reached, in the umpire's judgment, had there not been obstruction.*

3. If the obstructed runner is put out after passing the base which would have been reached had there been no obstruction or advanced beyond the two bases where the obstruction occurred,

*EFFECT: The obstructed runner will be called out. The ball remains live.*

4. When a runner, while advancing or returning to a base

a. Is obstructed by a fielder who neither has the ball or

b. Is attempting to field a batted or thrown ball, or

c. When a fielder fakes a tag without the ball

*EFFECT: The obstructed runner and all other runners shall always be awarded the base or bases which would have been reached, in the umpire's judgment, had there been no obstruction.*

*NOTE: If the umpire feels there is justification, a defensive player making a fake tag could be ejected from the game.*

AA. In games where a score is kept, it is the responsibility of the home team to turn in scores to their Area Representative. If after five (5) days the score has not been turned in, the game will go in as a forfeit in favor of the visiting team. Failure to report scores for more than three (3) games in a single season will result in the suspension of the non-reporting team's Manager for the next available game, in the regular season or in a League sponsored tournament.

AB. At the option of the team on offense, the On-Deck Batter shall be allowed to stand in the On-Deck Circle behind the batter, regardless of which dugout the offensive team occupies.

#### **IV - AREA ORGANIZATION**

A. Each participating organization should have a suggested maximum number of twelve (12) players per team.

B. Playing Divisions:

1. Age Groupings:

6 and Under

8 and Under

10 and Under

12 and Under

14 and Under

16 and Under

18 and Under

2. Number of Teams in an Age Grouping:

a. If there are enough teams within an Age Grouping to split the grouping into flights the League may elect to do so via a vote of the Board. Flights will be designed to group teams of similar proficiency to allow for more competitive games. Note: This can occur at any point in the season that the Board chooses.

b. Reassignment of Age Grouping Flight: At a time when a B Flight team has developed to the point where it is an overwhelming force in their flight, the League will recommend that the team move up to the A flight so that the players on that team can continue to develop their skills.

C. Seasons:

Spring Season is the Association's "competitive season" and Fall Season is the Association's "Instructional Season". In the Instructional Season team rosters will not be required to allow for each team to meet the normal number of players for which there are defensive positions. In the Fall Season there will be no official score to the games nor will there be rankings of teams.

D. League Fees must be turned in to the League Treasurer before the first scheduled game – no team can play until its League Fees are paid. League Fees are not refundable if the team disbands or withdraws from the League.

E. Girls may register to play at any of the participating organizations and provided space is available, every effort will be made to ensure that they are able to play with the organization of their choice. All participating organizations will cooperate to ensure all girls registered during the regular registration dates have a place to play.

F. Players will not be allowed to change teams after April 1st. Rosters are frozen on April 1st. A player may be rostered on only one (1) team's roster at a time. A player wishing to change teams prior to the April 1st must notify the team she is leaving in writing prior to playing for another team. After April 1st changing teams must be approved by a majority of the Board prior to playing for a new team. Failure to abide by this rule will result in the teams forfeiting all previous games where the infraction incurred.

G. All teams will be registered with the Douglas County Girls and Women's Softball League Inc. Each participating organization may sanction with other governing bodies.

H. A game that is halted due to weather conditions that has one or more completed innings will be considered a complete game. The score will revert back to the last completed inning unless the home team is ahead. Rained outs or canceled games will be rescheduled by the County Scheduler, only if the rainout will result in either team ending with less than 10 games. A team that fails to notify the League that they cannot make a rescheduled game will be fined an amount equal to the cost of umpiring the rescheduled game. Teams that have outstanding fines will not be eligible to participate in any League sponsored tournaments.

I. League games that have not been made up by the end of the season will not count as a forfeit unless not playing the game will result either team finishing with less than the minimum noted above. The team that failed to make up the game will forfeit and will be responsible for any umpire fees, which may be incurred.

J. All teams must abide by the rules properly accepted by the Board of Directors or the team will be withdrawn from the League by a vote of the Area Representatives.

## **V - TOURNAMENTS**

### **County Championship Tournament (End of Season)**

1. The County Championship Tournament (Competitive Season) will be held in locations approved by the Board and in accordance with the guidelines agreed upon by the Board of Directors.
2. All teams in each division will be seeded based on their win/loss record during league play within their division and will be placed accordingly on the brackets. When there is no separate A&B divisions during the regular season in any Age Grouping where there are more than three (3) teams (See Rule IV-B-2-a), the County Championship Tournament will be split into two flights for each age group - the A Flight will consist of all teams that performed at a winning percentage of 0.500 or higher over the season, the B Flight will be all teams that had a winning percentage of 0.499 or below. Seeding within each flight will be based on the overall regular season win-loss records of the teams.
3. Work during the County Championship Tournament will be divided among the participating organizations on a percentage basis according to the number of players represented by each participating organization during the preceding year.
4. Any special requests for times and/or days must be turned in, in writing, no less than seven (7) days prior to the first day of play in the End of Season county tournament.
5. The County Championship Tournament Games will be the same as league time limits with no time limit on championship game.
6. Protests must be filed with the umpire and Tournament Director before the game in question is over. The protest fee is \$75.00 The Tournament Director will be the Area Representative from that park. All decisions are final. There will be NO rescinding of the protest after a decision is made. Protests will be handled according to the sanctioning body rules.
7. Any direct conflict of interests, tournament director should contact another area rep or executive board member for the decision.
8. In 6 and Under games the score will be kept. The following shall apply: there shall be a four(4) run limit or three outs per half inning. Effect: The fourth run scored is an inning ending out regardless of the outcome of the rest of the play. Once the fourth run crosses the plate the umpire will call time and the sides will switch out. Run Rule will be as stated in paragraph M under the General Rules.

## **VI - DRAFTING SYSTEM**

### **A. Freezes:**

1. In all Age Groupings a manager may freeze up to ten (10) players (with each sister counting as one joint freeze) and at least one (1) of them being the coach's daughter. If a coach does not have a daughter on the team, he/she will be allowed that freeze, with a designee child as the daughter freeze
2. All freezes must be submitted to the Area Representative before tryouts begin. Frozen players can participate in the tryout but only the non-frozen players will be drafted. All freezes are protected for their team.
3. Along with the names of freezes, the coach must have the written permission of one or both parents or legal guardian before the draft begins.
4. Order of drafting will be determined by a draw from a "hat" or coin toss. After each round, the drafting order will rotate (1,2,3,2,3,1,3,1,2). When there are less than three teams, order of rotation will not reverse.

### **B. Late Sign-Ups:**

1. Any players that sign-up after the draft day will be put into a hat and drawn by all coaches in that age group from that participating organization, only if all teams have equal number of players

### **C. Registration:**

1. The dates for registration will be set prior to each season by the Association. Any park starting registration before the set beginning of registration will be fined \$250.
2. When all teams in the participating organizations have the suggested maximum number eligible to play, last girls to register may be placed in a County pool and the County Association will assign them to teams needing players in the organization nearest them.
3. Every participating organization will accept ALL registration applications on ALL scheduled registration days. Any participating organization found in violation of this rule will be fined a sum set by the Board of the Association, not to exceed \$50.00 per offense. This sum will be deducted from that organization's per team share of the funds distributed to each participating organization after the Championship Tournament.

### **D. Tryouts:**

1. Tryouts will be held by each participating organization prior to the draft date set by the Association.
2. All players present at the draft will be given a specific number that must be attached to the girl during the tryout.
3. Any eligible girl who does not participate in the tryouts will not be drafted, but the girl's name will be placed in a hat after the draft is completed and her name drawn. All coaches will participate in the draw, in order of draft rotation. There must be as many pieces of paper in the hat as there are teams drawing. Some papers will be blank. All names will be put in at one time for drawing. If after the drawing teams are uneven, teams with more players will have the option of keeping the new player or the last draft choice.
4. Two board members, to be assigned by the President, will oversee each participating organization's draft.

## **VII – THE GAME**

Rules will be governed by Douglas County Girls Softball.

1. Except as noted in 6&U and 8&U, there shall be a eighty (80) minute time limit for the game. There is a maximum of six (6) innings unless the game is tied at the end of six (6) innings. The minimum number of complete innings is one (1) unless the home team is ahead when the game clock expires. When the game clock expires, the inning that is underway shall be completed unless the home team is ahead or either team is run-ruled. No new inning shall start after eighty (80) minutes have elapsed on the game clock unless the game is tied..
2. Except as noted in 6&U and 8&U, there will be an eight (8) player minimum to start a game. The manager of a team which falls below eight players during the game, has the option to continue to play.

3. Except as noted in 6&U (regular season play) , there shall be a **five (5)** run limit per half inning. Effect: The **fifth** run scored is a inning ending out regardless of the outcome of the rest of the play. Once the **fifth** run crosses the plate the umpire will call time and the sides will switch out.

4. Tie games – In any regular season game where the score is kept if at the end of the game clock or the final inning (as listed in these rules) the score is tied, one (1) additional inning shall be played using the standard rules for that age division. If after the extra inning the teams remain tied the game shall be stopped and declared a tie. This rule does not apply during tournament play.

5. 10&U Exceptions: The Rules of Play will be modified for the 10&U Age Division per the 10&U Fastpitch Rules contained herein.

### **VIII - T-BALL RULES & EXCEPTIONS: (ALSO REFERRED TO AS SIX AND UNDER)**

A. There will be a **maximum of five (5)** runs "scored" rule per inning or three outs. Effect: The **fifth** run "scored" is a inning ending out regardless of the outcome of the rest of the play. Once the **fifth** run crosses the plate the umpire will call time and the sides will switch out. NOTE: There is no "official score" kept in 6&U games and no season rankings will be kept.

B. There shall be a sixty (60) minute time limit or five innings for the 6&U game. Except in tournament play, at the end of the time limit the umpire shall call the game after the batter (in the box at the time expires) completes her at-bat. This time limit is 'sudden death'; the inning shall not be completed and the home team does not get a "last at bat". NOTE: as there is no score, the run limits in Rule VII.A do not affect the 60 minute time limit in regular season play.

C. The base distance will be 55 feet.

D. There will be a 16-foot diameter circle around the 35-foot mark(pitching plate). The player pitcher has to be at or behind the 35-foot marker and inside the circle before the play starts, and she shall not stand immediately behind the Pitching Coach. There will be a 35' arc drawn from foul line to foul line to indicate the line in which defensive players must be behind prior to the ball being batted. Effect: Play will not begin until the defense is behind the 35' arc. If in the opinion of the umpire a player crosses the arc after a pitch is thrown but before the ball is batted the player will be warned, if she does it again in the same game she will be restricted to the outfield.

E. Complete team roster will be batted with the entire team eligible to play on the field.

F. Must have five (5) players to start the game.

G. After the game has started, if players arrived late they will be added to the bottom of the batting order and they will be allowed to play.

H. There will be a semi-circle foul line will be placed ten (10) feet from the back of the home plate running from the 1<sup>st</sup> base foul line to the 3<sup>rd</sup> base foul line. This line is to indicate additional foul territory for balls that are hit off of a batting tee. This line has no bearing on a ball that is hit when the Pitching Coach pitches the ball.

I. Two (2) defensive coaches will be allowed on the field during play in the outfield behind the outfielders. The offensive team may have three (3) coaches on the field, two (2) base coaches and one (1) to pitch or place the ball on the tee and to adjust the tee height for each batter. After this coach pitches or adjusts the tee, he/she must move toward the fence behind home plate so as to be out of the way of play.

J. A catcher will be optional for each team. If a team chooses not to use a catcher, the player may be placed in the field, but only if the team has less than ten (10) players in the field. On defense, no fielder may stand closer to the batter than the pitcher. The outfielders must play outside the baseline prior to the ball being placed in play. A maximum of six (6) players including the pitcher and catcher may play in the infield at one time. NOTE: Even if the team elects to not use a catcher, the Team Manager must present the appropriate catcher's gear to the umpire. Not having the appropriate catcher's gear will result in the \$25.00 fine in Rule III.S.

K. The batter will be allowed five (5) opportunities to hit the ball with the coach's option of either pitching or placing the ball on a tee. If the batter is unable to get a hit by the fifth (5th) pitch or swing, she is called out with the following exception. If the 5th swing is on a pitched ball and it is hit foul, she is allowed one additional pitch (not a ball on the tee). If the 6th pitch is not hit fair, she is out. From the tee, a swing and a miss, a swing and hitting the tee and foul balls all count as a swing. It is the duty of the Pitching Coach to remove the tee from the batter's box if the batter becomes a batter-runner.

L Only the pitcher can stop the play by stepping into the 16' diameter circle, and she must be in full control of the ball. If the pitcher is attempting to make a play and runs through the circle, this will not be considered making the play dead, and the play will be allowed to continue.

M. There will be a 15-minute grace period after the scheduled start time. If a team cannot field 5 players after the grace period the game will be forfeited. As additional players arrive, they will be added to the end of the batting order.

N. If the pitcher catches a fly ball while inside the circle (after the ball has hit by the batter), it is the umpire's judgment if the play is dead. If the pitcher attempts to make a play while the runner is attempting to advance, she will be allowed to.

O. The Pitching Coach shall not field any batted or thrown balls. A pitcher designee (player) will remain approximately three (3) feet to the left or right, but not directly behind the adult pitcher, nor closer than the 35-foot mark and will remain in that position until the ball is batted. This player will receive all balls batted or thrown balls to the pitcher's mound. No player may play in front of the Pitching Coach. The Pitching Coach will ensure that the pitcher designee (player) is in proper position prior to pitching the ball. Should the Pitching Coach, either by accident or reflex, touch or catch a batted ball during play action the ball will be considered a dead ball and the umpire will consider this hit one of the allowed five (5) pitches. All base runners will return to the base occupied prior to the ball being hit. When the Pitching Coach pitches the ball, both feet must be in the circle between the pitching plate and the front of the circle in a straight line to home plate - the pivot foot must remain in contact with the ground within the circle, the stride foot can move beyond the circle toward the plate during the pitch. The Pitching Coach may not pitch from either side of the pitching plate or to the left or right of the pitching plate between the front of the circle and the pitching plate. After the ball is in play the Pitching Coach is to exit the field of play away from the play and is to avoid contact with defensive players.

P. If in the opinion of the Umpire the Pitching Coach is intentionally interfering with the defense, the Umpire will warn the Pitching Coach. If the Pitching Coach continues to intentionally interfere with the defense the Umpire will eject the Pitching Coach from the game and follow League procedures outlined in Rule II.C (Conduct) above.

Q. There will be a halfway mark between the bases, if a runner is past the halfway mark when the pitcher steps into the 16'diameter circle with both feet and in full control of the ball, the runner will be allowed the base she is attempting to advance to. If the runner is not past the halfway mark, she must return to the last base.

R. For balls hit off the Tee, the umpires will wait until the ball stops rolling to call it foul if it is foul. If a batted ball rolls outside the additional 10' semicircle foul territory at home plate, the ball is fair. If the ball stops within the additional semi-circle foul territory, it will be called foul. (This rule applies to balls hit off the Tee only). If the batter takes a swing at the ball and, in the umpire's judgment, the batter did not strike the ball and only struck the tee, the ball is a foul ball and will count as one of the swings allotted to the batter.

S. Defensive coaches will ensure that the defensive players not stand in the base lines prior to a play starts to help to avoid collisions or injuries.

T. Batting Helmets with face guards and chin straps are required in 6&U for all players on Offense. Helmets must remain on the player until the player exits the field of play. A 6&U player shall not be ejected from a League game for removal of a batting helmet prior to entering the team area.

U. Any bat used in a T-Ball game is acceptable as long as it has the official logo for "Official Softball", "T-Ball" or "Big T".

V. A 10" optic yellow Riff Ball will be used in all league games unless both teams agree to use a standard optic yellow 10" softball.

W. If there is an overthrow (into foul territory) at first base or third base, runners will be allowed to advance one (1) base at her own risk and the ball and play will be dead when the runner reaches the next base. If an attempted play is made at the base in question the player may be thrown out (remember it was at her own risk), but the player may not go any further.

X. During regular season play no official score nor team rankings will be kept.

Y. When the player in the pitcher position fields a ball that is within the circle (pitcher's location does not matter) an out will not be called if the pitcher runs down the batter-runner for an attempted tag-out. Effect: batter-runner will be awarded first base. Note: this does not apply to a run-down play on any base runner. If the batter-runner becomes a base runner she is liable to be tagged out in an unassisted play by the pitcher.

## **IX - EIGHT AND UNDER RULES AND EXCEPTIONS**

- A. The offensive team will provide a Pitching Coach who will pitch when their team is at bat; the coach will pitch from the 35' pitching plate.
- B. There shall be a five (5) run limit per half inning. Effect: The fifth run scored is a inning ending out regardless of the outcome of the rest of the play. Once the fifth run crosses the plate the umpire will call time and the sides will switch out.
- C. Each batter will be allowed five (5) pitches, if the batter has not successfully hit the ball fair after 5 pitches, she is out with the following exception. If the 5th pitch is hit foul, she is allowed one additional pitch. If the 6th pitch is not hit fair, she is out.
- D. The Pitching Coach shall not field any batted or thrown balls. A pitcher designee (player) will remain approximately three (3) feet to the left or right, but not directly behind the adult pitcher, nor closer than the 35-foot mark and will remain in that position until the ball is batted. This player will receive all balls batted or thrown balls to the pitcher's mound. No player may play in front of the Pitching Coach. The Pitching Coach will ensure that the pitcher designee (player) is in proper position prior to pitching the ball. Should the Pitching Coach, either by accident or reflex, touch or catch a batted ball during play action the ball will be considered a dead ball and the umpire will consider this hit one of the allowed five (5) pitches. All base runners will return to the base occupied prior to the ball being hit. When the Pitching Coach pitches the ball, one foot must be in contact with the 35 foot pitching plate. After the ball is in play the adult pitcher is to exit the field of play away from the play and is to avoid contact with the defensive players.
- E. If in the opinion of the Umpire the Pitching Coach is intentionally interfering with the defense, the Umpire will warn the Pitching Coach. If the Pitching Coach continues to intentionally interfere with the defense the Umpire will eject the Pitching Coach from the game and follow League procedures outlined in Rule II.C (Conduct) above.
- F. One coach will be allowed on the field during defensive play inside the foul line and at least 10 feet behind the outfielders.
- G. There shall be a sixty (60) minute time limit for the game. There is a maximum of six (6) innings unless the game is tied at the end of six (6) innings. The minimum number of complete innings is one (1) unless the home team is ahead when the game clock expires. When the game clock expires, the inning that is underway shall be completed unless the home team is ahead or either team is run-ruled. No inning shall start after sixty (60) minutes have elapsed on the game clock unless the game is tied.
- H. If a team cannot field 7 players after the grace period the game is forfeited. As additional players arrive, they will be added to the end of the batting order.
- I. The defensive team must have one coach positioned behind the umpire to field the balls missed by the catcher.
- J. If there is an overthrow at first base or third base into foul territory, runners will be allowed to advance one (1) base at her own risk and the ball and play will be dead when the runner reaches the next base. If an attempted play is made at the base in question the player may be thrown out (remember it was at her own risk), but the player may not go any further.

## X – 10&U RULES AND EXCEPTIONS

1. It is the intent of these rules to allow for the 10&U Division to become familiar with the fastpitch game.
2. The Defense can field a total of ten (10) players, when ten players are fielded, four (4) must be in “outfield” positions.
3. All a play will utilize an 11” optic yellow, raised seam ASA stamped ball.
4. The “dropped 3<sup>rd</sup> strike” rule is NOT in effect. Effect: If a pitch results in a 3<sup>rd</sup> strike to be recorded on a batter the batter is out and she cannot advance to first base. The ball remains live.
5. The “look-back” rule is NOT in effect. Umpires will call time to stop “cat & mouse” situations between pitchers with possession of the ball in the circle and base runners. Effect: All runners will retreat to last base legally touched.
6. Pitching distance is 35 feet.
7. Illegal Pitches shall not be called on player-pitchers. The umpire shall inform the pitcher’s manager about the pitcher’s action that would normally result in an illegal pitch being called at the completion of the half-inning. Effect: The results of the pitch/play stand. Exception: Pitches where the pitcher is, in the opinion of the umpire, clearly walking off of the pitching plate (does not include "crow-hopping") to get closer to home plate prior to releasing the ball shall not be called strikes if the batter does not swing - they will be a ball, with an explanation given by the umpire.
8. Stealing: Only one base per play. Effect: If a base runner on 1<sup>st</sup> base (or 2<sup>nd</sup>) attempts to steal and the defense is unsuccessful in putting the base runner out, the base runner cannot attempt to progress to the next base on the same play. There are no exceptions. There will be no stealing during a Coach Pitch play. Clarification: If the defense proceeds to attempt a play on a different base runner; the original base runner, once she has legally and safely attained her stolen base the defense cannot make a second play on her. Example: Runners on 1st & 3rd. Runner from 1st attempts to steal 2nd drawing a throw (allowing the runner from 3rd to go home). If the defense attempts to put out the runner from 3rd they cannot get an out on the runner who started at 1st once that runner has legally and safely attained 2nd.
9. Stealing: A base runner on 3rd at the time of the pitch cannot steal home unless the defense attempts to put her out (example: pick-off throw by the catcher) or there is a play at another base. Effect: A base runner at 3<sup>rd</sup> cannot steal home on a passed ball/wild pitch (or any other live ball situation) unless the defense is attempting a putout on her or another base runner.
10. Pitching rules:

### A. 10&U Player-Pitcher Rules.

1. If The player-pitchers will be allowed to pitch to a batter until the batter has had four pitches that have been called a "ball" by the umpire, the batter has been struck out, the batter has been retired by the defense or the batter has legally reached a base. When a batter receives a fourth “ball”, the Offensive team will provide a Pitching Coach to complete the batter’s turn at bat. The strike count on the batter will carry forward with the remaining number of strikes equaling the number of pitches the Pitching Coach can deliver to the batter. See Coach Pitch Rules in section B below for information governing the game when a pitching coach is utilized
  - a) All pitches from the Pitching Coach will be strikes. Exception: See section VII.10.B.8 below. Effect: A pitch that is unhittable will count as a strike.
  - b) If after the third strike the batter has not hit the ball and been put out by the defense or reached a base legally, the batter shall be out. Effect: No Walks.
  - c) If what would otherwise be the last pitch from the Pitching Coach results in an uncaught foul ball, the batter will continue to receive pitches from the Pitching Coach until she swings and misses, does not swing, or she hits the ball and is put out by the defense or reaches a base legally.

Some examples of an at-bat:

- a) Player-pitcher throws 4 pitches – 0 strikes, 4 balls: After the 4th pitch, the Pitching Coach replaces the player-pitcher and may throw up to 3 pitches.
- b) Player-pitcher throws 5 pitches – 1 strike, 4 balls: After the 5th pitch, the Pitching Coach replaces the player-pitcher and may throw up to 2 pitches.
- c) Player-pitcher throws 5 pitches – 2 strikes, 3 balls: With this count, the player pitcher is allowed another pitch. A 3rd strike foul against the player pitcher allows another pitch until the ball is put in play, a fourth "ball" is thrown, or the batter is struck by a pitch. If a "ball" is thrown, the Pitching Coach will replace the player-pitcher and may throw one pitch.

- d) Player-pitcher throws 3 strikes (batter is out), the ball is put in play, or the batter is struck by a pitch: The Pitching Coach does not participate.

B. 10&U Coach-Pitch Rules

1. A coach from the offensive team or a designated person shall pitch to his own team – the person delivering the pitches shall be referred to as the Pitching Coach. The Pitching Coach may give advice and help **to the batter only**. He/she may **not** coach the **batter-runner or runners at ANY time**. Effect: 1<sup>st</sup> offense: a warning from the Umpire. 2<sup>nd</sup> offence: the pitching coach shall be relieved of pitching duties for the remainder of the game.
  - a. After a batter hits the ball, the Pitching Coach shall remain as motionless as possible or move quietly away from the playing action into foul territory away from the play. If, under the judgment of the umpire, the Pitching Coach intentionally violates this rule and is hit by a batted or thrown ball, a dead ball will be called and the runner closest to home will be called out, the batter-runner will be awarded 1<sup>st</sup> base (unless no runners are on base – then she is the runner closest to home and therefore out), and other runners will advance only if forced. If, in the judgment of the umpire, the Pitching Coach did not intentionally violate this rule and is hit by a batted ball, the ball is dead and the play is treated as single for the batter. Runners move up only if forced.
  - b. After a batter hits the ball, the Pitching Coach shall remain as motionless as possible or move quietly away from the playing action into foul territory away from the play. If, under the judgment of the umpire, the Pitching Coach intentionally violates this rule and interferes with defensive player making a play, a dead ball will be called and the runner closest to home will be called out, the batter-runner will be awarded 1<sup>st</sup> base (unless no runners are on base – then she is the runner closest to home and therefore out), and other runners will advance only if forced. Unintentional interference with a defensive player making a play will result in a dead ball and the play is treated as single for the batter. Runners move up only if forced.
  - c. It is the Pitching Coach's responsibility to try to avoid contact with all defensive players.
  - d. The umpire may restrict a Pitching Coach to the bench or eject him/her for repeated violations of these rules.
  - e. The pitching coach must stand on the pitching plate and should pitch hard straight underhand pitches that are in the strike zone without an arch.
2. The Pitching Coach is not to deliver the pitch if the Player-Pitcher is out of position (closer to home plate than the pitching plate or directly behind the Pitching Coach) and not paying attention to the play. If the Player-Pitcher moves closer to home plate after the Pitching Coach has started his motion the umpire will stop play as described in Rule VII.10.B.8 below.
3. A batted ball that hits the Pitching Coach shall be ruled a dead ball. The batter is awarded first base. All other runners will be awarded one base only if they are forced. See Rule VIII.10.B.1(a) for exceptions.
4. A runner may not leave a base until the ball leaves the Pitching Coach's hand.
5. Bunting shall be allowed.
6. There is no dropped 3<sup>rd</sup> strike rule. Effect: The ball is dead. The batter & base runners may not advance
7. At the start of a pitch, one player (the Player-Pitcher) shall be in the pitcher's position on either side of the Pitching Coach with one foot on or in the 8 foot radius circle. She shall be no closer to home plate than the pitching plate.
8. The Player-Pitcher may not move in front of the pitching plate towards home plate until the ball has been released by the Pitching Coach. Should the Player-Pitcher be in front of the pitching plate prior to the ball being released, an "illegal pitch" shall be declared (base runners awarded one base) and not counted as a strike from the Pitching Coach. If no runners are on base, a warning is issued to the defensive team. For a second offense during the same at-bat, the batter is awarded first base. All other runners advance one base, regardless of force. The offense can decline the batter's base award.

9. **The ball is live after each play until the defensive team has stopped all runners from advancing. Umpires should call time at this point. There is no look-back rule in coach pitch. This rule does not preclude the umpire from calling or granting time in situations such as when a runner has slid into a base, requests time, no other runners are advancing, or there is an injured player.** The ball shall be dead immediately anytime the Pitching Coach touches a ball thrown to him/her at the end of a play (whether they catch it or not) and all runners will return to the last base touched.
10. The Pitching Coach may not make appeals.

#### **Discussion and Points of Emphasis for 10&U Coach-Pitch Rules**

1. The philosophy behind these rules is to make them as few and as simple as possible, promoting hitting rather than walking while accommodating the 10&U Fastpitch game.
2. The only duties for the pitching coach are pitch to the batter and to coach the batter while at bat and before the batter hits the ball. Limiting the pitching coach to these duties only provides for a more realistic game environment and prevents the pitching coach from becoming a distraction to the defensive team.