

# GIRLS SOFTBALL – SPRING 2019

WILMETTE PARK DISTRICT, WINNETKA PARK DISTRICT, GBA, EBSA

## RULES

### Section A

Each player is required to play a minimum of two innings per game in a defensive position. This recommendation is made in the interest of fair play and providing a softball experience for every girl. All players will be placed in the batting order and bat each time their position comes up in the order. Batting orders should be rotated each game. Each player must play at least one inning at an infield position. No player should sit out for two innings until all players have sat out for one inning.

### Section B

Teams must field at least 7 players at the start time of a game or face forfeit. A game that has been forfeited can still be played as a practice game and the score will be recorded as 5-0.

### Section C

A five-minute forfeit time will be allowed from the scheduled start time of the game.

### Section D

- (a) Third/fourth grade teams will play with an 11" Incrediball.
- (b) Fifth/sixth grade teams will play with a 12" hard yellow ball.

### Section E

Third/fourth grade and fifth/sixth grade level champions of the playoffs will receive individual awards. Duplicate awards will be given in the event of a tie.

### Section F

Games will be played on Saturday's at Howard Park in Wilmette or Skokie Playfields in Winnetka. Mid-week games will be played in Wilmette, Winnetka, or Evanston.

### Section G

Each team will play a maximum of 10 regular season games.

### Section H (Wilmette)

Make-up games will not be rescheduled. Extra games have been added in the schedule to take into account rainouts. Our goal is to play a total of 8 games. Rescheduled games will be played at times and on fields based on availability of facilities. The games will not be continued. **No games will be made-up after May 22.**

### Section I

- (a) The host Park District will provide umpires. The home team will provide one game ball.
- (b) Sixty-foot base lines will be used both in 3/4 and 5/6 level games.
- (c) Home team will occupy the third base dugout.

### **Section J – Defense**

- (a) In 3/4 play, 10 defensive players are allowed on the field.
- (b) In 5/6 play, nine defensive players are allowed on the field.
- (c) Players must be positioned at all infield positions (1st baseman, 2nd baseman, short stop and 3rd base) before and during each pitch.
- (d) No infielder may be positioned closer than 40 feet from home plate while the ball is being delivered home by the pitcher.
- (e) Players may react immediately to the batted ball.
- (f) Outfielders must be positioned in outfield positions and are not allowed to cover a base on the initial play and subsequent throw of a fairly batted ball. A base runner will be ruled safe if an outfielder violates this rule.
- (g) In 3/4 play, a fourth outfielder is allowed. That fourth player is an outfielder and must follow the defensive guidelines of other outfielders.
- (h) All outfielders must have their heels in the grass (or be at least 10 feet behind the infield) when playing their respective positions.

### **Section K**

All players present must appear in the batting order, even if they are not starting defensively.

### **Section L**

- (a) Bunting is not permitted in third/fourth grade league and will result in batter being called out by the umpire.
- (b) Infield fly rule will not be enforced at any grade level.

### **Section M**

Foul Ball Rule: No restriction on number of foul balls.

### **Section N**

Free Substitutions: Player may return to the field in any spot defensively.

### **Section O**

Official Amateur Softball Association (ASA) rules will be followed.

### **Section P – Pitching Distance**

- (a) Pitching distance is thirty feet (35') for third/fourth grade.
- (b) Pitching distance is forty feet (40') for fifth/sixth grade.
- (c) Adjustments can be considered at lower levels as deemed necessary.

### **Section Q – Pitching**

- (a) The pitcher may release the ball in any manner as long as the follow-through motion of her pitching hand is below the hip and is released on the same side of the body as the pitching arm. One foot must be in contact with the pitching rubber as the ball is released.
- (b) The pitcher must start with two feet on the rubber.
- (c) The pitcher must deliver the ball in an underhand motion with the ball and the palm of the hand facing the batter.
- (d) One foot must remain in contact with the rubber until the release of the ball to the batter and the normal follow-through causes the foot to come off the rubber.
- (e) The pitch will be a strike if the ball crosses the plate between the shoulders and the knees.

- (f) Speed of the pitch does not influence whether the pitch is a ball or a strike.
- (g) Pitchers may still use a high arc pitch, but the ball must cross the plate between the shoulders and the knees to be a strike. No backward or sideways spin will be allowed. Spin caused by a legal throwing motion will be considered normal and acceptable.

### **Section R**

At all age levels, a pitcher is allowed to pitch a total of 2 innings and then a pitching change must be made. One pitch constitutes an inning. The pitcher may be substituted in and out as long as she does not exceed the inning limit as indicated above. Once a pitcher reaches the limit, she is no longer allowed to pitch in that game.

### **Section S – Grade 3/4 At-bats:**

- (a) A pitcher pitches to a batter until 1) the batter hits the ball into fair territory; 2) the batter strikes out; 3) the count reaches three balls.
- (b) Batters cannot receive a base on balls.
- (c) When the count reaches three balls, a coach from the hitting team will pitch.
- (d) The coach must pitch from 35 feet (the pitching rubber).
- (e) The coach inherits the strike count recorded by the pitcher.
- (f) It is presumed that all pitches thrown by the coach are strikes. (i.e.: if a coach inherits a 2-strike count, the coaches may throw one pitch to the batter.)
- (g) The coach/pitcher is not a defensive player and cannot field or otherwise interfere with a batted ball or any ball in play. If, however, a batted ball inadvertently strikes the coach/pitcher, the ball is in play and the defense should react accordingly.

### **Section T – Base running**

Base runners may not take a leadoff from a base until the ball has been hit or crosses home plate. Leaving the base too soon will result in the runner being **sent back to the base and the play dead**. If the runner leaves early, both the base runner and team get a warning. Next violation will result in base runner being called out.

### **Section U – Base running**

- (a) On a batted ball that remains in the infield, all base runners are entitled to attempt to advance one base.
- (b) Base runners may not advance an additional base on any overthrow to any base.
- (c) On a batted ball that is hit beyond the infield (goes past an infielder or beyond the imaginary plane of the infield), the batter and all base runners may advance on the base paths until the ball returns to the infield (a throw breaks the imaginary plane of the infield or a fielder runs the ball back into the infield). The ball must only break the plane. It does not need to be caught or fielded cleanly. When the ball returns to the infield, the play is dead and a base runner that is between bases may continue to the next base.

### **Section V**

- (a) There is no base stealing in 3/4.
- (b) In 5/6, stealing third base is allowed. Stealing second or home is not allowed. A player must be on second base in order to steal third. A runner at third may only advance home on a hit ball or a walk.

### **Section W**

A team may score a maximum of five runs in an inning unless they are losing, then they can score enough runs to tie the game, with a maximum of 10 runs able to be scored per at bat. If a team is losing by more than five runs, they may not overtake a lead. A team's time at bat ends when they have scored 5 runs, scored 6, 7, 8, or 9 runs to tie the game, or scored 10 runs.

### **Section X – Game Time Limit**

Wilmette & Winnetka: Game time limit will be one hour and twenty-five minutes from the scheduled start time or six innings, whichever comes first. **No new inning will begin after one hour and twenty minutes.** Umpire will be determining factor in enforcing this rule. **If in the middle of inning, the inning will be completed.** If game is tied at end of the inning, the score will stand and the game will be recorded in standings as a tie.

Evanston: **No new inning will begin after one hour and thirty minutes** after the first pitch

### **Section Y - (Games played at Wilmette or Winnetka Only)**

After every game, the coach from each team will initial the scorecard to verify the final score. This will ensure for accuracy in the standings during the season.

### **Section Z**

In any situation not covered by the aforementioned rules, the official rulebook, entitled ASA Official Guide published by the Amateur Softball Association of America, will be used as reference.