

2023 CYO SOFTBALL RULES

There are no CYO Athletic Guidelines as it Relates to COVID-19 or best practices specific to softball at this time.

I. CYO SOFTBALL

Softball is offered to girls in grades 3-8. Grade school leagues are fast pitch. A 2023 8th grade graduate may play in the 8th grade league. Any parish combinations MUST be approved by the CYO office before the players are allowed to begin practicing.

II. FEES

Softball fees for the 2023 season are \$65 per player and \$150 per team. All rosters and fees are due to the CYO Office prior by April 21. The CYO Office is located on the 3rd floor of the Pastoral Center (1933 Spielbusch Avenue) and is open Monday-Friday from 8:30-4:30.

III. DEADLINE TO ENTER A TEAM

A team entry form along with the \$150 team entry fee must be submitted to the CYO office by April 5, 2023. At this time you must notify the CYO office when your grade school is scheduled for graduation and/or any field trips or camps or any other scheduling requests which the CYO Office needs to be aware of prior to scheduling games.

IV. SEASON WILL BEGIN

League play will begin the week of Monday, May 8 for all leagues. Games in the minor and junior leagues will for the most part be scheduled on Monday & Wednesday; games in the cadet league will for the most part be played on Tuesday & Thursday. Fridays & Saturdays will also be used for additional playing dates and make-up games for all leagues. If a team is unable to play on a particular day of the week, that information should be included on the team entry form.

V. SITES OF GAMES

The games will be played at the **Monsignor Schmit CYO Athletic Complex** (555 South Holland-Sylvania Road). The fields are located on diocesan owned property on Holland-Sylvania, between Hill Ave. and Angola.

VI. RAINOUTS/CANCELLATIONS

You are encouraged to call the CYO Softball Hotline (243-4CYO) to check the status of your game on game day. Do NOT call the CYO Office and DO NOT check the CYO web site regarding the cancellation of any games. After 4:30 pm the decision on whether or not to play will be made at the field. When the weather is questionable, call the CYO Softball Hotline before leaving for games. In the event of an "unusually" hot day the CYO office may cancel games.

There is a lightning predictor in operation at the Monsignor Schmit CYO Complex. If the warning signal is sounded all games in progress will be canceled immediately. Everyone should proceed to their cars and leave the complex.

VII. OTHER LEAGUES

A girl may participate in another softball or baseball league and still remain eligible to play in the CYO league. She must participate in at least half of the CYO league games in order to be eligible for the CYO tournament. The CYO will not change any games due to conflicts with other league schedules.

VIII. GAME CHANGES

- A. Once the schedule has been distributed, the only games that will be changed and/or rescheduled by the CYO Office will be those that include circumstances deemed unforeseeable and unavoidable.

VIII. GAME CHANGES (continued)

- B. If a coach attempts to change a game and the request is denied by the CYO Office, one of the following situations will result:
 - 1) The contest will be forfeited, or
 - 2) The coach may contact the coach of the opposing team to see if he/she would be open to rescheduling. If both coaches agree to reschedule, it is the responsibility of the coach initiating the schedule change to secure a site, date, time, and officials to which the opposing coach is agreeable. The coach initiating the game change will also be responsible for paying the umpires.
- C. No contact with other coaches should be made prior to a denial or acceptance of a request by the CYO Office. No game changes will be considered by the CYO Office if a star player is out of town or ill, or if a team's head coach is unable to attend the game.
- D. Many of the schedule conflicts which are encountered each year could be avoided if the coach and/or parish athletic director would check with both the school and the families of the players to determine possible conflicts. These dates must then be submitted to the CYO office by April 12.

IX. DIVISIONS

The teams will be divided as follows: **junior girls** (6th, 7th & 8th grades), **cadet girls** (3rd, 4th & 5th grades). Other grade combinations may be used by parishes to form teams if necessary, and they would play in the league of their highest grade player.

X. LEAGUES & TOURNAMENTS

- A. The cadet & junior leagues will be scheduled to play ten (10) league games and a double elimination tournament. The tournament for each league will take place at the conclusion of the regular season. The minor league will play twelve league games with no post-season tournament.
- B. The first team listed on the schedule for each game will be the home team. In the tournament games there will be a coin flip to determine the home team.
- C. The tournaments for the **cadet & junior leagues** will be drawn up based on the standings in each league at that time.
- D. League standings will be kept for both the **cadet & junior leagues**. A league champion team trophy will be awarded at the end of the season. There will be no league standings kept in the **minor league**.
- E. A team trophy will be awarded to each tournament champion and runner-up.

XI. EQUIPMENT

- A. Game balls will be furnished by CYO and collected by the umpire at the conclusion of each game. The minor & cadet leagues will use the 11-inch ball. The junior leagues will use a 12-inch ball.
- B. Bases at the games will be provided by CYO. A double base will be used at first base. The inside base is for the fielder and the outside base is for the runner.
- C. Uniform: The uniform top must have a number on the back. Players may wear either shorts or softball pants. Tennis shoes or molded cleats must be worn. No metal cleats of any kind are allowed.
- D. Each team will provide its own bats. Bats must have rubber or taped handles. Bats not taped 12 inches from the handle will be considered illegal. Bats must have knobs on top. A baseball bat shall be considered illegal. All bats must be approved softball bats.

XI. EQUIPMENT (continued)

- E. The pitcher's mound will be set up at the following distances from the back of home plate:
 - Minors: 30 feet
 - Cadets: 35 feet
 - Juniors: 40 feet
- F. The bases will be set at 60 feet from home plate for all leagues.
- G. All catchers are required to wear a catcher's mask, catcher's helmet, chest protector, and shin guards. There are **NO** exceptions to this rule.
- H. Batting Helmets: All grade school batters **MUST** wear a batting helmet with two ear flaps and a mask (cage); base runners, and on-deck hitters must wear a batting helmet with both ear flaps. The on-deck hitters **MUST** warm up inside the fenced in area and NOT outside near the bench. This is for the protection of other players and spectators. Coaches are encouraged to have the on-deck hitter warm up on the side of the field facing the hitters back.

SPECIAL NOTE:

Coaches must make certain that both the catcher's gear and the batting helmets fit the girls and are properly worn at all times.

Bats may be swung only within the field of play. No bats may be swung within the confines of the bench or spectator area.

XII. PARTICIPATION RULE

- A. In the **minor leagues** we will use the round robin batting order which means that every player who is present at game time is listed in the batting order and bats. This means that the first hitter does not hit a second time until all other players have hit once. Every player must also play at least half of the game on defense.
- B. In the **cadet leagues** all players must play at least half of the game and every healthy player in uniform should be given the opportunity to bat.
- C. In the **junior leagues** all healthy players in uniform must play at least two consecutive innings of defensive prior to the completion of the 5th inning.
- D. The participation rules will also be used during tournament play.
- E. Additional hitter
A cadet or junior team may choose to use 11 hitters in their line-up. The batting order must remain constant, however any 10 of the 11 players can take a defensive position throughout the game. If a team chooses to use the additional hitter, then they must use an 11 person batting line-up the entire game.
- F. The substitution rule allows a player to enter the game a second time;
 - 1) The player that goes back into the game, must re-enter on her original batting spot (i.e. if she first bats #6 position, as a substitute she must re-enter in the #6 position).
 - 2) The 10 people listed as batters, must be the 10 used as fielders.
 - 3) A player coming out of the game a 2nd time may not re-enter.

XIII. GAME LENGTH

A. Game Time & Complete Game

The first game will start at 5:00 PM with no inning starting after 6:45 PM. 4 1/2 innings in Junior games and 3 1/2 innings in Cadet games constitutes a complete game in the event of darkness, time limit, or other weather-related problems. If a game is called prior to 4 1/2 innings (Junior) or 3 1/2 innings (Cadet) being completed or prior to a winner being determined, the game will be suspended and will be picked up from that point when it is re-scheduled. Both coaches and the umpire must sign the game card and the scorebooks for any suspended game. The second game will start at 7:00 PM. No grace period will be allowed. The umpire will call a forfeit if a team is not ready to play at the designated game time. The game will be completed at discretion of the umpire.

In the Minor division once 3 1/2 innings have been played the game is official. A Minor game will only be suspended if 3 1/2 innings have not been completed prior to the time limit or prior to a weather interruption.

In tournament games all games will be played to completion unless the “mercy rule” is used and/or both coaches agree that the game is over.

B. Pre-game

- 1) Teams should not arrive prior to 4:15 PM for a 5:00 PM game.
- 2) The only type of infield practice on the field prior to the first game will be line infield; therefore, both teams could use the field at the same time. There will be no type of infield practice prior to the second game unless the first game ends early and the umpire grants both teams' permission.
- 3) The two managers must exchange line-ups prior to their meeting with the umpire.
- 4) The managers must fill out a CYO line-up card with the starters listed on the front, and all of the substitutes present (and in uniform) on the back of the card.
- 5) The managers will meet with the umpires before the game. They will submit their line-up cards to the umpire and review the ground rules.
- 6) The players from both teams will then meet at home plate with the umpire(s) and managers to recite the “CYO Pre-Game Prayer”. All players should recite the prayer together along with coaches and the umpire. Everyone will then turn to the flag to recite the Pledge of Allegiance.

C. Game and Inning length

- 1) **CADET**: Games will be 7 innings long with a scoring limit of 5 runs per inning; the 2nd game of a Double Header will be 5 innings.
- 2) **EXCEPTION**: If a team is down by more than 5 runs in a minor game or a cadet game, or 7 runs in a junior game, they remain hitting until they tie the score or make 3 outs.
- 3) CYO games *will* be called by the umpire anytime after 4-1/2 innings if the losing team is behind by ten (10) or more runs.

D. Suspended Game

When a suspended game is resumed the same batting order must be used by both teams since the game will be re-started from the exact point of which it was stopped. If a player who was in the line-up is not present when the game is resumed, and the team does not have a legal sub for this spot in the order, then an out shall be called.

In the Minor division (for a suspended game) any spot in the order which cannot be filled by the same player will be skipped without penalty since a “round robin” batting order is used. If there are players present at the suspended make-up game, which were not present at the original date of the game, they shall be added to the end of the batting order. In all of these instances the two coaches are encouraged to speak before the game and use common sense remembering that the “game is for the kids”.

- E. All postponed, suspended, un-played and protested games must be played according to the decision of the CYO Staff. Any games canceled by the CYO Office will be re-scheduled and must be played as designated.

XIV. PITCHING RESTRICTIONS

- A. No pitcher may pitch more than 3 innings in any minor & cadet game or 4 innings in any junior game. Extra innings are not included in this number. When a pitcher takes the mound and throws one pitch that constitutes an inning regardless of whether or not any outs have been recorded. This rule is in effect during league play as well as tournament play.
- B. Any pitcher who hits three batters in an inning must be replaced for the remainder of that inning. They may return to pitch again in that game, but must be removed if they hit three batters again (in an inning) and then may not return to pitch in that game.
- C. A pitcher may use any portion of the approved pitching motion as long as the pivot foot is in contact with the pitching plate at the start of the motion (right foot for right handers/left foot for left handers). The pivot foot must remain in contact or drag forward off the rubber at the time of the release.
- D. No walks
In the **minor leagues** there will be no walks. After the batter has four called “balls”, the umpire will call time out, obtain the ball and hand the ball to the batter at home plate. The umpire will then call “play ball”. The “ball / strike count will continue until the batter hits the ball or strikes out by attempting to throw the ball into the air and hit a fair ball. If the player throws the ball into the air and fails to make contact or swing the bat, the throw is considered a strike. The pitcher must remain within 5 feet of the pitching plate and the catcher must be in the designated area wearing full gear. Both hands must be on the bat when attempting to hit the ball. NO one handed swinging is allowed. A foul ball is a strike even on the third one and the batter shall be called out.
- E. In the **cadet leagues** walks will be awarded 1st base but cannot advance to 2nd base.
- F. Any batter who is hit by a pitch will be awarded first base.

XV. GENERAL RULES

- A. Roster size
- 1) MINOR & CADET DIVISION: Rosters should not exceed 20 players. This is due to the rule that each player must play at least 3 innings per game during league play. Any exception to this rule requires a written explanation be submitted to the CYO Office.
 - 2) JUNIOR DIVISION: There is no roster limit.
- B. A player must be present, in uniform (jersey with number), and her name must be listed on the line-up card for at least half of all league games in order to be eligible for tournament.
- C. A team may be made up of 9, 10, or 11 players; but they must have at least 9 players to start the game.
- 1) 9 players = pitcher, catcher, 4 infielders, 3 outfielders
 - 2) 10 players = pitcher, catcher, 4 infielders, 4 outfielders
 - 3) 11 players = pitcher, catcher, 4 infielders, 4 outfielders, and an extra hitter
- D. Bunting
Bunting will be permitted in both the **cadet and junior leagues**, but not in the **minor league**.

XV. GENERAL RULES (continued)

E. Dropped third strike

A batter may run to first base on a dropped third strike in the **junior league**.

- 1) If first base is occupied and there is 0 or 1 out, the batter may not run on a dropped third strike.
- 2) With 2 outs, the batter may run on a dropped third strike even if first base is occupied.
- 3) If there is not an immediate attempt by the batter to run to first base on a dropped third strike, she will be called out. This is umpire's judgment.
- 4) If the ball is overthrown at first base by the catcher making a dropped third strike play, the ball will become dead. No other runners may advance.
- 5) A batter may **NOT** advance on a dropped third strike in the **minor & cadet leagues**.

- F. Any player throwing the bat will be warned the first time and removed from the game the second time. The umpire will allow the result of the batted ball the first time and warn the batter when the ball becomes dead. The second time a batter throws the bat, the umpire will immediately call the ball dead, call the batter out, eject the player and all runners must return to the base she occupied when the ball was batted.

G. Base Stealing

Minor leagues:

There will be NO base stealing and/or lead offs permitted.

Cadet leagues:

NO base stealing is allowed.

Runners must remain in contact with the base until the pitcher has released the ball. If the ball is not hit by the batter, the runner must immediately return to the base. The runner cannot be thrown out by the catcher; therefore, in this situation, the runner cannot advance on an overthrow.

Junior leagues:

Base stealing will be allowed. Each runner may only steal one base per pitch; therefore, a runner may not advance to a second base on an overthrow. Stealing of home is also allowed in the Junior leagues. There will be no stealing by the team in the lead if the lead is 10 runners or more.

Runners must remain in contact with the base until the pitcher has released the ball. A catcher is allowed to throw behind a runner and a play be made. In the event that a catcher throws behind a runner at third the runner may attempt to steal home.

- H. Outfielders must be positioned at least 10 feet behind the base path when the ball is pitched. Outfielders may not cover a base on a force play except in a back-up role. Violation of this will result in all base runners advancing one base at the end of the play in which the violation occurred.
- I. A player who is attempting to score must avoid contact with the catcher either by using a legal slide or stepping around her. The catcher may not block the entire plate; she must allow the outer half of the plate for the runner. Any runner who is guilty (in the umpire's judgment) of creating malicious contact will be ejected from the game; an out will also be awarded to the defensive team and the run will not count.

J. Infield Fly Rule

An infield fly is a fair fly (not including a line drive) which can be caught by an infielder, with ordinary effort and provided the hit is made before two are out and at a time when first and second bases or all bases are occupied.

When it seems apparent that a batted ball will be an infield fly, the umpire immediately announces it for the benefit of the runners. If the hit should then prove to be foul, the decision is reversed and it is treated the same as any foul.

The batter is automatically out when an infield fly is hit, and there is less than two out, with runners on first and second or all bases are occupied. The runners may tag up and advance at their own risk.

XV. GENERAL RULES (continued)

EXCEPTION: In the CYO **minor & cadet leagues**, when the infield fly rule is in effect and an infield fly is hit the batter is automatically out, and the runners may **NOT** advance.

- K. In the minor league a team is asked to have one coach available (with a glove) to help their catcher to retrieve passed balls and wild pitches. The idea of this is to help speed up the game. If the need arises, a coach can actually catch the pitches in Minor games, however there must be a player in full catcher's gear in the vicinity to make all the plays once the ball has been put in play. This option is not encouraged as we want to develop catchers, however it may be necessary in certain circumstances.
- L. No smoking or chewing of tobacco is permitted by players, coaches, umpires or spectators inside the CYO Athletic Complex. Any violation of this rule will result in immediate ejection from the game and should be reported to the CYO Office.
- M. Any rule not covered in this handbook is covered by National Federation High School rules.

XVI. OFFICIALS

- A. Softball umpires and any other member of the CYO Staff, have complete charge of the game, and their decisions are final during the game.
- B. Umpires will keep the game going. Only three (3) warm-up pitches or one minute between innings. Games will be called for rain, darkness or time limit. The ball is not to be tossed around the field unnecessarily.

XVII. PLAYER / COACH CONDUCT

- A. Coaches may question only the rules, not the umpire's decisions. To question a call, the coach must call for time and be recognized by the umpire.
- B. Any unbecoming language, as judged by the umpire, will cause the player or coach to be ejected from the game. There is no need for a warning.
 - 1) A coach who is ejected must leave the vicinity of the playing and spectator area. They are prohibited from any further contact (direct or indirect) with the team during the remainder of the game.
 - 2) Any player or coach ejected for a second time during the season will be suspended from the remainder of the season. If less than two games remain in the season, the suspension will be served during the next CYO sport in which the person participates.
 - 3) Any verbal abuse toward an umpire after the game will result in at least a one-game suspension.
 - 4) Any physical contact with an umpire at any time will result in at least a one-year suspension from the CYO program.

XVIII. SCORESHEETS

- A. Coaches should have their line-up card completed and exchanged with the opposing manager prior to the umpire arriving at the field. The line-up card should include all players' names and numbers.
- B. Each team must keep a scorebook during the game. Scorekeepers should communicate with each other each 1/2 inning. Umpires have their own duties and are not responsible for mistakes on scoresheets. Please have a competent scorer. The home team's book will be the official book.
- C. The umpire will have a game card that both coaches must sign after the game to approve the final score. The umpire will then turn the card into the CYO Office along with both teams' line-up cards.

XIX. SPECIAL REQUEST OF COACHES

All coaches are asked to inform the parents that they are not permitted to stand around the backstop. The umpires will ask parents around the backstop during the game to move.

XX. CONCLUSION ON THE RULES

These rules have been adopted for the CYO Softball Program with input from the league coaches over the years. These rules have been written and will be enforced with the health and well being of the athletes as the number one concern.

Due to the low number of players, all coaches are encouraged to work together to play the games and make the overall experience the best possible for all involved. This may mean making some adjustments to how many players are playing on a given night.

If you have any comments or suggestions about these rules, it should be put in writing and submitted to the CYO Office.

The CYO softball staff at the present time (3/21/23):

Clay Shaw	Director of CYO Athletics
	Asst. Director of CYO Athletics
Rev. Phil Smith	Diocesan Chaplain for CYO Athletics
Kathy Rakay	CYO Administrative Assistant
Carl Collier	CYO Softball Commissioner