

## Framingham Girls Fastpitch Softball

Junior B League - Grades 3 and 4

2018 Season - Approved April 3, 2017 Revised April 2018

### 2018 Season Highlights

Continuing important initiatives from last year, our goal is to keep games moving. In the league rules, we have highlighted USA SOFTBALL rules which are designed for pace of game improvements. We are instructing the coaches to use good judgement in enforcing these rules, but to keep them in mind if there are delays between innings or getting play started or restarted. Coaches bear most of the responsibility for keeping things moving, therefore, here are some suggestions:

- Use a courtesy runner for the catcher when there are 2 outs.
- When the catcher is not on base, at bat, or on deck, she should have all of her gear on and be ready to take the field.
- If a catcher is not ready when the offensive half inning ends, make sure a coach or other CORI'd adult assists the catcher in getting ready.
- During the offensive half inning, all players going to the field on defense in the next half inning should be told of their position before the 2<sup>nd</sup> out or well before the run limit is reached.

A regulation game is 5 innings. There is a 4 run limit for all innings with the exception of the last inning, which is either the 5<sup>th</sup> inning or the declared last inning by the coaches due to the time limit being close. The time limit has 2 parts: no inning may start after 1:45 has passed; the game is over when 2:00 is reached. If the 2:00 time is reached and an inning has not ended (top and bottom), the score reverts to the previous completed inning.

Stealing is permitted in Junior B in a limited way as outlined in Rule 8M.

Runners may only advance a maximum of one base on an overthrow. Umpires will award one base automatically on a ball that travels out of play on an overthrow. Additionally, an overthrow in play, the ball is live, but a maximum of one base may be taken.

The infield fly is not in effect for Junior B.

Batters may not advance to 1<sup>st</sup> base on a dropped 3<sup>rd</sup> strike: the batter is out.

Safety considerations: No jewelry is permitted on players participating in the game. This includes, earrings, other piercings, rings, necklaces, bracelets (including cloth). No taping of jewelry is permitted. Umpires have been instructed to remove players from the game for this. If they remove the jewelry, they may return.

\*Medical ID Jewelry (such as a bracelet or a necklace) is permitted.

Batting helmets are no longer required to have chin straps. Chin straps are permitted, but not required.

Fielding masks are not required, but we recommend use of these for pitchers and infielders. We do have some available in equipment bags and in the shed at Walsh for use during games.

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## **Junior B League Home Rules and Regulations**

The Framingham Girls Fastpitch Softball league will abide by all rules and regulations as stated under GIRLS FAST PITCH SOFTBALL, 18 and under in the Amateur Softball (USA SOFTBALL) rule book.

Framingham home rules are as follows:

### **Zero Tolerance Policy**

Please refer to policy at [www.framinghamsoftball.org](http://www.framinghamsoftball.org)

### **1. Age Grouping and Roster**

- a. Junior B League teams will consist of 3rd and 4th grade players
- b. On a case by case basis, players in lower grades may be placed on a roster based on skill level determined by the league

### **2. General**

- a. Junior B play is intended to continue instruction and introduce playing rules and strategies
- b. USA SOFTBALL umpires will be used in Junior B games
- c. Any playing rules listed below may be modified during the season by agreement of all coaches at the Junior B level, the Junior B league director, and the FGFS Board of Directors.
- d. Coaches will use discretion in the playing of their games.

### **3. Coaches**

- a. One coach, no more than three assistant coaches, and one scorekeeper are permitted per team. These are the only approved adults allowed on the field and in the bench area.
- b. Coaches and Assistants **MUST** attend initial coaches meeting to review rules prior to the season and must complete an interview, pass the CORI process, submit a signed Code of Conduct form, and must be registered by the league with USA Softball.
- c. Practice field assignments to be made by the league

### **4. General Pre Game Rules**

- a. All week-day games will start at 6:00 PM unless the board defers the time to play under the lights.
- b. A team not fielding 7 players 15 minutes after the designated start time shall forfeit the game.
- c. If the number of players drops below 7 players during a game, a forfeit must be taken even if an injury or a player ejection occurs.
- d. Coaches and/or umpires can call a game due to unsafe conditions once a game begins. Coaches and umpires are expected to err on the side of safety.
- e. Both Home and Visiting team coaches are responsible for field set up and takedown - including foul lines, bases and scoreboard. Field must be ready for play no later than 10 minutes prior to scheduled game time.
- f. All players and coaches must present all equipment for inspection by 15 minutes prior to game time. This involves placing all bats and helmets outside of the dugout fence.
- g. Visiting team takes infield at 5:35-5:45, or appropriate timeframe related to actual start time.
- h. Home team takes infield at 5:45-5:55, or appropriate timeframe related to actual start time.
- i. Coaches will discuss all ground rules with the umpire at Homeplate prior to the game. Ground rules include field rules set by the town, including items such as curfews.
- j. Home coaches are responsible for reporting final scores to the league (website).

### **5. Uniforms and Helmet Rules**

- a. Junior B league players must wear an approved batting helmet with a secured face mask. Fastened chin straps are not required but are permitted and encouraged

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- b. Pitchers are required to wear face masks/shields while pitching.
- c. For player safety, fielding/pitching masks for infielders and pitchers are strongly recommended but not required. Note: The league has masks for use during games in the equipment sheds and bags.
- d. All players must wear a league issued uniform shirt, and their own softball pants or shorts.
- e. All League uniforms shirts are required and must be tucked in.
- f. Sliding shorts, sliding pad on the leg and a visor are recommended but not mandatory.
- g. All hair should be pulled back
- h. No jewelry is permitted on any player participating in the game. If jewelry is discovered, the umpire will remove the player from the game. All applicable substitution rules will apply. Jewelry includes, but is not limited to, earrings, necklaces, bracelets, and any other non-clothing item worn on the wrists, ankles, or neck. The jewelry rule is non-negotiable. Note: A player may return to the game once the jewelry is removed, provided they comply with applicable substitution rules.**  
**\*Medical ID jewelry (such as a bracelet or necklace) is permitted.**
- i. Mouth guards are highly recommended for all players.

### 6. Player Rules

- a. Each Junior B player shall play a minimum of 3 defensive innings, sitting no more than 1 consecutive inning. The minimum play rule should be considered early in the season because of darkness.
- b. A continuous batting order is to be used consisting of all players present at the game.
- c. Players arriving after the start of the game, must be added to the end of the batting order.
- d. Discretionary benching of a player is allowed. The coach must notify the opposing coach as to such occurrences before the start of or during the game.
- e. If, in the judgment of coaches and the umpire, an injury that requires immediate medical attention occurs, the ball is immediately called dead and the player is attended to. Placement of runners and batters is at the umpire's discretion.
- f. If for any reason a team is playing with fewer than the number of players that started the game, as long as the total remains at 7 or above, the team will not be assessed an automatic out.

### 7. Pitching Rules

- a. Junior B Pitchers may pitch 3 innings per game, regardless of how many games per week are played.
- b. The starting pitcher and the first reliever only can be re-inserted once during a game at the Junior B Level.
- c. No other pitcher may be reinserted as a pitcher once removed from that position.
- d. One pitch constitutes one inning pitched.
- e. For pitching distance, see section 8

### 8. Playing Rules

- a. A full game is 5 innings.
- b. No inning shall start after 1:45 has passed. The umpire will notify both coaches when the last inning is starting.
- c. After 2 hours has passed, the game is over.
- d. If an inning is not concluded, the score will revert back to the score at the end of the last completed inning.
  - i. **NOTE:** All playoff games will be played to completion with no time limit. Every effort **must** be made to keep playoff games moving.
- e. 10 Field Players are allowed on defense at the Junior B level.
- f. A short outfielder or fourth outfielder may be placed in the outfield only and may move until the pitch leaves the pitcher's hand.

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- g. Pitching distance is 32-35 feet. Coaches measure and approve placement of the pitching rubber. We allow for a variance to accommodate the strength of pitcher's arms in the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> grade.
- h. Base distance is 55 feet.
- i. Player-pitchers cannot walk a batter.
  - i. If the count on a batter goes to 4 balls, a coach will pitch the remainder of the at bat.
  - ii. When a coach takes over pitching, the count will be the lesser of the actual count or 2 balls and 1 strike.
  - iii. A coach pitching cannot walk a batter. The batter must hit or strike out.
- j. If a batter is hit by a pitch, the ball is dead and the pitch counts as a ball on the batter with no advance allowed.
- k. All innings will have a 4 run limit.
- l. Run Ahead rule for FGFS. All games will be played to completion or time limit.
- m. The final declared inning by the umpire will be an unlimited run inning.
- n. Junior B Level - Runners are allowed to leave (lead) the base when the ball leaves the pitcher's hand.
- o. Stealing is an introductory skill at Junior B.
  - i. Maximum of 2 steals per team per inning
  - ii. Maximum of 1 steal per runner per inning
  - iii. Runners may not advance more than one base on a steal
  - iv. No stealing of home
- p. Runners at the Junior B Level may not advance from third to home on a wild pitch or passed ball.
- q. Overthrows are governed by the USA Softball rulebook and enforced by the umpire
- r. Teams will have 1 minute between innings. Pitchers may throw no more than 5 warm up pitches within the 1 minute time frame. 1 minute starts upon the 3<sup>rd</sup> out of the prior half inning or the end of the play in which the run limit is reached. Umpires will use discretion.
- s. No protesting of a judgment call is allowed.
- t. The head coach only may ask for a clarification to the umpire related to a call when it involves an interpretation of a rule.
- u. A suspended game is an official game if 4 complete innings or 3 ½ innings (home team ahead) are played.
- v. Games called because of darkness or inclement weather revert to the score after the last complete inning.
- w. Dropped Third Strike Rule does not apply. Once the batter gets three strikes, she is out and cannot advance to first base on a dropped pitch.
- x. Infield Fly Rule does not apply
- y. Bunting is allowed at the Junior B level. Batter may not fake bunt and then swing away. Batter is out.

### 9. Playoffs

- a) All teams qualify for the playoffs.
- b) Schedule TBD
- c) Players not playing in a minimum of 75% of the games during the regular season will not be eligible for the playoffs unless an injury or similar has prevented that player from playing. This will be determined on a case by case basis and ruled on by the league chairman. At the coach's discretion - coaches may also exclude a player from playoff eligibility for failure to attend practice sessions and/or other behavior deemed detrimental to the team or the league.
- d) Playoff rules and schedule are subject to review and modification by the Board.