

GIRLS SOFTBALL – MINOR DIVISION

Lake In The Hills Youth Athletic Association

Huntley Park District

Dundee Park District

League Rules – Revised 4/16/08

Managers/Coaches Objective and General Policies

- Place emphasis on teaching the rules, how the game is played, teamwork, and cooperation.
- One ***qualified*** umpire is required.
- Devote an equal amount of time to all players on the team.
- All rules will be enforced. Any rule not covered by these will be governed by IHSA/NFHS (high school) girls' softball rules.
- The home team (as listed on the schedule) is responsible for preparing the field prior to the game.

Length of Games

Games consist of seven (7) innings and will be considered a complete game after 4 innings have been completed (3 ½ innings if the home team is ahead). No new inning shall start after **1 hour and 45 minutes** from the actual game start time. The last inning will be announced, at its start, by the umpire, who will also serve as the official timekeeper. Final inning rules will apply to this inning.

No extra innings will be played. A game which has a tie score at the end of the last inning will be declared a tie.

Each team will have a fifteen (15) minute grace period from the scheduled start time to obtain the minimum number of players before the umpire will consider the game a forfeit. The teams may agree to play, however the forfeit will stand even if additional players arrive.

Number of Players

The defensive team will consist of ten (10) players in the field, with four outfielders played in an arc (left, left center, right center, and right field positions). No "short" outfielders are permitted, and outfielders are not permitted to make a play at 2nd base. A minimum of eight (8) players is required to start a game.

Injury Reduction

After a game has started and the team is reduced to six (6) players due to injury or illness, the game can continue and the 7th player can return and resume her spot in the game if able. Any at bats for that player that come up while unable to play will be considered automatic outs. If a team is reduced to less than seven (7) players due to an ejection, the game will be terminated and considered a forfeit.

Run Limit

An inning shall end when a team's sixth (6th) run crosses the plate, except for in the last inning.

Courtesy Rule

Fifteen (15) runs after four complete innings or ten (10) runs after five or more complete innings will constitute a win for the leading team.

Batting Order

All players present are placed in a continuous batting order which may not change during the course of the game. Any additions (i.e. late arriving players) to the batting order must be announced to the umpire and opposing team and placed at the bottom of the batting order, either in front of or replacing any play-up player as defined below.

Minimum Playing Time

With the exception of the pitcher position, free substitutions on defense are allowed throughout the game. Each player must play a minimum of two (2) innings defensively by the 5th inning and all players must play a minimum of three (3) defensive innings in a full 7 inning game.

“Play-Up” Players

Players may be called up from a younger division team to help a team field a complete line-up, subject to the following provisions:

- The play-up player must not have a regularly schedule game for their younger division team on the same game date.
- Play-up players are only eligible to play if a team has nine (9) or fewer of its regular roster players. At any point in which an additional regular roster player arrives, they will replace the line-up spot of any minor division player, and that minor division player will be taken out of the game permanently.
- Play-up players are not eligible to play in the pitcher or catcher positions at any time.
- Play-up players must bat at the bottom of the lineup.
- Play-up players will get the minimum playing time only in cases where they are the 10th player.
- Play-up players must be in their normal minor team uniform to play.

Dugouts

Home team will use the third (3rd) base dugout.

Pre-Game Meeting

Ten (10) minutes prior to the scheduled game time, the managers must meet with the umpire to discuss the game rules. If applicable the home team manager will sign the umpire sheet at this time.

Scorekeeping

The home team will keep the official score and should verify the score after each completed inning with the visiting team's scorekeeper.

Field Dimensions

Bases will be at distance of 55 feet. Pitching will be at a distance of 35 feet.

Softball

The game is played with a twelve (12) inch softball, provided by the home team. It is recommended that two game balls be present to help in case of long foul balls.

Bats

Official softball bat must be used, and must be stated on the bat.

Uniforms

To play in the game a player must wear a uniform. Jerseys should be tucked in and no clothing of any kind should be worn over the uniform. Jewelry, of any kind, is not allowed to be worn with the exception of medical alert medallions which must be taped securely to the player.

Authority of Umpire

The umpire has the authority to ask any player, parent, coach, manager, or fan to leave the premises if there is excessive harassment during the game. The umpire has the authority to stop play until said person has left the premises. If they do not leave, the umpire can declare a forfeit for the team that is involved. Any disputes should be discussed with the community representative to the league. If the issue is still not resolved, the committee of all community representatives will meet to resolve the issue.

Smoking/Tobacco Usage

Smoking or the use of any other tobacco product is not permitted at league activities.

Player/Coach Behavior

Throwing of equipment (in anger) is not permitted. The offender will be ejected to the bench and if the behavior continues will be removed from the premises. If a player or coach is ejected from a game, a formal review of the situation will be conducted and further suspension or removal from the league will be considered.

The use of abusive language will not be tolerated.

Intentionally taking off or throwing off a helmet while running will result in a player being called out.

All players not playing, fielding, or base running must remain seated in the dugout area.

At no time should "horseplay" be permitted.

No food or non-players are allowed in the dugout area or on the playing field during games.

Throwing of the Bat

Each player will receive one (1) warning for inadvertently throwing their bat. Any second or subsequent instances and the ball will be declared dead, the batter ruled out, and any runner returned to their original base.

Bunting

Bunting is permitted.

Dropped Third Strike

Batters may **not** advance on a dropped third strike.

Infield Fly Rule

The infield fly rule will **not** be enforced.

Pitching

Any new pitcher will be allowed seven (7) warm-up pitches between innings. Pitchers returning to the mound will be allowed five (5) warm-up pitches. **A player may only pitch in three (3) of the first six (6) innings. If a game goes into the 7th inning, a player would be allowed to return to the mound for their fourth (4th) inning at that time. One pitch thrown in an inning constitutes an inning pitched. Innings do not have to be pitched consecutively. (Players may return to the mound to pitch after having been removed, provided they have not reached the maximum innings described above.)**

Pitching mechanics regulations are identical to those used by the IHSA/NFHS:

Art. 1 . . . Prior to starting the delivery (pitch), the pitcher shall take a position with the pivot foot on or partially on the top surface of the pitchers plate and the non-pivot foot in contact with or behind the pitchers plate. Both feet must be on the ground within or partially within the 24 inch length of the pitchers plate.

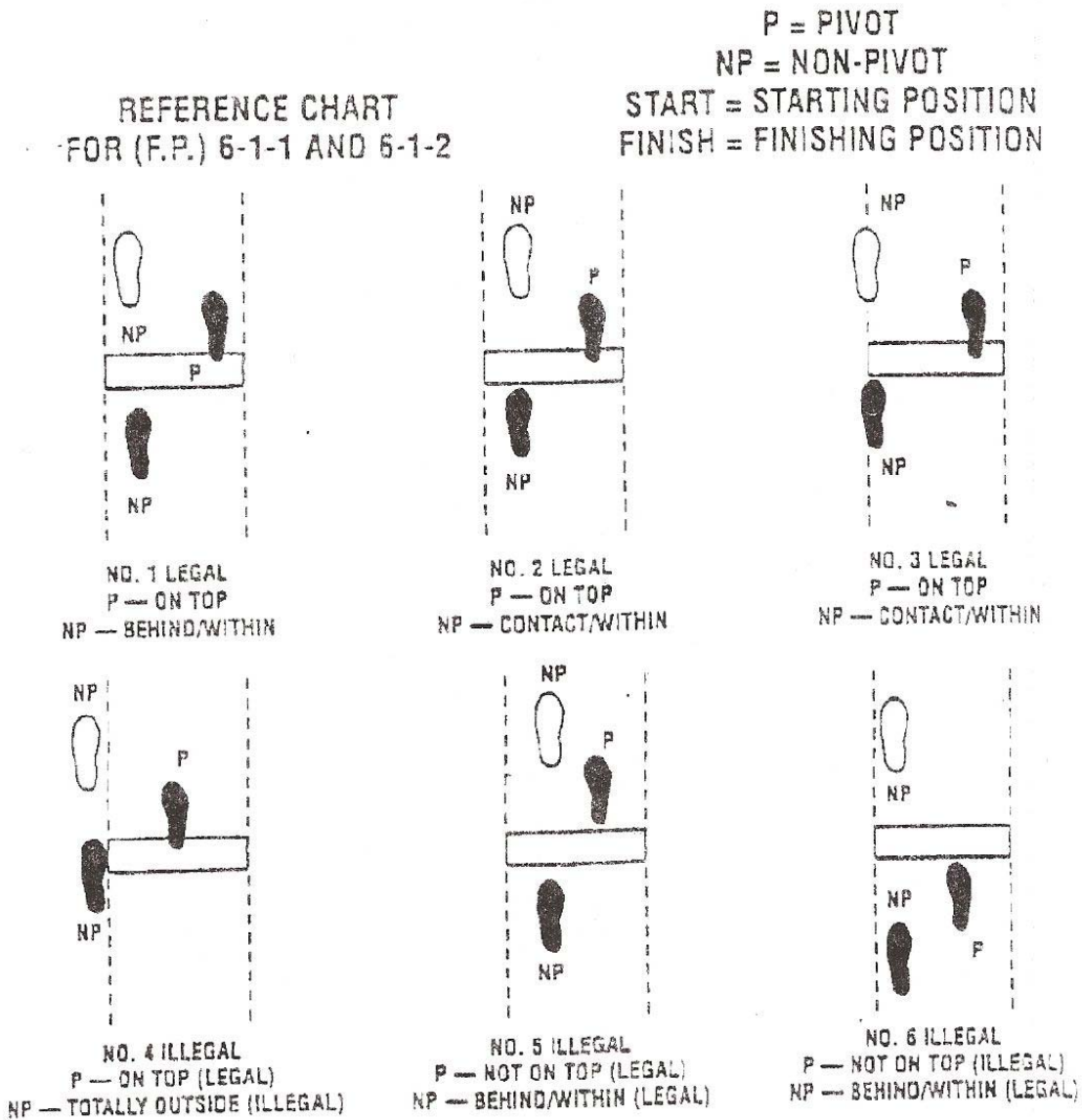
- a. Prior to pitching, the pitcher must take a position with shoulders in line with first and third base with the ball in the glove or pitching hand, and with the hands separated.*
- b. While in this position, the pitcher shall take (or simulate taking) a signal from the catcher.*
- c. After completing "b" above, the pitcher shall bring the hands together in front of the body for not less than one second and not more than 10 seconds before releasing the ball. The hands may be motionless or moving*
- d. The pitcher shall not be considered to be in the pitching position unless the catcher is within the area of the catcher's box and in position to receive the pitch.*
- e. The pitcher may not take the pitching position on or near the pitcher's plate without having possession of the ball.*
- f. The pitcher may remove herself from the pitching position as follows:*
 - 1. Before the hands come together, the pitcher may legally step back from the pitchers plate with both feet.*
 - 2. When hands are together, the pitcher may legally step back from the pitchers plate with both feet.*
 - 3. Either foot may be removed first.*

PENALTY: *Illegal pitch in a, b, c, e, and f. No pitch is declared in d.*

Art. 2 . . . About the pitch

- a. The pitch starts when one hand is taken off the ball or the pitcher makes any motion that is part of the windup after the hands have been brought together.*
- b. Once the hands are brought together, the pitcher shall not take more than one step which must be forward, toward the batter, and simultaneous with the delivery. Any step backwards shall begin before the hands come together. The step backward may end before or after the hands come together. NOTE: Towards is interpreted as within or partially within the 24 inch length of the pitchers plate.*

- c. The pivot foot may remain in contact with or may push off and drag away from the pitching plate prior to the front foot touching the ground, as long as the pivot foot remains in contact with the ground. Pushing off with the pivot foot from a place other than the pitcher's plate is illegal. NOTE 1: It is not a step if the pitcher slides her foot in any direction on the pitcher's plate, provided contact is maintained. NOTE 2: Techniques such as the "crow hop" and "the leap" are illegal.



Art 3. . . A legal deliver shall be a pitched ball that is delivered to the batter with an underhand motion.

- a. The release of the ball and the follow-through of the hand and wrist must be forward past the vertical line of the body.
- b. The hand shall be below the hip and the wrist not farther from the body than the elbow.

c. *The pitch is complete with a step toward the batter.*

Art 4. . . The pitcher may use any windup desired provided:

- a. *no motion to pitch is made without immediately delivering the ball to the batter;*
- b. *the pitcher does not use a rocker action in which, after having the ball in both hands in pitching position, she removes one hand from the ball, takes a backward and forward swing and returns the ball to both hands in front of the body; (In other words the pitcher may start with hands to the sides, step back, bring hands together, and then deliver the pitch.)*
- c. *the pitcher does not use a windup in which there is a stop or reversal of the forward motion;*
- d. *the pitcher does not make more than one revolution of the arm in the windmill pitch. A pitcher may drop the pitching arm to the side and to the rear before starting the windmill motion. The ball does not have to be released the first time past the hip. NOTE: One revolution is interpreted as “not two revolutions,” provided the pitching arm is dropped to the side and rear before starting the windmill motion;*
- e. *the pitcher does not continue to wind up after taking the forward step or after the ball is released. NOTE: Continuation of the windup is considered any action that, after the ball is released, causes the arm to continue to rotate past the shoulder.*

PENALTY: *Illegal pitch.*

Lead-Offs / Stealing / Base Safety

Lead-offs are not allowed.

Stealing 2nd and 3rd base is allowed after the pitch crosses the front of the plate. Stealing home is not allowed.

The umpire will declare runners who are caught leaving the base early out.

Runners stealing a base cannot advance on an overthrow. (Ex: A runner stealing from 1st to 2nd cannot advance to third if the put out attempt at 2nd base ends up in center field.)

No double stealing is allowed. Double stealing is defined as two different runners each attempting to steal a base on the same pitch.

If a player is walked, they must take their base and remain there until play has resumed and the next pitch is thrown.

If a “double” 1st base is being used the batter must touch only the base in foul territory (typically orange in color) on plays at 1st base. If the batter does not touch the proper base, the umpire should warn BOTH teams that any further failures to touch the proper base will result in an automatic out.

Base Running

No suicide stealing of home is allowed.

Base coaches cannot touch the runner or the runner will be called out.

A defensive player must have the ball in order to block the plate or any other base.

Sliding

Sliding is encouraged, but is not mandatory. When sliding, players must slide directly to the base. If the player chooses not to slide, an umpire has the right to call that runner out if unnecessary force was used when running into an opposing player.

Courtesy Runners

Courtesy runners may be substituted for the pitcher and /or catcher for the next defensive half inning in order to allow them to warm-up and put on their equipment in a timely manner. The courtesy runner must be the last player called out in that team's batting order. A player replaced by a courtesy runner for this reason must begin the next half inning as either the pitcher or catcher.

Look Back

When the pitcher has the ball in the pitching circle or near the mound area if no circle is present, she may "look back" any runner who is not on base. Once the look back occurs, the runner must make a decision immediately to advance to the next base or return to the previous base.

Taunting of the pitcher by the runner will result in the runner being called out by the umpire.

Safety

Base runners and batter (at bat or on deck) must wear helmets.

Catcher must wear catcher's helmet with mask, and a complete set of catcher's equipment.

Only rubber or "molded" spikes are permitted.

Head first sliding is not allowed.

While batting, only the batter and the player on deck should have a bat. All other players should remain on the bench.

All equipment is to be kept off the playing field and behind the dugout fence when not in use.

Fan Conduct

Only players, managers, and coaches shall participate in the game or occupy the playing field and bench areas.

Undue vocal or physically threatening actions by fans towards managers, coaches, players, or umpires will not be tolerated. This will result in the ejection of the person from the premises and subject to a league review.

A spectator can be ejected by the umpire, their own manager, or any league representative.