

Middle School Festival Sports Program

Softball Rules

Festival

A. Equipment for each team

1. 2 leather game balls with school name on it and given to the field coordinator
2. Catching gear, batters' helmets, regulation softball bats, gloves, practice balls: all with school name on it
3. During the game, equipment is to remain in the dugout and removed during games off
4. Each player must bring his or her own marked water bottle.

B. Field

1. Bases shall be 60 feet apart.
2. Fields will be lined with coaches boxes, foul lines, pitching circle, batters boxes and on-deck circle.
3. Peg bases will be used where possible; otherwise throw down bases will be in place.

C. Game Play

1. Batting

- a. Bat roster for each team until the 35 minute clock runs out or 4 complete innings.
- b. Each batter is allowed only 3 pitches.
- c. If a player hits the ball foul on the third pitch she will continue to bat until put out.
- d. The umpire will call wild pitches a "no pitch".
- e. The dropped third strike rule will still be used, as well as stealing.
- f. Umpire will make all other calls.

2. Hustle Rule

- a. Teams will have no more than 60 seconds to get to their positions after each inning.
- b. At 45 seconds, the umpire will announce a warning that the athletes have 15 seconds to get on the field.
- c. The catcher is exempt from the Hustle Rule if she has bat or run in the previous inning.
- d. One run will be added to the team who is not in violation

3. Pitching Machines

- a. Pitching machine shall be 40 feet from home plate.
- b. The speed will be set at 40 mph for 7th grade and 45 mph for 8th.
- c. The coach or designated adult whose team is on offense will run the machine. (Glove recommended).
- d. A defensive player will be positioned to the side of the machine to handle the ball on all defensive plays.
- e. The ball is live if it touches a coach or the machine.

4. Runners

- a. Runners may steal, but may not leave the base until the ball leaves the machine.
- b. A hit-by-pitch is a dead ball.
- c. Runners may NOT advance because there is not a live pitcher.

5. Scorekeeping

- a. Each team must furnish a scorekeeper. Scorekeepers will sit together at score table.
- b. Score remains on flip chart until reported to the field coordinator (A.D.)
 - c. Visiting team is decided by the flip of a coin with captains visiting the umpire before the game.
 - d. Visiting team will sit in the first base dugout and bat first.

6. Time Constraints

- a. Five runs or 3 outs end an inning.
- b. If the time limit expires before the inning is over, revert back to the previous inning to determine score
- c. If the home team is at bat in the last inning and is ahead in runs scored, but the clock runs out before there are 5 runs or 3 outs the game shall be declared over and the home team wins.
- d. In the event of a tie, the 3/3/3 rule takes effect. 3 runners on base, 3 batters, 3 outs. (visitors bat first). If still a tie, repeat with 3 new batters.
- e. No new inning will be started after 30 minutes. A new game is played every 40 minutes.
- g. Teams will have 5 minutes to take the field and be ready to play once previous game has ended.
- h. A time schedule is posted. Teams must be ready to play if games proceed at a faster pace.
- i. All players remain at the field until all their games have ended and their coach excuses them.

7. Time Outs and Substitutions

- a. No time outs will be allowed unless a player is incapacitated in some way.
- b. Substitutions on defense will be made so as not to stop the game.
- c. Coaches may not change player's defensive positions when their team is in the field.

8. Warm-ups

- a. Teams may warm up on extra field space, without interfering with the on going game.
- b. Teams are to conduct any pre-game warm up sessions off of the playing field.

D. Home Base

1. Teams are urged to arrive early and establish a "Home Base" for your team.
2. Players should report to their team home base after each game ends.
3. A cabana for shade and a banner with your team name on it are acceptable and recommended.
4. Set up away from dugouts and adjacent softball fields. They will be used for warm-ups.

E. Sportsmanship: Participants will:

1. Accept umpires' decisions with sportsmanlike conduct, without dispute.
2. Behave respectfully and courteously in the spirit of fair play toward umpire, players, coaches & spectators.
3. Participants must refrain from actions or attitudes aimed at influencing the decision of the umpires or covering up faults committed by their team.
4. A player or coach who is ejected from the game will not be allowed to finish that game and will not be allowed to participate in the next scheduled game.
4. Cheering should be positive and directed at your own team.

5. Team Captain and Coach are responsible for and discipline of their team.
 - a. The conduct
 - b. Have team pick up their trash and clear the dugout quickly after each game
 - c. Keeping team at the field site and ready to play in the event of rescheduling of games.
 - d. Meet opposing captain and umpire before game for coin toss, shake hands and wish each other good luck.
 - e. Lead their team in a cheer for the opposing team and thank the umpire at the end of game.
 - f. Requesting clarification of a ruling, by respectfully approaching umpire or field coordinator.
 - g. Reporting the final game score to the Field Coordinator. Any disputes will be settled at this time.

F. Teams

1. Each team will carry 9-17 players. In the event of injury, a team may continue with 8 players.
2. Teams will be divided separately by grade, 7th and 8th.
3. In the event that a school can only field one mixed team, the AD's will decide where to place them.
4. Coaches must rank teams by ability and name accordingly i.e. 8th grade Shea #1, #2 etc...
5. Rosters
 - a. Given to field coordinator by the coach prior to the start of the tournament.
 - b. Includes: grade, team name and members' names.
 - c. The roster is the batting order.
6. All players must bat and field during the tournament.
7. All players must remain in the dugout unless at bat, on deck or base coaches (They must wear helmets).
8. All spectators are to remain behind the backstop or the extension of the backstop fence.

G. Tournament Organization and Awards

1. All teams will be guaranteed two games. Winning teams will play more.
2. 1st, 2nd and Consolation awards in each division will occur on the field immediately following the final game.

H. Uniforms

- 1.** Each team member shall wear the festival shirt, shorts or softball pants/pads (optional)
- 2.** All team members must have their hair tied back with no metal clips or barrettes in their hair.
- 3.** Players may wear tennis shoes or rubber softball cleats.
- 4.** No jewelry is allowed, even stud earrings!
- 5.** It is strongly suggested that each player wear a baseball cap.
- 6.** Sport sunglasses are allowed on defense only.

All-Stars

Softball

1. Field

- a. Peg bases will be used.
- b. Home team will supply a scorekeeper and have fields prepared.
- c. Home team will furnish a cooler of water for each game they host.
- d. Visiting team will have 1st base dugout and will be up to bat first.
- e. Pitching machines will be used.
 - a. Speed of pitching machine is set at 40 mph for 7th graders
 - b. Speed of pitching machine is set at 45 mph for 8th graders.
 - c. The coach/adult designee whose team is on offense will operate the machine.
 - d. A glove must be worn while working the machine.
 - e. A fielder will stand to the left or right of machine to field.
 - f. Ball is live and playable if it hits machine or coach.
 - g. Umpire will still call balls and strikes with machine, with the understanding that
there are no walks.
 - h. Runners may not leave the bag until ball leaves the machine.
 - i. A hit-by-pitch is a "dead ball"...runners may not advance because there is no live
pitcher, only a machine.

2. Game Play

- a. Stealing is allowed in both the Festival and All-Star season.
- b. Tie Breaker
 1. In the event of a tie in All Stars, the 3/3/3 rule takes effect.
 2. 3 runners on base, 3 batters, 3 outs. (visitors bat first).
 3. If still a tie, repeat with 3 new batters.
- c. In the 5th inning there is no 5 run rule.
- d. Sliding is optional.
- e. "Hustle Rule"
 1. Teams will have max of 60 seconds to get into their positions after each inning.
 2. At 45 seconds, a warning will be announced by the umpire to warn athletes that
they have 15 seconds to get into their positions.
 3. If the athletes are not in their positions by 60 seconds:
 - a. One run is added to the team who is not in violation of the Hustle Rule.

- b. The catcher is exempt from the Hustle Rule if she has bat or run in the previous inning.
- 4. Ejected player or coach
 - a. Will not be allowed to finish that game.
 - b. Will not be allowed to participate in the next scheduled game.
- f. The Umpire, coaches, athletes and Athletic Director will remain on the field until the game, all disputes and ties are settled.

3. Innings/Time

- a. Game will consist of 5 innings.
- b. A new inning may not start after 1 hour and 20 minutes into the game.
- c. A game will be considered over when it is 10 minutes after sunset.

4. Teams

- a. A minimum of 12 to 15 players per squad.
- b. Every player must participate.
- c. An inning is over after 5 runs or 3 outs...whichever comes first.
- d. 9-batter line up...coaches must give roster to the official.
- e. Do not bat the roster in All-Stars.
- f. There will be 9 players on the field each inning.

5. Uniform

- a. No steel cleats may be used...only rubber.
- b. Sport sunglasses are allowed on defense only.
- c. All batters, runners, base coaches and student coaches will wear helmets
- d. Numbered jerseys, PE shorts or sliding pants and unaltered Festival shirt will be worn.
- e. All players are strongly urged to bring personal water bottles, hair ties and hats.