

# *Western Reserve Fastpitch League*

## **2018 Rules 14U (Updated 1.27.18)**

The USA (Formerly ASA) Softball rules govern play except as superseded by the following Western Reserve Fastpitch rules:

1. Girls softball league is reserved for girls with playing ages of 14 or less as of January 1st of the playing year in accordance with USA Softball.
2. Each game is scheduled with a 1 hour 50 minute time limit from the actual start of the game. No new inning can begin once the 1 hour and 50 minute mark is reached.  
NOTE: A new inning begins when the third out of the bottom of an inning is recorded. Lightning, rain, or thunder which impedes the safety of the players, the game needs to immediately stop and all players need to seek shelter until conditions improve. In the event of the observance of a lightning strike and/or Thunder, the game and game time will cease immediately, all players and coaches must leave the playing field (dug-out included) and seek shelter. Such suspended game and game time will not resume until 30 minutes after the last lightning and/or Thunder strike was witnessed. It is encouraged the coaches meet at safe location to confirm respective score books match (including the time of stoppage) for the intended purpose of resuming play. Suspended time does not count against time limit. Please refer to rule #TBD for greater detail for all suspending games being played on a different day than the originating day.
3. The softball utilized for each game shall be a 12" Ball. Leather covered balls. NO synthetic. .47 core.
4. **ELITE/LOWER DIVISION ONLY:** All team players must play at least 2 innings on defense. All substitutes must be in the game by the third inning.
5. The team roster size shall be limited to 14 unless the League Commissioner determines otherwise due to season ending injury or re-location of a player. Players must play in more than 50% of regular season WRF games to be eligible for playoff roster.
6. A seven (7) run rule per inning limit.
7. MERCY RULE - 15 runs after 3 innings, 12 runs after 4 innings, 8 runs after 5 innings.
8. a. *Round robin batting will be employed. Any player arriving after the game begins are to be placed at the end of the batting order. LATE ARRIVING players must be noted with Umpire at ground rules meeting and listed on batting card. In the event, a listed player is not present at their initial "at bat", such batter will be removed from the batting order and skipped over without a recorded out. Upon arrival of a "late player", such player shall be added at the end of the batting order and reported to the opposing team prior to their first "at-bat" pitch. Failure to notify the opposing team prior to the first "at-bat" pitch will be recognized as "batting out-of-order" and applicable rules will be enforced. Purpose of this rule is NOT to penalize players/parents arriving late due to traffic/work/conflicts.*

*(14U Rules cont)*

8. b. *A Manager has the option to bat an equal number of players to their opponent IF the opposing team has fewer players. Substitutions would be made by 3rd inning OR a player making a plate appearance. i.e. one team has 10 players, the 2<sup>nd</sup> team has 14 players. The manger with 14 players may have the option to bat fewer players  $\geq 10$ . Purpose of this rule is to not put a team with more players at a disadvantage by having more players to bat around their order.*

9. If a player must leave for any personal reason, the opposing coach, or scorekeeper must be notified and the first “missed” plate appearance shall be recorded as an out. Any/all subsequent missed plate appearances shall be skipped over without further penalty. In the event such player returns, she shall be re-entered in their original batting order position and the opposing team must be notified prior to the first returning “at-bat” pitch. Failure to properly notify the opposing team prior to the first returning “at-bat” pitch will be recognized as “batting out-of-order” and applicable rules will be enforced.

10. A warning will be issued to each team by the umpire for any bat that has been thrown (**regardless of intent**) and is judged to put any **person(s)** in danger. The next occurrence will result in the offender being called out. Any equipment thrown in anger (**as defined by the umpire**), will result in that player being ejected from the game. **NO ADDITIONAL WARNINGS!** An out will be taken in the batting order for that player for all further “missing” plate appearances.

11. The following rules pertain to pitching: a. Both feet must be touching the pitching rubber when starting. b. Pitchers must pause to look for a sign from the catcher to prevent quick pitching. A sign does not have to be given by the catcher. c. The pitcher must present the ball by touching it to the glove once before the delivery. d. No rocking is permitted. e. No crow hopping. f. No double windups.

12. A maximum of 5 warm-up pitches will be allowed for the start of an inning OR for a pitcher coming into a game for the first time as a replacement. A pitcher **re-entering** a game in the middle of an inning will be awarded 3 warm up pitches. Exception: if a pitcher is re-entering an inning that she has already participated in as a pitcher in that inning – NO warm up pitches will be awarded.

13. In the event a “safety base” is being used and a play is being made at 1<sup>st</sup> base, from either the infield or outfield, a batter/baserunner must use the outside (orange color). If the play is elsewhere, the inside base may be tagged by the batter/baserunner in a continuation or possible continuation toward 2nd base. Please note, the **defensive player** may use the orange bag on a dropped third strike **that rolls on the foul side of 1<sup>st</sup> base**. In this situation, the batter/baserunner is required to touch the white bag if the orange bag is occupied by the defense. \*NOTE: Once the batter/baserunner becomes a baserunner, the double base becomes one bag.

14. All **offensive** players are required to wear batting helmets with a protective face guard **and chin strap** while on the playing field as all times. In the event a player is in violation of this rule, both teams will be issued one waring. Any/all subsequent violations of this rule will result in the offending player being recorded as an out. If a base runner intentionally removes her helmet during play, she may be called out at the discretion of the umpire.

*(10U Rules cont)*

15. If a manager, coach, players, or parents attempt to stall a game in any way, the umpire can allow the game to continue without regard to a time limit or if darkness is an issue, the game can be rescheduled by the League Commissioner.
16. Violations of any of the WRF or Governing Body rulings shall be subject to discipline (including forfeiture of the game) of the offending team, as determined by the WRF Board.
17. If a school event (awards ceremony, carnival, etc) OR Community Event conflicts with a scheduled game, the Coach or Coach Representative must notify the Coach from the opposing team at least 48 hours prior to the date of that game. And, both coaches must put forth “best effort” to re-schedule the game. The WRF Board reserves the right to award a forfeit to the team in violation of “best effort” attempt (as determined by the WRF Board) to reschedule a game.
18. All games that are rained-out or cancelled must be rescheduled and communicated with Jim Wagner via email to [jim.wags@sbcglobal.net](mailto:jim.wags@sbcglobal.net). When attempting to reschedule game(s), “best efforts” (as determined by the WRF Board) must be implemented by both teams. The WRF Board reserves the right to award a forfeit to the team in violation of “best effort” attempt to reschedule a game.
19. GAME START TIMES: Start times must be mutually agreed upon (in advance) by the respective team coaches. A target of 6:30p for weekday games when possible. A team needs a minimum of eight (8) players to begin an official game. A 15 minute grace period is afforded a team waiting to reach the minimum number of players. If after the grace period, a team does not have 8 players, the team will have to forfeit.
20. The official timekeeper is the umpire and will call out the start time of the game. And, the home team will maintain the “Official” scorebook. The visiting team scorekeeper is encourage to confirm matching scoresheets after each inning. Any unsettled disputes will go with the Home team scorebook.
21. Both teams must report the final score of the each game by email to [jim.wags@sbcglobal.net](mailto:jim.wags@sbcglobal.net) within 48 hours upon completion of the game.
22. Suspended game due to inclement weather or darkness, the following rules apply:
- A. If the game has completed 5 innings (4 ½ innings with the home team winning) the game is over and constitutes a full and complete game. No innings will be made up at a later date.
  - B. Suspended games will be considered any game that has not completed 5 innings (4 ½ innings with the home team winning) will resume at the exact point that play was halted. Teams will finish the next time they meet if they meet during the season. **“Best Effort” (as determined by the WRF board) to re-schedule suspended games must be implemented by both teams. The WRF Board reserves the right to award a forfeit to the team in violation of “best effort” attempt to reschedule a suspended game.** If the teams do not meet, the League Commissioner will reschedule the game.
  - C. Upon resuming a suspended game, players in original lineup who are not present for games’ completion are skipped in the batting order – No out is to be taken.
  - D. Players not in original lineup who are present for the games’ completion are added to the

bottom of the batting order. .

*(10U Rules cont)*

23. Speed Up Rule – When a catcher is on base or reaches a base with two outs, it is mandatory the catcher be replaced by a player on the bench. If there are no bench players it would then be the player who made the last out. Optional for Pitcher with 2 outs to have a courtesy runner following the same rules.

24. Metal Cleats are permitted.

25. a. Residency Rule – Max of total roster is 14 players. Upper Premier Division +50% from community OR School District. Lower Elite Division No more than 4 players from outside community or school district.

25. b. Exempted players will not count towards non-resident players. Those are players who did not make not make their home community team. Or players released from their community team. Players with these qualified exemptions will be ‘grandfathered in’ on their existing team’s roster for as long as they remain with that team or organization.