

# Schuylerville Youth Recreational Softball Program



## 2017 Parents and Coaches Handbook

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# **Schuylerville Youth Softball Parents and Coaches Handbook**

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## **Organization:**

The Schuylerville youth recreational softball program will be managed as a division of the Old Saratoga Athletic Association. The OSAA is a Not-For-Profit organization. All managers, coaches and league organizers are volunteers. All proceeds from fundraisers, registration fees and concessions will be used for softball-related activities.

Due to the many similarities of the programs, the softball and baseball programs will work together whenever possible to reduce costs and increase efficiencies for the players, parents and coaches. Common events such as opening day, field clean up days, registration, picture night, etc. will be coordinated with the softball commissioner.

The softball program will have a committee made up of volunteers. The committee will be organized by the Commissioner(s). Committee members will be selected by the Commissioner(s) to serve on the committee. Committee members will have specific areas of responsibility along with providing general counsel on softball related matters. The softball committee will meet regularly and meetings will be open to the public. Committee positions will be added or removed as needs change.

Current committee positions:

- Commissioner
- Budget Assistant/Sponsor Coordinator
- Uniforms/Equipment Coordinator
- Field Clean Up/Maintenance Coordinator
- Picture Night/Trophies Coordinator
- Umpire Coordinator

## **Goals of the program:**

The Schuylerville youth softball program is a recreational organization. The primary goal of the program is to introduce kids to the game of softball and provide an opportunity for them to learn the game and advance overall skills. The program will provide a means for players to develop their skills in an organized manner.

As with all youth sports programs, safety is a primary concern. The league will always be looking for ways to make the softball experience both fun and safe.

## **Participation/Eligibility Requirements:**

All children that are age 4 to 12 years old on January 1<sup>st</sup> of the current year and who reside within the Schuylerville Central School District are eligible to participate in the softball program.

## **League Structure:**

The league will have four divisions providing for multiple skill and age classifications. The player's age is determined as their age on January 1 of the current year. The divisions will be as follows:

*Instructional Division, 6U (Ages 4-6)*  
*Rookie Division, 8U (Ages 7-8)*  
*Minor Division, 10U (Ages 9-10)*  
*Majors Division, 12U (Ages 11-12)*

***Players will be required to play within the appropriate division for their age as of January 1<sup>st</sup> of the current year. An exception will be made for any 6 year old player who has already completed 2 seasons of tee ball. In rare circumstances, additional exceptions may be made by the commissioner. To request an exemption, parents must submit a request via e-mail to the commissioner.***

### **Important Dates:**

Thursday January 19, 2017	Online registration open
Saturday February 18, 2017	In Person Registration at Saratoga Town Hall (8:30-10:30am in the Gates Room at the Saratoga Town Hall)
Wednesday March 1, 2017	Softball meeting open to parents and coaches (6:30pm in the multi-purpose room at the elementary school)
Sunday March 12, 2017	Last day to register on line with no late fee
Monday March 13, 2017	\$20 Late fee begins being assessed
Saturday March 18, 2017	Registration closes at the end of the day
Tuesday March 21, 2017	Softball draft meeting—Head Coaches only (6:30pm in the multi-purpose room at the elementary school)
Saturday April 1, 2017	Field clean up day
Saturday April 29, 2017	Opening day
Wednesday May 10, 2017	Picture Night at Fort Hardy Park
All Star Tryouts (all levels)	To Be Determined

### **Communications:**

Communications will be sent via email and through the OSAA website [www.osaacolts.org](http://www.osaacolts.org) as well as the OSAA’s Facebook page to keep parents informed of upcoming events.

### **Registration:**

Parents are encouraged to sign their children up on-line. **Everyone that is interested in volunteering to serve as a Head Coach or Assistant Coach must sign up to do so online at the same website that is used for player registration.** Details will be available on the OSAA website, [www.osaacolts.org](http://www.osaacolts.org) and through school handouts. Dates for the opening and closing of online registration, as well as the date for in person registration, can be found in the “Important Dates” section of this handbook.

The cost per player will be determined prior to the start of registration. Costs change every year due to changes in pricing for equipment, field supplies, umpires, etc. Every effort is taken by the league to keep registration costs as low as possible.

## **Coaching:**

Everyone that is interested in volunteering to serve as a Head Coach or Assistant Coach must sign up to do so online at the same website that is used for player registration.

- The OSAA mandates that all coaches complete an annual background check, which will be completed through this site: <http://osaak.siplay.com/site/>
- All coaches must complete a concussion training course once (not annually) through this site: <http://www.cdc.gov/headsup/youthsports/training/>
- Once the coach completes the concussion training course, they must provide a printed copy of their certificate, or e-mail a copy of their certificate, to the commissioner.

Prior to the draft, head coaches will be selected from the pool of candidates by the commissioner and each team will have one head coach. Assistant coaches for each team will be selected by the head coach of that team. Head coaches will be given a list of people who volunteered to coach and head coaches must choose their assistant coaches from that list. A head coach may only select two assistant coaches prior to the draft to ensure fairness. In the event there are more candidates than there are head coaching positions to be filled, the commissioner will request information from all interested parents to determine the most qualified candidates. Factors affecting the decision include:

- Previous OSAA softball coaching experience
- Previous year's commitment to mandatory requirements (i.e. - Field Cleanup days, managers' meetings, all-star tryouts, etc.)
- Adherence to OSAA Code of Conduct, and the other rules, policies and guidelines set forth in this handbook
- Previous personal softball or baseball experience
- Other OSAA or youth league coaching experience in any sport.

**Important note to Instructional Division Parents:** The coaching positions for the Instructional division are historically difficult to fill. Generally, people want to help but they don't know how. The league provides coaches with all of the information needed to start and run the team. Most coaches who have taken an Instructional division team remain in the program through the higher levels as coaches. It is important to note that parents who volunteered for Instructional division coaching positions will be given preference for coaching positions at the next level (8U).

## **Coaching Philosophy and Guidelines:**

Our program's Coaching Guidelines can be found on the Softball page at [www.osaacolts.org](http://www.osaacolts.org)

Coaches will be expected to adhere to the OSAA code of conduct. All disciplinary matters will be handled by the commissioner. Our players should be able to look to coaches for an example of how they are expected to conduct themselves, especially as it relates to sportsmanship. Coaches are expected to treat umpires, spectators, and all opponents including players, coaches, and managers with respect. Questioning and/or arguing calls made by an umpire, even if the umpire is an opposing coach or manager, will not be tolerated.

The commissioner may suspend or remove any person from a coaching position at any time for inappropriate conduct, failure and/or refusal to adhere to the rules, policies, and guidelines in this handbook.

Our primary goal is for the kids to have fun playing the game of softball. The focus of every coach should be to keep the game fun for the kids, while trying to teach fundamental softball skills and good sportsmanship along the way. At the younger age levels, coaches should emphasize teaching the fundamental skills in addition to general instruction on the basics of the game, such as:

- The proper fundamentals of throwing, catching, fielding, batting, and baserunning.
- The name and responsibilities of each defensive position.

At all levels of our league, every effort should be made to keep playing time for all players reasonably even, and to rotate players at various defensive positions so that they can gain experience at different positions. As players progress to the 10U and 12U levels in our league, players may begin to specialize more at certain positions, but an effort should still be made to rotate positions to keep the game fun and interesting for all players.

The following general rules will apply to every team practice, scrimmage, or game at all age levels:

- No players will be allowed to swing a bat without wearing a helmet equipped with a facemask and chin strap at any time
- No players will be allowed to swing a bat outside the batter's box unless they are supervised by a coach in an area which is a safe distance away from players and spectators.
- Protective facemasks are strongly encouraged for all players, particularly all infielders. Protective facemasks are mandatory for pitchers at 10U and 12U, and batting helmets with a protective facemask and chinstrap are mandatory for pitchers at 6U and 8U.

**Draft:**

**The sole goal of the league with respect to the Draft is for all teams in each division to be as competitively balanced as possible.**

Players will be selected by the head coaches during an annual draft. Each head coach will be allowed to select two assistant coaches from the list provided by the commissioner. All other players are selected in the draft based upon the draft rules which are outlined below for each division (no exceptions). **At the conclusion of the draft, the commissioner will review the team rosters at each level to ensure the teams are competitively balanced. If the teams are not competitively balanced, the commissioner may reassign players to other teams in order to better achieve competitive balance.**

Draft Procedure/Rules for Each Division:

**Instructional Division (6U):** Numbers will be drawn out of a hat to determine the order in which the coaches will select players. Coaches can only select one player per turn except in the case of siblings. The objective is for each team to have an equal number of experienced players and first year players.

**Rookie Division (8U):**

One head coach at each division will keep a master draft list to track all selections for all teams.

Head coaches will only be allowed two draft choices for the children of assistant coaches. The head coaches at the draft will rate each player on a scale of 1-3, 3 being the highest. If a player is not able to be rated because the player is not known by any coaches, then the player will be rated as a one (1). All players will be rated including the children of the head coach and assistant coaches.

Once the player ratings have been completed, the draft order will be determined. Each head coach at the draft will tally the ratings of the players already assigned to their team (daughters of head coach and 2 daughters of assistant coaches). The team with the lowest score at this point will pick first. The team with the next lowest score will pick second and so forth. Once the draft order has been set for the first round, the teams will begin picking players in order. Head coaches may select one player per turn except in the case of siblings.

Before the start of each subsequent round, each head coach will tally the total rating of all players they have selected to that point, including children of head and assistant coaches. The draft order for each subsequent round will be based upon the team with the lowest point totals picking first, with the team with the highest point total picking last in each round.

Head coaches should attempt to evenly distribute amongst all teams all players rated as a 3, 2 and 1. At the conclusion of the draft, the master draft list for each division will be submitted to the commissioner.

**Minors (10U) and Major (12U) Divisions:**

The draft rules will be the same as those for the Rookie (8U) Division with the following exceptions:

- All players will be rated on a 1-5 scale instead of a 1-3 scale. Players that have quality pitching experience should have that experience reflected in their rating.
- Head coaches should attempt to evenly distribute experienced pitchers and players at each rating (1-5) on each team.
- All other 8U Draft Rules and Procedures should be followed without exception.

### **Equipment/Uniforms:**

The league will provide a team jersey and a visor to each registered player in the league. All players will be required to wear black softball pants and black socks during games. Parents may purchase the pants and socks on their own to ensure the desired size and quality. Parents will also have the option at the time of registration to order softball pants and socks through our uniform supplier. Head coaches and assistant coaches will also receive hats and jerseys.

The league will provide batting helmets, catching gear, softballs and a few bats for each team. Most parents in the league choose to provide their child with their own batting helmet (which must have an attached facemask and chin strap) and bat. An increasing number of parents are choosing to supply their child with a facemask to be worn while on defense for safety reasons. These facemasks are available at local sporting goods retailers and online. These facemasks are particularly helpful to young players who are still developing their ability to catch the ball.

### **Bats:**

All bats must be certified for use in youth softball play. The information provided below is intended as a reference for parents to consider when choosing the right bat for their child.

**Bat Length by Height and Weight**

	<b>Player Height (in inches)</b>									
	<b>&lt;36"</b>	<b>36-40"</b>	<b>41-44"</b>	<b>45-48"</b>	<b>49-52"</b>	<b>53-56"</b>	<b>57-60"</b>	<b>61-64"</b>	<b>65-68"</b>	<b>69-72"</b>
<b>&lt;60</b>	24-25"	26"	27"	28"	29"	29"				
<b>61-70</b>		27"	27"	28"	29"	30"	30"			
<b>71-80</b>			28"	28"	29"	30"	30"	31"		
<b>81-90</b>			28"	29"	29"	30"	30"	31"	32"	
<b>91-100</b>			28"	29"	30"	30"	31"	31"	32"	



<b>101-110</b>			29"	29"	30"	30"	31"	31"	32"	
<b>111-120</b>			29"	29"	30"	30"	31"	31"	32"	
<b>121-130</b>			29"	29"	30"	30"	31"	32"	33"	33"
<b>131-140</b>			29"	29"	30"	31"	31"	32"	33"	33"

### Popular Bat Sizes by Age

<b>Age</b>	<b>Bat Length</b>	<b>Bat Weight</b>
5-7 years	24"-26"	13-16oz.
8-9 years	26"-28"	16-18 oz.
10 years	28"-29"	18-20 oz.
11-12 years	30"-31"	18-22 oz.

### Fields:

The majority of games will be played at Ft. Hardy Park (6U through 10U) and Schuyler Park (12U). Each year, a field clean-up day will be held in early April. The first clean up day is intended for parents and players to participate. The expectations for the fields following the first clean up day are:

- Fields will be raked
- Fence lines will be weed wacked
- Dugouts will be cleaned
- Garbage cans will be emptied
- Dirt/clay added as needed to fields
- Bases/pitching rubbers installed
- Pitching mounds filled with clay and tamped
- Batters boxes filled with clay/sand mix and tamped
- Field mowed (if necessary)

If necessary, a second clean-up day will be scheduled for coaches and committee members. Participation by at least one coach from each team is mandatory. The expectations for the second clean-up day are:

Each team will be assigned a week (end) to perform maintenance on their respective fields. It is the responsibility of the manager of the team to enlist volunteers to assist with field maintenance items such as: mowing, mound/home plate maintenance, fence line weed whacking, empty garbage cans, clean dugouts, etc. Specific duties will be outlined by the field maintenance coordinator.

### Opening Day:

Opening day will be held on April 29, 2017, weather permitting. Opening day is all about fun for the kids. The day starts with a parade through town from the Schuyler House to Ft.

Hardy Park. The kids will be in full uniform and will march through town with their team. On the field, there will be an opening ceremony with team introductions and a ceremonial first pitch.

### **Scheduling:**

League games will be scheduled starting near the end of April and running through late June (approx. 9 weeks). Games will be scheduled Monday- Saturday. There will be no scheduled games on Sunday unless a make-up game is requested. Weekday games will begin at 6PM.

The league will assign a scheduling coordinator. The name and contact information for the coordinator will be given to all managers at a pre-season managers meeting. All field assignments will be given by the coordinator including practice and games.

Head coaches will schedule practices for their teams. A pre-season practice schedule will be provided to ensure that all teams have practice time reserved but managers have the option of utilizing other fields for practices.

### **Rescheduling Games:**

Every effort should be made to play all scheduled games. Weather-related cancellations will occur. The head coaches of each team are expected to communicate with each other and make a decision regarding whether or not a game will be played in cases of inclement weather. As soon as a decision is made to cancel a game, coaches are expected to communicate this decision with parents. Until parents have received notification from their head coach that a game has been cancelled, they should assume that the game will be played as scheduled.

### **Conduct:**

Coaches, parents and players are expected to act appropriately at all games and practices. It is mandatory for all coaches, parents, and players to agree to abide by the OSAA Athletic Code of Conduct at the start of each season. The OSAA Athletic Code of Conduct is available for review on the Forms and Information page of [www.osacolts.org](http://www.osacolts.org). Any coach, player or parent that violates the code of conduct during the regular season or All Star season will be subject to removal from the program. If you witness behavior which you believe may violate the Code of Conduct, report it to the Commissioner immediately.

### **Injuries:**

All on field injuries must be reported to your team's head coach and the Commissioner as soon as possible.

### **Sponsors:**

The league has historically had significant support from local businesses in the form of sponsorships. Team uniform sponsorships and field banners are available for businesses to participate in the youth baseball program. Parents and players are encouraged to support

these local businesses whenever possible. Our league is always looking for additional sponsors. If you know someone who might be interested in becoming a sponsor, please contact the softball commissioner.

### **All-Stars:**

Each year, our league intends to field All Star teams in the 8U, 10U, and 12U divisions to compete in local tournaments against other communities. It is the intention of the league to field the best teams available at each age group. There are some situations in which players in our recreational league may be playing above their age level. Players that are playing above their age level may try out for whatever age level All Star teams for which they are eligible. For example, an 8 year old player who plays at the 10U level in our recreational league may try out for the 8U All Star team.

The tryout dates are posted in the Important Dates section of this handbook, and will be communicated to parents in an e-mail in the early part of the season. There will be one tryout per age division. No additional tryouts will be offered to players who miss the tryout. Tryouts will be open to any player in the league that would like to try out and is eligible to play in that age division. The age of the player is determined by their actual age on January 1<sup>st</sup> of each year.

**In order for a player to be eligible to participate in All-Stars, they must have played in at least 60% of their team's games at the time the tryout is conducted.** For example, if a player has only played in three of the eight games that her team has played as of the date of the tryout, the player is ineligible for All-Star Play. At the sole discretion of the commissioner, an exception to this rule can be granted to a player who was unable to play in at least 60% of their team's games due to extraordinary circumstances, including, but not limited to, illness or injury.

Before allowing their daughter to try out for any All Star team, they should also be aware of the following:

- All Star play is more competitive than what you will find in our recreational league.
- Equal playing time for all players is not guaranteed and is determined at the discretion of the head coach.
- There is an additional cost involved to cover the increased cost of All Star uniforms and tournament registration fees. We estimate that the additional cost per player will be \$30.00 in 2017 and possibly more depending upon the number of tournaments that the head coach decides to enter.
- All Star participation involves a significant investment of time from the parents. Tournaments normally start near the end of June and run through much of July. Every effort should be made to attend all practices and games. If you cannot make this commitment, you should not have your daughter try out for All Stars.

Head coaches from each team have the responsibility of participating in the tryouts for the division in which they coached and to evaluate players that are participating in the tryout. The head coaches will evaluate players based on a point system which will take

into account fielding, hitting, running ability. At the 10U and 12U level, pitching ability will also be evaluated. Scoring sheets will be collected from each head coach and provided to the commissioner.

Scores will be tabulated by the commissioner and the team selection will be determined by player scores. The top twelve (12) players will be selected for each all-star team. The list of players who made the team will be communicated to the tryout participants in an e-mail. In the event an All-Star team is short players for a game or tournament, it is the sole discretion of that team's head coach to select substitute players, if any.

League playing rules for all divisions are as follows:

### **Instructional Division (6U) Rules**

- 1) The batter will receive a maximum of 5 pitches from the coach. If, after 5 pitches, the batter has not put a ball in play, the tee will be used. The at bat will continue until the batter hits the ball in fair territory.
- 2) Outs recorded by the defensive team (pop ups, tag outs, force outs) will be treated as outs in the game. This encourages the defense to attempt to make a play, and it teaches all of the kids the rules of the game.
- 3) Each team will go through the batting order only once per inning.
- 4) Anyone playing the pitching position must wear a helmet with a face guard and chin strap.
- 5) Players should be taught the proper positioning for each position player. Normal infield positions plus the pitcher should be played, with all other defensive players in the outfield.
- 6) The last player to bat in the inning always hits a homerun.
- 7) All games should be one hour in length, weather permitting.

### **Rookie Division (8U) Rules**

- 1) 60 ft. base lines. The pitcher's rubber will be 35 ft. from home plate. Prior to every game, the coaches from each team are required to use the field lining machine to line the playing field as follows:
  - a. Batters boxes
  - b. Foul lines for the first and third base lines
  - c. An approximate 8' diameter circle (pitching area) should be chalked around the pitching rubber; and
  - d. 2' to 3' long lines should be chalked approximately halfway between 1<sup>st</sup>/2<sup>nd</sup> base, 2<sup>nd</sup> /3<sup>rd</sup> base, and 3<sup>rd</sup> base/home plate (these lines should be perpendicular to the base path/foul line).
- 2) Each team is required to exchange lineups with each other prior to the game, and keep score using a scorebook to be provided by the league.
- 3) A face mask and chin strap is required for all helmets. This is for the safety of all players.
- 4) A maximum of 6 players will be allowed in the infield area. These 6 players must be placed the following positions: Catcher, Pitcher, 1<sup>st</sup> Base, 2<sup>nd</sup> Base, Shortstop, and 3<sup>rd</sup> Base. All additional defensive players must be in the outfield grass prior to the ball being hit.
- 5) Pitchers are required to wear a helmet with a face mask and chin strap. The player playing pitcher will start out each pitch in the pitching circle, either to the left or right of the coach that is pitching.
- 6) There is no minimum number of players required to play an official game. If one team is short players, the head coaches may agree to borrow players to fill out their outfield on defense.
- 7) Coaches pitch to the players. The coach must stay inside the pitching circle when delivering a pitch. The coach should make every effort to get out of the way on a batted

ball so that the player at the Pitcher position has an opportunity to make a play on the ball.

- 8) Each batter will get a maximum of 7 pitches or 3 swinging strikes, whichever comes first. The batter cannot strike out on a foul ball. They will receive an additional pitch.
- 9) Runners may only advance on a batted ball (no stealing). Runners may not leave the base prior the ball being hit, or the ball crossing the plate if the batter swings and misses or does not swing at the pitch.
- 10) Runners will be awarded only one base on an overthrow that goes out of play.
- 11) Time limits: No new inning will start after 1 hour and 45 minutes and all games will have a time limit of 2 hours. Every effort should be made to start the games on time. Good judgment should be used by head coaches if darkness or visibility becomes a potential safety issue.
- 12) Unlimited substitutions and freedom to move players around during the inning on defense, as long as it does not cause a delay in the game.
- 13) Coaches for the defensive team are allowed on the field, but should remain in foul territory in the outfield.
- 14) There is no penalty (such as an automatic out) for a team who misses an at bat for any reason (including, but not limited to, injury, illness, ejection, etc.). The head coaches must communicate with each other if a player on their team will miss an at bat.
- 15) There is a 5 run limit in effect for each team each inning, except the 6<sup>th</sup> inning, or final inning (due to time limits). It is the responsibility of both scorekeepers to immediately notify the umpire that the batting team has scored 5 runs in that running. When the time limit is close to being reached, the head coaches should communicate with each other prior to starting a new inning regarding whether that inning will be treated as the “final” inning for the purpose of this rule.
- 16) On all plays involving a batted ball in fair territory, the play is not considered dead until a player on the defensive team throws a ball which enters the pitching circle, or until a player on the defensive team is holding the ball and enters the circle (such as the pitcher picking up a ground ball and running into the circle). A ball thrown into the pitching circle does not have to be caught in order to end the play. Base runners are awarded bases based upon where they were positioned relative to the hash marks at the moment the ball entered the circle.
  - a. If the runner was at or past the hash mark between bases, they are awarded the next base.
  - b. If they were **not** at or past the hash mark, they must return to the previous base.

Example: With a runner on second base, a batter hits a ground ball.

The runner, who started on 2<sup>nd</sup> base, rounds 3<sup>rd</sup> base and heads toward home. The batter rounds 1<sup>st</sup> base and heads toward 2<sup>nd</sup> base. A member of the defensive team throws the ball to the pitching circle, and it enters the pitching circle. At the moment the ball enters the circle, the runner had passed the chalk line between 3<sup>rd</sup> and home, and the batter had not yet reached the chalk line between 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> base. The runner is awarded home (counting as a run), but the batter must return to 1<sup>st</sup> base.

## Minors Division (10U) Rules

- 1) **Each team is allowed to play a maximum of 10 players in the field.** No more than 6 in the infield (catcher, pitcher, short stop, 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> base. Outfield positions: right, left, center field. The 10<sup>th</sup> player is called a rover and must stand in the outfield grass until the ball is hit.
- 2) **Minimum of 8 players required** to play an official game. If a team does not have enough players, the game can be played but that team will forfeit the game.
- 3) **Time limits/number of innings:** No new inning will start after 1 hour and 45 minutes and all games will have a time limit of 2 hours. Every effort should be made to start the games on time. Good judgment should be used by head coaches if darkness or visibility becomes a potential safety issue.
- 4) **The pitching distance will be 35 feet.**
- 5) **The dropped third strike rule** does not apply. The batter is out regardless whether the catcher catches the third strike or not.
- 6) There is a 5 run limit in effect for each team each inning, except the 6<sup>th</sup> inning, or final inning (due to time limits). When the time limit is close to being reached, the head coaches should communicate with each other prior to starting a new inning regarding whether that inning will be treated as the “final” inning for the purpose of this rule.
- 7) **Base runners** can leave the base once the pitcher has released the ball. If a runner leaves the base prior to the pitcher releasing the ball, the umpire will issue a warning to that runner’s team. After this warning, any subsequent instances of the runner leaving the base prior to the pitcher releasing the ball will result in the runner being called out by the umpire.
- 8) **Base runners** cannot steal more than one base on a single play. When a batter is walked, they cannot advance to second base until the first pitch is thrown to the next batter.
- 9) **Base runners** can steal home.
- 10) **Sliding Rule-** "ASA rules DO NOT require a runner to slide into a base. Umpires have been instructed to call the runner out for interference if the runner does not slide and either disrupts (interferes) with the play or crashes into a defensive player. Main objective of sliding is to avoid injuries to either player."
- 11) **Strike Zone** - At this level, the strike zone will be wider than the plate. A good rule of thumb is that if the girl can hit the pitch, the pitch is a strike.
- 12) **Batting Lineup** – Set batting order using all players. DO NOT CHANGE BATTING ORDER. Bat 12 girls if you have 12 girls.
- 13) **Fielding Positions** – Unlimited substitutions and freedom to move players around.
- 14) **If a player is ejected** or has to leave, simply remove her from the batting order and move the next player below her up in the order.
- 15) **Pitching rule involving excessive walking of batters:** A pitcher can only walk 3 players per inning. Once the pitcher gets to ball 4 on any batter after 3 players have been walked, a coach from the offensive team comes in and pitches to that batter until they hit a fair ball. The batter will only receive **five** pitches from the coach pitching. A batter will get an additional pitch when they foul off the last pitch (whether it is the fifth pitch, or an additional pitch after previously hitting a foul ball on the ‘last’ pitch). If the batter does not put the ball in play after five pitches,

the batter is out. The player who is pitching continues to pitch to all batters in the inning. The only time the coach would pitch again is if the pitcher threw 4 balls again to another batter. This rule allows only 3 walks per inning and more live play on the ball.

### **Majors Division (12U) Rules**

- 1) **Each team is allowed to play maximum of 10 players in the field.**
- 2) **Minimum of 8 players to play official game.** If a team does not have 8 players, the game can be played but that team short will forfeit the game.
- 3) Pitching distance is 40 feet.
- 4) **Time limits:** No new inning will start after 1 hour and 45 minutes and all games will have a time limit of 2 hours. Every effort should be made to start the games on time. Good judgment should be used by head coaches if darkness or visibility becomes a potential safety issue.
- 5) **Dropped third strike rule applies.**
  - a. **With first base unoccupied, the catcher must cleanly catch the third strike to record an out.** If the catcher drops the third strike (swinging or called), the out must be recorded by tagging the batter, tagging another runner off base, or recording the out at 1<sup>st</sup> base.
  - b. **With first base occupied and less than two outs, the batter is out on the third strike regardless of whether the catcher drops the third strike.** All runners advance on their own risk. The batter will normally run to first anyway. After the play has finished, this batter/runner is then declared out. If the bases are loaded, there is no “Force out” at any base on this situation.
  - c. **With first base occupied and two outs, the batter is not out on the dropped third strike.** The batter must be put out by tagging or making the out at 1<sup>st</sup> base. All runners can advance at their own risk. If the bases are loaded, the force out at any base is in effect (i.e.- the catcher can step on home plate with the ball before the runner at 3<sup>rd</sup> base comes home to record the 3<sup>rd</sup> out).
- 6) There is a 5 run limit in effect for each team each inning, except the 6<sup>th</sup> inning, or final inning (due to time limits). When the time limit is close to being reached, the head coaches should communicate with each other prior to starting a new inning regarding whether that inning will be treated as the “final” inning for the purpose of this rule.
- 7) **Base runners** can leave the base and steal “ON RELEASE OF” of the ball by the pitcher.
- 8) **Base runners** can steal more than one base on a single play
- 9) **Base runners** can steal home.
- 10) **Sliding rule-** ASA rules DO NOT require a runner to slide into a base. Umpires have been instructed to call the runner out for interference if the runner does not



- slide and either disrupts (interferes) with the play or crashes into a defensive player. Main objective of sliding is to avoid injuries to either player.
- 11) Strike zone-** At this level, the strike zone will be wider than the plate. A good rule of thumb is that if the girls can hit the ball, the pitch is a strike.
  - 12) Batting order-** Set batting order before the game using all players. Do not change batting order. Bat all girls (if you have 12 girls bat all 12 girls).
  - 13) Fielding positions-** Unlimited substitutions and freedom to move girls around.
  - 14) If a player is ejected or has to leave,** simply remove her from the batting order and move the girls below her up in the order.