

Western Reserve Fastpitch League **2018 Rules for HS League 18U (Updated 3.30.18)**

The NFHS rules govern play except as superseded by these rules:

1. Girls softball league is reserved for girls with playing ages of 18 or less as of January 1st of the playing year in accordance with **National Federation of High School 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 time limit is reached. Lightning, rain, or thunder which impedes the safety of the players, the game needs to immediately stopped and all players must leave the playing field (dugout included) to seek shelter until conditions improve. After the observance of a lightning strike or thunder, no game can resume until 30 minutes after the last lightning strike **or thunder** was witnessed. Suspended time does not count against time limit. NOTE: A new inning begins when the third out of the bottom of an inning is recorded.
3. The softball utilized for each game shall be a 12” Ball. Leather covered Balls only NO synthetic. .47 core
4. The team roster size shall be limited to 14 unless the League Commissioner determines otherwise. Players must participate in 50% of the regular season games to be playoff eligible. 18u is permitted a “Taxi Squad” of 4 players. These 4 players must be listed separately. They are not Playoff Eligible. If they are to replace a regular rostered player, the replaced player must be released. The former Taxi Squad Player would then be playoff eligible ONLY if they meet the rule of having played in a minimum of 50% of the regular season games.
5. No run rule limit per inning.
6. MERCY RULE = Up 10 runs after 5 innings.
7. *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 but not in batting order as a SUB. Once player arrives they can be placed at bottom of batting order. Purpose of this rule is NOT to penalize players/parents arriving late due to traffic/work/conflicts. No out taken for prior missed at-bats.*
9. If a player must leave for any personal reason, the opposing coach, or scorekeeper must be notified before the first pitch and they and the first “missed” shall be recorded as an out. Any/all subsequent plate appearances skipped over without future penalty. If the player returns, she will be re-entered into her original batting order position and the opposing team must be notified prior to the first “at-bat” pitch. Failure to properly re-enter such returning player will result in “batting out-of-order” and applicable rules will be enforced. *(18U Rules cont)*

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10. A warning will be issued to both teams 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 determined 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.

11. 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.

12. In the event a “safety base” is being used and a play is being made at 1st 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 1st 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.

13. 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 warning. 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.

14. 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.

15. Violations of any of the Western Reserve Fastpitch League or Governing Body rulings shall be subject to discipline (including forfeiture of the game), as determined by the WRF Board.

16. 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.

17. All games that are rained-out or cancelled must be rescheduled and communicated with Jim Wagner via email to 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.

18. 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.

19. 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.

20. Both teams must report the final score of the each game by email to jim.wags@sbcglobal.net within 48 hours upon completion of the game.

21. 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. .

22. 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.

23. Metal Cleats are permitted.

24. 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.

24. 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.