

# Hopedale Girls' Softball League

## Senior Division Rules/Guidelines

### GENERAL:

**We are an instructional/recreational league. Winning should be downplayed. Learning the fundamentals of the game, improving skills, teamwork and fun should be emphasized. Discipline (obeying rules, paying attention, respect for other players, coaches and umpires) should be taught and required.**

- A twelve inch ball will be used.
- All games will be limited to 2 hours. No inning may be started after 1 hour and 30 minutes from the start of the game. Any inning started prior to that may be completed if there is enough daylight to safely do so.
- Games will be 6 innings unless reduced by the time rule.
- In case of a tie, extra innings may be played if both teams agree; however the time limit shall prevail.
- A maximum of 10 fielders will be used in the field. All four outfielders must be in the outfield grass prior to each pitch.
- Teams may play with as few as 8 players by game time. If you have less than 8 borrow from the other team.
- All players must play a minimum of 2 innings in the field.
- Infielders must stay out of the baseline if not fielding a batted ball.
- Umpiring is done by USSSA sanctioned umpires.
- Batters, runners, bat persons and player coaches must wear helmets.
- No infield fly rule.
- Smoking by coaches, assistant coaches or scorekeepers in or around the playing area is prohibited.
- Cheering is encouraged. Derogatory comments, chants or gestures toward opposing team players by coaches and/or fans will not be tolerated.
- No parents or coaches behind the backstop.
- Complaints regarding coaching conflicts will be reviewed by the Board of Directors and the affected coaches will be notified.

- Coaches are responsible for the safety and conduct of their players. When not in the field or at bat, players should be on the bench. Playing catch behind the bench should only be allowed when players need to warm up prior to going into the game. **ONLY THE ON DECK BATTER IS ALLOWED TO SWING A BAT, AND THIS MUST ONLY BE DONE IN THE ON DECK CAGE.** Coaches should get an assistant coach/parent volunteer to help on the bench, especially when they are on the field or coaching bases.
- Coaches should try to give players equal time in all positions consistent with the development of their abilities. (e.g. Players who have trouble catching a thrown ball should not be placed at first base until they have developed the confidence and skills to safely play there). Players should not be played where they are not comfortable.

#### **PITCHING:**

- Pitcher may use either windmill or modified pitching
- USSSA fast (and modified) pitching rules apply.
- The pitcher's mound will be 40' from home plate.
- The pitcher may start with either one (modified) or two feet (windmill) in contact with the rubber. One step backwards will be allowed if pitching modified. No steps backwards are allowed with windmill.
- Pitchers are limited to 3 innings per game.
- The umpire shall remove a pitcher in the event she hits 2 batters in one inning or 3 batters in a game.

**BATTING:**

- All players are to be included in a continuous batting order.
- A maximum of 10 players may come up to bat in one inning with exception to the last inning.
- In the last inning, the team that is losing may bat an unlimited # players until the game is tied or 3 outs are made (whichever comes 1<sup>st</sup>).
- The first thrown bat will result in a warning for that player. The next time the same player throws the bat she will be called out.
- Bunting is allowed.
- No fake bunts (to draw in the infielders) will be allowed.

**BASE RUNNING:**

- Sliding is permitted, but not head-first. Runners must slide at home to avoid contact. If a player fails to slide when there is a play at the plate the runner shall be called out. Umpire discretion is final.
- Runners may not leave the bag until the ball reaches the plate.
- Stealing of second and third is allowed. There will be a limit of 3 steals per inning. A double steal will be considered as 2 stolen bases.
- A batter cannot advance to 1<sup>st</sup> on a dropped third strike.
- A courtesy runner may be used only in the event of an injury to the runner. The courtesy runner shall be the girl who made the last out.
- The umpire will award an extra base on an overthrow that goes out of play.
- Runners are allowed to keep running until the ball is under control in the infield. Runners are not allowed to take an extra base on the throw from an infielder back to the pitcher.
- Continuing to 2<sup>nd</sup> base on a walk is not allowed.