

**2023 Softball League Rule – 10U Division**  
Revised 3.23.23

**Division Requirements**

- 1) All players must wear a full conforming uniform during game play, unless both coaches agree otherwise.
- 2) The official ball is the 11-inch USA certified ball.
- 3) All players must have equal playing time and be presented in the infield within the first three (3) innings of a game. If you have special circumstances, they must be approved by a softball commissioner. This rule only applies during regular season and does not apply during tournament play.
- 4) Players may not taunt an opponent. Derogatory comments are not allowed. Violation results in a warning, second violation results in ejection from the game.
- 5) The umpire's rulings are final and non-contestable. Coaches, players, and fans will exhibit good sportsmanship at all times. Profanity is strictly prohibited. Violation results in a warning, second violation results in ejection from the game. **Coaches will be given a STRICT guidelines on umpire confrontation. Obtaining explanation of an umpire's call will ONLY take place between innings WITH BOTH COACHES PRESENT. Coach to umpire discussion will only occur with both coaches present at any time. No exceptions. Umpires will not engage in mid-inning confrontation. A warning will be issued by the umpire to the coach. Any further infraction of this rule will result in coach ejection. BALLS AND STRIKES WILL NOT BE ARGUED, PERIOD. Coaches will also be given strict guidelines on arguing balls and strikes. This is a ZERO TOLERANCE policy. Any coach reported of this infraction will be reprimanded.**
- 6) There is no infield fly or drop third strike rule in effect at this level.
- 7) All coaching staff must sign coach's code of conduct and all parents must sign the parent's code of conduct, both to be filed with the league prior to the first game or the game is forfeited.
- 8) USA rules will be used where not specified on this document.
- 9) **\*\*\* Substitutions will only be permitted when a team can roster less than nine (9) players in any given game. Subs can only be provided by 8U and 10U players. The sub will bat last in the line up and be permitted to ONLY play in the outfield. You may only use subs to complete a nine (9) player roster. Teams will NEVER be forced to take an out for rostering less than nine (9) players.**
- 10) **\*\*\* Water Rule. Coaches may call a game time out to provide water to players. This time out will be a 30 second time out. In the event a pitcher needs this time out, there will not be a mound visit conversation. This rule will not be used to avoid mound visit situations. Umpire will deem if the water time out needs to be counted as a mound visit. Coaches are allowed two (2) time outs per inning.**
- 11) **\*\*\*Mound Visit Rule. The head coach shall be permitted to visit any one pitcher TWICE IN AN INNING, but, on the second visit to the pitcher's mound, the pitcher must be removed. The manager shall meet the pitcher either on the pitcher's mound or at the baseline and no other player, except the catcher, shall join in the meeting.**

## Equipment Requirements

- 1) Defensive face masks are required in the infield.
- 2) Batting helmet with face mask must be worn while batting and running the bases.
- 3) Heart guards are required for pitcher's helpers. This is a no exception rule. Umpires will be checking heart guards between every inning.
- 4) All bats must be USA/USSSA approved. All bats are subject to inspection at any time. In the event a bat is deemed illegal, the violating player will be removed from the game.
- 5) \*\*\*Metal cleats are illegal in this league.
- 6) All catchers will wear appropriate catcher's gear provided by their league.

## Batting

- 1) No walks are allowed in this age division. If the opposing player pitcher pitches four (4) balls to a batter, then that batter's coach will pitch two (2) HITTABLE pitches to their batter. If the batter strikes out against the player pitcher, it will be deemed a strike out.
- 1) Each half inning will end when the defensive team has gotten three (3) outs, or the offensive team has scored five (5) runs.
- 2) Bunting is allowed, but only off of a player pitch. Bunting off of the coach's pitch is not allowed.
- 3) Coach is not allowed to enter the field of play until the umpire has declared a dead ball and called for the coach to enter the field. If the coach enters the field before being called on by the umpire and runners are in the act of stealing it is considered interference and each base runner must go back to the previous base. Hittable pitches are determined by the umpire. If a batter swings at a non hittable pitch and misses it will count as a strike and towards 1 of the 2 coach's pitches. Pitching coach must have one (1) foot in contact with the pitching rubber when the pitch is delivered unless the rubber is set past 35 ft, then they may move up to 35ft. The coaches' pitch will be underhand. The batter must hit one (1) of the two (2) hittable pitches or they are out. A foul ball that is not caught mandates an additional pitch from the coach. The pitching coach is not allowed to coach the batter or base runners after the pitch is delivered. The coach pitches are not intended to give the team an unfair offensive advantage.
- 4) Batters will not throw bats and will be warned by the umpire once for the violation. This warning will be a team warning, and the next violation will result in the acting batter being declared out.
- 5) All batters must wear a helmet with a face mask/guard.
- 6) \*\*\* In the last 4 games of the season, coach pitch will end. Batters will be eligible to be walked by the player pitcher. Stealing home will be permitted. Once the tournament starts, we will revert back to original rules for the duration of the tournament.

## Base Running

- 1) Coaches may not assist a runner, via any physical contact. Any violation will result in the runner being declared out.
- 2) Runners may steal a base when the ball leaves the pitcher's hand. No lead offs or stealing home is permitted. There will be a team warning issued by the umpire for a player leaving the base early, the next occurrence from the team will result in the runner being called out. Runners may only advance one (1) base on a steal, passed ball, or wild pitch. Runner may steal on ball 4 (NOTE: the ball is to be in the pitchers hand, then time will be called by the umpire and the coach will come onto the field). A runner may not steal during coach pitches.
- 3) Runners may advance one (1) base on each defensive overthrow up to 3<sup>rd</sup> base. If an attempt is made on a runner advancing to another base after an overthrow and another

overthrow occurs, the runner may advance, but only up to 3<sup>rd</sup> base. You can only score from actions of a batter. Actions of a batter will be ceased once an error occurs. The umpire will deem when an error occurs and will signal to that effect. Once that has occurred, no runner can score from 3<sup>rd</sup> base unless actions of a batter is still in effect. If no error has occurred, runners may advance freely with the understanding they may be thrown out. (example: batter hits the ball to the fence. Runners may continue to run until an error occurs, no matter where the error occurs, or the bases are cleared. The umpire will determine what is a throwing error. Once a throwing error occurs, runners must hold at 3<sup>rd</sup> base.)

- 4) \*\*\* If a pitcher or catcher attempts a pick off throw at 3<sup>rd</sup> base and an overthrow occurs, the runner may advance home.

### **Fielding**

- 1) The defensive team will consist of ten (10) players: six (6) infielders (1<sup>st</sup> base, 2<sup>nd</sup> base, shortstop, 3<sup>rd</sup> base, catcher, and pitcher) and four (4) outfielders.
- 2) Outfielders must start in the outfield grass prior to each pitch.
- 3) No infielder, except pitcher, will be positioned closer to home plate than the pitching rubber prior to the release of the pitch.
- 4) Distance from the front of the pitching rubber to the back point of home plate is 35 feet. The circle around the pitcher's mound will be 16 feet in diameter.
- 5) The pitcher may only pitch in two (2) consecutive innings per game. Free reentry. If a pitcher only pitches one pitch in an inning, that counts as one of their innings pitched.
- 6) The pitcher can step back or start back when delivering the pitch and must have one (1) foot in contact with the ground when the pitch is delivered. If the pitcher uses a windmill motion, only one (1) revolution may be made. If the pitcher uses a whip motion, only one (1) whip may be made.
- 7) Play has ended and the ball is dead when the ball is under control by the pitcher with both feet inside the pitcher's circle. Look back rule is in effect.
- 8) All defensive players must wear a defensive protective face mask.
- 9) Pitchers are required to wear a heart guard.

### **Game Length**

- 1) Regulation game time is one hour and thirty minutes (1:30) from the first pitch or six (6) innings, whichever comes first. No new inning will begin after the time limit has expired. New inning begins immediately following the third out of the previous innings. If the game is tied at the completion of a full inning, international tie break rules apply (the last batted out from the previous inning start on 2<sup>nd</sup> base with no outs and the batting order resumes where left off). No time limit during championship game, will play complete six (6) innings.
- 2) Game is complete if a team is leading by more than fifteen (15) runs after four (4) innings or ten (10) runs after five (5) innings.
- 3) The following will be used for rain out and delay of game. The game is a complete game at the completion of three and one-half (3.5) innings, if the home team is ahead, or four (4) innings if the visiting team is ahead. In the event a game is delayed by rain and either of these conditions has been met, the game is over and the score is final. If, however, neither of these two conditions has been met, the game will be suspended and the game will restart with a new time limit of one hour (1:00) of play as soon as possible.

## **Code of Conduct**

All persons associated with Mt. Vernon Optimist Softball program, including coaches, players, umpires, parents, and attendees, will conduct themselves both responsibly and courteously. If a person's conduct results in an ejection, they will be asked to leave the property. They will have five minutes to comply and if they refuse, the offending team will forfeit the game.

Any "trash talking", derogatory comments, profanity, or abusive language toward a coach, player, umpire, parent, or attendee will result in a team warning. A second offense, during any will result in immediate ejection and suspension from the next scheduled game.

Any intentional physical contact by a coach, player, umpire, parent, or attendee will result in immediate ejection and suspension from attending Mt. Vernon Optimist sporting events for the remainder of the season.