

## **2023 Coaches Pitch Baseball League Rules**

*The development and display of Christian character is a major focus of this program. Therefore, good sportsmanship is expected from all players, coaches, parents and spectators. It will be the responsibility of all coaches and umpires to assure that this attitude is maintained at all games and practices. This is, first and foremost, the greatest attribute of our program and “must” be adhered to.*

### 1. Games

- a. Each game will begin with a prayer led by one of the coaches or the umpire.
- b. A game will be forfeited if a team cannot field seven (7) of their team's players within 10 minutes of the scheduled game time. Games that start late are still under the same time limits and the time will be started when the game would have started if all players were present.
- c. Games will be a maximum of six (6) innings or 1 hour and 15 minutes in length.
- d. No new inning will start after 1 hour and 10 minutes of time. If the home team is ahead and there is still time, they will be allowed to hit until the time limit is reached.
- e. An inning consists of three (3) outs or until the seventh (7) run scores.
- f. The inning is officially over after the 7th run scores, thus no additional runs will count towards the final score. The play should be allowed to finish and may be used for team and/or individual statistics. The exception to this rule is the 6<sup>th</sup> inning. There is no run limit in the 6<sup>th</sup> inning (if a team is down by seven (7) or more runs, the team has the chance to score additional runs).
- g. Decisions of the umpire are final! No protests will be allowed. However, Head Coaches may get explanations of the call from the umpire.
- h. A SOAR representative (Executive Director, other Staff Members, or the umpire may determine if the game should be suspended due to safety of the players (weather, etc.).

### 2. Fielding

- a. A team may use 10 players in the field, but 4 of them need to be outfielders.
- b. No rovers or defensive shifts are allowed. The standard positions must be honored.
- c. No more than 2 coaches can be on the field while their team is on defense. The coaches are not allowed on the infield. One additional coach is allowed in foul territory but must stand next to the fence adjacent to their dugout. All other coaches must be outside the field of play.
- d. The player in the pitcher's circle must stay within 3 feet of the pitcher's mound, regardless of where the opposing coach stands to pitch.
- e. There is NO in-field fly rule.
- f. If a player on the fielding team has control of the ball in the infield, the player with the ball may raise their hands and call for time-out from the umpire. The umpire will use his/her discretion to determine if time-out should be granted. If so, all

runners who have not progressed at least half way to the next base will be required to go back to their base.

### 3. Catchers

- a. Player catchers are required. Even if a team is playing shorthanded, a player must play catcher.
- b. For speed of play, the inning can start while the catcher is getting their gear on.
- c. The catcher is required to wear a helmet with a face mask on it as well as the chest protector. The leg guards are strongly recommended but optional.

### 4. Pitching

- a. Coaches will pitch to their own team.
- b. There will be no pitcher's circle and coaches should pitch at whatever distance (within reason) they're comfortable pitching from based on their personal pitching ability and the talent level of their kids.
- c. Coaches are encouraged to pitch overhand but may pitch underhand to any player that may need such a pitch.
- d. Coaches must avoid contact with the ball and must move to foul territory once the batter hits the ball.
- e. If the pitching coach is struck with a hit, it becomes a foul ball. If it was the 7<sup>th</sup> pitch, the batter will get one more pitch.

### 5. Batting

- a. All players must be in the batting lineup.
- b. A batter must wear a batting helmet while in the batter's box.
- c. A batter will be out when the strike count reaches four (4); however, a batter cannot strike out with a foul ball.
- d. A batter may NOT bunt; however full swing hits where the ball doesn't go very far are allowed.
- e. A batter will get a maximum of seven (7) pitches. If after 7 pitches the batter has not hit the ball, he/she will be called out. (Encourage players to swing at last pitch). If the player fouls off the 7th pitch, the batter is still out.
- f. A player is given one (1) warning for "slinging" a bat. The next time the player slings that bat, the player may be called out. This decision is based on the umpire's discretion.

### 6. Base Running

- a. All runners must remain on base until the ball has been hit.
- b. A runner forcing contact with a defensive player with no effort to avoid contact with that player may be called out.
- c. Base runners must slide on close plays at 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, or home plate. The umpire has the right to call out a runner who doesn't slide on a close play.

- d. In an overthrow situation a runner may only advance one base. If, however, the fielding team tries to throw out the advancing runner and it leads to another overthrow, the runner may advance one base again.
- e. All offensive players must wear batting helmets when they are on the field of play (running bases, on-deck, batting, etc.), until they return to the dugout.

#### 7. General

- a. All players that are bleeding or have an open wound must be removed from the game until the bleeding stops and the wound is properly bandaged.
- b. Profanity will not be allowed.
- c. Coaches, players, and spectators alike should be encouraged to applaud the efforts of the opposing players.
- d. As a display of good sportsmanship, teams shall shake hands with opposing teammates, coaches and umpires following each game.
- e. Each game is required to have a score keeper. The home team's score is the official score.
- f. The Umpire has the freedom to stop the game at any time on his/her preference to have teams huddle and pray and may include parents (stay in stands), to refocus why they are out there and to calm a situation down before it escalates.

#### 8. Equipment

- a. Helmets are recommended to have chin straps.
- b. Helmets are recommended to have facemasks
- c. Bats must not exceed 2 5/8" in diameter.

#### 9. Sportsmanship/Fair Play. As a Christian league we have extra rules to promote Christlikeness in our attitudes and games.

- a. Each player should play no more than one more inning than all others on the team; conversely, every player should not sit on the bench more than one more inning than all others on the team. No player, nor position is exempt from this rule.
- b. Coaches are strongly encouraged to rotate players between positions, both infield and outfield. Please consider the child's safety when placing them at certain positions.
- c. After a player has hit two home runs in the same game, they must stop for a max of a double for all future at bats.
- d. After a team gets up by 10 runs, no aggressive base-running is allowed. At this point, we want the offense to earn their runs by hits rather than taking advantage of the other team's lack of throwing and catching skill. While it is exhaustive to cover what constitutes aggressive base running, a common-sense approach is to be used. Any head coach who feels the other team is violating this rule shall call timeout and have a meeting with the umpire and the opposing team's head coach. If the umpire agrees the rule has been violated, then a warning will be given to the violating team. If the rule is violated a second time, the coach will be

asked to leave the field of play. If the rule is violated a third time, the team will forfeit the game.

Coaches Pitch League Guidelines – Revised 10/10/22