Rev. 03/20/2023

Softball Rules for Games Between Branchburg and Hillsborough Teams

K-2nd Grade Division

All ASA Rules apply except as noted below:

I. PLAYERS / MANAGERS / COACHES

A. All managers and assistant coaches must be Rutgers Safety-Certified.
B. Parents who are not certified are not allowed on the field.
C. Only players registered in the recreation program may play in the games. No substitute players are allowed at any time. This includes brothers and sisters of players. There are no exceptions to this rule at any time during the season.
D. Children not playing softball are not allowed on the field during practices and games.

II. EQUIPMENT

A. Only equipment approved for use by the leagues shall be used in practices, clinics or games. This includes bats, batting tees, gloves, helmets and catcher's gear.
B. All practice and game balls shall be 11 inch "softtouch" softballs.
C. Only ASA-approved bats may be used.
D. Sneakers or rubber cleats may be worn (no metal cleats).
E. Uniforms and visors will be worn at all games.
F. Batting helmets are required to have attached facemasks (chin straps are optional).

III. FIELD

A. Distance between consecutive bases shall measure **45** feet.
B. Pitching rubber should measure **30** feet from the back of home plate.

IV. REGULATIONS

A. Up to ten (10) defensive fielding positions to be used (including adult catcher, child pitcher fielding position, four infielders, and up to four outfielders). The position of catcher shall be played by a team coach (from the batting team, if possible). A team coach (from the batting team, if possible) will pitch, with a child positioned alongside to field the pitching position.
B. The coach that is pitching should not field batted balls unless they are hit hard up the middle (to protect the child fielding the pitcher position).
C. All outfielders must play at least ten feet behind the bases or be in the grass area of the outfield. Positioning outfielders in the infield is not allowed.
D. Coaches of defensive team are encouraged to be on the field to instruct players at this age level.
E. Games are to be maximum of six (6) innings long unless shortened by lack of sunlight as defined below, or if maximum time limit is reached. Maximum time limit: In no case (day or evening games) should a new inning be started after 1 hour and 45 minutes past scheduled game start time. In addition, all games must end at least 10 minutes before next scheduled game on field. **At this level, upon arriving to field the team managers may agree to have longer pre-game practices and have only 3 to 4 inning games.**
F. Sunlight (unlighted fields only): Before Memorial Day no new innings are to be started after 7:45 p.m. (to be modified only if agreed to by both managers). Starting on Memorial Day and thereafter, no new innings are to be started after 8:00 p.m.
G. A player arriving late to the game shall be added to the bottom of the batting order.
H. A player leaving early from the game is skipped in the batting order (no automatic outs).
I. Only ONE person at a time in the on-deck cage and wearing a helmet. Players cannot swing bats outside of the on-deck cage when warming up.
J. All players will bat, regardless of whether they are playing the field.
K. Unlimited free substitution of players in the field.
L. In the event a team is short on players, the opposing team may share players as needed to allow the game to proceed.

V. GAME PLAY

A. All players should be rotated to different positions in the field during a game so they can gain experience with all defensive positions over the course of the season.
B. Baserunners shall not advance on overthrows or once ball is in the infield.
C. Hard hits into the outfield can be extended into doubles at the hitter's risk. Baserunners may also advance two bases at their risk on such hits.

VI. PROGRESSION TOWARD "THREE STRIKES" RULES

First 4 Games Played:

1. The coach will pitch to his/her own team (pitching machine may also be used if available). Kindergarteners and players still learning the swing should be encouraged to bat using the batting tee if not yet ready to hit actual pitches. If batter has failed to hit the ball after about five good pitches, batter shall utilize the batting tee,
2. The catcher will be a coach from the team that is hitting.
3. Every player in the lineup will bat each inning.
4. Outs are not counted during the first six games.
5. Each player will advance one base at a time (except in the case of doubles; see Section V, Rule C).
6. After the last player in each inning bats, all baserunners will run around the bases to home plate.

Starting with the 5th Game Played:

1. The teams will start playing "real games."
2. Each team will have three outs per inning.
3. The 3-out / 5-run rule per inning is in effect, meaning that after 3 outs or 5 runs, the inning will be over.
4. The coaches will continue to pitch to all batters (pitching machine may also be used if available).
5. After four swinging strikes, the batter will be out. There will be no walks or called strikeouts. After the third swinging strike, each batter will be asked if she wants to hit off the batting tee or receive a pitch from the coach.

Starting with the 9th Game Played:

1. Batting tee will no longer be utilized in games.
2. The coaches will continue to pitch to all batters (pitching machine may also be used if available).
3. After three swinging strikes, the batter will be out.

VII. INCLEMENT WEATHER

A. Play shall be stopped at the first sign of lightning or nearby thunder. Players and spectators should seek cover away from the field and bleachers, preferably in a vehicle.
B. Game shall not resume until 30 minutes from last lightning/thunder.
C. Games may be played during showers until the umpire halts play, or, if an umpire is not present, until managers agree to stop play. However, if umpires are not present, but

games on adjacent fields have umpires, then managers must follow decisions made on the adjacent fields.

D. At this introductory level, no make-up games will be scheduled for games shortened by inclement weather.

VIII. SPORTSMANSHIP

A. The goal of our program is to promote learning, develop skills, encourage sportsmanship and to HAVE FUN!

B. GOOD SPORTMANSHIP (AMONG COACHES, PLAYERS, AND SPECTATORS) IS EXPECTED AND SHOULD BE STRESSED AT ALL TIMES! Players should be taught by example of their coaches to respect the opposing team and the umpire.