

# Marcellus Optimist Youth Softball

## Ponies "B" League Rules

### GAME TIME LIMIT

No new inning shall start after 7:50. We would like games to end by 8:10 pm at the latest. A game shall last 6 innings or 2 hours. A game IS considered complete if 3 ½ or 4 innings are completed.

### 5 RUN PER INNING RULE

Continuous batting order will be used. Players arriving late should be added to the end of the batting order. If a player is injured while on base, she will be replaced by the last batter who is not on base at the time of injury. A half-inning will be completed after five runs are scored or three outs are made. In a half-inning if after four runs are scored a situation occurs in which more than one run would score only the fifth run will be counted. EXCEPTION: There is no run scoring limit in the top and bottom of the **sixth inning (or the last inning if six will not be played.)**

### PLAYING TIME & SUBSTITUTION

The field will be set with 6 infielders and 4 outfielders. Outfielders need to play in the outfield. You cannot exceed 6 players in the infield. Every player must play in AT LEAST 2 consecutive innings. You can start a game with 1, 2 or 3 outfielders (7, 8 or 9 total players). If you have less than 7 players, it is considered a forfeit but you may still "scrimmage".

If you know you are going to be short players, you may secure a substitute player from your own league or the league directly below you. The substitute must be a registered player for your league. If you are securing substitutes, you should not exceed 9 players for that game. A substitute should not be used to pitch.

\*\*All teams participating this year are going to a grade level system rather than age based.\*\*

## MAXIMUM INNINGS PER PITCHER

For 2021 we are suspending the pitch limit rule. Be mindful of your players and do not overuse them.

## INFIELD FLY RULE

There is no infield fly rule. The defense must catch the ball for it to be an out.

## PITCHING DISTANCE

The ball (11 in.) shall be pitched from a distance of 35 feet. A pitching rubber or chalk line will mark the distance. Pitchers should start with one foot on the pitching rubber. They may not "walk into" the pitch. If a team's pitcher is having difficulty getting the ball to the plate, the 2 coaches should conference and agree to any variation of this.

## PITCHING PROCEDURES

To help transition from coach-pitch to B league, coaches WILL pitch to batters in the first 3 innings of each game. However, if coaches from both teams agree, you can have the kids pitch the whole game or only do 2 innings of coach pitch starting in week 3. Coaches need to pitch from 34-35 feet. (It is not coach pitch where we lob it in!) Coaches can NOT walk their own batters but they can strike them out. **If the batter swings at 3 pitches and does not hit the ball, she is out. There are no called strikes when the coach is pitching.** If a coach is having a hard time throwing strikes, please ask for assistance from the other coach or a parent. We are not trying to strike out our own players.

After this, the player will pitch to each batter. If the bases are loaded and the batter walks, at that time her coach will come in and pitch (from 35 feet) until the batter reaches base or is put out. They will have a new pitch count. **If the batter swings at 3 pitches and does not hit the ball, she is out.** There will be no bunting OR stealing when the coach is pitching.

A player removed as a pitcher may pitch again in the same game, providing she remains in the game defensively when removed from the mound. However, she may only return to the mound once per inning. A pitcher is not considered removed when a coach comes in to pitch.

### STRIKE ZONE

We will play with an extended strike zone. Umpires are expected to call strikes on a pitched ball deemed hittable (umpire's judgment) with usual effort from a batter. Batters should stay in the batter's box unless they are avoiding being hit by a pitch. We want batters offering at hittable pitches! We are not encouraging "walks".

### BASE STEALING

Runners must not leave the base until the pitched ball reaches the batter. To help develop catchers and encourage them to throw, base stealers will not be able to advance beyond the base that they intended to steal, even if the ball is misplayed, overthrown, etc. Runners will NOT be able to steal home. Runners may NOT steal when a coach is pitching to a batter.

Base stealing WILL be phased in by week 3. For weeks 1 & 2, there will not be base stealing.

### CIRCLE VIOLATION

The circle violation will be in effect. Please explain this rule to all team members, parents, etc... When a runner is off a base after a pitch or as a result of a batter completing a turn at bat, and while the pitcher has the ball within the 8-foot radius circle, the runner must IMMEDIATELY attempt to advance to the next base or return to the previous base. Once the runner had decided which base to move toward she must not hesitate or change direction unless a play is made on her. A fake throw as determined by the umpire IS considered an attempted play.

Basically, when the pitcher has the ball in the circle—the runner has to go back to the base or try to steal the next base. She made not stay off and “dance” around to try to bait the pitcher.

## BUNTING

Bunting will be allowed. A bunt is a batted ball not swung at, but intentionally met with the bat and tapped slowly. For the protection of the first and third base players, there will be no instances in which a batter shows a bunt and then swings away. If this happens, the ball will be called dead, batter will be called out, and runner(s) will return to the base(s) they were on at the time of the pitch. Fake bunting and NOT hitting is allowed. (In a base stealing situation) There is no bunting when a coach is pitching.

STANDINGS :Standings will be kept for the purpose of play-offs. Scores should be reported as soon as possible to the league coordinator &/or president.