Whitby Girls Softball Association

2023 House League Rules

Rule 1 – Playing Field and Divisional Game Times

1. The following playing field dimensions apply:

	Mite	Squirt	Novice	Bantam	Midget
Ball size	11 inch	11 inch	12 inch	12 inch	12 inch
Pitching distance	30 feet	38 feet	40 feet	43 feet	43 feet
Base paths	45 feet	55 feet	60 feet	60 feet	60 feet
Extended plate	Yes	Yes	No	No	No

2. All game times are as per the schedule below. No new inning is to start after curfew. If the curfew time is reached and the Home team is ahead, the last half of the inning need not be played.

	Mite	Squirt	Novice	Bantam	Midget
Game 1 Start Time **Game 2 Start Time**	6:15 p.m. -	6:30 p.m. -	6:30 p.m. -	7:00 p.m. 9:00 p.m.	7:00 p.m. 9:00 p.m.
Curfew time	7:45 p.m.	8:00 p.m.	8:00 p.m.	10:30 p.m.	10:30 p.m.
Maximum innings	5	7	7	7	7
Minimum innings for a regulation game	2	3	4	4	4

   - All Divisions – Once an inning is started the inning will be completed with the following exception:
     - In the last inning, if the Home team is ahead or goes ahead, the game is over.
   - A suspended or called game shall be considered regulation and complete as per the schedule.
   - The Scheduler, Division Convenor, Umpire, the WGSA Board or its assignee(s) may adjust these times as required (i.e., environmental conditions).

3. It is the responsibility of the Home team coach to declare a rain out, or a field unfit to play, until 90 minutes prior to the scheduled game. At this time, the host team Coach/Convenor or Scheduler is to advise their opponent's team Coach, the Convenor, and the Umpire Scheduler of the decision to cancel. After this time, the decision to cancel rests with the umpire at the diamond. For the current season, the Umpire Scheduler is Al Betts – contact at 905-809-6201.

4. Double Bag - Where a double bag is used at first base the batter-runner shall be declared safe if she contacts the orange part of the bag before a defensive player successfully completes an out by tagging the batter-runner with the ball or by contacting the white part of the bag. On balls hit to the outfield, when no play is being made at the double bag, the batter/runner may touch either portion of the base. The batter/runner, progressing through first base, shall not be declared safe until she has legally obtained a base and the umpire has called time. A batter/runner who contacts the orange part of the bag may progress to second base on her own initiative, and at her own risk, when a defensive player over-throws the base at first. It shall not be necessary for the batter/runner to tag the white part of the bag in the latter circumstance

Rule 2 – Equipment and Uniforms

1. No jewelry may be worn by players during warm-ups, practices, and games. A “Medic Alert” bracelet/necklace is the only exception. Note that metal hairclips are considered jewelry.
2. Equipment supplied by the WGSA is official. Equipment that is "Softball Canada, ASA 2000 or 2004, USA Softball certified, WBSC certified or ISF 2005 Approved" may be used. Hardball, baseball, Little League and T-Ball bats may not be used.
3. A player must be wearing their house league team sweater and long pants or ball shorts to participate in any game. The only hats/visors permitted are WGSA issued. Note that jeans, capri's or other pants with snaps or any metal adornments (e.g. tearaways, track pants with zippered legs, etc.), are not permitted as they could cause injury.
4. Team sweaters must be visible and tucked in or tied at the hip at all times during the game. However, at the discretion of the umpire sweaters or light jackets may be worn in inclement weather.
5. Players in all divisions must provide their own CSA-approved batting helmets with face mask and chin strap.
6. As per Softball Canada Rule 3 Section 6, all catchers must wear a mask, helmet, throat protector, shin pads, and chest protector. A pelvic protector is strongly recommended for all players. Any person catching for a pitcher warming up must wear an approved face mask.
7. Coaches must wear WGSA coaching shirts at all games.
8. Metal cleats are not allowed in any division. Only running shoes or plastic/rubber molded cleats are acceptable.
9. On field coaches, players and volunteers must wear fully enclosed shoes.

Rule 3 – Players and Call-ups

1. Only players registered with the WGSA may play. There is no exception under any circumstances.
2. All players who are present at the start of the game will be included in the batting order. Players arriving late will be added to the bottom of the batting order provided their team has not started through the batting order a second time.
3. If a player is sick or injured and cannot play a defensive or offensive position, she must be removed from the game but is not considered an "out". The player may re-enter provided they do so before a complete inning has passed. (i.e., if the player is injured in the middle of the 3rd inning she must return before the beginning of the 5th inning or she will not be eligible to play).
4. Fair Play Rule 1 – During the course of each game no player will sit a second inning until every player has sat at least one inning (and no player shall sit a third inning until all players have sat a second inning, etc.). Where it may be necessary for a player to sit more than 2 innings per game, due to the size of the team, the coach will distribute such requirements equally among players from game to game. For detail on Fair Play Rule 2, please see division specific rules.
5. Coaches will keep line-up sheets for every game, including any revisions, to verify compliance with any Fair Play rules. If either of the Fair Play rules are abused, it shall be brought to the attention of the Division Convenor for further action. Failure of a coach to comply with fair play rules may result in forfeiture of the game and/or suspension of the coach as determined by the Protest Committee. In the event of a breach of the fair-play rules during a game, time will be called and an opportunity to rectify the breach will be permitted, at that time. In the event that a resolution is not reached, the game is to be continued with the coach who initiated the complaint having the option to protest to the convener.
6. All coaches will use a standard line up form. A sample line up form will be provided at the beginning of the season and will be made available on the website. As requested by the convenor, this form must be available for review at any game.
7. All player call-ups must be approved by the convenor. The coach is responsible for notifying the convenor of their need for call-ups at the earliest opportunity. A player may only be called up if her regular team is not playing.
8. Call-ups may only come from the division immediately below and must be played. To avoid a default, if one team has sufficient players and additional call-ups, that coach will designate call-ups that are to be transferred to the opposing team. This is the essence of good sportsmanship. Any abuse of the call-up rule as deemed by the Convenor may result in forfeiture or the game may be replayed with board approval.
9. All Call-ups must use their regular team jersey from their own division.
10. All Call-ups used must be placed at the bottom of the batting order.
11. Any players playing Rep ball (or carded as a Rep player) during the current season are ineligible to play in the WGSA.

Rule 4 – The Game

1. If no umpire is available, the game will be cancelled.
2. Per inning mercy rule:
    - 4-run per inning mercy rule will apply for Mite, Squirt and Novice.
    - 5-run per inning mercy rule will apply for Bantam and Midget.
3. Intentional walks are not allowed in any division
4. Outfielders must stand on the outfield grass before the pitcher has released the ball. Infractions will be ruled as a "No Pitch".
5. Unlimited defensive substitution, including the pitcher and catcher, is allowed.
6. In the event of a default, and upon the desire of the teams, an exhibition game will be played to normal game time limit. A minimum of 16 registered players must be available to play. A score of 7-0 will be recorded against the defaulting team. If both teams have insufficient players (including call-ups), then both teams are considered in default and will be charged with a loss. This game will not be rescheduled.
7. For the Mite, Squirt and Novice divisions, each team can play with 10 defensive players (if available). The extra position shall be assigned to the outfield. For the Bantam and Midget divisions, each team can play with a maximum of 9 defensive players (if available).
8. Only a WGSA coach (wearing a WGSA coaching shirt) may address an umpire. Only 3 coaches are allowed in the dugout or bench area. The scorekeeper will reside in a designated area near the dugout. An adult volunteer is only allowed to assist with controlling the players off the field if one of the official team coaches is absent.
9. The Home team score sheet is the official record of the game.
10. Both teams are to report the score to the Convener within 24 hours of completion of the game.

Rule 5 – General

1. All coaches must adhere to the WGSA Vulnerable Sector Check Policy. This includes any adult volunteers if they are performing team duties on a regular/consistent basis.
2. All coaches are accountable to the Division Convenor and the Protest Committee. Any controversy regarding the application or interpretation of these rules must be announced in the form of a protest to the game umpire before the next pitch occurs and then referred to the Protest Committee, whose decision shall be final. Referral must be made through the Division Convenor in writing following the game in question.
3. The Umpire shall have complete discretion and decision concerning the conduct of any game and shall be given a copy of these rules by the umpire in chief prior to the commencement of the game. The coaches have a responsibility to remind the umpire of any division specific rules prior to the start of the game and may not be ejected for showing league rules to the Umpire.
4. Softball Canada rules shall govern the conduct of any game except where house league rules, as per above, have amended Softball Canada rules.
5. In an effort to ensure that Select players honour their house league commitments Select players who miss a house league game may be ineligible for their next select team tournament unless

and until the player receives permission from their House League Division Convener to participate.

6. Final standing tie breaker rules will be as follow (and in order) if 2 teams are tied:
    1. Head to Head between tied teams
    2. Run Differential in all the games played (runs scored less runs allowed)
    3. Total runs allowed in all games played
    4. Total runs scored in all games played
    5. Flip of a coin
    6. If 3 or more teams are tied, points 2 through 5 will be used to determine final standings.

Rule 6 – Playoffs

All the aforementioned rules are in effect except as follows:

1. The team finishing lower in the division standings will set up the diamond. "Home team" will be decided prior to the start of the game by a coin toss.
2. If a playoff game is tied after regulation or the time limit, the game will continue inning by inning until the tie is broken subject to the umpire's decision. A tiebreaker rule will be used where a team's last out in the previous inning will start as a runner on second base.

Rule 7 – Division-Specific

	Mite	Squirt	Novice
Minimum players	A team must start and finish a game with a minimum of 8 players, and in case of injury finish with 7 players. Of the 8 players starting the game, at least 6 must be from the official team roster.		
Maximum call-ups	A maximum of 3 players may be called-up for any game.		
Base stealing	Base stealing is not allowed. In addition, a player may not leave the bag until the ball is hit.	A runner may not steal a base until the ball crosses home plate or into foul territory after a pitch.	A runner may not steal a base until the ball leaves the pitcher's hand.
Infield fly	The infield fly rule is not applicable.		
Dropped 3rd strike	The dropped 3rd strike rule is not in effect. On a third strike, whether the ball is caught or not the batter is out.		Dropped 3rd strike rule is in effect.
Walked batter	During 5 pitch portion of season – there are no walked batters. During competitive pitching portion of season – A called "ball 4" will be a 1 base award for the batter-runner who may not steal another base on that play. However, all other players may advance at their own risk	A called "ball 4" will be a 1 base award for the batter-runner who may not steal another base on that play. However, all other players may advance at their own risk.	N/A
Catcher pinch run	If the catcher is on base with 1 out or 3 runs in, the coach must ask for time out to replace her with pinch runner. The pinch runner must be the player furthest from batting in the order.	If the catcher is on base with 2 outs or 3 runs in, the coach must ask for time out to replace her with pinch runner. The pinch runner must be the player furthest from batting in the order.	
Positional fair play	Coaches will alternate players between infield and outfield positions on an equitable basis throughout the game. No player will play the outfield a second time before all the other players have played in the outfield at least once, subsequently no player will play outfield a third time until all players have played outfield a second time. No player will play the same position more than twice in a game.		
Outfield plays	Outfielders must throw the ball to an infielder to make a play; outfielders cannot make a play at a base on their own.		
Defensive coaching	One defensive coach is permitted in the outfield (behind the players) during the game.	N/A	
Batting	During the competitive portion of season – 1) The batter will start with a count of 0 balls and 1 strike. 2) A fairly hit ball for a single will receive a one-base award provided no outs were made on the play. At the time of the hit, runners move at their own risk and only advance without risk of being put on the award when forced.	N/A	

	Mite	Squirt	Novice
Pitching / Catching	• The season will be split into 2 parts – first 4 weeks utilizing 5-pitch rules and from week 5 onwards we shift to "competitive pitching. <u>5-Pitch</u> • For the 1st 4 weeks of the season, coaches will pitch (with "five pitch" rules, as outlined below) to their own team for the first 2 innings of the game. In the 3rd inning, players will pitch to their own team. If a 4th inning is necessary, the coach will pitch to their own team. <u>5- Pitch rules</u> • Batters will be granted 5 pitches to hit a fair ball or will be declared out. • There will be no walks issued. • The defensive player in the pitching position must stand on either side of the offensive pitcher until the pitch is released. If the coach is hit with a batted ball it will immediately be called dead and will be counted as a pitch or swing against the batter. If a pitcher makes a play in the 3rd inning, it is a dead ball and will not be counted as a pitch or swing against the batter. <u>Competitive Pitch</u> • From week 5 of the season onwards <u>Competitive Pitch Rules</u> • A maximum of 2 appearances per game per pitcher or catcher, with no consecutive inning. • The earliest that a pitcher or catcher of the 1st or 2nd inning can make her 2nd appearance is the 4th inning. The earliest that a pitcher or catcher of the 2nd inning can make her 2nd appearance is the 5th inning. • One pitch is considered as an appearance or inning pitched (or an inning caught). • If the pitcher hits 3 batters in one inning, she must be replaced for that inning. • A pitcher must wear a pitching mask or helmet with a cage. • A call-up is not allowed to pitch the first inning.	• A maximum of 3 appearances per game per pitcher or catcher, with no more than 2 appearances in consecutive innings. • The earliest that a pitcher or catcher of the 1st or 2nd inning can make her 3rd appearance is the 5th inning. The earliest that a pitcher or catcher of the 3rd or 4th inning can make her 3rd appearance is the 6th inning. • One pitch is considered as an appearance or inning pitched (or an inning caught). • If the pitcher hits 3 batters in one inning, she must be replaced for that inning. • A pitcher must wear a pitching mask or helmet with a cage. • A call-up is not allowed to pitch the first inning.	• A maximum of four (4) appearances per game per pitcher or catcher, with no more than 2 appearances in consecutive innings. • The earliest that a pitcher or catcher can make her 3rd appearance is the 5th inning. The earliest that a pitcher or catcher of the 3rd or 4th inning can make her 3rd appearance is the 6th inning. • One pitch is considered as an appearance • If the pitcher hits 3 batters in one inning, she must be replaced for that inning. • A pitcher must wear a pitching mask or helmet with a cage. • A call-up is not allowed to pitch the first inning.

	Bantam	Midget
Minimum players	A team must start and finish a game with a minimum of 8 players, and in case of injury finish with 7 players. Of the 8 players starting the game, at least 6 must be from the official team roster.	
Maximum call-ups	A maximum of 4 players may be called-up for any game.	
Infield fly	Infield fly rule is in effect.	
Dropped 3rd strike	Dropped 3rd strike rule is in effect.	
Catcher pinch run	If the catcher is on base with 2 outs or 3 runs in, the coach may ask for time out to replace her with pinch runner. The pinch runner must be the player furthest from batting in the order.	
Pitching / Catching	• A maximum of five (5) appearances per game per pitcher. A pitcher cannot pitch more than three consecutive (3) innings. • The earliest that a pitcher can make her 4th appearance is the 6th inning. • The earliest that a pitcher can make her 5th appearance is the 7th inning. • Similar rules apply to the catching position. • A call-up is not allowed to pitch the first inning.	N/A