

### **General Rules and Regulations**

1. The time/inning limit of the game is 50 minutes or 5 innings, whichever comes first. A minimum regulation game shall be 30 minutes or 3 innings after both teams have had equal opportunities at bat. No new inning shall begin once 5 minutes or less remain on the official game clock. Umpire will be in charge of official game time. If home team is winning; then the bottom half will not be played. If the game is tied after innings/time limit has been reached, the game will end in a tie. Game time begins at the conclusion of the pregame plate meeting.
2. There is a 5-run limit per inning. A mercy rule is implemented of the winning team being up by 11 runs at the completion of 3 innings, or up by 6 runs at the completion of 4 innings.
3. The field shall have 50-foot baselines, with the distance from the back of home plate to the front of the pitching rubber as 35 feet.
4. Any rules not specifically covered in this rule set will default to USSSA; the league manager has the ability to modify these rules throughout the course of the season to provide for circumstances that may come up that have questionable effect on the league and game play.
5. **The goal of this division is continuing the introduction of baseball/softball to the players with basic rules that are implemented with the guidance of the coaches and under the supervision of the Branson Parks and Recreation Department.**

### **Player Eligibility**

1. Participants in this division shall be no less than 5 years old, and no more than 6 years old on May 1<sup>st</sup> of the calendar year.
2. If a team is below 6 players, the coaches may agree for the lending of players in defensive positions.

### **Batting**

1. All players in the line-up will bat in continuous order. If a player is sick/injured, their spot may be skipped without penalty.
2. If a player arrives late to the game, the player is to be inserted at the end of the batting line-up.
3. Each batter will receive 3 swings to bat the ball into fair territory. If the batter fails to hit the ball into fair territory after three swings, the batter shall be declared out.
4. All batted balls must travel outside the 12-foot arc around home plate, inside the field of play, to be considered a fair ball.

### **Base Running**

1. Runners must remain in contact with the base until the ball has been contacted by the batter.
2. A ball that is overthrown by a defensive fielder shall be considered dead, and no runners shall be allowed to advance outside of the base they were advancing to at time of the throw.
3. With 2 outs, if the catcher is on base, they may be run for with a courtesy runner. This courtesy runner shall be the person who made the last out. **The purpose of this rule is to continue the pace of play of the game and maximize the amount of playing time for all involved.**
4. Slide or avoid interference, contact may occur between base runner and fielder, shall govern this division. It is the responsibility of the base runner to avoid interfering with a fielder in the process of making a play on the runner if the base runner chooses not to slide. Contact with the fielder alone does not make interference.

### **Defense**

1. There are 5 infield positions plus the pitcher to be utilized. An additional player may be utilized as the catcher. Remaining players may be stationed in the outfield.
2. The pitcher must be positioned inside the pitching circle, and no infielder shall be closer than the base path when the ball is struck at.

### **Participation and Role of Coaches**

1. Two offensive base coaches are allowed to be positioned in foul territory at a distance no closer than the base to home plate. The nearest base coach to the dugout is responsible for ensuring that players are not swinging bats while inside the dugout.
2. A third offensive coach (if applicable) is to be stationed behind the catcher for placement of the ball on the tee, and for the clearing of the bat from the field of play.
3. Defensive coaches may be on the field to help their team. Coaches are not allowed to intentionally field nor throw a live ball but may help and assist a defensive player throwing the ball or directing them where to throw the ball.
4. Offensive coaches on the field are encouraged to not physically aid and assist players in advancing bases. Coaches may aid and assist if an offensive player is not moving/advancing to the next base on a live ball.
5. Home and away is determined by schedule. The home team's book shall be the official book.