

## **2026 1st & 2nd Grade Softball - UPDATED 04/13/2026**

**IHSA Rules shall prevail unless specifically stated in these rules.**

**Base distance 60ft – Pitcher's Mound 30ft – 11" "Safe Soft" Ball**

### **1. Playoffs**

a. 1st & 2nd Grade Level do not play in a play-off at the end of the season.

### **2. Use of Coaches**

a. An offensive coach will pitch to the batters and may direct runners.

b. A defensive coach will stand behind the catcher to toss back the ball and may coach infield players from that position. Keep two balls handy to help speed up the game.

c. Offensive coaches are allowed at 1st & 3rd base to direct runners.

d. A defensive coach or two will be allowed in the outfield.

### **3. Use of Players**

a. All players on a team's roster will bat in consecutive order. A player arriving after the game starts shall be added to the end of the order. The opposing manager must be notified.

b. All players must play a minimum of half of the game. (3-innings of a 6- inning game)

c. A player cannot be on the bench for consecutive innings.

d. No player can sit out twice until everyone has sat out once and a player cannot sit out three times until all have sat out twice.

e. Managers are expected to rotate the players sitting out first from game to game. The goal is to insure a comparable number of innings played for each player during the course of the season.

f. Any violations of the use of players should be reported to the league commissioner.

### **4. Replacements**

a. If a team loses a player for the season, the manager must notify the league commissioner. The League, at its discretion, will provide a substitute player.

b. If fewer than 9 players are available for a game, the Junior League team can pull from any other 1st & 2nd Grade team in order to play.

c. A substitute must bat last and can only play in the outfield.

d. The sub can continue to play until nine rostered players arrive. The sub can remain in the batting order after all nine rostered players have arrived but can no longer play a defensive position. She must bat only.

## **5. Base Running**

a. When the ball is put into play by a batter, any runners currently on base may advance *as many bases as the batter*. On balls hit through the infield, either in the air or on the ground, to the outfield, the hitter is eligible to advance as far as second base.

b. Runners cannot advance on an overthrow at any base.

c. A courtesy runner should be used if the catcher is on base regardless of the number of outs. The courtesy runner shall be the player who made the proceeding out.

d. Base stealing and lead-offs are not allowed. The base runner may not leave the base before the batter has made contact with the ball. Each team will receive one warning per game. The second time the runner is out.

e. Safety bases will be used at 1st base. Runners must use the orange base and the 1st baseman must use the white base if there is a play at 1st base.

f. Plays that draw the defensive player into foul territory may cause this to change. The umpire, at his/her discretion, will make the decision on which side of the base each player has the right to.

g. On any play to first base, the batter may NOT advance, nor may the base runners advance more than one base from where they started.

h. When a play is made on a base runner at any other base and the ball is overthrown, the runner may NOT advance.

i. Any runner approaching any base except first will be required to avoid contact with a defensive player. If, in the opinion of the umpire, the runner should have slid into the base, that runner will be called out. Thus, not all runners who don't slide will be called out. The umpire's decision is final.

j. On throws to the pitcher, the ball will be dead once the throw has been made to the pitcher and has entered the imaginary 8' radius around the pitcher's mound. The coach/pitcher shall make every attempt to catch a ball being thrown to back to the pitcher.

k. Any ball thrown to the pitcher's mound and/or traveling through the circle will be ruled as an attempt and the play will end at that point. Base runners that have advanced more than halfway to the next base may be awarded that base at the umpire's discretion. The umpire's call is final.

l. The 1st and 3rd base coaches may not physically assist or touch runners in any way under live ball conditions. Only verbal instructions are permitted.

m. If a ball put into play bounces and hits a runner regardless of whether a defensive player has made a play for the ball, the runner will be considered safe and be allowed to advance to the next base.

## **6. Batting**

- a. The strike zone shall be shoulder to shins and the width of the plate.
- b. The barrel of the bat may not exceed 2 ¼” and must be an official softball bat. Any bat not meeting this requirement will not be allowed unless both coaches agree to allow the questionable bat to be used.
- c. All batters shall wear a batting helmet that meets NOCSAE requirements. Face guards must be on the helmet and chin straps are recommended. Any helmet provided by any player must also conform to this requirement.
- d. A batter will not receive a walk.
- e. A batter hit by a pitch will NOT be awarded first base.
- f. There will be a four run limit in all innings.
- g. A batted ball that strikes a coach pitcher will result in a dead ball and the batter will be awarded first base. Only base runners that are “force” to the next base will be awarded that base.
- h. No intentional bunting.

## **7. Pitching Rules**

1. After May 15<sup>th</sup>, team may elect to have a player pitch the 2<sup>nd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> innings.
2. The front of the pitcher’s rubber shall be 30 feet from the back tip of home plate.
3. Each pitcher is allowed a maximum of 2 innings per game. One pitch constitutes an inning.
4. Pitchers will be allowed 5 warm up pitches before their first inning. Returning pitchers will be allowed 3 warm up pitches before any inning after their first.
5. Batter Hit by Pitch, coach pitcher will immediately come in to complete the strike count per the rules outlined below. If the ball hits the ground before hitting the batter it is not considered hit by pitch.
6. There will be no illegal pitches.
7. There will be no walks.
8. A pitcher will throw a maximum of three pitches to a batter. Balls/strikes will be called by the umpire.

9. If the batter fails to make contact, then the coach will throw four additional pitches to the batter. The coach pitcher will NOT inherit the count. Balls or strikes are not called by an umpire, but swinging and missing will be a strike and girls can strike out. A batter will be considered out if they fail to hit the ball into the field of play within the four coach pitches. Foul balls on the 4<sup>th</sup> or subsequent pitches will result in another pitch.

10. The coach pitcher must pitch from the pitching rubber.

11. There are no restrictions on replacing pitchers. Free substitutions are allowed at any time during the game.

12. Coaches are encouraged to teach the girls the following rules:

Hands apart when Pitcher steps on the mound (ball can be either in hand or in glove).

Pitcher brings hand to glove. This is the start of the wind up. (Pitcher is not allowed to separate her hands and bring them together in the glove again.)

13. If a team is struggling to find a pitcher that can throw strikes, the defensive team may revert to the coach pitch rule. The defensive team should make this decision at the start of an inning and communicate with their opponent. "The offensive coach will pitch this inning. An offensive coach assumes the pitcher's role and throws up to four pitches

14. Coach Pitching: Prior to May 15<sup>th</sup> or during odd innings after May 15<sup>th</sup>, an Offensive Coach shall pitch (or if the team pitching opts out of pitching that inning due to lack of players available to pitch). The coach will throw up to six pitches to the batter. Balls or strikes are not called by an umpire, but swinging and missing will be a strike and girls can strike out. A batter will be considered out if they fail to hit the ball into the field of play within the six coach pitches. Foul balls on the 6<sup>th</sup> or subsequent pitches will result in another pitch.

## 8. Defense

a. No defensive player will play more than 2 innings in any one position and all players must play at least one inning in the outfield. A team may play up to 10 players in the field to increase the amount of playing time for each girl. When 10 players are in the field there MUST be four outfielders (no Short Center).

b. All players must get one inning in the infield during the first three innings of a game... (1st, 2nd, 3rd, SS, P) Catchers are not considered infield players in this level.

c. All outfielders will be positioned no closer than the edge of the grass in the outfield prior to the pitch. An outfielder cannot receive a throw at second base to complete a force out.

d. An outfielder **cannot** field a batted ball and step on second for a force out. Outfields must throw the ball to an infielder to complete the force play.

e. No defensive player may play more than 2 feet in front of the baseline prior to the pitch.

f. One defensive coach is allowed in the outfield with the defensive team.

g. On all plays to a base, the defensive player must throw the ball and may not roll it to the base in an attempt to avert a bad throw or catch on the play. All coaches must instruct their players the proper techniques of throwing and catching.

h. STRONGLY ENCOURAGE A FACE MASK BE WORN BY ALL PLAYERS. PITCHERS MUST WEAR A FACE MASK AT THE PITCHER POSITION.

## **9. Game Time**

a. Scheduled game time is start time. Have your team ready to play at the assigned and scheduled time.

b. No new inning will begin after 90 minutes from the official start of the game by the umpire's time piece. There is a drop dead time of 1:55.

c. Incoming managers / coaches must converse with the managers / coaches that have delayed games in progress to come to an agreement on the start time of the next game.

d. Tie games will not be resumed.

e. Rainouts, including lightning cancelled games, will not be made up.

f. Threatening weather or lightning detector activation will end the game at that point and it will be treated as a rainout.

## **10. Suspension and Forfeitures**

a. A team must have a minimum of 6 players from its own roster and a minimum of 7 players including replacement players at the start of the game. Game time is start time. Where fewer than 9 players are available, there will be no automatic outs. It is encouraged to fill any vacant outfield positions with players from the opposing team. These players will be taken from the bottom of the batting order in that inning.

b. In case of a forfeit, managers should attempt to play a practice game using the umpire.

c. Any manager or coach ejected from the game will automatically be suspended for the season. The League Commissioner shall be notified of the situation.

d. Protests are not allowed.

e. Managers shall keep their teams and fans behavior in line. Artificial noise makers such as cow bells, horns, clackers and the like will not be permitted at any time.

f. The use of tobacco products and / or alcoholic beverages is prohibited at any and all BYB&S facilities. There are no exceptions.

g. The use of profanity by coaches, players, and parents is prohibited

## **11. Miscellaneous**

- a. The infield fly rule does not apply at this level.
- b. The dropped third strike rule does not apply at this level
- c. If you have any complaints regarding umpires, coaches etc., please report it to your League Commissioner.
- d. Respect all umpires decisions, as they are final. If you need to question a rule (not an umpire's judgment call), you must discuss it in a respectful way only. Please remember these umpires are kids.
- e. All teams are responsible for picking up everything in the dugouts after every game.
- f. One game ball will be provided by each team.
- g. If there is a problem with a coach or parent that is out of control, the umpire will go into the concession stand and call the local authorities. Please remain calm at all times.
- h. A no jewelry policy will be in effect at all times. All jewelry, including but not limited to earrings, bracelets, or necklaces must be removed prior to play. The only exception to this rule is a "Medical Alert Tag" necklace or bracelet. These must be securely tape in place with the Medical Tag showing.

## **12. Threatening Weather and Lightning Conditions- see website for details**