

## 2024 CARROLLTON BOOSTERS SOFTBALL 7-8-YEAR-OLD RULES

### 1. THE GAME

- a. Distances: Pitcher's plate (rubber): 32 feet Bases: 55 feet Ball size: 11 inches. Ball type: RIF 10
- b. Time Limit: Five innings or 1 hour and 15 minutes (whichever occurs first.). During the regular season, a new inning may not start after 1 hour and 10 minutes. If an inning starts within 1 hour and 10 minutes, it must be completed. An inning is deemed started once the last out of the preceding inning has been made. In case of rain, three innings constitutes an official game. If less than three innings have been completed, game will be resumed from point of stoppage, with appropriate allowance made for personnel differences. In the event that a full five-inning game is played to a tie, and there is still regulation time remaining, extra innings will be played within the time limit.
- c. 15-run mercy rule after three innings.
- d. Each team is limited to scoring 7 runs in the first 3 innings of regular season games. The 7-run limit does not apply after the 3<sup>rd</sup> inning, **nor is it in effect during the playoffs.**
- e. Only one offensive and only one defensive conference will be allowed during a half-inning.
- f. Home team is responsible for keeping official scorebook. Home team will use first base dugout and visiting team will occupy the third base dugout.

### 2. PLAYERS AND SUBSTITUTIONS

- a. Teams will field ten players. Every player must play in the field at least every other inning. After the first pitch of an inning, all players must complete the inning, except in the event of injury or umpire ejection. The catcher position is optional. **\*\*Penalty for violation of this rule is FORFEITURE OF THE GAME\*\***
- b. If a team fields less than 7 players at any time during the game, it will forfeit the game.
- c. Each player must participate in the field and at bat. Defensive team can have no more than 6 infielders (including the catcher). If you do not use a catcher then you will have 5 outfielders.
  - i. *The catcher is allowed to be positioned outside the "catcher's box", but, if so positioned, no out will be declared if she catches a foul fly ball, and interference will be called if she fields a ball batted fair.*
  - ii. No defensive player (other than the catcher) may be closer to the batter than the pitcher is (i.e., within 32') until the batter makes contact with the ball (Umpire's judgment call). The only two positions that can be next to the coach pitcher will be the pitcher and shortstop. This is a safety rule.
    1. The pitcher and shortstop can move further behind the pitcher for safety reasons.
  - iii. Defensive players may not rotate between pitches during the same batter to other locations
    1. If this does occur, the coach pitching does not have to allow for the moving player to get set
  - iv. First base, second base and third base defensive players must play close to the base
- d. All teams will bat through the batting order without substitution in the batting order.
- e. Players are encouraged to arrive at least 15 minutes prior to game time so that coaches may properly enter lineups in the scorebook. A player who arrives after the start of the game but before the start of the second inning will be placed at the end of the batting order. **Any player arriving after the first pitch of the second inning will be ineligible to play in that game. No exceptions.** **\*\*Penalty for violation of this rule is FORFEITURE OF THE GAME\*\***
- f. **Injury/Illness** General rule: If a player becomes ill or injured during the course of a game, she will be ineligible to participate for the remainder of the game if she does not bat in her assigned position or if she fails to participate defensively in two consecutive half-innings. If the player becomes ineligible, her position in the batting order will be vacated.
  - i. If a player cannot take the field at the start of an inning due to illness or injury, she will be designated as a fielding substitute for the duration of that inning *unless* she had been a substitute the previous inning or if her team has an insufficient number of players present to have fielding substitutes. If she is designated as a substitute in the current inning, she must participate in her team's next defensive half-inning or become ineligible for the remainder of the game. If she is not designated as a substitute, she may, upon recuperation, be put back in the field prior to the end of the current half-inning.
  - ii. If a **fielder** becomes ill or injured after an inning has started and must leave the field, a substitute, if available, will replace her. The ill/injured player may, upon recuperation, go back in for the substitute prior to the end of the inning.

- iii. If a **batter** becomes ill or injured and cannot complete her at bat, the next scheduled batter will complete the at bat, but will **receive a fresh count**. The ill/injured player is not ruled ineligible unless she misses her next at bat or defensive inning, as per above.
- iv. If a **baserunner** becomes ill or injured and is unable to run the bases, the last batted out shall run for her. The injured/ill player may not go back in for the pinch-runner, but resumes her spot in the batting order next time through. Additional note: "designated runners" may not be used; a player cannot be replaced every time she reaches base due to a preexisting condition; if she is too injured to run, she is too injured to play.

### 3. COACHES / PITCHING

- a. Batting team will furnish its own pitcher/coach – *adult, volunteer only – no payment allowed*. The pitcher/coach is not allowed to communicate with the players while on the field. The exception to this rule is that the pitcher/coach may, when necessary, assist a batter with proper batting stance. The pitcher/coach is only allowed to communicate with the other coaches when the ball is dead. When the ball is batted into play, the pitcher/coach must move away from the side of the field where the ball is hit, and either forward or back so as to not interfere with the defensive players. After one warning, noncompliance with any of the above can result in the pitcher/coach being disqualified from pitching for the remainder of the game. *Runners may be called out if the pitcher/coach interferes with defensive play, whether the interference is intentional or not*. If a batted ball hits the pitcher/coach before being touched by a defensive player, the play will be ruled a "no pitch". At its option, the batting team may use the league coordinator or assistant coordinator as its pitcher.
- b. One defensive coach will be allowed in the outfield. The home team's defensive coach will be positioned in the left field foul territory, and the visiting team's defensive coach will be positioned in the right field foul territory.
- c. An additional offensive/defensive coach or adult volunteer will be positioned behind the catcher to assist with the retrieval of passed balls and with returning bats to the dugout. *This additional coach or volunteer is not permitted to coach from that position.*

### 4. BATTERS – RUNNERS

- a. All batters and runners must wear batting helmets with face masks and chin straps.
- b. Only the on-deck batter is allowed in the on-deck area. The on-deck batter is not allowed to leave the dugout unless she is wearing a batting helmet. No one else is allowed to swing a bat in the on-deck area or in the dugout.
- c. Each batter will be allowed a maximum of *five* pitches. If the batter either swings and misses or fails to swing at the 5<sup>th</sup> pitch, she will be declared out. If the batter hits a foul ball (which is not caught) on the 5<sup>th</sup> or subsequent pitch, she will receive another pitch. There are no strikeouts prior to the 5<sup>th</sup> pitch, i.e., a batter may swing at all five pitches. There are no walks.
- d. **Double-Base.** For safety purposes, a double-base will be used at first base, with half the base (white portion) in fair territory and half the base (normally orange portion) in foul territory. The following rules apply when using the double base:
  - i. A batted ball which strikes the white portion of the base is fair, whereas a batted ball which strikes the orange portion of the base is foul.
  - ii. Whenever a play is being made on the batter-runner prior to her reaching first base, the fielders must use the white portion of the base and the batter-runner must use the orange. On such plays, the batter-runner can be called out for interference if she runs into the fielder while trying to reach the *white* portion of the base. However, if a throw is being made from the foul side of first base, or if an errant throw either pulls the fielder into foul territory or goes past the fielder, both the fielder and the runner may use either part of the base.
  - iii. Once the batter-runner has reached first base, or even if she misses first base, all subsequent plays on this runner will involve the white portion of the base only, including tag-ups, returning to the base after overrunning or rounding, etc.
  - iv. When there is no play being made on the batter-runner at first base, she may use the white portion of the base, as in rounding first base on a hit to the outfield. In this case, since no play is being made, obstruction can be called on a fielder blocking the base. It is always the duty of fielders to yield to a runner unless they either have the ball or they are making a play on a batted ball.
- e. No bunting allowed. Penalty is a strike on the batter. Umpire's judgment call.
- f. Batter throwing bat will receive one warning per game. After warning, batter is called out anytime she throws bat. Ball is dead and all runners return to bases occupied without risk.
- g. No infield fly or dropped third strike rule.

- h. No leads - the runner must remain on the base until the pitched ball is batted or, in cases where the batter swings and misses, until the ball crosses home plate. Baserunner will be called out if she leaves the base early. No stealing is allowed.
- i. All base runners may advance only one base on an overthrow provided the ball travels outside of a foul line. A runner attempting to advance on such an overthrow is at risk. If the runner overruns or continues past the next base, she can be tagged out. If a runner safely secures a subsequent base or safely crosses home plate, she will be returned to the proper base by the umpire at the conclusion of the play.
- j. Time / Check
  - i. Defense must check the lead runner. The lead runner is considered checked when a defensive player has possession of the ball either in the baseline ahead of the lead runner or in the pitcher's circle, *and* the lead runner retreats to last base touched or remains on base occupied. If the lead runner is checked, all base runners behind her are checked as well. After the lead runner is checked, a base runner less than half way to the next base is returned to the last base touched. Umpire's judgment call - runners are considered checked only when the umpire has called timeout. Defensive player should hold the ball until the umpire acknowledges the check by calling time. Once time is called and recognized by the umpire, the defense can no longer get any baserunners out.
- k. Any base runner that intentionally removes her helmet while play is ongoing will be called out. Umpire's judgment call.
- l. No courtesy runners will be used.
- m. **Interference:** the runner is out, and the ball is dead, when the runner interferes, whether intentionally or not, with 1) a fielder attempting to field a batted fair ball, 2) a fielder attempting to catch a fly ball over foul territory, or 3) with a fielder attempting to throw the ball.
  - i. Interference is also called if the runner *intentionally* interferes with a thrown ball or with a fielder attempting to field a deflected batted ball.
  - ii. Interference is also called if the runner remains on her feet and **crashes** into the fielder who has the ball. However, if an errant throw draws the fielder into the runner's path, interference is not called.
- n. **Obstruction** is called when a fielder who is neither in possession of the ball nor in the act of fielding a batted ball impedes the progress of a runner. When obstruction occurs, a delayed dead ball is called, and play continues.

## 5. PROTEST AND EJECTION

- a. Protests must be made before another pitch is thrown or within 10 minutes of the end of the game, whichever is sooner. Only the head coach can make the protest. Time is suspended while the protest is being made. An umpire's judgment call may not be officially protested. Only the head coach may speak to the umpire to question a call or inquire about a rule. Any assistant coach that speaks to the umpire will receive one warning. A second violation of this rule will result in the assistant's ejection from the game. Penalty for ejection of an assistant is the same as a coach's ejection.
- b. Any player that is ejected from a game by an umpire shall not be suspended from any future game without the approval of the league coordinator. If a player is ejected rule B1 may apply. The league coordinator's decision shall be rendered within 48 hours of the ejection or 24 hours prior to the commencement of the next game, whichever is the earlier to occur. In the absence of the league coordinator, the vice-president of softball may make the decision.
- c. If an umpire ejects a coach from a game, that coach is automatically suspended from the following game. If a coach is ejected more than once, that coach is automatically suspended for the next game and shall be subject to additional suspensions or expulsion as may be determined by the coordinator for the league with the approval of the vice-president in charge of softball.
- d. A league coordinator may suspend a coach for one or more games, as well as practices with his/her team due to misconduct and/or unsportsmanlike conduct of any nature occurring during or outside of games. This applies even if the coach's misconduct or unsportsmanlike conduct occurring during a game does not result in ejection by an umpire.

## 6. CARROLLTON BOOSTERS POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

- a. The league coordinator will reschedule all rained out games. A rained-out game can be rescheduled on any day, weekends included. Only the 4th of July and before noon on Sundays are excluded without the prior approval of the Carrollton Booster Board. A game is subject to be rescheduled as early as the next day. No special arrangements with the league coordinator will be permitted. Any games that had started will be continued from the point where the game was stopped. However, if a game completed three innings of play or two and a half innings when the home team is leading, it is considered a complete game.

- b. Round Robin and Playoff games may be scheduled prior to dates printed on schedule if deemed necessary by league coordinator or commissioner of softball.
- c. Only five adults, 18 years or older, and team members will be allowed in the dugout or on the field for each team. The five adults include the pitcher/coach and the scorekeeper. There is NO SMOKING at the ballpark, and NO BEER or ALCOHOL is permitted inside the dugout, outside the dugout or on the field by coaches while coaching. Coaches must also refrain from using cell phones while coaching.
- d. Regardless of circumstance and to emphasize sportsmanship and inclusions, coaches will NEVER encourage batters to make an out intentionally. A pitcher/coach will never intentionally strike out a batter. Enforcement of this rule may be by the umpire, coordinator or commissioner of softball; and may lead to suspension of coaching privileges.
- e. Official Carrollton Booster team shirts and team caps/visors must be properly worn by all players except the catcher, who need not wear her cap/visor. If a player does not have a team shirt and cap/visor before she must first bat or before she must first play in the field, she will be ineligible to play in that game. Player's shirts must be tucked in during play.
- f. Only tennis shoes or rubber cleats will be allowed.
- g. No jewelry. Any player wearing earrings that cannot be removed must cover the front and the back of the earring with a bandage or tape.
- h. Any player wearing a hard cast or splint on any part of her arm or leg is not eligible to play in any games.
- i. Players shall not be assessed more than a total of \$20 per player per season per sport by any coach for any expense, including but not limited to rental of courts, fields, batting cages, parties, or coach's gift, without prior approval from the commissioner of that sport.
- j. ASA softball rules will apply to any other situation.
- k. Only softball bats may be used.