**2021 Buckeye Softball Rules**

1. Roster of players with names and birthdays must be turned in to the President of the league before the first game. There is no limit on the rosters. Teams are permitted ten (10) players on the field. Teams can play with eight (8) if needed. Ten players are positioned on the field with the understanding that the outfielders are positioned in the outfield. When using only nine players, the 10th batter is not an out unless the team starts with 10 players. When using only eight players, the 9th batter is an out. Any less than eight players are a forfeit, not a reschedule.
2. **Age Limit: Players can not turn thirteen (13) before January 1st of the current year.**
3. Games are six (6) innings in length. The six (6) run rule must apply to all innings. If a team is behind in score, they can then go ahead by a maximum of six (6) runs per inning. The expectation is the last inning of play when there in so limit of runs to be scored. The game is considered over when one of the following applies: A. if one (1) team is fifteen (15) runs ahead after four (4) innings. B. If one (1) team is twelve (12) runs ahead after five (5) complete innings.
4. All weekday games start at 6:00pm. Teams need to be at the ball fields by 5:30 pm for weekday games. The away team gets the diamond for warm-up for fifteen (15) minutes beginning at thirty (30) minutes prior to start of game. The home team gets the diamond for warm-up for fifteen (15) minutes beginning fifteen (15) minutes prior to start of the game.
5. Rain-Out games: A. In case of a rainout, the home team must notify the opposing team by 4:30pm. B. In the event of rain and lighting, a game that is called before four (4) complete innings have been played, the game must be started where the game left off. C. Regardless of the inning, if lightning is spotted, the game must be stopped. The coaches and the umpire will make the decisions how the game will be played out or rescheduled. (Thunder and lighting are an automatic 30 stop of play. D. Make up games must be made up before the start of the tournament. If one of the opposing teams decides not to make up the rain out game, the result will be a forfeit for that opposing team not wanting to play. Otherwise, if a game cannot be made up and agreed upon by both teams, the result will be a forfeit for both teams. Games can be made up at any start time with an agreement of both teams. Contact of league president for any rainout game is discrepancies.
6. Home teams provide umpires and two (2) game balls. The balls are to be 12” white or red stitched restricted flight with .47 core yellow balls. During the regular season, plate umpires are to be at least sixteen (16) years old and the base umpires are to be at least fourteen (14) years old. (unless agreed upon before start of game with it being harder to find and keep umpires.) NO Coaches or parents of playing teams will be permitted to umpire. During the tournament, plate umpires must be at least (18) years old and the base umpire must be at least sixteen (16) years old. Umpires are to have a copy of the rules prior to the start of the game. A. No parent umpiring unless necessary. Both coaches must agree. B. Plate umpire should keep track of score after each inning to be sure both books agree.
7. The winning team coach must text the final score of the game to the president of the league after each game. Text: **Tyler Stover 419-733-1853**
8. Protests: This should follow fast pitch rules as closely as possible. The protest must be made at the time of the play. The home plate umpire should make clear written record of the play in both scorebooks. If the incident cannot be resolved at the game, a meeting of the coaches will be held and a ruling will be made. **You cannot protest an umpire’s judgement**
9. **Farmette Girl Play: During the Farmette season, a Farmette player may move up to a** buckeye league game only if the buckeye team does not have enough players for that game. Each Farmette girl is allowed this option only three (3) times. This does not alter her playing in the Farmette league. However, if she plays a fourth (4) game, she can no longer go back to the Farmette league. (the Farmette player must actually play in the game in order for it to count for the allowed times to play up.) If there is a Farmette girl that will be filling in for the buckeye league, this must be reported to the league president each time they play. Once the Farmette season is over, there are no restrictions on how many games a Farmette player can play in the buckeye league. **NOTE: It was discussed at the league meeting in 2021 and this will not be enforced this this year. The Farmette League meeting confirmed. If a girl plays more than 3 games up she will still be allowed to play down in Farmette league.**
10. **Junior Girl/4-County girl Play:** junior/4-county girls can be brought down to play if needed as long as they are eligible by age. They will not be allowed to pitch. If there is a junior/4-county girl substitution if the player is going to be used during the tournament, it must be approved at the league draw by all the coaches.
11. **Bases are set at sixty (60) feet.** Pitchers’ mound is set at forty (40) feet with a circle measuring sixteen (16) feet across around the mound. Once the ball is within the pitcher’s circle, the base runner must commit to a base and either advance or return to previous base. Only one (1) base may be advanced unless a play has been made towards the advance. Standing between bases, runner will be called out. Runners can be played upon.
12. **Offense play inference:** If a fielder is trying to field the ball and the runner interferes by running into the fielder, the runner is out. If a runner is advancing bases and is struck by the batters hit, the runner is out. Runner must try to avoid a collision at all cost.
13. **Defense player interference:** A fielder is not to block the base line or base (this includes home plate) unless there is a play in the process. Infielders may not stand in the baseline. One warning will be given: second occurrence will result in the runner being advanced to the next base. (encourage your catcher to set up inside home plate on the fair side of the plate and not directly in the baseline to home plate. If there is not a play at the plate and the catcher is blocking the plate the defensive player can be called for interference and the runner will be safe.)
14. **Coaches Interference:** Coach cannot touch the base runner at any time in order to restrain or advance a player, if the coach does so, the runner is out.
15. **Substitutions:** Players may be substituted for and can later return after one inning. The player must return to the same batting position in the lineup. Should unforeseen circumstances occur that a player is injured and there are no substitutions available (which have not been used) it is up to the discretion of the coaches from both teams to allow an already substituted player to enter in that position that has already been used.
16. **Pitching:** A. pitchers must begin motion with at least one foot on the pitcher’s mound, within the pitchers 24” plate with hands separated. Pitcher must contact the rubber/ground when releasing the ball (no hopping). The pitcher must begin with one foot on the rubber and must stay in the confinements of the pitching rubber. If a pitcher wets fingers and does not wipe them on before stepping on the rubber. A warning will be issues, a second offense will result in a balk being called. (please encourage all pitchers to start with both feet touching rubber. B. After bases are loaded, a walk will be awarded after four (4) balls. If the batter is hit by a wild pitch, she will take her base if the bases are loaded, and a run will be scored. First base will be given to the batter if hit with a pitched ball. C. If the pitched ball bounces off the ground and hits the batter, it is a dead ball. The batter is not awarded first base. No runners can advance. D. If the batter is a hit on the hand and no swing was attempted, the runner is awarded first base. E. A pitcher can re-enter as a pitcher unlimited times as long as the player never leaves the game. If the pitcher leaves the game, they may re-enter in their previous position in the batting order, they can re-enter as a pitcher as well. F. Pitchers can wear heart guard which is to be determined by the coach/ball park (it is not mandatory)
17. **All batter must wear a helmet with a face guard while batting and running bases.** Helmet is to remain on until batter/runner returns to the dugout.
18. **The batter’s box is required and should measure 3ft.** by 7ft and a 6” from home plate. It is not necessary to make up a catcher’s box.
19. **The catchers must give the right away to the runner coming home if she does not have the ball or if no play can be made on a runner.** Catcher can only block plate when she has the ball.
20. **Bunting is permitted**
21. **Base stealing is permitted to all bases and home plate. Runners must stay on the bag until the ball crosses the home plate.** On ball four, the batter will only be awarded first base unless there is a play in the field. A walked batter cannot advance to second base unless there is a play in the field. Strike three the batter is out. (the batter cannot advance if the catcher misses the ball) runners can advance, a runner may steal on a third (3) strike or a fourth (4) ball to the current batter.
22. **If the catcher makes a play on a runner stealing after a walk has been issued, the runner that was walked may steal second base if there has been on another runner.**
23. Sliding is to be encouraged but is not mandatory this year when there is a play at the base or plate the runner is trying to advance to. (OHSAA rules state that if there is a play at the base or plate the runner is advancing to the runner must attempt to slide or could be called out at the discretion of the umpire.) this rule is encouraged but will not be enforced this year in this league. While sliding at the plate, those sliding headfirst are automatically out.
24. If the runner takes out a base person purposely, they are automatically out. This will be at the umpire’s discretion.
25. Overrunning 1st base: Batter-runner may legally overrun 1st base and not be played on as long as batter-runner does not make an attempt to advance to 2nd base. (if not attempting to advance toward 2nd, encourage batter-runner to turn right or toward foul territory) If batter-runner legally overruns 1st base and attempts to advance toward 2nd base, batter-runner can be played on.
26. Sportsmanship should be encouraged between all participants, players, coaches, and all spectators. The umpire will warn offenders the 1st time, the next offense will result in an ejection from the ball park
27. There is no infield fly rule
28. Batting out of order is an automatic out. (when filling out line up card, use players last name and give jersey # of player. Do not use first names on the line-up card)
29. Throwing the bat will result in a warning the first time and then an out there after.
30. The league champion will be determined solely on the team who finishes with the best overall record. If two or more teams finish with the same record, head to head will determine the champion. If three or more teams have the same record and head to head doesn’t resolve go to step 1:
    * + 1. Tally up the point differential in each match against the other tied teams. The team that has the largest point differential should be declared the champion. If there is still a tie, move to step 2
        2. Use total points scored against the other tied teams. If still a tie, flip a coin!!!!

1. League tournament- scheduled to start Wednesday June 23, 2021 with championship on Monday June 28, 2021. Tournament will be held in the city, which the league president is from. All league play must be completed by June 17th. The tournament fee is now **$125.00** which needs to be paid prior to the first game. Home teams will be required to supply the balls for the home games they are hosting at their park. The fees are for the cost of trophies and umpires for the league tournament.

**Please make checks payable to:**

**Rockford Recreation Association**

**PO BOX 16 Rockford, OH 45882**

**The tournament draw will be held on June 17th at 8:15pm at Shane’s Park. It will be ran by the league president. If there is an odd number of teams one bye will be given. If there is an even number of teams two byes will be given. If there is a bye in the tournament brackets the team(s) with the best records will be given those byes. In the event that there are multiple teams with the same best record and there are enough byes for each team, a preliminary draw will be done to determine who gets the byes. Once the byes have been identified, the rest of the teams will choose where they want to go on the bracket in order of how they finished in the league. If there is a tie, we will go head to head. If the two teams did not play each other, we will do a coin toss. If a representative is not at the drawing, all spots left on the board will be put into a hat and the league president will draw the number to determine what bracket position they will be put in. (coin flip if head to head does not determine the highest number)**

**League Awards that will need to be handed out!!**

**League champion- highest number of players from the roster with the highest number of players (each player will need a trophy or medallions) and 1 team banner to keep**

**Tournament Champ- highest number of players from the roster with the highest number of players (each player will need a trophy or medallions) and 1 team banner to keep**

**Tournament Runner up- highest number of players from the roster with the highest number of players (each player will need a trophy or medallions) and 1 team banner to keep**

**A set of rules must be given to all base coaches and assistants**

**Coaches please remember we are all here for the kids and we need to keep this in mind at all times. Umpires are now a days mostly younger higher schools so we need to watch how we treat them; they are just young themselves but need to know the game. Profanity and any disrespect activity will not be allowed. When you are the visiting team, please try to follow the home teams’ rules and regulations.**