

## 2024 Melrose Park Fall Ball Rules

**Game Length:** 10U – 6 innings.

All others – 7 innings.

**Time Limit:** 10U – 18u Game will be 90 min drop dead. (no new inning after 85 mins)

**Run Limit:** Teams are limited to scoring 5 runs per inning at 10U & 6 runs for 12u.

For 12u-18u a mercy rule will be in effect. 12/10/8 after 3<sup>rd</sup>/4<sup>th</sup>/5<sup>th</sup>.

**Cleats:** **No metal cleats** allowed at any fields in Veterans Park (Fields: Bulger, Grant, Ruby, Northpark or Gouin)– only plastic molded cleats or tennis shoes. This applies to all ages.

**Pitching Limits:** 10U – 3 innings, 12u through 18U Divisions – no restrictions. Each pitch constitutes an inning. All pitchers (not just the starter) can leave the mound and return once per game. All starting and substitute pitchers can leave the game defensively and still return to pitch once per game.

**Stealing:** 10u – leave on release – you can steal all bases EXCEPT home (you can NOT advance on a steal to third and overthrow) - You can only score on a batted ball or a walk.

12u-18u– leave on the release – you can steal all bases including home.

**Infield Fly:** In effect for 12U and older.

**Drop Third:** In effect for 12U and older.

**Players:** You must have 8 players to start. If a team has less than 9 players, the missing position is an out each time that position bats. If a team has less than 8 players, the game results will be a forfeit.

**Injured Player:** If a player leaves a game due to injury – that batting position is an out until the player is able to return (**This penalty applies only when you reach the minimum number of players which is 8.**) if you are batting more than 9 in a continuous batting order, the injured player can be skipped without penalty or if you have legal substitutions to replace injured player.

**Helmets:** Must be NOCEA approved and have a face mask. Absolutely no baseball style chin extensions allowed for softball unless a face shield is attached. Protective face masks in the field are optional for all ages, strongly encouraged for all ages.

**Batting:** Continuous batting order for 10U & 12U. For 14,16 &18U teams can have the option of:

- a) Continuous batting order
- b) Standard 9 player batting order with Dp/ the Flex being the 10<sup>th</sup> player w/ bench substitutions (IHSA rules)
- c) The team with more players can bat the same number of players as the opposing team.

**Defense:** There is free substitution for defensive players if using continuous batting order.

**Speed Up:** To keep the game moving pitchers will be limited to 5 pitchers when they enter the game and 3 pitchers for the next inning. After the 1<sup>st</sup> inning, Balls will NOT be allowed in the field between innings. Catchers must be removed with 2-outs and replaced with a courtesy runner, otherwise, Pitcher and catcher anytime. The spirit of the rule is simply. Courtesy for pitcher and catcher who will be catching or pitching the following inning.

**Mound:** 10U – 35' (and 11" ball)  
12U – 40' (and 12" ball)  
14U & 16/18U – 43' (and 12" ball)

**Rosters:** Must be turned in with birth dates at the start of the season.

**Other:** IHSA rules will be followed for any rules not covered above

Please Note: There is no slaughter rule for 10u-12u. There is no unlimited last inning either. However, due to inclement weather or delays where games actual start time has been pushed back, the umpire in order to keep the games moving and on time **may elect once a team reaches an insurmountable threshold of runs by which to catch the other team may consider this a slaughter and end the game, before the 90 minute finish the inning rule.** Example. Due to the Run limit of 5 runs per inning max for 10u divisions in a 6 inning game 11 runs would be the

threshold by the 4<sup>th</sup> inning for the trailing team to over come or tie. In a 7 inning 12u divisional game would be 13 runs by the 5<sup>th</sup>.

**Concussion Protocol:** All Umpires are to be mindful of concussion related injuries and are instructed when in doubt sit them out. There may or may not be a trainer on site. Umpires are to work with managers regarding this in the event a trainer is not present. Umpires will ultimately decide whether or not the player is allowed to continue to play in that particular game. Concussion issues and symptoms may be the following: Confusion, dizziness, vomiting, lack of balance, headache, slurred speech. If any of these are visibly observed, The Umpires are told and instructed to remove that player from the game. Player safety is a priority.

**Conduct:** It is the responsibility of the Managers to conduct themselves, their team and their fans in a manner which represents good sportsmanship at all times, to have players legally and properly equipped for each game and to apply an on field example of leadership especially during disputes regarding rule interpretations or judgment calls with umpires.

True leadership and sportsmanship is applied “especially in times of heated moments and controversy” This is where *Their (your players, coaches and fans) Attitude Reflects (The managers) Leadership.*