

# WGSL

## Clinic Division Rules

### SPRING SEASON

### 2011

It is the objective of the Wallingford Girls' Softball League to provide an organized slow pitch softball league to girls who live in the Town of Wallingford, while providing a positive learning experience for all participants. The League stresses skill development, team play and fun. Fair play, cooperation and respect among players, coaches, parents/spectators, umpires and officials shall always be emphasized. All rules established by the League are directed to these ends and, therefore, shall be interpreted and applied by the coaches in the way in which they are intended. Circumventing these intentions to win, though technically permissible in some cases, is not considered in the best interest of the league, its participants and, most importantly, the girls.

**GOAL** – The Clinic Division will teach basic softball fundamentals to our younger players. ASA rules will be introduced to the players, though modified to reflect their lack of experience. In general, players will learn to bat, throw, catch, and run bases in a generally non-competitive atmosphere.

**ELIGIBILITY** - The Clinic Division is open to any girl in grades two (2) and three (3) who lives within or attends school within the boundaries of the Town of Wallingford. The maximum age is nine (9) years as of January 1

### THE RULES

Clinic Division play shall conform to the rules of the Amateur Softball Association (ASA), except as revised below. The format of the rules below is consistent with the "ASA Playing Rules & Umpire Manual", which is why you will see references to several rules you probably didn't know existed.

#### **THE PLAYING FIELD (ASA Rule 2)**

- a. The pitching rubber will be placed thirty (30) feet from the rear point of home plate. The pitcher-coach shall pitch to **all** girls from the pitching rubber.

- b. Bases will be placed forty-five (45) feet apart. If not already placed on the field by the League, the home team coach will set the bases and pitching rubber before the game and return them to the locked field box after the game.

### **EQUIPMENT (ASA Rule 3)**

- a. Bats used in the League must be marked T-ball, "OFFICIAL SOFTBALL" and/or bear an ASA certification mark. All approved bats must have a WGS� label affixed to the bat.
- b. The official game ball is a Poly-Soft Ball (10") or a comparable ball approved by the League. A New ball is to be provided by the home team at the start of each game. A Suitable Used Ball is to be provided by the visiting team for back up.
- c. The catcher must wear all catchers' equipment while positioned behind the plate. This equipment includes a combination helmet/mask with a properly adjusted throat protector, a chest protector, and shin guards (used to protect from thrown bats).
- d. All batters, base runners and player-base coaches must wear approved batting helmets. Chinstraps must be used while wearing a batting helmet. Helmets must not be removed until the player is off the field. Those players failing to comply will not be allowed to hit, run or coach.
- e. Players must wear the shirts provided for their team by the League. League issued hats/visors (only) with the visor forward must be worn in the field. There are no exceptions. Sweatshirts and other warm clothing may be worn under uniforms at any time.
- f. Players must wear rubberized cleats or other athletic shoes. Socks must also be worn. Non-athletic shoes, street shoes and boots are not allowed.
- g. All visible jewelry must be removed. Players who fail to remove the jewelry upon request will not be allowed to play. (Note: Coaches will ask players to wait until after the softball season to have their ears pierced.)
- h. The head coach will maintain all League distributed equipment in good working order and will request replacement equipment from the League's Equipment Manager as necessary.

### **PLAYERS & SUBSTITUTES (ASA Rule 4)**

- a. There is no minimum number of players required to start or continue playing a game.
- b. The batting order must include all players present and ready to play. Any player(s) arriving late to the Game may be added to the end of the batting order.
- c. Teams will use all players on defense each inning as follows:
  - Four (4) infielders as well as a player-pitcher and a catcher. For safety, the four infield players must be positioned no closer than 40 feet from home plate and in fair territory prior to the pitch.
  - The player-pitcher must stand no closer than 30 feet from home plate and must be within **6 feet of the pitching rubber** at the hit of the ball. It is the job of pitcher coach to stand clear of any balls hit in his direction.  
Note: If the Pitcher Coach is hit with the ball he/she is considered part of the playing field (like an umpire) and the ball is played where it lands.
  - No infielder is permitted to stand on a base or in foul territory (except for the catcher) at the time of the pitch.
  - All remaining players will play the outfield. All outfielders must be positioned no less than five (5) feet beyond the normal infield dirt area prior to the pitch. If the infield is poorly defined or if a larger field is used, then outfielders must be positioned at least 15 feet behind the bases.

- d. All players, not on the field, batting, on deck, or running bases must remain in the dugout/bench area during the game; the players may not leave the dugout area without the coach's permission.

### **THE GAME (ASA Rule 5)**

- a. Game time is as indicated on the game schedule regardless of the number of players present and ready to play. There are no forfeits, since there are no standings and no playoffs. However, if there is a major imbalance between the team rosters (four or more players) or if a team has less than nine players, the coach with more players will be allowed to lend girls to the other team. This is encouraged (not mandated) since we feel that the girls will generally learn more with rosters that are more balanced.
- b. Games will start at 5:45 p.m. and continue for as many innings as can be completed before 7:30 p.m. up to a maximum of six (6) innings. Play will not continue past 7:30 p.m.
- c. Umpires or Head Coaches have the authority to suspend any game prematurely should conditions warrant, i.e. insufficient visibility, wet conditions, lightning, excessive cold, continuous harassment from anyone present, etc. Where the safety of the girls is a concern, either head coach or the umpire has the authority to suspend a game. Games will not be rescheduled if at least three (3) innings of play has been completed or play is halted after 7:00 p.m.
- d. **Postponements:** In case of inclement weather, the League no later than one hour-fifteen minutes before game time will post the status of all games on its website, ([www.wgsl.org](http://www.wgsl.org)); it is the responsibility of the Head Coach (or his/her designate) to confirm the status of his/her team's game. It is then the responsibility of the Head Coach (or his/her designate) to inform his/her players within a reasonable timeframe of any postponement. Teams must report to the field of play, unless otherwise notified. Postponed and suspended games will be rescheduled by the League to be played at the earliest available makeup date.
- e. All players and coaches will hustle on and off the field between innings. All players will be ready and in position when the umpire declares "play ball". Coaches are requested to enthusiastically enforce this rule to allow the maximum amount of playing time for the girls.

### **PITCHING REGULATIONS, SLOW PITCH (ASA Rule 6)**

- a. The pitcher-coach will pitch to his/her players with a normal underhand motion (slow pitch) from 30 feet. The arc will not be higher than ten (10) feet as measured from the ground, common sense does apply.
- b. The catcher shall be in full gear and ready to take her position at the end of each half inning, unless she was the last batter, on deck or a baserunner.
- c. All teams at the start of the season will use a coach pitcher. Player pitchers may be introduced into games after the first scheduled game following Memorial Day. Since abilities vary greatly at this age, the coach will decide which players will be allowed to pitch. No player should be put in the pitching position if she is not ready nor if she does not want to.

### **BATTING (ASA Rule 7)**

- a. Each team shall submit a batting order to the opposing coach before the start of each game. The batting order must include all players present and ready to play. Players who arrive after a game is in progress will be placed at the end of the batting order.
- b. Balls or non-swinging strikes will not be called. Strikes will be called only for missed pitches and foul balls. A foul ball is a strike only if there is less than two (2) strikes.

- c. A team will remain at bat until there are three (3) outs or until all of the batters completes their turn at bat and all play has been stopped by the umpire.

### **BATTER-RUNNER AND RUNNER (ASA Rule 8)**

- a. There will be no walks (base on balls).
- b. Time will be called by the umpire or defensive head coach only after a play has been attempted and (1) an infielder has clear possession of the ball and is standing in the base line ahead of a runner (the runner must return to the base), (2) the ball is thrown to the pitcher-coach (advancing runners can continue to the first base they come to), (3) in the umpire's opinion, all play has come under the control of the defense, or (4) the ball is dead. Advancing runners must stop at the first base they come to after the umpire calls time. If a baserunner is on base or simply taking a lead from that base when time is called, the runner will remain on or return to that base. A timeout will not protect a runner being "forced" to the next base. The runner can still be forced out.
- c. Runners will be allowed to advance on overthrows, with one exception: the batter-runner will stop at first base if first base is overthrown (other runners may advance at their own risk). However, if a subsequent play is attempted by the defense (other than throwing to the player-pitcher), any and all runners may advance at their own risk. Finally, if the ball rolls out of play, runners will advance only to the next base.  
**Note:** The overthrow exception is meant to encourage infielders to attempt a throw to first, especially if no one is on base. On the flip side, allowing other runners to advance on overthrows is meant to discourage throwing the ball just for the sake of throwing it. Finally, players must learn to back each other up.
- d. If a runner passes a preceding runner before the preceding runner is put out, the second runner will be called out.
- e. In guiding runners around the bases, base **coaches shall always assume that a defensive player will properly make a play.** The base coach's directions to advance runners will always be a positive reaction to defensive plays and not in anticipation of the failure of a fielder.
- f. Sliding is not permitted at the Clinic level.

**NOTE ABOUT BASERUNNING:** Runners should be taught to look for and listen to the two base coaches. If the ball is hit deep enough past the infield, runners should be encouraged to take an extra base or two. By the same token, if a fly ball is caught, runners should know enough to hustle back to their base since they can still be thrown out for a double play. Batters need to learn that extra bases will often reward solid contact with the ball. And fielders need to learn that if they don't quickly pick up the ball and throw it to the infield, runners will keep running.

### **PROTESTS (ASA Rule 9)**

**There are no Protests in the Clinic Division.**

### **UMPIRES (ASA Rule 10)**

The League will make every attempt to have junior umpires at the game. The umpires will be High School or Senior Division players. **Any badgering or intimidation towards an umpire is ground for a coach or parent to be dismissed from the League.** They are making a good faith effort to call the game as they see it. Their calls are not to be question. If you think the

umpire may need a little more training you are to speaker to the Clinic Vice-president to discuss the matter.

### **SCORING (ASA Rule 11)**

- a. Score will not be kept nor are there standings or playoffs in this Division.
- b. There are no forfeits. If a team has less than 9 players, the opposing team shall share players to balance out the teams.

### **OTHER RULES**

- a. Coaches: The League encourages each head coach to use as many parents/coaches as can be managed to teach the girls.
- b. On defense (in the field), two coaches will be allowed to roam the outfield to help guide the girls. One coach will back up the catcher to retrieve passed balls. No defensive coach will be allowed in the infield area during normal play. Nor will any coach be allowed to physically interfere with a ball in play. A coach can provide fielding instruction from the sidelines or outfield.
- c. On offense (at bat), there will be the two base coaches and a pitcher coach. In addition, a bench coach will keep players who are not on the field, at bat, on deck or on base in the dugout-bench area.
- d. Discipline: Any player, regardless of ability, can and should be withheld from the entire game if disciplinary reasons are such that it is necessary. The opposing coach must be notified prior to the game. If the disciplinary problem occurs during a game, the coach will notify the opposing coach immediately upon imposing the disciplinary action. This measure should only be taken if it is uniformly enforced with all players, regardless of ability. Parents will be informed of their daughter's disciplinary problems as soon as possible.
- e. Conduct: All coaches are reminded that players and spectators will emulate their conduct. Coaches will set an example by providing a model reflecting those values and intentions herein. Any coach exhibiting or reported for un-sportsman like conduct or abusive language/behavior will be reviewed by the League to determine his or her continued participation. The offending coach's continued participation in the League will be subject to review by the League.
- f. Safety: The playing area must be kept clear of equipment not being used. Spectators must stay behind the fence. Players not in the field, at bat, on deck or on base should remain in the dugout-bench area. Where there is no fence, spectators and equipment must remain behind an imaginary line drawn from the end poles of the backstop parallel to the foul lines. Failure to comply with this rule will seriously compromise player safety.
- g. **Smoking/Alcoholic Beverages: Smoking/Alcoholic Beverages:** There shall be no drinking of alcoholic beverages allowed in the parks. There shall be no smoking on the playing fields and the surrounding areas. Per Town Ordinance, smoking is only allowed in the parking lot areas of the parks including the Gaylord Field Complex. Coaches committing an infraction of the smoking rule will receive a written warning after the first infraction. Coaches committing a second infraction of the smoking rule will be suspended indefinitely and subject to review by the respective Division Vice-President, League Vice-President and League President. Coaches committing an infraction of the alcoholic beverages rule will be suspended indefinitely and subject to review by the respective Division Vice-President, League Vice-President and League President.

## **JUNIOR CALL-UP PROCEDURES**

### Calling up Clinic Players

1. All Clinic Division head coaches will evaluate their teams during the pre-season for the expressed purpose of selecting players who have the skill, knowledge, and attitude to compete at the Junior level. These players may be eligible for call-up. Clinic coaches will not consider any girl who could be at serious risk playing with the older girls. Coaches may reconsider their selections at any time.
2. At the start of the season, the League will provide each Junior team head coach with the name and phone number of each Clinic team head coach. If there is reason to believe that a team will be unable to field 9 players for a scheduled Junior game the Junior head coach may contact the parents of girls on the call-up list from the Clinic team that has a BYE for that day. If, in an emergency situation, enough girls are not available from the BYE team to complete the roster, the Junior division head coach may contact the Clinic division head coach of the teams that are schedule to play for no more than one girl from a team. It will be the discretion of the head coach and the parent of the player to agree to give a player the opportunity to play in the Junior division game and miss her own Clinic division game. No Junior division coach may contact a Clinic division player's family without the prior expressed permission of the parent."
3. All call-ups will play a minimum of two (2) complete innings. Call-up(s) will be placed at the end of the batting order. After two (2) complete innings, no Clinic player will be allowed to play defense in place of a roistered girl who is present and ready to play, unless the Clinic girl is subject to disciplinary action as described elsewhere in the rules.
4. The Junior coach shall report the use of a call-up player to the League within twenty-four (24) hours of playing her in a game. The League will provide phone numbers.
5. All coaches, parents and players are reminded that the sole purpose for call-ups is to avoid forfeiture, not to enhance a team's chances against an opponent.

**Approved by the Wallingford Girls Softball League, Inc.**

Last Revision Date:  
November, 2010