

THOMASVILLE YMCA

**RULES & REGULATIONS – YOUTH FASTPITCH SOFTBALL 2022**

**ARTICLE I – ELIGIBILITY**

**SECTION A – AGE DIVISIONS OF PLAY**

1. The age control date is prior to **September 1, current year**. Age determines proper division of play. No exception to playing below age level unless approved by YMCA. A copy of birth certificate is required for registration.
2. The age divisions for youth coed softball are as follow:
  - 8 & Under (Coach Pitch)
  - 10 & Under (Juggs wheel, Hybrid (Machine & Live Arm) or Live Arm)
  - 12 & Under (Live Arm)
  - 14 & Under (Live Arm)

**ARTICLE II**

**SECTION A – GOVERNING RULES All Leagues**

- YMCA games in youth softball at all levels of play are governed by the current rules and regulations of the Georgia High School Association Constitution and By-laws and the Georgia Recreation and Parks current Athletic Manual with the exceptions as may be found herein.
- The National Federation (National Alliance) current edition of Softball Rules Book is the official guide for all YMCA games with exception as may be found herein.

**SECTION B – LENGTH OF GAMES**

- A regulation game shall consist:
  - 8&Under- 4 innings or 1 hour
  - 10&Under- 6 innings or 1 hour 15 minutes
  - 12/13&Under- 6 innings or 1 hour 15 minutes (single game each night unless double header: 1hr games)
  - 14&Under 7 innings or 1 hour 30 minutes (single game each night unless double header: 1hr games)

**TIME LIMITS:**

- If there is five (5) minutes or less remaining on time clock a new inning will not begin.
- The international Tie Breaker rule will be enforced for the **10 & Under**, 12 & Under and the 14 & Under within 10 minutes of the time limit.
- The umpire shall have authority to call a game in accordance with the time limit. If the umpire allows an inning to begin, that inning must be completed regardless if it causes the game to exceed the time limit. Play-off games are exempt from time limits and will be played in accordance with Article II, Section B (1), with the exception of run rule as stated in Article II, Section B (5).
- Any game played to the time limit shall be an official game. If a game is called for any reason prior to the expiration of the time limit, it is an official game provided 5 or more innings have been played or 4 ½ innings if the home team is ahead in. In the event a game is called prior to the completion of the above lengths, it shall be replayed from the beginning.
- A game shall be considered complete after 5 innings with 8 runs, 4 innings with 10 runs or 3 innings with 12 runs ahead.  
(Note: **ONLY 8U & 10U** if all the players on the team that is behind have not batted and the team ahead has enough runs for the mercy rule to be in effect, the leading team automatically goes to defense and the team behind automatically comes to bat.)
- Any League official may terminate or shorten any game if deemed appropriate.

**SECTION C – SPECIAL PLAYING PROVISIONS All Leagues**

A slung bat will result in a team warning for the offending team on the first offense. Each additional slung bat for that team will result in the batter being called out. There will be no ejection. EXCEPTION: unsportsmanlike conduct. No Runners advance.

## **8 & UNDER COACH PITCH**

### **PITCHING RULES/OFFENSIVE RULES**

1. From 35', the offensive coach will deliver no more than five underhanded pitches with moderate speed to each batter. If batter fouls the 5<sup>th</sup> pitch, the batter will be allowed one additional pitch. Failure to complete turn at bat at this point results in an out. Offensive Pitching Coach must keep one foot in the circle.
2. The coach pitching may only coach the batter until she reaches first base or after she leaves third base.  
(Penalty: The coach will be replaced after the second occurrence for the remainder of the game.)
3. Any batted ball that strikes the offensive pitching coach shall be declared a hit.  
The ball is declared dead and each runner that is force is awarded 1 base.
4. If the pitching coach intentionally allows the ball to hit him/her. (Penalty: batter is out - Umpire's Judgment). No runner may advance.
5. The offensive coach (pitcher) must attempt to avoid interference and try to pick-up the batter's bat provided he/she does not interfere with the play.
6. If the offensive coach (pitcher) does not attempt to get off the field and/or interferes with the defensive player to keep him/her from making a play will result in the batter being called out. No runner will advance.
7. Batter will be called out on 3 swinging strikes.
8. No walks. No bunting allowed.
9. Three outs or five runs, whichever occurs first shall constitute a teams' turn at bat.
10. No base stealing. Base runner must remain in contact with base until the ball is batted. Failure to do so results in an out and the pitch is ruled no pitch.
11. All batters and base runners must wear protective helmets with face masks and chin straps (optional). Voluntary removal of the helmet while running bases results in an out at the time the infraction.

### **DEFENSIVE RULES**

1. The defensive pitcher (player) must have one foot within the pitching circle perimeter at the time of the pitch. Penalty – Offensive team may take the result of the pitch or a re-pitch.
2. It is mandatory that the pitcher wears a facemask.
3. All players present for game shall be listed in the batting line-up and will bat at the appropriate time. Any player that shows up late shall be inserted at the bottom of the batting lineup.
4. All players shall play defense. Six infielders will be placed at the regular softball infield positions. All remaining players will play in the outfield and must remain in the grass.
5. The catcher will be located behind home plate with equipment on. A coach of the defensive team is allowed to position himself well behind the catcher to help with receiving missed balls and will not be allowed to instruct players from this position.
6. Defense must stop the progression of the runner. Once stopped the Umpire will call time.
7. On an infield out, where no error occurs, runners will be allowed to advance one base only. For example; a runner on 2<sup>nd</sup>, batter hits ground ball to 1<sup>st</sup> baseman who touched 1<sup>st</sup> for an out on the batter, the runner on 2<sup>nd</sup> will only be allowed 3<sup>rd</sup> base unless the 1<sup>st</sup> baseman attempts to throw the runner out at 3<sup>rd</sup>. The game shall be played in manner consistent with regular softball. Umpires will interpret the running with this thought in mind.
8. Infield fly rule is not in effect.
9. The defensive team will have one silent coach behind home plate and may have one coach in foul territory beyond first base, one coach in foul territory beyond third base. The offensive team may have a coach at first and third base.

**10 & UNDER** ~~Prior to the start of game Head Coaches will determine pitching method of Machine only, Hybrid or Live Arm and must declare to the head umpire prior to the start of game.~~

**LIVE ARM:**

1. Pitching Rubber will be set at 40'. A 11" softball .47 core optic yellow ball will be used.
2. Mandatory that the pitcher wears a facemask.
3. All players present for game shall be listed in the batting order and bat at the appropriate time. Any player that shows up late shall be inserted at the bottom of the batting lineup.
4. Free substitution on defense is permitted. All players are required to bat once per game and it is required that coaches rotate substitutes every inning to assure adequate playing time for all players. (Penalty for Substitute infraction is forfeiture of game and one game suspension for the Head Coach)
5. Live Arm ONLY courtesy runner for pitcher and catcher is allowed.
6. Ten players are allowed on defense with the utilization of a fourth outfielder. There will be no penalty (an out) if the team has 8 players in the batting order.
7. In field fly-rule is in effect.
8. Bunting is allowed. No fake bunts / slash bunt.  
It is illegal for a batter to square to bunt and then draw back the bat back and swing away, commonly known as a slash bunt.  
A. Penalty results in an out and all runners must return to base occupied at the time of pitch.
9. Walks allowed. One base restriction applies.
10. All innings will have a 5 run limit per team.
11. When pitcher is in firm possession of the ball in the circle, all non-committed base runners must return to the previously occupied base.
12. Hit by pitch, batter will be granted 1<sup>st</sup> base. Runners will advance only if forced.

**MACHINE PITCH**

1. Pitching Distance 40'. A 11" softball .47 core optic yellow ball will be used.
2. Machine ball speed will be approximately 37 miles per hour.
3. Offensive coach will feed the machine to his/her players. At this point, the Coach will deliver no more than five pitches to each batter. If batter fouls the 5<sup>th</sup> pitch, the batter will be allowed one additional pitch. After one additional pitch, failure to put ball in play, foul ball or no swing will result in an out.
4. Coach will be responsible for any adjustments to machine and for presenting ball to batter prior to feeding machine.
5. No Walks. No Walks by hit by pitch.
6. Batter will be called out on 3 swinging strikes.
7. Bunting allowed. No fake bunts / slash bunt.  
It is illegal for a batter to square to bunt and then draw back the bat back and swing away, commonly known as a slash bunt.  
A. Penalty results in an out and all runners must return to base occupied at the time of pitch.
8. If a batted ball hits the pitching machine, person feeding machine, or extension cord off the ground, it is considered a "DEAD BALL SINGLE", batter will be awarded first base and all other runners move up one base, if forced.
9. If a thrown ball hits the machine or coach feeding the machine, each base runner may be awarded a base per judgment by the umpire.
10. A courtesy runner is allowed for the catcher only.
11. Player in pitcher's position must have one foot within the pitching circle and never closer than 40 feet of home plate when pitch is delivered.
12. Machine Pitch ONLY, passed ball is dead. No base runners advance.

## HYBRID:

1. Start of game, pitching done by a youth pitcher for one or two innings of each game from 40'. Remainder of the game done by an electric powered pitching machine from 40'. Machine Speed will be set at 37 mph.
2. Walks allowed during Live Arm. One base restriction applies.
3. Bunting allowed. No fake bunts / slash bunt.  
It is illegal for a batter to square to bunt and then draw back the bat back and swing away, commonly known as a slash bunt.
  - A. Penalty results in an out and all runners must return to base occupied at the time of pitch.

## GENERAL RULES

1. Stealing is allowed with the following limitations;
  - A. A player cannot steal home. **\*\*\*May advance home on a pass ball ONLY during Live Arm.**
  - B. **Machine Pitch.** A base runner can steal when the ball reaches home plate, and then only one base advance is allowed.
  - C. **Live Arm can steal when ball leaves pitchers hands, and then only a one base advance is allowed.**
    - i. If a throw becomes an overthrow during a stolen base attempt, the one-base restriction will apply. (ball is dead—no advance).
    - ii. If the machine throws a ball that is uncatchable (too wide or too high), it will be called a no pitch and runners cannot advance.
    - iii. **Machine Pitch.** Runners must maintain contact with the base until the ball crosses home plate. {Penalty—runner is out}
    - iv. **One-base advances may occur if another runner, attempting to steal, is the object of a play.**
2. If a thrown ball hits the machine or coach feeding the machine, each base runner may be awarded a base per judgment by the umpire.
3. When a thrown ball hits the pitching machine or the extension cord off the ground, it is considered a “DEAD BALL” and played as if thrown out of bounds.
4. Base runners(s) must remain in contact with the base until the ball is hit. Failure to do so results in an out and no pitch on the batter.
5. When pitcher is in firm possession of the ball in the circle, all non-committed base stealers must return to the previously occupied base.
5. No player shall be intentionally walked more than once per game.
6. **A line shall be drawn in the infield at the same distance as the pitching machine (40 feet). No infielder is allowed in front of the restricted line until after the ball is delivered through the machine, outfielders remain in the outfield grass area, and the pitcher must remain in the circle. Penalty:** The penalty for violation of this rule is Delayed Dead Ball and the batting team having choice of the result of the play or no pitch will be declared.
7. Base coaches at first and third base are permitted for the offensive team. All other personnel must remain in the dugout area at all times.
8. **Catcher must return ball to pitcher following a pitch as the ball is live until the player-pitcher gives the ball to the coach at pitching machine within the pitching circle. Umpire will determine when ball is dead and will immediately call time.**
9. Heckling of the batter by the catcher will not be allowed. If heckling occurs and is reported by the opposing coach, the umpire will issue ONLY ONE warning to both the catcher and the head coach. PENALTY- catcher will be removed from catching position.
10. In field fly-rule is in effect.
11. All innings will have a 5 run limit per team.

## 12 & UNDER and/or 13 & UNDER

1. All players present for game shall be listed in the batting order and bat at the appropriate time. A player arriving after the game has started may be added to the bottom of the batting order. If players leave during the game for other than an injury/illness, there will be **no penalty all long as the team has 8 in the batting order.**
2. Free substitution on defense is required. (**Penalty for Substitute infraction is forfeiture of game and one game suspension for the Head Coach**)
3. Ten players are allowed on defense with the utilization of a fourth outfielder.
4. Stealing is allowed. The base runner may attempt to steal once the ball has left the pitchers hand.
5. Bunting is allowed. Bunting allowed. No fake bunts / slash bunt.  
It is illegal for a batter to square to bunt and then draw back the bat back and swing away, commonly known as a slash bunt.  
B. Penalty results in an out and all runners must return to base occupied at the time of pitch.
6. If a batter is hit with a pitch, she will advance to first base.
7. A batter may advance to first base on a dropped 3<sup>rd</sup> strike as long as 1<sup>st</sup> base is not occupied or 1<sup>st</sup> base is occupied with 2 outs.
8. All innings will have a 5 run limit.
9. No player shall be intentionally walked more than once per game.
10. Rubber molded Cleats allowed.
11. A 12" softball .47 core optic yellow ball will be used. Pitching Rubber Distance is 40'.

## 14 & Under

1. There shall be NO inning limitation on a pitcher in fast pitch softball.
2. All players present for game shall be listed in the batting order and bat at the appropriate time. A player arriving after the game has started may be added to the bottom of the batting order. If players leave during the game, there will be no penalty all long as the team has 8 in the batting order.
3. Only 10 will play defense.
4. Free substitution on defense is required. (**Penalty for Substitute infraction is forfeiture of game and one game suspension for the Head Coach**)
5. Stealing is allowed. The base runner may attempt to steal once the ball has left the pitchers hand.
6. Bunting is allowed.
7. If a batter is hit with a pitch, she will advance to first base.
8. A batter may advance to first base on a dropped 3<sup>rd</sup> strike as long as 1<sup>st</sup> base is not occupied or 1<sup>st</sup> base is occupied with 2 outs.
9. No player shall be intentionally walked more than once per game.
10. All innings will have a 5 run limit.

## ALL LEAGUES

- Charged conferences – when on offense a team may be granted not more than one charged conference per inning to permit the coach or any of that team's members to confer with base runners and/or batter.
- **Only (2) Defensive timeouts per game.**
- No head first slides. PENALTY; the runner will be called out.
- **All plays at home plate the runner must slide in order to avoid a collision. Penalty for not sliding the runner will be called out.**
- Only players, managers and coaches of records and one batboy are allowed in the dugout area. The coach and manager of record must be reported to the umpire prior to the game. When a team is on defense all

members of that team, except those in the game, must remain in the dugout area at all times, unless there is a time out. While on offense a coach may occupy the proper box at first base and third base. The on deck batter may also be in the on deck circle. All other personnel shall remain in the dugout. A player is permitted to coach a base but must wear protective headgear while so doing.

- NO SMOKING OR THE USE OF ANY TOBACCO PRODUCTS, ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES OR ANY OTHER UNLAWFUL SUBSTANCE IS PERMITTED IN THE DUGOUTS OR ON THE PLAYING FIELD BEFORE, DURING OR IMMEDIATELY AFTER GAMES OR PRACTICES.

### ARTICLE III

#### SECTION A – APPROVED EQUIPMENT

- Shoes are mandatory for play in all levels of play. Rubber molded, cleated shoes are approved for use. STEEL SPIKES ARE NOT PERMITTED in 8U, 10U or 12U only allowed in 14U and 17U divisions of Fastpitch softball.
- **A.S.A approved bats must be used.** The official bat in ASA Championship Play must meet all of the requirements of Rule 3, Section 1 and: must bear **either** the ASA approved 2000 certification mark or the **ASA 2004 certification mark** as shown below, and must not be listed on an ASA non approved list,



Or must be included on a list of approved bat models published by the ASA National Office; or must, in the sole opinion and discretion of the umpire, have been manufactured prior to 2000 and if tested, would comply with the ASA bat performance standards then in effect.

- The official ball shall be permitted for play in ASA. 8 & Under and 10 & Under hit 11” softball .47 core Optic yellow. 12 & Under and 14 & Under will hit a 12” softball core .47 Optic yellow ball. Exception- T-ball shall use a ball approved by the YMCA.
- Regulation home plate, pitcher’s rubber and bases shall be used.
- Gloves and/or mitts may be worn by any player. ~~Pitcher’s gloves must be one color and neither white nor gray.~~ Pitcher’s are prohibited from wearing tape or foreign material on the fingers or palm of the pitching hand.
- Catchers must wear full protective equipment including mask with throat protector, protective cup in athletic supporter, body protector, and shin guards. **The catcher’s helmet shall be so designed as to give protection to the temples and the base of the skull as well as the top of the head.** The umpire must inspect all catchers’ protective equipment, including substitute catcher’s, to assure it is being properly utilized. The umpire shall not allow a catcher to participate unless the catcher is properly equipped.
- All players must wear protective helmet equipped with a face mask while batting, running bases, and when on deck. This helmet shall be so designed as to give protection to the temples and the base of the skull as well as the top of the head.
- When an umpire orders a batter or runner or catcher to wear protective equipment in accordance with the above, the failure of the player to do so shall cause a player’s dismissal from the game. **Players must be inside dugouts before removing batting helmets.**

### SECTION III

#### SECTION B – UNIFORMS:

- In all leagues the jersey and socks are the uniform.
- Players in all leagues are required to wear uniforms for all games. A player is considered out of uniform when the jersey is not worn. A player will not be permitted to participate in a game without the proper jersey.

#### **SECTION C – PLAYING FIELD REQUIREMENTS:**

- Distance between bases – 60’
- Minimum outfield distance is 200’.
- **Pitching Distance**  
8U Coach Pitch- 35’  
10U Machine 40’  
10U Hybrid Machine 40’ - Live Arm 35’  
10U Live Arm Only- 35’  
12U Live Arm 40’  
14U & Up Live Arm 43’

#### **ARTICLE IV – PROTEST**

- A judgment decision by an umpire on any play shall not be protested.
- Protest on misinterpretation of the rules is allowed to the Umpire-in-Chief provided such protest is made before the next pitch. Such protest shall be duly recorded in the scorebook, Game will continue until conclusion and protesting team will make protest in writing to the YMCA within 24 hours. If protest is upheld the game will be played from the point of the protest.

#### **ARTICLE V – MISCELLANEOUS**

- A team must have 8 players to start and continue a game. If a team has less than 7 players, they may pick up extra players from their opponents team in order to play. The game will be officially considered as a forfeit, a loss will be recorded for the team that does not meet the minimum requirements to start play. Official score recorded as 7-0.
- If a team begins with 8 players or subsequently only 8 players remain, an out will be charged for the absent 9<sup>th</sup> player when that slot becomes eligible to bat. Any late arrivals will be inserted in an out slot if less than required players are present or at the end of the line-up if minimum number is present. No penalty will be assessed when 9 or more players are present.
- Line-up cards will be given to the umpire and a copy given to the opposing team prior each game. Each line-up card will include the player’s name, number, and defensive position. All substitutes will be listed. Once the line-up card is given to the umpire no changes can be made without charge of a substitution.
- Game time is forfeit time unless the opposing coach grants 10 minutes. If granted, the time limit is still in effect with original start time.
- All games will be followed by prayer. The prayer will be the responsibility of the home team.
- The home team will occupy the bench area on the first base side.
- The umpire(s) and/or YMCA personnel shall have the authority to remove any player, coach or spectator who threatens the safety of any player or general wellbeing of the program. This may be done without warning. This includes excessive wildness by a pitcher.
- Any coach or player ejected from a game shall be suspended for the next subsequent game. All instances of misconduct will be reported to the Softball Committee for review and further action if necessary.
- Each team will police the ball field following each game, behind home plate to the foul poles, especially bench areas and playing field as required.
- All players present for game must participate in the game unless coaching reasons are declared prior to the game to the opposing manager/coach and home plate umpire. Failure to comply will subject game to protest by opposing team, which could result in forfeiture.
- The purpose of this program is to provide wholesome recreation with emphasis placed on fun, participation and fundamentals. The maximum participation of each team member is strongly encouraged. It is also the purpose of this program for each participant to learn and exercise good sportsmanship.