



Hillsborough Youth Athletic Association

11-12 and 13-14 Softball

Local Rules and

Playing

Philosophy

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The primary goal of the 11-12 and 13-14 Softball Division is to further hone softball skills and proficiencies in a positive team environment. The 11-12 and 13-14 Softball League is a division for 11-, 12-, 13-, and 14-year-olds as determined by established age scales. The game is played on a 60-foot diamond, and all games are called by official umpires.

The following local rules apply to the HYAA 11-12 and 13-14 Softball Division. Any rule, topic or situation not covered in this document will automatically default to the Babe Ruth Softball rulebook. The league commissioner will have final ruling on any disputes.

Team Formation

1. Players shall be evaluated at the league scheduled evaluations before the spring season. Players are encouraged to attend evaluations. There will be no evaluations ahead of the fall season.
2. Pitchers and catchers should be distributed evenly across teams before the general draft
3. Following evaluations, head coaches will attend a draft to form teams.
4. At the draft, the following rules will be implemented:
 - a. Coaches will draw numbers randomly to assign draft order.
 - b. Draft shall be snake format (order reverses in even rounds)
 - c. Coaches are permitted to select one (1) assistant coach prior to the draft to be automatically added to their team.
 - d. Players who attended evaluations will be displayed for coaches to draft from with corresponding scores. For fall drafts, spring evaluation scores will be used from the previous season if available.
 - e. All players who attended the evaluations shall be selected prior drafting any players who did not attend evaluations.
 - f. The names of players who did not attend the evaluations will not be displayed to the coaches during the draft, however their age will be visible.
 - g. Requests from parents will be considered but coaches are not required to honor them during the draft.
 - h. There will be no trades by the coaches following the completion of the draft.

Uniform / Protective Gear

1. Playing uniform is defined as the HYAA team jersey, shorts or pants and a visor. Jerseys must be tucked in, and hats facing forward. Uniform customization is prohibited with the exception of a players first name, last name or number embroidered (1/2" tall maximum) on their visor only.
2. Players must be in full uniform when playing in a league game. (Regular or Post-Season). Uniforms are not required for practice.
3. No player will be allowed to wear jewelry during practices or games.
4. The catcher is required to wear all protective gear, including leg guards, chest protector, and approved one-piece catcher helmet/ mask with throat protection.
5. The catcher is not required to use a catcher's glove.
6. It is strongly recommended that all adult volunteers playing the catcher's position wear a protective cup (for male's only) and catcher's helmet.
7. All players are required to wear batting helmets with a mask when anywhere in the field of play or in the batting cage – runners should not remove their helmet until in the dugout.

Equipment

1. The batting cages are for HYAA use only. Only one player and one coach will be allowed in the batting cage.

2. Bat Rules

- a. Only softball bats with a maximum barrel diameter of 2.25 inches are permitted for use. No other limitations for bat length or weight are mandated.
- b. Only approved bats should be present in the dugout.
- c. If a player is caught using a non-approved bat before they bat, the bat will be immediately removed from the game.
- d. If a player is caught using a non-approved bat during or after their at-bat, the batter will be called out, and any runners that advanced during the at-bat will return to the bases they occupied at the beginning of the at-bat. The bat will be immediately removed from the game.

Pre-Game

1. Managers, (Head Coaches), must present a Babe Ruth Course Completion Certificate to the commissioner prior to starting the first game.
2. Coaches from both teams are responsible for site preparation on game days. This includes repairing any damage caused by water, gathering player and game equipment as well as repairing/removing safety issues (fence tears/rocks/etc...). The Home team is responsible for lining the infield to specification prior to game play unless the Home team is not an HYAA team, then the HYAA team will line the field. Both teams are responsible for securing the game ball.
3. Players are not permitted on the field until their coach arrives and it's time for warm ups. Only players, coaches, and adult volunteers are permitted in the dugout.
4. Thirty-five minutes prior to the game start time, the Home team will have use of the batting cage for 15 minutes. Twenty minutes prior to the game start time, the Visiting team will have use of the batting cage for 15 minutes. Both teams will be ready to start the game 5 minutes prior to the start time. Batting warm-ups will not be delayed for late arriving players.
5. Thirty-five minutes prior to the game start time, the Visitor team will have use of the field to warm-up for 15 minutes. Twenty minutes prior to the game start time, the Home team will have use of the field to warm-up for 15 minutes. All on-field warm-ups will end 5 minutes prior to the stated game start time. For second games on weeknights, there may not be any infield practice depending on the status of the first game.
6. A team may begin a game with a minimum of 7 players in uniform. If 7 players are not available at game time then that team must forfeit. If there is a forfeit the teams can play a scrimmage, however only players from the teams scheduled to play can participate. Players arriving late will be added to the bottom of the batting order immediately upon arriving no matter the point of the game. There is no "OUT" penalty for playing with 7 or 8 players.
7. A team's batting order will consist of every player that is on the roster and at the game.
8. Coaches must provide their batting order to the opposing team at least 5 minutes before game time.
9. Games must start on time.
10. Each team will provide its own scorekeeper. The home team is the official scorekeeper. Scorekeepers should confer between innings to make sure they have the same score. If they are different, scorekeepers must notify the managers and home plate umpire before play resumes. The on-site field rep will stop game play until the discrepancy is resolved.
11. The home team will be responsible for running the concession stand, unless the visiting team is not an HYAA team, then the HYAA team will run the stand. Coaches will assign a parent volunteer to run the concession stand prior to the start of the game. No kids under 14 are allowed in the concession stand without adult supervision or commissioner approval.
12. Practices are scheduled by the commissioner only. There will be no extra team practices allowed. Rained out practices can be rescheduled based on field availability and commissioner approval.

General Game Play

1. **Before the first pitch is released, coaches will agree on the game start time and the home team scorekeeper will record it.** The game can be delayed or suspended due to darkness or weather conditions if the minimum number of innings have not been met. On the rescheduled game date, the game will resume where play left off, including outs already recorded, runners on base, and with the batter who was at bat when the game was called.
2. Game duration will be a maximum of 6 innings. Games cannot commence a new inning after 90 minutes. A new inning is considered "started" at the same instant that the 3rd out of the previous inning is recorded. The home team shall be entitled to complete any inning started unless ahead in the score going into the bottom half of the final inning. Otherwise, the game will be called due to time limitations.

3. Each team will be allowed two time outs per inning with a time limit of one minute. The pitcher must be removed from the game on a manager's second trip to the mound in one inning.
4. A five run rule will be in effect each inning. Play ends if one team is ahead by 11 runs after 4 innings, or by 6 runs after 5 innings.
5. Starting players must play a complete inning in the field before they can be substituted unless there is an injury.
6. Any player may reenter the game as long as the player being replaced has played a complete inning.

Offensive Game Play

1. Offensive coaching will be limited to base coaches at first and third base.
2. A continuous batting order will be used. All players on the team roster will bat regardless of their play defensively.
3. The batter must have both feet in the batter's box when the ball is hit. If one foot is out of the box when the ball is hit, the batter will be called out.
4. Base running Rules:
 - a. Base runners may not lead off. A runner cannot advance until the ball has left the pitcher's hand. A runner leaving the base early will be called out.
 - b. Ball is live until umpire calls time; pitcher returning to rubber does not stop play.
 - c. Base runners are encouraged to slide feet first on all close plays, except when going to first base. A dive back into a base from overrunning a base is not considered a head first slide.
 - d. Base coaches cannot touch base runners while the ball is in play. If a coach touches a runner, the runner is out. If this is the third out, any runs scored during this play do not count.
5. The catcher must have a pinch runner if on base with 2 outs. The pinch runner will be the player who made the last out. If less than 2 outs, the catcher must run for herself.
6. The "dropped third strike" rule will be in effect in the 11-12 division.
7. HYAA will begin observing the Look Back rule. The look-back rule in fastpitch softball requires base runners to choose a direction (advance or return) immediately once the pitcher has possession and control of the ball inside the pitcher's circle, preventing runners from teasing or hesitating between bases.

Defensive Game Play

1. Each player must play a minimum of 1 inning of defense in the infield. No player can sit out a 2nd inning of defense until all players have sat out 1 inning of defense. Penalty for not following this rule is forfeiture of the game. If the player's non participation is a result of the manager's deliberate action, the manager will be suspended for one game. A second violation by the same manager will result in permanent suspension from managing or coaching in HYAA. If a coach feels a player's safety is at risk with the mandatory inning of infield play, a meeting between the coach, player parent, and commissioner is required to create an exception for that player.
2. No chatter directed towards the batter will be allowed at any time.
3. Any ball hit out of bounds (ex: under the fence) is live until the defensive player holds their hands up to the umpire signaling to the ball out of play.
4. The infield fly rule is recognized and enforced.
5. To stop play, the defensive team must make the lead runner stop.
6. The distance from the front of the pitching rubber to the back of home plate will be at 40 feet.
7. Pitchers will be permitted to pitch three innings per game. However, once a pitcher is removed from the mound during an inning, he cannot return to the mound during that game. An inning will be counted if a single live pitch is thrown.
8. There is no penalty for balks however it is strongly recommended an umpire calls a balk and explains his call to the pitcher, but the result of the call is "no play." This approach is instructional and amounts to giving the pitcher a "warning" of what is an illegal maneuver. If the infraction is repeatedly made by a single pitcher, the umpire has the authority to remove the pitcher from the game as a pitcher only. Leniency will be stressed as this is a teaching/learning process.

Post-Game

1. Visitor team is responsible for dragging the field after the game. Both teams are also responsible for cleaning the dugout and emptying the trash in the dumpster.
2. All coaches need to make certain that all facilities are cleaned and locked up before leaving.

Officiating / Sportsmanship

1. The umpire has authority over the field of play, and has authority to eject coaches, assistant coaches, players, and spectators at any time while at the field of play. The league commissioner or field representative may be consulted to interpret local rules; however, the umpire's ruling is final.
2. The umpire may issue one warning prior to the start of the game for the following:
 - a. Any offensive language by the manager, players, or spectators.
 - b. Any team member throwing any piece of equipment or acting in an unsportsmanlike manner.
 - c. Any player throwing a bat will be called out.
3. Only head coaches are allowed on the field to discuss any call with the umpire. If needed, scorekeepers, assistant coaches, and / or the league's nightly field supervisor may be called in. The umpire, commissioner and field supervisor have the authority to eject coaches, assistant coaches, players, and spectators at any time while at the field of play. Any person ejected must leave the premises immediately. The incident will be referred to HYAA Board of Directors for further action at the discretion of the Board up to and including expulsion from the league.
4. Any coach, player or spectator exhibiting unsportsmanlike behavior (verbal or physical), or throwing any piece of equipment in an unsportsmanlike manner while at the field of play will be ejected. The incident will be referred to HYAA Board of Directors for further action at the discretion of the Board up to and including expulsion from the league.

Weather Policy

1. Coaches will decide the adverse weather policy for their own practices. For games, the coaches will communicate and let the commissioner know 2 hours before the game time, to allow adequate notification of parents.
2. When there is any lightning visible in the area, play will immediately stop and players will seek nearest shelter. After a minimum of 15 minutes from the last lightning strike, play may resume at the umpires' discretion, keeping safety of all the children at the highest priority.

End of Season Tournament Play

1. A post season double elimination tournament will be held with tournament seeds decided by items 3 & 4. Winners bracket is always the home team. The "If Necessary Game" home team will be determined by a coin toss 10 minutes prior to the start of the game.
2. Tournament games will be played with time limit & slaughter rules in effect however if tied when the time limit expires can be extended to determine a winner. Semifinals, finals, and world series will play, without a time limit, a regulation 6 inning game unless ended by slaughter rule, extended because of a tie score, or the home team is ahead leading into the bottom of the final inning.
3. A forfeited game results in a score of 5-0 for the winning team.
4. Determination of League Standings:
 - a. Win-Loss Record
 - b. Results of Head to Head Competition
 - c. Fewest Runs Allowed
 - d. Run Differential with a maximum of 10 per game
 - e. Coin Toss