

Cortland Softball League

2016 12U Majors Division Rules

General Rules

1. Prior to each game, batting orders must be exchanged and recorded into the respective scorebooks.
2. All players must remain on the bench or in the out of bounds area when not batting or on deck
3. Coaches are not permitted in the playing field.
4. No game shall be started without a minimum of 8 players on a team. A forfeit can be called, however we are here for the children so do your best to work it out.
Forfeits require a full game fee for the umpire.
5. If at game time an umpire is not present, a substitute (agreed on by both coaches) can be used or the game can be made up.
6. Catchers must wear proper equipment, even when warming up.
7. Pitchers are required to wear an infield mask. It is strongly recommended that the entire infield wear one.
8. The home team is responsible for paying the umpire.

Game Rules

1. The time limit is one hour and forty-five minutes (1 hr. 45 min.) from the **actual** game's start time. Exception: if the umpire arrives late, the time limit begins when the game is started. No new inning shall start after the one hour and forty-five minutes have elapsed.
2. Ten players on the field, the short fielder **must** stay in the outfield.
3. All players must be in the batting order whether they played in the inning or not. Pinch-hitting is not allowed. No batting out of order.
4. Free substitution for defensive positions.
5. Bunting is allowed.
6. No infield fly rule.

7. One base on an overthrow that goes out of bounds. An overthrown ball in the playing field is live until returned to the pitcher's circle.
 - a. NOTE: On overthrown balls begun by a batted ball (i.e. balls overthrown in attempt to make a defensive play), runners may attempt to take as many bases as they desire, provided the ball is still within play and not within the pitching circle. Once the ball is within the pitching circle, no further advancement can be made other than the base they may be in the process of reaching at the time, and if the ball is out of play, it becomes a dead ball and the appropriate out of play advancement is instituted.
8. Runners may not leave the base (lead or steal) until the ball has crossed the plate.
9. Runners may steal 2nd or 3rd base, if there is an overthrow, the runner may advance to another base.
 - a. Stealing Home: Runners on 3rd base may steal home only after the ball crosses the plate AND the catcher makes a clean catch or stop (keeps ball in front of her). In this case, the ball remains live and the runner may steal home before the ball is returned to the pitching circle. If the catcher fails to cleanly catch or stop the ball, the runner may not advance home.
 - b. If the catcher throws the ball back to the pitcher and it is overthrown or mishandled by the pitcher and ends up outside of the circle, the ball is live and the runner on 3rd base is allowed to steal home.
 - c. Also, if the ball is intentionally thrown to any other location on the field outside of the pitching circle, the runner on third may attempt to steal home if she desires. This includes when a ball is thrown by the catcher to 2nd base, if a runner is trying to steal 2nd.
10. A team may NOT steal once they are up by 10 runs.
11. We will not honor the dropped third strike rule.
12. A pitcher must start with both feet in contact with the rubber and must have her pivot foot (right foot for a right handed pitcher) in contact with the rubber until the ball leaves her hand.
13. A pitcher may leave the game and return in later innings as long as she doesn't appear in more than three (3) innings per game. **One pitch thrown in an inning constitutes an inning of pitching.**
 - a. In the course of the game, if a team in the field has used their first pitcher for the maximum 3 innings, and their second pitcher is having difficulty throwing strikes (5+ consecutive walks), the two coaches could agree to allow that team to return their first pitcher to the game. This rule is contingent on agreement from **both** coaches. *It is expected that there will be an element of sportsmanship here – this is not endorsing a team to bring back a “speed” pitcher to control the game in their favor. This is also assuming that there is no 3rd pitcher option.* This rule will apply to regular season games, as well as play-off games.

14. For the safety of all players, any pitcher who hits 3 batters in a game **must** immediately be removed from the pitching position for the rest of the game (she may play any other position). Hit by Pitch (HBP) is determined by the umpire – i.e., at the umpire’s discretion, the batter has made a legitimate effort to avoid being hit by the ball. Coaches should review this rule with the umpire before each game.
15. Pitching distance is 40 feet – no exceptions.
16. There will be a mercy rule of 5 runs per inning. The inning shall end once a team has scored the maximum number of runs. Continuous plays are not allowed. It is the responsibility of the coaches to stop their base runners once the inning run rule has been reached. If time allows, the sixth inning (and ONLY the 6th inning) is an unlimited-run inning.
17. The “mercy rule” for the game is 15 runs. The game will end **any time** after the losing team is behind by 15 runs **and** has batted four (4) times. This update was mandated by the Greater Lowell Umpire’s Association.

Example 1: If the home team were ahead by a score of 15-5 going into the BOTTOM of the fourth inning, the game would end if the home team were to score 5 runs (thus putting them ahead by 15 and the LOSING team would have batted four times).

Example 2: If the visiting team is leading 15-5 after four full innings, the game would continue but could end immediately if the visitors scored 5 runs in the top of the 5th inning. In this case, the visitors would be ahead by 15 runs and the LOSING team (the home team) would have already batted the minimum 4 times.

18. Cheering for your own team is highly encouraged. Teamwork and building an enjoyable experience for all the girls in the league is our desired goal. However, there comes a time when the line can be crossed and it is up to the coaches and the umpire to be aware of the incidents and to try to maintain a level playing field for both teams. This issue is not only between girls from both teams, it involves coaches and parents. Negative cheers about the other team should not be tolerated. Sudden noises (shouts, horns, foot-stomping, "swing", or other noise making devices) shall not be tolerated. Yelling things like "good pitch", "ball", "strike", etc. is not allowed until after the pitch is over and has been called by the umpire. These are manipulative techniques intended to influence the batter and the umpire. **This should not need to be a rule – it is sportsmanship and etiquette.** Coaches are responsible for adherence to this etiquette for themselves, their other coaches, their players AND their players’ parents.
19. The catcher may attempt to throw out a runner at any base who has led off that base too far. In the event that the catcher makes an errant throw to the base, runners may advance until the ball is returned to the pitching circle.