

CYO FASTPITCH SOFTBALL RULES

The National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) Softball Rules apply in this league with the exceptions contained herein. CYO game contest rules may not be altered by mutual consent of the coaches. Only the CYO office may issue authorized changes.

OFFICIAL TEAM

- Defined as an individual or group of children from one or more parishes listed on the team roster who meet the eligibility rules and are approved by the Parish Designee, Pastor and CYO office. Eligibility Rules, as defined in Bylaw 4 of the Charter & Bylaws, shall be followed to determine all questions regarding eligibility.
- In the Varsity & Junior Varsity Divisions the official number of players per side is nine (9). A game may not be played with less than eight (8) players per side. Additional players may be added during the game and will occupy the ninth (and subsequent) spot(s) in the batting order. Until the ninth player enters the game the ninth spot in the line-up will assume an out each time that spot would come to bat. (The game can't end with this assumed out. The game must continue until another out occurs).
- In the Cadet, Developmental & Elemental Divisions the official number of players per side is ten (10). The players will be placed with four (4) outfielders. A game may not be played with less than eight (8) players per side. *Additional players may be added during the game and will occupy the ninth and tenth spot(s) in the batting order. Until the ninth and tenth player enters the game the ninth and tenth spot in the line-up will assume an out each time that spot would come to bat. (The game can't end with this assumed out. The game must continue until another out occurs).*
- A CYO Team refusing to continue playing a scheduled contest for any reason without the consent of the referee or CYO representative may be subject to a suspension for one calendar year. This also applies to CYO Sanctioned Events.

OFFICIALS

- Officials have the power to warn or disqualify from the game or match anyone who commits acts which intend to influence their decisions.
- Officials have the authority to call or suspend a game if conditions warrant.
- Officials shall be paid before the team takes the field to play the game. Payment shall be made to the official, in cash.
- Should one team fail to show-up for a scheduled game, the team present should not pay the umpire for the forfeited game. The umpire is to call the CYO Area Athletic Director with the following information; date, time, location of game and name of team & coach present at field in order to receive payment.
- Should both teams show up for a scheduled game and one team does not have enough players to begin the game and a forfeit is called, the team that caused the forfeit shall pay the umpire the total fee for both teams.
- Should an umpire decide to postpone or cancel a game prior to its start, the umpire *shall* not be paid by either team.
- Should officials fail to appear five (5) minutes prior to the starting time of the game, both head coaches may arrange for persons to umpire the game and call the CYO Commissioner to report the no-show.
- Head coaches are required to attend the pre-game meeting with the plate umpire to verify that all his/her players are legally equipped, and that all players and equipment are in compliance with all rules.

EQUIPMENT

- BALL - CYO will provide official game balls to each team for use in season games.
 - A federation approved 12” circumference optic yellow regulation ball will be used for the Varsity & Junior Varsity Divisions
 - A federation approved 11” circumference optic yellow regulation ball will be used for the Cadet, Developmental and Elemental Divisions.

- FIELD
 - *Varsity, Junior Varsity, Cadet Divisions*
 - *The distance between the bases will be 60 feet. The distance from the back point of home plate to the center of second base shall be 84'10.25".*
 - *The pitching distance will be 40 feet, measured from the front of the pitching plate to the back point of home plate.*
 - *A 16 foot diameter pitchers circle will be used around the pitcher plate.*
 - *Developmental and Elemental*
 - *The distance between the bases will be 60 feet. The distance from the back point of home plate to the center of second base shall be 84'10.25".*
 - *The pitching distance will be 35 feet, measured from the front of the pitching plate to the back point of home plate.*
 - *A 16 foot diameter pitchers circle will be used around the pitcher plate.*
- PLAYERS
 - Catchers must wear a facemask, chest protector, throat protector, shin guards and a full catcher's helmet.
 - Helmets with facemasks are required for all batters, base runners and on-deck batters.
 - When a catcher is warming up another player the catcher must wear the appropriate catching gear: including facemasks, chest protector, throat protector, shin guards and a full catcher's helmet.
 - Metal spikes are prohibited.
- BATS – Must conform to ASA regulations. Bats that are broken, dented, cracked, will deface the ball or do not meet the bat specifications are illegal.

UNIFORMS

- Numbers on the jersey are MANDATORY. A number shall be printed on the back of each jersey. The number on the back of the jersey shall be 6 inches in height.

- All players must have the CYO Emblem on their uniform either sewn or stenciled.
- Pitchers are limited in the color of long sleeves worn under the uniform. *Pitcher may not wear yellow exposed undershirts.*
- Chains, earrings, other jewelry, glitter, face paint or other inappropriate items may not be worn during the game.
- An American flag and or a commemorative/memorial patch not to exceed 2 by 3 inches and with the approval of the CYO may be worn on each of the uniform apparel provided neither the flag or patch interferes with the visibility of the player's number.

INCLEMENT WEATHER

- Teams are to report to the field at the scheduled time of the game, unless they are notified through the CYO Office of the field/game cancellation.
- Coaches may not mutually decide to cancel a game. If this happens, teams will be responsible for paying umpire and field fees.
- Game umpires have the discretion to cancel or postpone a game.

PRE-CONTEST COACHES RESPONSIBILITIES

- Coaches are responsible for the supervision of their team before the contest.
- At each contest and practice, coaches *are* to have in their possessions; an official team roster, a copy of each players Preparticipation Form and Emergency Medical Authorization Form, and a first aid kit.
- If the schedule does not indicate home & visitors a Coin-flip will be used. The team listed first on the team schedule shall call the toss. The winner shall choose to be home team or visitor.
- For the first game on the field a grace period of ten (10) minutes will be allowed before a forfeit is declared. There will not be a grace period for other games.
- *CYO Credentials are to be worn and visible at all times.*

TEAM BENCHES

Bench personnel are limited to players listed on the eligibility roster, one student manager and two *CYO certified* coaches.

PARTICIPATION

- Each player must be treated with dignity regardless of their ability.
- Participants may only play and be rostered on one CYO team in the same sport in the same school year.
- Each player must play a minimum of one (1) full inning in the field unless the game is called by the umpire.
- If all players do not participate it is an immediate forfeit called by the scorer and umpire.
- If a coach will not play a player because of missed practice, unsportsmanlike conduct, academics or injury, the coach must inform the umpire and scorekeeper before the game begins.
- A CYO player may *also* play on a *non-CYO* Softball Team in another league. CYO games take precedence and will not be rescheduled due to conflicts

GAME, TIME & RUN LIMITATIONS

- No game will start after 8:00 PM, and all games must stop at 9:00 PM.
- Practice session must be completed by 9:00 PM.
- No CYO Games (Season or Sanctioned Events) may be held Holy Thursday, Good Friday, Holy Saturday or Easter Sunday.
- All games shall be scored as regulation games, if after 4-1/2 innings have been played the game is called by the umpire because of darkness, rain or any other cause, which in his/her opinion makes future play hazardous.
- Varsity & Junior Varsity Divisions
 - Teams will play seven (7) innings or a 1.5-hour time limit.
 - If at the end of seven innings the score is tied, the time limit is set aside and the International Tie-Breaker Rule will be used until a winner is determined. International Tie-Breaker - Both teams will get at bats and each will start the inning with the player that made the last out in the previous inning on second base.
- Cadet, Developmental & Elemental Divisions
 - Teams will play six (6) innings or 1.5-hour time limit

- If the game is tied at the end of six innings the International Tie-Breaker Rule outlined above will be used as long as the time limit has not been reached. Once the time limit has been reached the game will end and the score shall be recorded as a tie.
- After the time limit has expired no new inning may start. A new inning shall be considered started after the third out of the previous inning has been made.
- Run Differential Rules
 - Mercy Rule
 - In the Varsity & *Junior* Varsity Divisions, if after the 5th inning (4-1/2 innings for the home team) a team is ahead by ten (10) runs the game shall be called, if all participation requirements are met. If participation requirements are not met, those players that have not played must be substituted in the next inning. The game will end when the participation requirements have been met and there is a ten (10) run lead.
 - In the Cadet, Developmental or Elemental Divisions, if after the 4th inning (3-1/2 innings for the home team) a team is ahead by ten (10) runs the game shall be called, if all participation requirements are met. If participation requirements are not met, those players that have not played must be substituted in the next inning. The game will end when the participation requirements have been met and there is a ten (10) run lead.
 - Inning Run Limit Rule
 - In the Cadet, Developmental and Elemental Divisions the inning will end when a team has *scored five (5) runs*. Continuous runs scored on a play will be counted. *Unlimited scoring will be permitted by both teams in the last inning of the game.*
 - In the Varsity & Junior Varsity Divisions, the inning will end when a team has scored ten (10) runs. Continuous runs scored on a play will be counted *Unlimited scoring will be permitted by both teams in the last inning of the game.*

SUBSTITUTIONS

- Since the continuous batting order rule is in effect, unlimited substitution is permitted on defense.
- If a player is removed from the game due to injury or illness, when her position in the line-up is up, the team must take an automatic out.
- Courtesy Runner - When there are two (2) outs, and the catcher or pitcher is on base, you must place the last available player on base for the pitcher or catcher as a “courtesy runner”. This courtesy runner must be reported to the umpire. The player is not noted in the scorebook and does not satisfy any participation requirements. If a “courtesy runner” needs to be used in any other situation the “runner” shall be the player that made the last batted out.
- Pitcher Limitations
 - One (1) inning will be charged to a pitcher that pitches one (1) pitch in an inning.
 - Violation of these rules will cause a forfeit to be charged to the team in violation. If both are in violation, both shall forfeit.
 - In the Varsity & Junior Varsity Divisions a pitcher may pitch four (4) innings in any game. Once four (4) innings are pitched in the game she will be ineligible to pitch any remaining innings scheduled for that game.
 - In the Cadet, Developmental and Elemental Divisions a pitcher may pitch three (3) innings in any game. Once three (3) innings are pitched in the game she will be ineligible to pitch any remaining innings scheduled for that game.

OFFICIAL SCORER

- Each team is required to have an official scorebook at each game. At the completion of the game it shall be the duty of each coach to have the umpire sign the scorebook.
- It is the responsibility of the winning team to submit the score and innings played to the CYO Office.

RULES OF PLAY

- Batting Order – The Continuous Batting Order will be used in all divisions.
- Stealing a Base

- Varsity and Junior Varsity Division teams are permitted to steal when the ball leaves the pitcher's hand.
- Cadet, Developmental and Elemental Division base runners may only advance on a hit ball (no stealing). The runner may leadoff when the ball is released by the pitcher but must return to the base if the ball is not hit (This eliminates advancement on passed balls, wild pitches and any play initiated by the catcher).
- Pitching
 - At least one foot must be in contact with the pitching plate when the pitcher begins motion.
 - The ball must be held in both hands from 1 to 10 seconds.
 - The pitcher must start the step back before the hands come together. The step may end before or after the hands come together.
 - Once hands are separated the pitch must be delivered.
 - The crow hop and leap are illegal.
 - Delivery must be underhand
 - A pitch may not be delivered until all defensive players are positioned in fair territory (except the catcher).
 - Pitcher will be allowed five (5) warm-up pitches. Substitute pitchers will be allowed eight (8) warm-up pitches.
- In the Cadet, Developmental and Elemental Divisions, the ball is considered "dead" when the ball is in control of the pitcher within an eight (8) foot radius of the pitching plate.
- A hit batter will be awarded first base, providing the batter has attempted to avoid being hit by the pitch.
- Bunting is allowed in all divisions.
- Sliding is allowed in all divisions (no head first sliding). At home plate, on a close play, the base runner cannot barrel into the catcher, she must slide or give-up.
- Dropped Third Strike
 - Developmental and Elemental Divisions, the batter will be called out on a third strike, even if the catcher drops the ball.
 - Varsity, Junior Varsity and Cadet Divisions, on a dropped third strike the batter is entitled to try to reach first-base before being tagged or thrown out, unless a runner already occupies first-base

and there are less than two outs (in which case the batter shall be called out).

- A dead-ball strike will be called on the batter when, in the umpire's judgment, she is hit by the pitch and prevents it from entering the strike zone.
- The infield fly rule is in effect in all divisions. A fly ball hit in fair territory that can be easily caught (in the umpire's judgment by an infielder). With less than two (2) outs and a runner on first & second, or first, second and third, the batter is automatically out and the runners can advance at their own risk.
- The batter will be called out when her discarded bat hits the ball a second time.

(Revised January, 2008)