

# Bi-County 12u Girls Softball League Rules

Last updated 3/1/24

## **I. Player Eligibility**

1. Players may not turn 13 years of age before September 1.
2. A player must play ball with their hometown team or the team from the town where they attend school, if that town provides the appropriate age level team. If a player starts the season with a team, they must stay with that team for the remainder of that season unless their residency changes. Once a player has opted to join a team sponsored by the sport association or equivalent in a particular town, then they are required to continue with the program in that town unless the town should no longer offer an age appropriate team or if the player moves. If a town does not offer a team in a particular age group, the players in that age group from that town are allowed to play in another town which offers an age appropriate team.
3. A player must play at least half of the regular season games with that team or a younger team from the same Bi-County town in order to be eligible for representing that town in tournament play, except in the case of an injury. A player may only pitch for one team at one level during tournament play.

## **II. Field and Equipment Requirements**

1. Bases are set at 60' apart. Batter's box must be drawn and enforced.
2. Pitch from 40'.
3. Use a 12" non-restricted flight yellow softball.
4. The home team is responsible for providing at least two qualified umpires for each of the scheduled games with the home plate umpire always being an adult or otherwise qualified umpire. Failure to provide at least two qualified umpires will constitute a valid protest on the part of the visiting team and could lead to forfeiture of the games by the home team, unless the visiting team coach waives the protest.
5. Any ground rules regarding the home field must be discussed prior to the onset of each game with both umpires and the coaches of both teams.
6. Uniforms or shirts will be required to be of the same color with a different number on the shirt required for each player. Uniform number must be clearly visible from either front or back side.
7. Players must wear batting and running helmets. Catchers must wear protective gear including shin guards, chest protector, mask, and helmet.

## **III. Lineups and Fielding Positions**

1. If declared on the starting lineup, a team will bat its entire roster throughout the game and have unlimited defensive substitutions; OTHERWISE, teams must follow the NFHS substitution rule allowing any player, starter, or substitute, to be withdrawn from the game and reentered once, provided such player occupies the same batting position whenever in the lineup. The DP/FLEX option will not be used.

3. Teams can field 10 players, but may field as few as 7 without penalty.

4. Only 6 players, including the pitcher and catcher, are allowed to play in front of the baseline. All other players must play behind the baseline.

#### **IV. Game Play**

1. Games will be 5 innings or 1 ½ hours, whichever occurs first. Once the time limit is reached, the current inning must be completed, and no new inning started. The clock will stop during rain delays or any other delay not caused by one of the teams. No infield will be allowed if game is 20 minutes or more behind schedule. If any game is tied, then it will be played out to determine a winner regardless of time.

2. There is a 5 run limit per inning.

3. Players are allowed to steal after the ball has left the pitcher's hand. If a player leaves the base before they are allowed, each team will be allowed one warning by the umpires, but the runner will be sent back to the base she was occupying and the plate umpire will call no pitch. For a second, and any subsequent instances of leaving a base too early once a warning has been given, the player will be automatically called out and the plate umpire will call no pitch.

4. Home plate is open. There is no infield fly rule. Advancement to first base on a dropped third strike is allowed if first base is unoccupied OR if there are two outs.

5. The Bi-County has no mandatory slide rule. No deliberate running down of players. This will be discretion of the umpire. First offense- the player will be called out. Second offense- the player will be ejected from the game.

6. There are no pitch or inning limits for softball pitchers.

7. All softball pitching rules will be enforced according to the NFHS rules book, including crow hopping and the circle rule.

#### **V. Scheduling and Cancellations**

1. Home team must attempt to reschedule any game canceled due to weather within one week or the home team will forfeit. If a game is canceled due to circumstances other than weather, the requesting team must attempt to reschedule that game within one week or they will forfeit. **Games must be rescheduled, not necessarily played, within a week to avoid forfeit. Any game canceled multiple times due to weather or any game canceled in the week before the tournament will not need to be rescheduled and will not result in a forfeit.**

#### **VI. Standings and Tournament**

1. **Winning percentage** will determine position in the tournament. In the case of a tie in the standings, head to head records will be used. If still a tie, run differential among tied teams, lastly a coin flip. If more than two teams are tied, the tie breakers are used to determine the top seed among the tied teams. After one spot is determined, the remaining teams will start over with the tie breakers. Records must be submitted to tournament host coordinator as soon as possible. **Coaches please contact the tournament host 7-10 days prior to the start of the tournament with your current record, in an effort to speed up the seeding process.**

2. During each tournament, the tournament host team will be responsible for providing a minimum of two umpires for each tournament game. Each team will be responsible for contributing two new balls to the host team during the tournament.
3. Early round games will use regular season time limits, but Championship and 3<sup>rd</sup> place games will be played to their entirety. Mercy rules and mathematical elimination will still be used in all games. Any games suspended due to weather will be resumed at the point the game was suspended and played to its completion.
4. Teams will not be permitted to warm up on the field before games during the tournament.
5. All lineup changes must be reported to the official scorekeeper and to the opposing team.
6. The Bi-County League will furnish trophies for the first, second, third, and fourth place teams. If there are 6 or fewer teams in a league, only three places will be given. Trophies will be given to each player on the regular season first place team.

## **VII. Conduct and Process**

1. If a coach has to be forcibly removed from a game due to unsportsmanlike behavior, it will constitute a one game suspension for the next game. Any future such instances will constitute a lifetime ban from coaching in the Bi-County League. Any such incident is to be reported to the Bi-County League.
2. These rules are specific to this league. Anything not covered is subject to the NFHS rule book.
3. It is expected that these rules will be understood and adhered to by all coaches and umpires in the Bi-County League. Every attempt should be made to work out any differences and clarify ground rules prior to the beginning of each game to minimize any difficulties.
4. Protests are discouraged and must be made by town presidents.
5. Anyone, including fans, using profanity or offensive words towards the umpires, coaches, or players will be removed by the umpire or field/tournament director.