

Denville PAL Softball

2016 Rules

Updated: March 19, 2016

INSTRUCTIONAL DIVISION

1. The Instructional Division (grades 3-4) will follow the current ASA rule book except where modified below.
2. Game Length: all games shall be six innings in length. All rules in the ASA rule book pertaining to length of the game should be modified by one less inning to reflect the shorter game.
3. Time Limit: No game will be played for more than 2 hours, the umpire shall keep the clock. No new inning shall start 1 hour and 45 minutes after the start of the game if another game is scheduled afterwards on the same field. If no other game is scheduled, a new inning may be started at 1 hour and 45 minutes if both coaches agree.
 - The game starts at the end of the coach/umpire meeting at home plate. A new inning starts immediately after the final out of the previous inning.
 - At the coaches' discretion, with two outs in any inning, a pinch runner may be used for the catcher to keep the game going. The runner will be the player who made last out.
4. The inning is over when three outs are recorded or after 8 runs are scored, whichever comes first.
 - In the last inning, three outs must be recorded.
5. Mercy rule: 10 runs after four innings (31/2 if home team is winning).
 - The winning team is encouraged to continue playing the game as long as the losing team agrees so all the girls have more opportunities to play.
 - If the losing team agrees to continue playing, the final score and winner is determined at the time the mercy rule is invoked. Any play after the mercy rule is considered a scrimmage.
 - The umpire shall continue to officiate at the umpire's discretion.
6. The umpire may determine if an inning other than the 6th will be the last inning based on both available daylight and the "game time limitation" rule and will notify coaches so they may plan accordingly.
 - If the teams are then able to play an additional inning within the "game time limitation" rule and sufficient daylight exists, they shall continue to play.
 - The umpire will have the final decision on calling games due to rain or darkness.
7. If a game is called in the middle of an inning due to weather or darkness, then the score will revert back to the score at the end of the last inning unless the home team is tied or winning. If the home team is tied or winning when the game is called, then that will be the final score.

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8. Players: Teams must have a minimum of eight players to play. A 20 minute grace period will be given only if a team has less than eight players.
 - Only players rostered to that team may play. No 'guest' players are allowed.
 - Each girl on the roster must play a minimum of three innings in the field.
 - No player shall sit two innings before all players on the team have sat one inning.

There will be no "playing up" or "playing down". All girls must play in the appropriate division for their age, NO EXCEPTIONS.
9. Each team will follow a permanent batting order that must include all players in attendance, including those not playing defense in a given inning
 - Players arriving after the start of the game shall be placed at the bottom of the order.
 - Players having to leave early will be skipped in the batting order without penalty.
10. Ten defensive players may be used in the field. If ten players are used, four outfielders must start each play in the outfield. Outfielders must remain in the outfield grass until the pitch is released.
 - The outfield is considered to be 10 feet beyond the base paths, regardless of where the grass begins.
11. Girls will pitch innings 1, 3 and 5.
 - The strike zone for this division runs vertically from the top of the batter's knees to her forward armpit and runs horizontally from 3" off the outside edge of the plate to 3" off the inside edge of the plate. This strike zone should be communicated to the umpire prior to the start of each game.
 - During the innings that the girls pitch, hitters must put the ball in play, walk or strike out. If a girl walks two consecutive batters, the coach, for the team that is up to bat, will come in to pitch to the next batter.
 - The pitcher will stay in the game and play defense by the pitcher's mound. After the coach pitches to one batter, the pitcher will return to pitch to the next batter.
 - The pitcher can be replaced at any time.
 - Bunting is permitted during player pitch.
12. Coaches shall pitch to their own team. The batter shall be called out after 3 swinging strikes or after she receives 6 pitches and does not put the ball into play. If the 6th pitch is fouled off, the batter shall receive an additional pitches as long as she fouls the ball off or puts the ball in play. If after the 6th pitch she swings and misses or doesn't swing at the pitch, then she will be declared out.
 - The coach who is pitching must make every effort to avoid interfering with the defensive play on a batted ball. No walks are permitted during the innings in which the coach pitches.
 - Bunting is not permitted during coach pitch.

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13. An 11 inch softball will be used for game play.
14. The distance from the back of home plate to the pitcher's mound is 32 feet. The distance between base paths shall be 60 feet.
15. No infield fly rule.
16. Fake bunting and swinging away (Slash") is not permitted.
17. Runners may advance ONE base on an overthrow, at their own risk.
18. If the ball is hit into the outfield, runners can no longer advance once the ball is thrown back onto the infield and under the control of an infield player. (An outfielder running the ball into the infield does not qualify, and runners may advance with liability to be put out.)
19. Stealing is not permitted.
20. Dropped third strike will NOT be used.
21. Once the ball is secured in the pitcher's circle, the runners must decide whether to continue to the base they were headed or to stop and return.
 - A runner may not 'dance' between bases. If this occurs, the runner shall be called out.
 - If the pitcher 'makes an attempt' at the runner, the play is live again. A pump fake is considered 'making an attempt'.
22. On a play on a runner or batter-runner, the player must slide or avoid contact or risk being called out on interference. (Please note, this does NOT mean that a player must slide, but if she doesn't slide and makes contact with the defensive player, she could be called out for interference.)
23. If a batter is hit by a pitch and the pitch is not a strike then it is a dead ball and the batter is awarded first. The batter does NOT have to try and avoid being hit. However, if the batter leans into the pitch (i.e. in the umpire's judgement tried to get hit by the pitch) then if the pitch was a ball then the batter would remain at bat and awarded a ball, but not first base unless it was a ball 4. If the ball was a strike and the batter leaned into the pitch and was struck, then it would be a dead ball and a strike would be assessed to the batter. If it was the third strike, the batter would also be out.
24. If the batter hits or misses and throws the bat, the umpire will issue a warning to the batter and the coach. If the bat is thrown a second time by the same batter, the batter will be called out.
25. Pitchers are limited to five warm-up pitches. If the catcher does not have her equipment on, an alternate should be ready to warm up the pitcher. If another player is used to warm-up the pitcher, that player must wear a catcher's mask.

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26. Obscene language or abusive behavior by coaches, players, or fans will not be tolerated. Coaches or players ejected from the game and may be subject to suspension or termination. They will leave the field area if ejected by the umpire. Fans will be ejected from the field after one warning from the umpire. Game play will be suspended until the offending fan is removed.
27. An umpire will be provided for each game. If the umpire does not show up within 30 minutes of the start time, a parent, spectator, or coach will be used. The only exceptions are play-off games, an umpire is mandatory and play cannot commence until an umpire arrives.
28. Teams must try to give as much notice as possible if they are unable to field a team and cannot play a game. Teams must cancel game at least 3 hours prior to game time if there are last minute player missing. The coach of the cancelling team must then contact the umpire director and scheduler to cancel. If not able to cancel 3 hours prior, the canceling team forfeits and receives 0 points. If it is a visiting team they must notify the home team prior to 3 hours or take the forfeit.

The team which cancelled the game must make all efforts to reschedule the cancelled game, if fields are not available then the game will be rescheduled on the opponents fields.

In the event of a cancellation due to weather, the home team must make all attempts to reschedule a cancelled game.

29. The winning team must email game results to scorereport@denvillesoftball.org within 24 hours of the game. Results will be posted on the league website. Failure to email results may impact playoff seeding. Results should be emailed with the following information: division, date of game, coach reporting results, winning team name & score and losing team name & score.
30. Playoffs championship tournament will be held at the end of the season.
 - All teams in the division will participate in the tournament.
 - No Time Limit for playoff games, must be scheduled appropriately.
 - Mercy rule will remain in effect.
 - Playoff seeding will be based on a point system; 3 points for a win, 2 points for a tie, 1 point for a loss, and 0 points for a game not played. Forfeits will be considered a game not played for the forfeiting team and a win for the opposing team.

To make our program fun and competitive, the rules will be modified if needed.