

2021

**WICOMICO COUNTY JUNIOR GIRLS
SOFTBALL**

MINOR LEAGUE



Andrew Bugas
PROGRAM DIRECTOR
410-548-4900 Ext. 113
abugas@wicomocounty.org

Cancellation Line 410-548-4900 Ext. 5

Wicomico County Department of Recreation, Parks and Tourism
500 Glen Avenue
Salisbury, MD. 21804

WICOMICO COUNTY/OPTIMIST JUNIOR GIRLS SOFTBALL MINOR LEAGUE

GENERAL INFORMATION

- I. **ELIGIBILITY:** Born in 2011 or later
Players of younger age classification may play in an older age classification (one year early) with parent's approval. All participants may only play in one softball league sponsored by the Wicomico County Dept. of Recreation & Parks per season.
- II. **REGISTRATION** - Every girl must register at the Recreation & Parks office. To register, a parent must complete a registration form and pay the registration fee. A birth certificate must also be presented for any new girls to the Junior Girls Program.
- III. **ROSTER** - A team roster must be submitted to Recreation and Parks at the final organizational meeting.
- IV. **DRAFTING** - All new girls registering for the League must be drafted (according to the drafting guidelines). Girls wishing to change teams must do so by indicating on their registration form or contacting the Program Coordinator to include them in the draft. Girls may only request this one time per season. Once a player is re-drafted, she may not change teams again for that season.
- V. **DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE VISITING TEAM AND HOME TEAM**
 - A. **OFFICIATING:** Home plate umpires will be assigned by the Umpire Assignor, Nancy Peavley, 410-845-1778.
 - i. The home team will be responsible for providing the base umpire.
 - ii. In the event the paid umpire does not show up, the game will not be played and will be rescheduled at the earliest convenience. (please notify Recreation & Parks regarding this the following day).
 - iii. Home teams that continuously fail to provide a field umpire will be reported and brought before the federation.
 - B. **SCORE KEEPING:** At each game, the home team will be the official scorekeeper, (Optimist members will be the official scorekeeper at Optimist fields 1 & 2). Both teams should keep score and compare scorebooks after each inning.
 - C. **Standings:** All Game results and standings can be found at www.quickscores.com/wicomico
- VI. **CANCELLATIONS** - If a scheduled game is not called off because of inclement weather by 5 p.m., both teams will be expected to be present and ready to play at 6 p.m. In the event a double header is scheduled on a given night, and the 6 p.m. game is canceled due to weather or field conditions, the 8 p.m. game should be canceled as well. If you have any questions whether the game is postponed, call the Recreation & Parks office at 410-548-4900, Ext. 5 before 5 p.m. If your game has been postponed, it will be re-scheduled at a later date.
- VII. **PLAYOFFS** –
 - A. At the conclusion of regular season play, single elimination playoffs will be held.

- B. All teams will participate and will be seeded according to their winning percentage. In the event of ties for a playoff seed, the game between the two teams will be considered.
- C. The best seeded teams will be the home team throughout the playoff.
- D. In the first round of playoffs, curfew, darkness and rain rules apply. (Only four innings have to be completed – not the full six, if curfew, darkness or rain occurs.)

VIII. OFFICIAL RECORD KEEPER

Winning teams should report their wins to the Program Coordinator by Thursday morning, 10 AM.

Scores can be left on voice mail at 410-548-4900 ext. 113 or emailed to abugas@wicomicocounty.org please be sure to include team name and date you played.

THE GAME

1. All games are scheduled to begin at 6 p.m. with a 10 minute grace period. After the 10 minute grace period, the team unable to field the minimum of 7 players shall forfeit the game.
2. Six (6) innings constitute a complete game. In case of rain or darkness, four complete innings will constitute an official game.
 - a. **EXCEPTION:** if the home team is ahead, 3 innings will constitute an official game. If an unofficial game called for rain or darkness will be replayed from the beginning. A decision to call the game must be made by the paid umpire (both volunteer umpires, if no paid umpire). A game should be called at the first sign of lightning.

REGULAR SEASON GAMES MAY END IN A TIE

3. The League will abide by a slaughter rule. In effect, the following conditions must be met:
 - A. That the losing team has batted at least 4 times (innings).
 - B. That the losing team is 15 or more runs behind at the conclusion of their fourth time at bat. Therefore, if the visiting team is losing, the game must go 3 ½ innings and if the home team is losing, the game must go 4 innings.
 - C. A team will be permitted to score a maximum of five (5) runs per inning (conclude the play, but only count a maximum of five runs) for the first three (3) innings. At the start of the fourth inning, there will be unlimited runs/inning.

4. **CURFEWS: A curfew of 1 1/4 hour will be placed on all games.** No new inning may begin after the curfew time expires. The curfew is 1 1/4 hour from the time the game actually begins, however, if an inning has already started when the curfew time expires, the inning must be completed (unless home team is winning). The game must go four (4) complete innings (3 if the home team is winning) to be considered a complete game. If the game is not complete at curfew time, the game will be re-scheduled at another time and will be played from the point it concluded.

COUNTY CURFEW POLICY: On weeknights, no new inning of a game may begin after 11 p.m. A fifteen minute lights out policy will follow at the conclusion of the last game.

5. Game changes are possible due to school functions, only if a team cannot field a team of the minimum of 7 players. Teams are one postponement at the discretion of the Program Coordinator.
6. Rain-outs and game changes must have a re-scheduled date within one week of cancellation.

PLAYERS AND SUBSTITUTES

1. Ten (10) players make a complete team. 10 players may play in the field at one time. Teams have the option of batting 11 players; the extra batter must bat in the 11th batting position at the start of the game. The tenth player fielder must be an outfield player (giving a total of 4 outfielders). The 10th player may not move to the infield until contact has been made. *****New Roster Batting Option***: Allows a team the option to bat its entire roster (all players physically present) in lieu of a "traditional" lineup. Teams choosing to roster bat may disperse additional players - starters who aren't listed as defensive players - anywhere in their batting order to bat everyone present. If a player leaves the game for any reason, it creates an absent player (automatic out) situation.**
2. In case of an injury, a player may be re-substituted into the game if everyone has already played. Teams unable to field a complete team may play with a minimum of 7 players. However, if the team fields any additional players from their roster, they must play and be placed at the bottom of the batting order.
3. The Re-entry Rule may be used.
4. Before each game, the opposing coaches must hand in their starting line ups - FIRST AND LAST NAMES OR THE UMPIRE WILL NOT START THE GAME. A team playing with eleven players must designate so at this time. **All qualified Pitchers must be marked on the line-up card as well**
5. Playing Time:
 - a. If a team has 15 girls or less present at a game, all girls must play a minimum of 3 innings offense and defense.
 - b. If a team has more than 15 present at a game, all girls must play a minimum of two innings, offense and defense.
 - c. Every player should play the minimum requirement in the field. (This of course, depends on whether the game goes six complete innings.)
 - d. If a coach wishes to discipline a player (sit her out), the coach must notify the other coach prior to the game or during the game if necessary.
 - e. In the event a player does not play the minimum number of innings, the game may be protested; by the opposing coach. Most likely a forfeited game will occur.
6. Optional - A courtesy runner will be allowed for the catcher when there are two outs. The player that made the last out would run for the catcher.

PLAYING FIELD AND EQUIPMENT

1. The base distance will be 60 feet and the pitching distance will be 40 feet (measure from apex of home plate to front of pitcher's plate and from apex of home plate to back of base).
2. A chest protector, mask, helmet, and shin guards must be worn at all times by the catcher.
3. Rubber cleats or tennis shoes must be worn by all players. Metal cleats will not be allowed.
4. Players are not be permitted to wear jewelry. Coaches or umpires should ask for removal of jewelry. Failure to remove jewelry will be ejection of that player. (Jewelry that cannot be removed for medical reason should be taped).
5. Batting helmets **are** required. The batter, on deck batter and all base runners must have batting helmets on and secured. Players will not be penalized if the chin strap unsnaps and the helmet falls off.

PITCHING

1. The minor league is a fast pitch league (open style pitching). Pitching distance is 40ft.
2. In the event of an illegal pitch, the pitcher will be given a warning the first time. If it occurs again, a ball shall be called on the batter (the runners shall not advance).
3. Only a forward pitching motion may be used (when arm comes through to release ball). The pitcher's pivot foot may remain in contact or may push off and drag away from the pitching plate prior to the front foot touching the ground, as long as the pivot foot remains in contact with the ground. The non-pivot foot may be on, in back of, or in front of the pitching rubber, but not to the side of the rubber.
4. **DEFENSIVE CONFERENCES** - The defensive team requests a suspension of play for any reason and a representative (not in the field) of the defensive team enters the playing field and gives the umpire cause to believe that he has delivered a message to the pitcher.

There should be only one charged conference between the manager or another team representative with each and every pitcher in an inning. The second charged conference shall result in the removal of the pitcher from the pitching position for the remainder of the game.

5. Players can be switched to and from the pitching position for an unlimited number of times, but must pitch to at least one complete batter.
 - a. Each pitcher is limited to pitching a maximum of four innings (12 outs) per game. No middle of the inning warm-ups will be allowed for any pitcher that has already pitched during that game.
6. If in the judgment of the umpire, a pitcher is wild enough to endanger the safety of a batter, after a warning to the pitcher and the coach, said pitcher should be removed from the pitching position for the remainder of that game.

BATTING

1. All bats must have the USSSA stamp

2. Three strikes constitute a strike out, regardless if the catcher is able to stop the pitch. No third strike drop rule.
3. **Strike Zone:** armpits to the top of the knees.
4. The infield fly rule does not apply in this league.
5. Bunting and slap bunting is allowed. When attempting a bunt, if the batter does not pull the bat back it will automatically be called a strike regardless of where the ball is pitched.
6. Dangerous slinging of bats will not be permitted. Each individual player will be given one warning, and the next time called out by the umpire, and the play is dead. All base runners must return to their original base.
7. A batter that is hit by a pitch may take first base as long as she has made an effort to move out of the way. This rule does not count if the ball hits the dirt first and then the player.

BASE RUNNING

1. Base stealing is permitted. Only 2 runs may score on steals home per inning on a passed ball to the catcher. The penalty for any attempt of stealing home past 2 runs will be the player will be sent back. Leaving the base will be allowed once the pitcher has released the ball.
2. Base runners can advance on passed balls but not during ball exchanges between the catcher and the pitcher.
3. A base runner failing to touch a base (advancing or returning) or failing to tag up after a fly ball will be called out. (See Rule 8, Section 2, Article 3 for details). The umpire should wait until the play is over before making the call.
4. A base runner may leave the base as soon as the pitcher has released the ball during a pitch. Players leaving the base too early will result in an automatic out and loss of the base runner. A no pitch will be declared and the play will be considered dead.
5. Base runners may not interfere with a fielder's play on the ball. Any interference will result in the base runner being called out. The ball shall be declared dead.
6. Tagging up on a caught fly ball is permitted.
7. Field of Play - is defined as the area within the boundaries of the fence or if a field does not have not have a fence, the imaginary lines extending from the backstop.

When a fielded ball is overthrown and remains in the field of play, the base runner may advance at her own risk. When a fielded ball is overthrown out of the field of play, the base runner will be given the base she is going to and the next base. (EXCEPTION: if she is standing on the base, she is given one base). Runners advance according to the lead runner. The awarding of bases is timed by when the ball leaves the player's hand on the throw.

UNSPORTSMANLIKE CONDUCT

There is absolutely no room in youth recreational programs for unsportsmanlike behavior. The Wicomico County Junior Girls Softball League endorses a zero tolerance toward any

unsportsmanlike behavior exhibited during the program. Federation members of each league have pledged to police unsportsmanlike conduct. All coaches need to make an effort to keep players and parents behaving in a sportsmanlike conduct.

The use of profanity or unsportsmanlike conduct by either players or coaches will be grounds for dismissal by umpires. A player, coach, or parent who is dismissed from a game for unsportsmanlike conduct must leave the field/park immediately. If a coach refuses to leave, the game will be forfeited by that team. In addition, a player or coach ejected from a game will be automatically suspended from the next two (2) games that are played. A coach that is ejected must call the recreation office to make an appointment to come in for a meeting with the appropriate league or department official. This meeting must take place before he/she is allowed to coach again. This includes practices and games. Any coach that is thrown out a 2nd time in a single season will be removed from coaching for the remainder of the season.

The umpire's decision in all matters is final and there shall be no protests. The official shall report all ejections to the umpire assignor and/or recreation department as soon as possible after the game is completed, along with a brief statement to the recreation department of the occurrence. Please contact the Program Coordinator concerning these incidences.

PROTESTS AND APPEALS

1. A protested game will only be considered if the umpire is notified immediately before the next pitch has been thrown after the play in question. If the umpire is not notified there will be no protest, with the exception of illegal player protests which you have 24 hours to report.
2. A protest must contain the following:
 - a. A \$50.00 protest fee. This fee must be cash and is refundable only if the protest is upheld.
 - b. A detailed written account of the situation being protested. Please use the protest form in the back of the rulebook.
 - c. Rule interpretations must be stated in the report. Please include the page number, section, article and rulebook (Wicomico County Junior Girls Softball or USSSA Softball rulebook) in which it is located.
3. The protesting coach must notify the Program Coordinator within 24 hours of completion of the game in question.
4. Call 410-548-4900 ext. 113 or e-mail abugas@wicomicocounty.org to report a protest. The Program Coordinator will notify the Junior Girls Softball Federation members within 24 hours of being notified. (weekends and holidays excluded).
5. The umpire must notify the league umpire assignor within 24 hours of the completion of the game in question.
6. A protest committee will then be formed, comprised of league officials and federation members, not including the federation representatives from the league that the player/team is from.
7. The committee will hear and review the case, and make their decision in a timely manner.
8. Decisions made by the protest committee are final. **NO EXCEPTIONS.**
9. All parties involved must attend the protest hearing, including coaches and umpire(s).
10. If the protesting coach does not attend the meeting, then the protest will be thrown out and the result of the game in question will stand. **NO EXCEPTIONS.**

11. Protests and appeals may only be made by the head coach.

All protest will be heard within a maximum of five days after the protest has been filed. Both coaches will be notified of the date of the protest hearing either by phone, mail, or e-mail.

SMOKING AND CONSUMPTION OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES ARE PROHIBITED.

It is recommended that the teams give a cheer following the game. Shaking hands with the opposing players should be done at your own discretion.

USSSA Softball Bat Marks Rules*

- Have the new permanent¹ USSSA Mark on its taper OR
- Be a Wood Bat

ALL of the above must be manufactured by an approved USSSA Bat Licensee



***Bats which meet these rules will be allowed in USSSA play, unless the bat is listed on the [USSSA Withdrawn/Non-Compliant Bats List](#) (found under Licensed Equipment – New Bat Rules section of the USSSA Baseball website) as a bat withdrawn by the manufacturer or found by USSSA to be non-compliant.**

¹USSSA marks and other graphics of the bat must be applied permanently and must be applied by the USSSA licensed manufacturer. No stickers or decals are allowed and no one may add graphics to a bat once manufactured. Use of a bat with graphics not applied by the manufacturer will be use of an altered bat and subject to suspension under the USSSA Altered Bat rules. In addition to being violation of the USSSA Altered Bat rules, any use, creation or application of a USSSA mark without written permission of USSSA is a violation of Federal Trademark law and may result in prosecution by USSSA. If you have any concern about the person selling or providing you a bat, do not accept the bat, because you will be held responsible for any bat you bring into or use in a USSSA facility.

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