

**Mayfield Hts. COED Softball
League Rules for 2024**

LEAGUE AUTHORITY:

- 1) The Mayfield Hts. Softball League is responsible for all Mayfield softball financial operations – Umpires and scorekeepers not included.
- 2) The Mayfield Hts. Softball League and its' Commissioner reserve the right to rule on any situation of dispute and further reserves the right to interpret all rules, their meaning and intent, and may modify or change such rules and render decisions which in its judgement benefit the League. The Mayfield Hts. Softball League Commissioner will be the final authority on all league and playing rules.
- 3) All Mayfield Hts. Softball will be played under One Nation Slowpitch rules, except where league rules override.

FEES:

- 1) The league entry fees will be \$400.00 for all teams.
- 2) The league reserves the right to release a team, with no refund for money paid, if the balance of entry fees is not paid in full by May 3, 2024. **NO TEAM WILL BE ALLOWED TO TAKE THE FIELD WITHOUT BEING PAID IN FULL.**
- 3) At least fifteen (15) minutes prior to game time, each team will pay umpire fees of \$26.00 cash per game (\$52.00 for doubleheader). **Games will not start until fees are paid by both teams.**
- 4) All money needs to be in an envelope with **CORRECT CHANGE**. Scorekeeper will not have change.
- 5) In the event of a forfeit, the forfeiting team will pay game fees for both teams (\$104.00 for a doubleheader). This fee is due at the time the game is ruled a forfeit. Failure to pay the forfeit fee on game day will result in a \$5.00 fine and forfeiting team may not take the field for their following game until all fees are paid.

SCHEDULING:

- 1) Games will be played on Kobe field or Fornaro Field.
- 2) All game times are posted on the league schedules and those can be accessed online at **bgsd.com**, the City of Mayfield Heights website, and distributed by managers. **All cancellations will be relayed to the managers by the League Commissioner.** Team Managers will receive an email with all changes, and they must notify their team of date and time of make up. Although every effort will be made to make up cancelled games, due to weather, field availability, length of season, etc., **there is no guarantee all scheduled games will be played.**

- 3) There is **5 minute grace period** for starting times; the home team must have at least nine players on the field at the game starting time. If your team forfeits, have someone present to pay the forfeit fee.
- 4) Each game has a time limit of 60 minutes. No new inning may start after the time limit has expired. Any inning started must be completed, regardless of the time limit. If there is time remaining on clock, a new inning will begin.
- 5) If a game is cancelled due to weather, ALL subsequent games that evening are cancelled. League Commissioner will text Team Managers on game day to determine whether that evening's games will be played. If there is no current info, or if there is no message at all, teams should assume games are being played. Please refrain from calling the hotline until one hour prior to your own game time. Do not call City Hall or Commissioner for game information.

TEAM:

- 1) Teams will carry a minimum of 10 (at least 5 male and 5 female).
- 2) All players must have a signed contract card on file with the league. Team managers are responsible for collecting and submitting signed cards prior to the season. No player may take the field without having signed a contract card. If team has repeat players, make sure that the player checks the same previous year box. The City of Mayfield Heights has a data base of teams and players.
- 3) Added players must sign a contract card.
- 4) Any team that forfeits three times during the season will be removed from the league.
- 5) All teams should be attired in proper uniforms. The league strongly suggests teams are in matching jerseys with at least a matching shirt color.
- 6) All members of the team will need to adhere to all COVID guidelines set forth by the state of Ohio and the Responsible RestartOhio.
 - a. All players must conduct symptom assessment prior to coming to field. Managers are in charge of keeping City of Mayfield Heights apprised of any compromised cases.
 - b. There should be no person other than a player in the dugout. This includes children and especially pets.
 - c. Smoking and drinking alcoholic beverages are strictly prohibited.
 - d. Chewing tobacco is not prohibited in the dugout.
 - e. Players must bring their own water bottles. No team water coolers.
 - f. Teams must enter the field in a timely manner and exit the field without congregating in park or parking lot.
 - g. Teams oversee that their spectators.

PLAYERS:

- 1) All players must be at least 18 years of age, or a high school graduate.
- 2) Players are required to have at least 4 games played in order to be eligible for the playoffs.
- 3) If a player wishes to change teams' mid-season, he/she must be released from their original team and sign a new contract card with their new team. A player may only switch teams once per season.
- 4) Only team managers will be permitted to discuss disputed plays with the umpire. No player will be permitted to argue with the umpires, though they may confer with umpires within reason. Managers are responsible controlling their players and fans. Swearing is not permitted. Players can be ejected for swearing at the umpire's discretion. An out may also be called against the offending team in accordance with the league profanity rule. Any verbal or physical abuse directed against an umpire will result in immediate suspension, length of which to be determined by the commissioner.
- 5) The commissioner reserves the right to suspend or alter any suspension of any participant, and the length of such suspension according to his discretion. Suspensions may be levied upon a player for game ejection, verbal abuse of umpires, game participants, league officials, or fans, for excessive profanity, etc. Physical abuse or assault upon any umpire, league official, player or fan will result in a one-year suspension from the league and will result in notification of suspension to One Nation Slowpitch officials.

GAME:

- 1) Prior to game, teams will provide the lineup for the day and the CORRECT CHANGE for fees for ump and scorekeeper. Both teams are responsible for keeping track of score, batting order, substitutions, etc. Scorekeeper will also keep track of the above, and their tally will be considered official if a dispute arises. Please notify the scorekeeper of any changes or substitutions you wish to make during the game.
- 2) All teams are to be ready to play at a minimum of 15 minutes before the game is supposed to begin. Once a team has batted around, no additional player may be added to the lineup. An exception to this is if a team wishes to list their absent player in the lineup they may do so, with the risk of taking an out if said player is still absent when it is their turn to bat. If a player leaves the game for any reason, the team may continue to play with at least eight players. If there is no substitute, their turn in the order will be considered an out.
- 3) Male/Female Requirements:
 - a. A team may play with a minimum of four men and four women up to a maximum of six men and six women.
 - b. Teams can play with one more woman than man without taking an out in the order. (Ex./ 6 women, 5 men)

- c. Teams can play with one more man than woman, but an out will be recorded each time through the batting order. (Ex./ 6 men, 5 women)
 - d. Batting order must rotate man, woman, man, etc.
 - e. Defensively, teams can place players where they choose, with the exception of the pitcher and catcher, which must be man and woman. Ex./ 4 men in outfield, 4 women in infield, man pitching, woman catching.
 - f. Players will not be permitted to rotate positions once an inning has begun, with the exception of injury or pitching change.
 - g. No 5 man infield is allowed. Must be 4 in outfield and 4 in infield.
- 4) Pace of play is to be dictated by the managers. Please get your team in and out of the dugout in a timely manner, and up to bat as soon as the team gets back into the dugout.
- 5) Speed play is in effect. All batters start with a one ball – one strike count on them. The second foul ball after a two-strike count is considered a strikeout if it lands in foul territory. If a player plays the ball by catching a fly ball, the play then becomes live and players run at their own risk.
- 6) Pitching minimum and maximum are 5' to 10'.
- 7) The One Nation Slowpitch batting order/field position requirements will be in effect as follows:
- a) All infielders must start with at least one foot on dirt infield prior to pitch. All outfielders must have both feet on grass outfield prior to pitch.
 - b) Teams must finish the game with the same number of players in the lineup as it started the game. Any open spot in the lineup, even if due to injury, will be considered an out. Teams may not play with fewer than eight players at any time; teams with less than eight players are subject to a forfeited game.
- 8) When a male batter reaches base via a walk, he will automatically proceed to second base. The next female batter must hit with the following exception: **with two outs, a female batter has the option of automatically walking** following a walk to a male batter.
- 9) Five innings constitute a complete game; four and one half (4 ½) if the home team is ahead. No matter what inning, a game lasting the full time limit will be a complete game.
- 10) Run Spread Rule: Run rule spread will be 20 runs after three innings, 15 runs after four innings, and 10 after five innings.
- 11) Automatic Flip Flop Rule will be in effect.
- a. If home team is losing by 20 or more runs after the 2nd inning, they automatically flip to the away team and need to score the amount of runs to keep the game going.
 - b. If home team is losing by 15 or more runs after the 3rd inning, they automatically flip to the away team and need to score the amount of runs to keep the game going.

- c. If home team is losing by 10 or more runs after the 4th inning, they automatically flip to the away team and need to score the amount of runs to keep the game going.
 - d. After the flip, if the team scores the amount of runs to keep the game going, they will remain the away team for the completion of the game.
- 12) Ties will not be replayed. In case of a tie game after the time limit has expires, there will be a one inning tie-breaker. Each team will start the inning with one out. Each batter will start with a one-ball, one-strike count. If game is still tied after the one inning, the game will result in a tie.
- 13) The Re-entry rule is in effect. That is, any player in the starting lineup maybe substituted for and re-enter the game to his/her original spot in the batting order. The substitute is out for the rest of the game once the original player re-enters.
- 14) Bats must have the USSSA or ASA “thumbprint” stamp for use in league play. **Bats that are not approved for league play include any bat rated at 100 mph, or any bat that has been altered to improve performance.** The Commissioner reserves the right to outlaw any bat that may be considered hazardous to the safety of the players at any time.
- 15) Home run limit (over the fence) two per team. Any hits over the fence beyond these rules will be recorded as an out.
- 16) Sliding is permitted into all bases.
 - a. Players may not deliberately crash into a fielder in an attempt to dislodge the ball – an out will be called and the runner will be ejected from the game. When in doubt – “slide or give up”.
 - b. Baserunners must run to the “safety” base at both first base and home plate. Any baserunner touching the permanent home plate, regardless if a play is being made on them or not, will be called out immediately with no exceptions. All plays made at the permanent home plate will be force plays, where no tag is necessary.
 - c. There is a “commit” line 20 feet beyond third base; any baserunner touching or going past this line must proceed to run to home plate.
- 17) The courtesy runner rule is: One batter/runner of each gender may be run for once per inning, for as many times as they are on base that inning, by any member of the same gender on the roster. Should the substitute runner be on base when it is his/her turn at bat, an out shall be recorded and their time at bat forfeited.
- 18) A female batter/runner cannot be thrown out at first base by an outfielder. However, an outfielder may choose to relay hit ball to an infielder, who then may throw out a female batter at first base.

- 19) All outfielders must start the pitch on the grass part of the outfield. There also must be two outfielders on the left side of second base, and two outfielders on the right side of second base. No team can play three outfielders on one side.
- 20) No team shall play five infielders.
- 21) No metal spikes of any kind are allowed. Rubber cleats are permitted.
- 22) Any player ejected from a game for any reason will receive a one game suspension – player must sit out their next game.
- 23) A high priority is placed on sportsmanship. Taunting or “trash” talk against opposing players may result in termination of the game. Play competitively while having respect for the opposing team and spectators.

FORMAT & PLAYOFFS:

- 1) Playoffs will be determined by seeding with final season standings.
- 2) All teams will be eligible for the playoffs at the end of the regular season.
- 3) Double elimination, Round Robin Tournament.
- 4) A player must have at least 6 games played during the regular season to be eligible for the playoffs. Any question of eligibility will be determined by the Commissioner.
- 5) Time limits will be 60 minutes (no new inning may start after 60 minutes) during the playoffs, with the run spread mercy rule still in effect. In the Championship Game, there will be no time limit or run spread rule in effect.
- 6) Teams are responsible for all umpire and scorekeeper fees until the championship series.

ADDENDUM:

- 1) Pitchers will be allowed to pitch from inside a “box”, measured from the pitching mound to six feet behind the mound and the width of the mound. Pitchers must still be in a set position within the box when delivering the pitch.
- 2) If the home team is short-handed to start the game, they may choose to hit first (in effect becoming the visiting team) to allow them more time for their ninth player to show. This may only be done with the consent of the opposing manager, and does not affect future home/visitor status in subsequent games between the two teams.