

# Unionville Minor Softball Rules 2020

\*Rules maybe updated up until April 30th, 2020\*

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***The following rules apply to ALL levels. Exceptions for specific divisions are listed within the playing rules. Rules not covered in this outline are as designated by Softball Canada***

**NO PROTESTS ALLOWED!** All umpires decisions are final. Mobile Phone, tech devices, rulebooks and papers are not allowed on the field during an inning. Clarification of rules or calls may be requested between innings only. Only one coach per team may make a request. The umpire must be told who the designated coach is prior to the game start.

**Positive cheering ONLY!** Taunting, degrading chants and other negative noise is unacceptable behaviour from players, coaches or spectators. Coaches are responsible for the control of their players' parents/spectators. Ask them to abide by the rules and respect the umpires, as well as the opposing team. Any use of profane language by coaches or players will be noted by the umpire and that individual will receive only one warning. Subsequent similar acts will result in immediate ejection from the game and the playing field area. Any use of profane language or derogatory remarks directed at an individual will result in immediate ejection from the game and playing field area, without warning. Further action may be taken by the UMSA Executive. Members of UMSA must abide by the City of Markham Code of Conduct.

Under the terms of our City of Markham permits, UMSA will enforce Markham's *code of conduct* and UMSA rules & regulations. Coaches & players are not permitted to consume alcohol while wearing a UMSA uniform, during our diamond permits. Alcoholic beverages may not be brought to the diamond/parking lot areas. There will be zero tolerance. An automatic suspension of player, coach or other volunteer, for a time period levied by the executive. No smoking by coaches, umpires, players or spectators on the playing field, on the bench or in the stands & the surrounding area of 25 meters during games or practices according to the Ontario Law.

Coaches are not responsible for transportation. An adult, responsible for a player, must be present at games in the event of injury or sudden, game ending weather change.

Home team is listed 2<sup>nd</sup> on the schedule, visiting team is listed 1<sup>st</sup>. The home team coach will assign the official scorekeeper, who will keep score for both teams. Both teams' coach will prepare a 'line-up/position chart' & make it available to the umpire before the game begins. At the end of the game the umpires sign the score sheet. Score sheets are to be kept for review by the convenor when requested. The home team (mitch and up) provides the new game ball.

## **Section 1. Diamond Equipment/Pitching Base Distances**

REFER TO QUICK REFERENCE CHART for distances.

1.2 Home team is responsible for placing the bases (do not use bat) and drawing all necessary lines 15min prior to first pitch. They are also responsible for the careful removal and storage of bases (including clips, pegs and hammer), after the game. Make certain the small blue UMSA box is locked.

## **Section 2. Game Times and Eligibility**

2.1 Home team coaches are to be at the diamond no later than 30min. prior to game start to prepare the diamond. Home team takes the 3<sup>rd</sup> base side bench. Visiting team may warm-up for 10 minutes beginning at 20 min. prior to game start. Home team warm up will follow. Visiting team takes the 1<sup>st</sup> baseline bench.

2.2 The umpire is the official timekeeper. UMSA schedules two umpires (not in Blast Ball or T 3 Pitch) for all games. If only one umpire is present, the defensive team is to supply the base line umpire. If no umpires are

present then there will be no game & a fun exhibition game will go forward. *Please report lack of umpires asap to UMSA.*

2.3 A minimum of 7 players is required to play(exception: Blast T-ball/ t-3 Pitch minimum 5 players). Failure to field minimum players by 6:29 pm will result in forfeiture, which is called by the umpire. Once the forfeiture is set, it stands and an exhibition game will be played & umpired. In the case of both teams forfeiting, no points will be awarded. See Reference for minimum number of players in your division.

2.4 All coaches at the 5 Pitch level and up are supplied with a 'call up list'. Call-ups are permitted only by executive permission. These are players from the division below, to be used as substitutes for absent team players. Call-ups can only be used to bring a roster up to 9 players. A player from the call up list may only be called up a total of three times per season. The division convenor must be notified of call ups. If it is discovered that the call-up rule has been violated, then any excess call-ups must be removed from the game and the violating team will lose the runs from their most productive inning. Siblings are not to be used as a 'regular' player on their older siblings' team. *Teams will automatically forfeit if they use players other than: registered UMSA house league players from their own roster or substitutes (call-ups) approved by UMSA, using UMSA players from an older division.* UMSA Select players must play on a house league team.

2.5 First pitch is not always at 6:30 pm or 8:00 pm. In order to avoid delays, when the umpire calls for the 1<sup>st</sup> pitch and there is no batter in the box, 'strikes' will be called for each pitch until the batter arrives. If the pitcher is not ready, 'balls' will be called. The umpire will enforce this at the start of all innings.

2.6 Games will end as follows: No new inning is to be started after 80 minutes of the scheduled start time (1 hr. 20 mins.) by the umpire's watch. In the event of failing light conditions, the game may be ended earlier at the discretion of the Umpire or at the request by both teams' coaches. Games at lit diamonds such as Crosby Main, Carlton, Berczy Village, Monarch, Mintleaf & Centennial may have a curfew see schedules for time.

### **Section 3. Safety and Diamond Conditions**

3.0 No electronic devices are permitted on the bench or field for the safety and consideration of all players and coaches. Players' phones must be turned off and put away during games and practices. Coaches, as phones may be a distraction and risk injury to yourself or players, your phones are to be put away and not used during games or practices on the diamond.

3.1 The Umpire will decide if the game will be played when the playing conditions are questionable exception:Blast T-ball and T-3 Pitch both coaches will determine at game time). The decision will be made at the diamond, at game time. If it is safe to play, then Rule 2.3 will be used to decide if the game is defaulted. In the event of a rained out game, the game will be scored as a tie. After the game has started and rain begins, it is up to the umpire whether or not the game continues. Games cannot start or continue if lightning has been observed. In these weather conditions, all players and spectators must leave the area immediately. Keep away from trees, metal fences and bleachers. A minimum of 3 innings (or 2 ½ if the home team is winning) must be played to constitute a complete game. If City of Markham pulls permits, UMSA will post on their website that the games are cancelled due to weather. Posting will be made on [www.umsa.ca](http://www.umsa.ca) by 4:30pm game day. Participants are to refrain from contacting the City of Markham or UMSA during the day. UMSA nor coaches pre-cancel games, only when notified by the City of Markham. Remember double header games may have the first game canceled due to weather, but the second game may still go ahead.

3.2 The Safety Base will be used at first base at all times. If no safety base is available, immediately notify the league line. If a play is being made at first base the runner must step on the orange, or outside, portion of the bag only, or he/she will be called out. The fielder must use the white portion only, if not, the runner is safe. If a play is not being made at first, the runner may touch either the white or orange portion of the safety base. When returning to first base, the runner must touch the white portion of the base. This is for safety!

3.3 Practice swings are not permitted outside the playing field. Practice swings are allowed in the on-deck circle and outside the batter's box.

3.4 Players must sit on the bench until they are on-deck. This means that players should not be in the stands, but attentively watching the game being played from the bench and cheering on their team!

3.5 All players must wear their current complete UMSA team uniform to play. No non league hats. UMSA Select hats are to be worn during select games only. Teams will be penalized for uniform infractions. Penalty: an out. Softball Canada rules require shirts to be worn tucked in. This is for safety reasons & insurance. Players are to wear pants provided, again for safety reasons. Non-compliance penalty - automatic out. This will be strictly enforced after opening day.

Players are not allowed to wear: a) shorts, or other clothing, which exposes bare legs or ankles, b) tearaways, c) jeans or any pant with buttons, zips or snaps, d) jewellery, including watches, sunglasses, chains, earrings, wristbands, bracelets and camp bracelets. EXCEPTION: Medic Alert ID must not be removed or taped, e) sandals, metal cleated shoes.

3.6 Gum chewing is not allowed during the game.

3.7 The Blood Rule, as described by Softball Canada is in full effect. This rule states that any player injury resulting in blood on clothing or skin will require immediate action as follows: a) all articles of clothing stained by blood must be changed, b) any blood stains on skin must be cleaned and covered completely. In this instance, a player would be allowed to continue playing in a non-team shirt. Failure to comply with these two steps will result in the player being removed from the game.

3.8 UMSA provides disposable ice packs and first aid kits in all their blue equipment boxes. Coaches are responsible to notify when materials have been used. Please discard used ice packs in garbage after use. Coaches and Umpires are also responsible to notify UMSA via email of field hazards and/or serious player injury.

3.9 All safety equipment supplied must be worn. Catchers (except Blast Tball & T-3 Pitch) must wear shin pads, chest protector and athletic support. Batters and base runners must wear a helmet with the chinstrap done up. Exception, chin straps are not required in Bantam+. Helmets are not to be removed until the player is safely behind the screen or sitting on the bench. Early removal of a helmet will result in the player being called out. If a player chooses to wear a personal helmet, UMSA will not be held liable in case of injury. Personal helmets cannot be shared with other team members. Helmets must be CSA approved.

3.10 Only fielders gloves, as defined by Softball Canada, are permitted in the infield (except 1<sup>st</sup> base) & outfield positions.

## **Section 4. Equipment**

4.1 Wooden bats are prohibited. Personal bats must meet current fast pitch softball criteria (drop 9 or greater). UMSA is not responsible if they are damaged, lost or stolen.

4.2 Equipment is to be kept off the playing field and away from non-participants.

4.3 Blast t-ball and T-3 pitch use a 9-inch incrediball. Coach Pitch, 5 Pitch use an 11" incrediball, Mite, and Squirt use an 11 inch ball(47 core). Novice, Peewee & older use a 12 inch ball(47 core).

4.4 All players must wear a batting helmet and past the screen before removing the helmet. Players in coach pitch up to midget must wear a caged helmet. For those wearing their own personal helmet, the cage and helmet must be the same brand and CSA approved.

4.5 All pitchers in Mite and Squirt must wear the pitching mask provided by UMSA in the team equipment bag or their own if desired.

## **Section 5. Playing Rules - All Levels** (see subsequent sections for specific division rules)

5.0 **General rotation-** House League is recreational therefore players must rotate and not be assigned set positions. Those wishing to play positional ball should tryout for a Select team in addition to their house league team. **\*\*All players must play an outfield position before any player plays an outfield position for a 2<sup>nd</sup> time.\*\***

***“Sitting” does not count as an outfield position.***

5.1 All team members present for the game will bat in rotation. A batting order must consist of first and last names and jersey numbers. These are to be entered on the official score sheet. Any player who arrives late (after the first pitch of the game) must be moved to, or added to, the end of the batting order. Unless a coach and in turn the umpire, has been previously notified, a late player cannot play after the batting order has been completed once.

5.2 No player will sit a 2<sup>nd</sup> time until every player has sat once. UMSA strongly urges coaches to keep track of their sitting rotation and carry it over several weeks so that the same few children are not sitting every week. Coaches must have a chart of positions and line up ready at game time. Violations of this rule may result in the forfeiture of the runs scored in the offending team’s most productive inning. **Note:** The chart, listing the scheduled positional play for all players, may be altered, if an injury occurs to a player who was participating in the game and adjustments required to ensure that the rotation rule is not violated.

5.3 Pitchers may have a maximum of 5 warm up pitches.

5.4 Players may not change defensive positions during an inning, except in the case of injury.

5.5 Any batter who throws the bat (more than 8 feet airborne) will be called out & the base runners must return to their bases. The ball is dead.

5.6 If the batter, after reaching first base safely, or any other base runner is injured, that player may be replaced by the last out. Due to a player’s physical disability, rules may be amended. This player’s coach will carry a letter from the executives detailing the changes.

5.7A Batters hit by a pitch, outside the strike zone and only if they did not swing at the pitch will be awarded first base and the ball is dead. Batter must attempt to avoid being struck, if they do not the pitch will be counted as a ball. If any portion of the bat touches the ball first, the pitch will be counted as legally batted ball. *This rule does not apply to the Coach Pitch and Five Pitch divisions.*

*5.7B Pitcher who hits 3 batters in the same inning must be changed and must follow regular rotation and the replacement cannot have pitched the previous inning.*

5.8 No intentional walks are allowed. Should the umpire deem a walk to be intentional, the batter will be awarded two bases.

5.9 If the ball is in play the runners are allowed to advance as far as possible at their own risk. If the ball is thrown out of bounds (outside a line formed by extending the screen) the runners advance 1 base from the time of the throw without liability of being put out.

5.10 Runners may advance after a caught fly ball, including a foul fly ball, provided they remain on their base until the ball is first touched by a fielder, or they return to touch their base if they left the base before the ball was first touched by a fielder. A fly ball caught out of play will be counted as a foul ball and not an out.

5.11 Defensive coaches must remain in the dugout or behind the screen. Coaches and players are not allowed behind the backstop. They may only stop a game due to injury. Offensive coaches are allowed at 1<sup>st</sup>

and 3<sup>rd</sup> only, and must remain 2 feet behind the baseline. There is a maximum of one time-out per inning, and unreasonable delays may result in forfeiture of the game at the umpires' discretion.

5.12 The defensive team will have 4 outfielders in Coach Pitch, 5-Pitch, Mites, and Squirts. These fielders should be spaced evenly between the left and right foul lines. The use of a 'rover' is prohibited. Blast TBall & Tee-3 Pitch Divisions have a maximum of ten players per team. There are no outfielders used in these divisions as the use of the homerun line is in effect.

5.13 To speed up the game, if a catcher is running and there are two outs, the catcher is to be replaced by the last out.

### **The following applies to Coach Pitch & 5 Pitch**

#### ***Rationale:***

- i) to make the games more fun for kids;
- ii) to assist in the development of skills through more involvement from all participants; iii) to make the game more exciting to watch for parents and families.

### **Section 6. Additional Playing Rules for Coach Pitch Only**

SEE QUICK REFERENCE FOR MORE DETAILS!

Rotation: No player may repeat an infield position during the game.

6.1 There is a maximum of 5 runs per inning or 3 outs.

6.2 Each team will have 3 offensive coaches - at 1<sup>st</sup> base, 3<sup>rd</sup> base and the friendly pitcher/coach. Coaches may not physically assist base runners when the ball is in play. If they do, the base runner is out, the play is dead and all other base runners return to original bases.

6.3 In an attempt to speed up the game, coaches should not take longer than 4 minutes to set their team up defensively. Have parents assist.

6.4 There is an 8-foot diameter-pitching circle with the centre being the pitching rubber at 28 feet from home plate. The defensive pitcher must be positioned in the back half of the circle (ie. No closer than 28 feet from home plate). The defensive pitcher may not leave the pitching circle until after the ball is hit. The defensive pitcher may not make an unassisted out at first base, the runner will be declared safe. Effect: Make the pitcher throw to first base. The defensive pitcher may tag a player at any other base including home plate.

6.5 The friendly pitcher/coach must: a) pitch to their own players, for the entire inning b) have a bucket containing 5 incrediballs, c) not intentionally interfere with the play of the ball or with defensive players d) not assist either team in any way except to pitch e) wear a glove.

6.6 The umpire shall call Pitch 1, Pitch 2, etc. as each ball is pitched. The catcher shall keep all pitched balls until the batter finishes their turn at bat. No strikes or balls will be called. **After 5 pitches with no contact the batter will be called out.**

6.7 If the friendly pitcher/coach or the bucket is hit by a batted ball, it will be called no pitch and no base runner can advance. The batter will return to bat with the same count as before the pitch.

6.8 The batter must attempt a full swing at the ball. There is no bunting (a bunted ball is considered a dead ball). A foul or dead ball is considered a pitch and base runners may not advance (except with regards to rule 6.7).

6.9 A pitched ball which hits the ground before reaching home plate is a dead ball. It will still be counted as one of the 5 pitches.

6.10 Runners may not advance on over throws at first or third base.

6.11 No sliding, the runner is to be called out. No stealing, the runner must return to the previous base. The base runner may not leave the base until the ball has been hit, i.e. leadoff. A runner leading off is automatically out. All play is dead. All other players including the batter maintain their original position prior to the lead off occurring. The count on the batter remains the same.

6.12 No rolling the ball. An attempt must be made to throw the ball. Fielders may not "run" the ball into the infield.

6.13 The home team will provide the bucket and 5 game balls. The visiting team will have their empty bucket beside the catcher in order for the catcher to gather the balls.

## **Section 7. Additional Playing Rules for 5 Pitch Only**

Rotation: No player may repeat an infield (except pitchers, see 7.4) position during the game. In addition, a player cannot play in the outfield a second time until all players have played an outfield position.

7.1 A maximum of 5 runs or 3 outs per inning.

7.2 Each team will have 2 offensive coaches (1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> base) and 2 defensive in the outfield to verbally assist their players.

7.3 To speed up the game, coaches should not take more than 3 minutes to set their team up defensively. Get parents to assist!

7.4 The defensive pitchers (fielding team) position is as follows:

a) There exists an 8-foot diameter pitching circle with the centre being the pitching rubber at 28 feet from home plate. The defensive pitcher must position them in the back half, on the glove side of the friendly pitcher (no closer than 28 feet from home plate) until after the ball is hit.

b) After the ball is hit the defensive pitcher may leave the pitching circle to field the ball.

c) The defensive pitcher may not make an unassisted out at 1<sup>st</sup> base, the first base runner will be called safe.

Effect: Make the pitcher throw to 1<sup>st</sup> base.

d) The defensive pitcher may tag a player at any other base, including home plate.

7.5 The friendly pitcher must be a player from the offensive (batting) team (not a coach).

NOTE: The objective of the league is to develop all the softball skills of the players and to promote their enjoyment of the game. Realistically, some of the players may not have sufficiently developed skills for pitching. Therefore, the league will not insist on all players taking a regular turn at pitching. Coaches are encouraged to give all their players an opportunity to pitch, at least during the practices and exhibition games. To promote the development of more pitchers, each pitcher will be limited to a maximum of 2 complete (alternate) innings or 3 appearances per game. The convenor will monitor the use of players as pitchers over the season.

If during any inning, the pitcher's turn in the batting order arises, the pitcher will be substituted by a player on the bench (not a base runner). The substitute pitcher will finish the inning. The league recommends that the players that are designated to pitch should be placed as far apart in the batting order as possible, in order to facilitate substituting from the bench. The starting pitcher should be placed near the bottom of the order, so that they will have a better chance of completing the first inning. To minimize the number of substitutions the players that will pitch subsequent innings should be selected based on where you are in the batting order.

- 7.6 The pitcher must wear a batting helmet. They will a) pitch from the pitching rubber to their own team, for the inning b) have a bucket of 5 balls at their side c) not intentionally interfere with the play of the ball, or with defensive players. d) not assist the offensive team in any way except to pitch the ball
- 7.7 The umpire shall call Pitch 1, Pitch 2, etc. as each ball is pitched. The catcher shall keep all pitched balls until the batter finishes their at "bat". No strikes or balls will be called. After 5 pitches the batter will be called out.
- 7.8 If the friendly pitcher or the bucket is hit by a batted ball, play will be stopped and no pitch called. No base runner can advance. The batter will return to bat with the same count as before.
- 7.9 The batter is allowed a maximum of 5 pitches in which to hit the ball. The batter must attempt full swing at the ball. There is no bunting. A bunted ball is considered a dead ball. A foul or dead ball is considered a pitch and base runners may not advance.
- 7.10 To stop play, the ball must be in control of an infielder or the defensive pitcher and no further play is being attempted. The umpire will call, **stop play**. Base runners are in jeopardy until reaching a base. If the ball is overthrown and leaves fair territory, the *runners may not advance*.
- 7.11 No sliding, the runner is to be called out. No stealing, the runner must return to the previous base. The base runner may not leave the base until the ball has been hit. A runner leading off is automatically out. All play is dead. All other players including the batter maintain their original position prior to the lead off occurring. The count on the batter remains the same.
- 7.12 No rolling the ball. An attempt must be made to throw the ball.
- 7.13 Fielders may not "run" the ball into the infield.
- 7.14 The home team will provide the bucket and 5 game balls. The visiting team will place their bucket beside the catcher, in order for the catcher to gather the balls.

## **Section 8. Additional Playing Rules for Mite Only**

***Note: To enhance the enjoyment of the game, the size of the umpire's strike zone will be increased. It is recommended that coaches encourage their players to swing the bat.***

PLEASE SEE QUICK REFERENCE CHART FOR MORE INFO & ALL OTHER RULES SPECIFIC TO THIS DIVISION!

**Rotation** In addition to Rule 5.0, the only infield position that may be repeated is that of the pitcher in alternate innings (i.e. innings 1,3,5,7 or 2,4,6). Other than pitchers, players cannot repeat any infield position during the game.

8.1A The coach is permitted one visit to the mound per game which must result in the change of a pitcher. When the pitcher is changed it must be one that did not appear as pitcher in the previous or following inning. The new pitcher is not permitted any warm-up pitches.

8.1B Offensive coach cannot call an offensive conference.

8.2 A walked batter may not advance past 1<sup>st</sup> base until after the next pitch.

### **Section 9. Additional Playing Rules for Squirts Only.**

PLEASE SEE QUICK REFERENCE CHART FOR MORE INFO & ALL OTHER RULES SPECIFIC TO THIS DIVISION!

**Rotation** In addition to Rotation Rule 5.0, pitchers and catchers may repeat their position in alternative innings only ( i.e. innings 1,3,5,7 or 2,4,6). Other than pitchers and catchers, players cannot repeat any infield position during the game.

9.1 The coach is permitted one visit to the mound a game which must result in the change of a pitcher. The new pitcher is not permitted any warm-up pitches. An appearance by a pitcher must follow the pre-stated rotation rule.

9.1A Offensive coach cannot call an offensive conference.

### **Section 10. Additional Playing Rules for Novice, Pee wee, Bantam Midget Only**

PLEASE SEE QUICK REFERENCE CHART FOR MORE INFO & ALL OTHER RULES SPECIFIC TO THIS DIVISION!

Please Review and Institute Rule 5.0

**Rotation** In addition to Rotation Rule 5.0, pitchers and catchers may repeat their position in alternate innings only ( i.e. innings 1,3,5,7 or 2,4,6). **After all players play an outfield position any player can repeat any position except pitcher or catcher. After every player has played the outfield position, you may play positional ball except pitcher and catcher for the remaining innings of the game.**

10.0 In combined Pee wee Bantam Boys & Novice Bantam Girls, pitchers will pitch from the designated distance for their division.

10.1 The coach is permitted one visit to the mound per game which must result in the change of a pitcher. The new pitcher is not permitted any warm-up pitches. An appearance by a pitcher must follow the pre-stated rotation rule

10.1A Offensive coach cannot call an offensive conference.