

LEAGUE RULES - 2012

Montgomery County Senior Softball League

www.mcssl.org — Telephone 267-738-6551

1. EQUIPMENT

- a. **Softballs:** Balls are provided by the league (Dudley W812-Y-RF, Core .44, Comp .375, red stitched, yellow synthetic). One new ball per every other game will be supplied by the home team. The spare ball will be the best one available from the previous game. Managers will receive a supply of balls at the start of the season.
- b. **Bats:** Only bats supplied by the League may be used, so personal bats are not permitted. A player may choose to donate an approved personal bat to the league for all to use. Please contact the the Commissioner if you wish to donate a bat.
- c. **Cleats:** For player safety, metal cleats are prohibited by the league.

2. GENERAL GAME RULES

- a. **Time allotment for games:** Each game is allotted 90 minutes to complete 7 innings. Additional innings can be played if time permits. If a game exceeds 90 minutes and interferes with the time slot for a succeeding game, the game shall revert to the last full inning and be scored a tie. An inning shall not be started 15 minutes prior to the next time slot for a game.
- b. **Team players:** Every player will play in the field and bat in the game. All players on a team are in the batting line-up. The maximum number of defensive players is twelve for outdoor play. Fielders shall be assigned positions by their respective manager. If more than twelve players are available, the manager will rotate players so that each available player gets equal defensive play during the game.
- c. **Forfeits:** A game will be forfeited if a team is unable to field nine players. To avoid forfeit, players may be borrowed from other teams, but must be first taken first from any excess players of the scheduled opponent. Players from the scheduled opponent must transfer to the other team so all can play. If both teams need players, they will be selected from a pool of volunteers from other teams. The managers will alternate picks from the pool, and a coin flip will determine the first pick. Players transferred or picked as described above will bat last in the line-up.
- d. **Runs per inning:** a team may score a maximum of 5 runs per half inning, except in the last inning of the game where a team can score an unlimited number.
- e. **Mercy Rule:** if one team is leading by 15 runs after 4 1/2 or 5 innings, the losing team has the option of ending the game prior to the seventh inning.

3. UMPIRING

- a. **Plays at 1st base:** called by the 1st base coach.
- b. **Plays at 2nd and 3rd base:** called by the 3rd base coach.
- c. **Fair/foul ball determinations:** called by the catcher.
- d. **Balls, strikes, illegal pitch, and home plate plays:** called by the on-deck batter.
- e. **Infield fly rule:** The infield fly rule will be called by the on-deck batter or either base coach in the

following circumstance. First, there must be less than two outs and 1st and 2nd bases or 1st, 2nd, and 3rd bases must be occupied. Second, a fair fly ball (not including a line drive) is hit which can be caught by an infielder with ordinary effort. The call is made when the ball is at the highest point of its arc. The batter is automatically out, and runners may advance at their own risk.

f. **Resolving disputes:** Disputes will be discussed by the opposing managers with input by the base coaches and the on-deck batter. If a solution cannot be agreed on by the managers within two minutes, a coin shall be tossed - heads; safe; tails; out. No other players can be involved in the discussion.

4. PITCHING

a. **Legal pitch:** A legal pitch is defined by ASA Rules and travels in an arc no less than 6 feet and no more than 12 feet in height. For reference, the batting cage is 12-feet high. A ball that does not meet height requirements will immediately be called illegal by the on-deck batter, and the illegal pitch is a ball. An illegal pitch becomes legal if the batter swings at it.

b. **Strikes:** A called strike is a legal pitch that strikes the wooden home plate on-the-fly. All other pitches are balls.

c. **Pitching distance:** The distance between the pitchers mound and home plate shall be 50 feet from the point of home plate to the nearest edge of the pitching rubber. A pitcher may legally pitch from behind the pitching rubber.

d. **Walks:** There will be a maximum of two walks per half inning. After two walks, only strikes will be called. Intentional walks are not permitted.

5. CATCHING

a. **Catcher's mask:** A league catcher's mask is available, but its use is not required.

b. **Force outs at home plate:** The catcher can make a force out at home by tagging any portion of extended home plate. Tagging the runner at home plate is not allowed. The catcher must tag the regular home plate, and the runner must go to the alternate home plate.

6. BATTING

a. **Bunting and chopping at the ball:** Bunting or chopping is not permitted. A dead ball situation will be called, the batter is out, and all runners must return to their original bases.

b. **Substitute runner from home plate:** A substitute runner is permitted from home plate. The substitute runner must start in foul territory at a pole in the backstop designated by the league. If the substitute runner interferes with the catcher the batter will be declared out, a dead-ball situation will be called, and the runners may not advance. A runner leaving before the ball is batted is out, and such plays will be called by the on-deck batter.

c. **Batting out of order:** Any batter that bats out of order is out.

d. **Foul ball with two strikes:** A batter with two strikes is out if a foul ball or foul tip is hit.

e. **Pop foul ball caught by the catcher:** The batter is out no matter how high the ball travels.

f. **Batted ball hits ceiling in indoor play:** The first batted ball for a batter that hits the ceiling counts as a strike. The batter is out if a second ball hits the ceiling during the at-bat.

g. **Batted ball hits wall in indoor play:** A batted ball hitting a side wall in indoor play is a hit.

7. BASE RUNNING

a. **Avoiding contact:** The runner must make every attempt to avoid contact with the defensive player or be declared out.

b. **Running past the base:** Base runners may run past the base (without necessarily touching it in order to avoid colliding with the fielder) without liability of being called out.

c. **Sliding:** Sliding into bases is prohibited - a runner that slides is out.

d. **Plays at 1st base:** Whenever there is a play at first base, the runner must tag the outside base (orange bag) to avoid collision. If the runner tags the inside bag (white bag), he is automatically out. If there is no play at first base, the runner may tag either bag. The fielder can tag the orange bag for a force-out if there is an errant throw.

e. **Rundowns:** Run-down plays are not permitted. A runner making an aggressive step or steps towards the next base has two choices:

1.) The runner may make one and only one change of direction to return to the base he just left. The runner may be forced out while attempting to retreat to the base.

2.) The runner may try to advance to the next base. The runner may be forced out at the base to which he is trying to advance.

f. **Base running leads:** Leads are not permitted. Base runners must maintain contact with the bag until the batter swings or be declared out.

g. **Scoring:** A base runner coming home must tag the runner's home plate or be declared out.

h. **Defensive plays at a base:** The defensive player has the right to the base on force plays. Defensive players may not dive or slide to make an out.

i. **Interference at a base:** An errant throw that draws a defensive player into the path of the runner is not considered interference. A base runner will not be called out if he fails to tag a base because he has taken evasive steps to avoid contact with a fielder.

j. **Commitment line between 3rd and home:** A line indicates the halfway point between 3rd base and home plate (32.5 ft.). Once a runner crosses this line, he must continue towards home. A runner that re-crosses the line is out.

k. **Tagging a runner between bases:** Tagging of a base runner in the base path is permitted between home and 1st, between 1st and 2nd, between 2nd and 3rd, and between 3rd base and the commitment line. A runner may not be tagged once the runner has passed the commitment line between 3rd base and home plate.

l. **Courtesy runner on the bases:** A courtesy runner may be used at any base. The batter who has just reached base must immediately request a courtesy runner before the next pitch is thrown. A courtesy runner who is still on-base when his batting slot comes up is out -- he then takes his turn at bat if there are less than three outs. A player who is used as a courtesy runner may only be a courtesy runner once per inning and a maximum of two times per game. A courtesy runner is permitted anytime a runner is injured while running the bases.

NOTE: These rules are made for your safety and enjoyment. They are so that we can all go out and have great time with our fellow players. If you feel a need to question them, please re-read our Mission Statement first.

JRM

Revision: 1/26/12