

# **Manhattan Instructional Softball 2009 Rules**

## **General**

- Scores will be kept but Coaches, parents and players should not allow themselves to get caught up in whether they are winning or losing. The focus of the Instructional level is to be on *teaching* the game of Softball.
- Games will be six innings with no extra innings with the exception of playoff games. There shall be a 1 hour and 45 minute time limit. If six innings are not completed within the allotted time, no inning shall start however the current inning shall be completed as if it were the final inning of the game, i.e. home team gets last bats if needed. If the inning ends in a tie, the game ends in a tie.
- All games will start promptly at their scheduled time. Any team not ready to play within 10 minutes after the scheduled starting time shall forfeit the game.
- Games not played due to weather or poor field conditions shall be rescheduled as soon as possible. All rescheduled games must be played prior to the end of the regular season.
- In the event of rain or darkness, three complete innings constitutes an official game.
- If lightning is observed by any Manager or Coach play shall cease immediately, the field and bleachers cleared and, time permitting, the game shall continue once the lightning has left the area.
- Umpires. The respective coaches of each team will umpire the game themselves. If the Coaches agree, a spectator or parent can be asked to umpire.
- No jewelry, except medical ID bracelets, shall be worn during the game. This includes earrings, studs, rings, watches and barrettes.
- A thrown bat will result in a warning being given to the offending player on the first occurrence. On subsequent occurrences by the same player, said player will be called out and no base runners will be allowed to advance, however, this out will not count towards the three outs to end a team's time at bat.
- No infield fly rule will apply.

## **Field of Play and Equipment**

- Distance between the bases will be 50 feet. The pitching rubber distance is 30 feet. The Coach or designated parent pitching does not have to pitch from the rubber but must be within the pitching circle. Home plate to the center of second base is 70 feet 8.5 inches.
- There shall be an orange safety base at First Base.
- The ball used shall be an 11" yellow softball.
- Metal cleats are not allowed.
- All batters and base runners must wear a helmet with a protective cage mask.

## **Defense**

- Each team will play with 10 defensive players. A team may play with less than 10 players but no less than 8. The positions eliminated when less than 10 defensive players shall be Left/Center and Right/Center.
- The 10 defensive positions are Pitcher, Catcher, First/Second/Third Base, Shortstop, Right Field, Right/Center Field, Left/Center Field and Left Field. All outfielders must not be in the infield. All infield positions must occupy the area typically associated with said position. There shall be no shifts.
- All players present must play in the field on defense for at least 3 innings during the game.
- Players may not play more than 3 innings at the same position during the game.
- Errant throws made during an attempt at a play at any base will result in a dead ball and no runners can advance.
- Managers/Coaches for the defensive team are encouraged to take the field with their teams to instruct and encourage the fielders. No more than 2 defensive Managers/Coaches shall be on the field at one time and must stay in the outfield during play.

## **Offense**

- All players present will bat in a continuous batting order.
- A team's time at bat will continue until either 3 outs are made or all the batters in the batting order have batted once. There is no run limit per inning.
- On balls hit that do not get out of the infield, the batter and all base runners may advance only one base.
- On balls hit through the infield, the batter and all base runners may continue to advance until the ball is returned to the infield. The infield is defined as the base path from first to second base and second to third base.
- Once the ball reaches the infield, base runners that are more than half way to the next base may continue at their own risk of being put out. Base runners half way or less to the next base must return to the previous base but cannot be tagged out when forced to return.
- The ball does not have to be caught or under control by a defensive player to stop the advancement of the base runners. The ball simply has to reach the infield.
- Errant throws made during an attempt at a play at any base will result in a dead ball and no base runners can advance.
- Bunting is not permitted. The batter must take a full swing. An obvious attempt to bunt will be declared a strike.
- There is no stealing. Runners may not leave their base until the ball is hit.

## **Pitching**

- The batting team's Coach or designated parent shall pitch to their team.
- The batter shall face 7 pitches or 3 swinging strikes (foul or missed ball), whichever comes first. If after 7 pitches the batter has not hit the ball into play said batter is Out regardless of the count. If the batter keeps fouling the last pitch she shall receive an additional pitch.
- There shall be no Walks or Hit by Pitch issued.
- The Coach or designated parent pitching shall not be responsible for fielding any balls during live play. The Coach or designated parent pitcher can field throws back from the catcher on a dead ball.
- If a batted ball strikes any Coach or designated parent pitching in fair territory the ball is dead, all base runners are to return to their previous base and the pitch is replayed.
- The ball is dead after each pitch not hit by the batter.