**HOW IS U13 PLAYED?**

Maximum number of players allowed on the playing field is (9), you can however play with 8. If less then that a forfeit will be given.

**Equipment:**

Players should wear suitable running shoes or cleats.

When batting, each player is required to wear a batting helmet with a face mask.

Catcher must wear all catching gear.

Pitchers must wear pitching mask.

**Games:**

6:30 start time, with 5-10 min warm up. No new inning after 1 hr 30 min.

Home team will be determined by the schedule and each home team will be in the field first with the away team batting first. Home team will be responsible for setting up the bases and gets the 3rd base dugout.

Home team is also required to submit the scores via our form. [U13 House League Score Sheet Submission Form](http://www.lethbridgeminorsoftball.com/form/6653) This is on our website under the U13 division home page.

We have 2 rounds throughout the season to promote development.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Round 1 Play | Apr 29 – May 15 |
| Round 2 Play | May 20 – Jun 14 |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **U13** | **Round 1** | **Round 2** |
| Pitching | No walk rule with coach pitch assisting. (see no walk rule on last page) | Full Pitching rules in effect-  NO coach assisting. |
| Stealing | No stealing home allowed, (2nd and 3rd allowed) | Stealing home allowed |

The first round allows teams to get new pitchers and catchers in the game without fear of walking or allowing passed balls. This also promotes swinging at a ball and not just waiting for a walk.

**LEAGUE PLAYING RULES:**

Lethbridge Minor Softball Association follows the current Softball Canada (CASA) Rules 1 through 12, except where noted otherwise in the Softball Alberta Operating Rules and in the Lethbridge Minor Softball operating rules. Home team takes the third base dugout, visiting team takes the first base dugout.

## RESPONSIBILITIES TO PLAYERS – FAIR PLAY

All coaches shall exercise and promote the principles of Fair Play. Fair Play shall be defined as all coaches taking reasonable measures to ensure players receive proportionally equal access to instruction, support and playing time on the field during the season regardless of skill.

## RUN AHEAD RULE (FORMALLY MERCY RULE)

Lethbridge Minor Softball will follow the Softball Canada Run Ahead Rule 5.6 Run Ahead rule shall result in the conclusion of the game if:

### **RUN AHEAD RULES: -** A Run Ahead Rule shall result in the conclusion of the game when there is a difference of:

### 15 or more runs after 2½ or 3 complete innings of play.

### 10 or more runs after 3 ½ or 4 complete innings of play.

### 7 or more runs after 4½, 5, 5½ or 6 complete innings of play.

Complete innings must be played unless the team second at bat scores the required number of runs while at bat. When the team first at bat reaches the required number of runs in the top half of the inning, the team second at bat must have their opportunity to bat in the bottom half of the inning.

## RUN PER INNING / OPEN INNING RULE

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Category** | **Division** | **Round** | **Runs / Inning Limit** | **Open Inning** |
| U13 | All | All rounds | 5 | None |
| U13 | All | Playoffs | 5 | Final Inning |

## BASELINES AND PITCHING DISTANCES

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  |  | **Pitching Distance** | | **Diamond Layout** | |
| **Category** | **Ball** |  | **Girls (in feet)** | **Base- Lines** |  |
| U13 | 11” |  | 38’ (11.58 m) | 55’ (16.7 m) |  |

\* Per Softball Alberta Operating Rules

**Note**: Teams playing up a category will use the pitching distances and baselines of the higher category. U13 teams that move up to U15 will be required to use the 12” ball. Exceptions may be made on a yearly basis by the coaches and/or division directors.

## THROWING OF BAT

Any batter who throws his/her bat after any swing may be given a warning on his/her first infraction and can automatically be declared OUT on his/her next occurrence. If the batter is called out for interference, the ball becomes a DEAD BALL, and all runners must return to the base they occupied before the infraction. On a batter’s THIRD occurrence in the game, the batter will also be removed from the game.

## DROPPED THIRD STRIKE (SOFTBALL CANADA RULE 8.2A)

This rule will not apply to the U11 and U13 categories.

* Can occur on either a called 3rd strike or a swinging 3rd strike.
* The batter runner may advance if there are less then 2 outs and first is NOT occupied.
* Cannot occur when there is a baserunner on first base at the time the pitch is released and there are less than two outs.
* The batter runner may run if 2 out and 1st is occupied.
* The umpire will verbalize the strike 3 call but not that the ball is dropped.
* The batter may be tagged out or thrown out at first.
* The batter is out if they leave the field of play.
* The batter is out if they break their established base-path.
* Occurs when the catcher does not legally catch the thrown pitch.

**Note**: a pitch hitting the ground and then caught by the catcher is not a legally caught ball.

* the batter is out.
* if the ball stays alive (e.g., not a passed or trapped ball) any baserunners may steal at the risk of being put out.
* the umpire does not verbalize that the ball has been dropped.
* it is up to the catcher to realize that the dropped 3rd strike rule is not in effect and decide whether to try and throw out any baserunner who may be stealing.
* in an obvious situation, where in the umpire's judgement, the batter knows they are out because first base was occupied but continues to run the bases to distract the defence the batter may be called for interference; the umpire will kill the play; since the batter is already out the base-runner closest to home will be called out; any other runners will be returned to their original bases.

Note: if the bases are loaded the catcher can touch home plate for a third out force.

## CHARGED CONFERENCE (SOFTBALL CANADA 5.9)

The Charged Conference Rule limiting conferences between coaches, manger, or other team representatives and pitchers, batters or runners does not apply to the U11 and U13.

There shall be only three charged defensive conferences, in a seven-inning game, between the manager, or the team representative from the dugout, with the pitcher or with any other defensive player.

See Softball Canada rulebook for further clarifications Exception: U15 will have 5 conferences in a 7-inning game.

## PITCHING SPECIFIC RULES

Pitchers may pitch a maximum of:

* U11 three (3) innings per game
* U13 categories four (4) innings per game.
* U15 categories four (4) innings per game. (Per LMSA operating rules)

Should a pitcher throw one (1) pitch (excluding warm-up pitches), this is classified as a complete inning pitched. In the event of extra innings, the pitching rule is not in effect. The penalty for pitcher(s) exceeding the limit of innings pitched is that the coach is ejected; player(s) is removed from pitching position.

At the time of the appeal, the non-offending team shall have the option of:

1. Allowing all plays to stand
2. Or revert to the spot in the game when the violation occurred.

## INFIELD FLY (SOFTBALL CANADA 1.52)

This rule will not apply to the U11 and U13 categories.

1. Is a fair fly ball (not including a line drive or a bunt)?
   1. When first and second, or first, second, and third bases are occupied with less than two out.
   2. That can be caught by an infielder with ordinary effort.
   3. If two are out the infield fly rule does not apply, runners can advance at their own risk.
2. The pitcher, catcher, and any outfielder that positions himself in the infield on the play shall be considered infielders for the purpose of this rule.

NOTE:

1. When it seems apparent that a batted ball will be an infield fly, the umpire shall immediately declare, “INFIELD FLY, IF FAIR THE BATTER IS OUT,” for the benefit of the runners

2. The ball is alive, and runners may advance at the risk of the ball being caught, or retouch and advance after the ball is touched, the same is on any fly ball

3. If the hit becomes a foul ball, it is treated the same as any foul

4. If a declared infield fly can fall untouched on the ground, and bounces foul before passing first or third base, it is a foul ball

5. If a declared infield fly falls untouched to the ground outside the baseline, and bounces fair before passing first or third base, it is an infield fly rule.

## BATTING OUT OF ORDER (SOFTBALL CANADA 7.2)

If the error is determined while incorrect batter is at bat:

1. The correct batter may legally take his place and assume the ball and strike count of the incorrect batter.
2. Any runs scored or bases ran while the incorrect batter is at bat shall be legal.

If the error is determined after the incorrect batter has completed their turn at bat and before the next pitch (legal or illegal pitch)

* + - The player who should have batted is out.
    - Any advance or score made because of the improper batter becoming a batter- runner shall be nullified.
    - Any out that is made prior to discovering the error remains an out.
    - The next batter is the player whose name follows that of the player called out for failing to bat.
    - If the next player was the incorrect batter who was called out, go to the next person in the line up.
    - If the batter declared out under these circumstances is the third out, the correct batter in the next inning shall be the player who would have come to bad had the players been put out by ordinary play.
    - If the third out is made on a runner prior to the discovery of the infraction an appeal may still be made to reinstate the correct batting order. This appeal if made, does not result in an additional out.

If the error is discovered after the first legal or illegal pitch to the next batter:

* + - The turn at bat of the incorrect batter is legal.
    - All runs scored and bases run are legal.
    - The next batter in order shall be the one whose name follows that of the incorrect batter.
    - No one is called out for failure to bat.
    - Players who have not batted and who have not been called out have lost their turn at bat until reached again in the regular order.

No runner shall be removed from the base he/she is occupying to bat in his proper order:

* + - He/she merely misses his turn at bat with no penalty.
    - The batter following him in the batting order becomes the legal batter.

**EXCEPTION:** The batter-runner who has been taken of the base by the umpire as in Section 2b above.

* + - When the third out in an inning is made before the batter has completed the turn at bat, that batter shall be the first batter in the next inning, and the ball and strike count shall be cancelled.

**NOTE:** This is an appeal play.

The appeal can only be made by player, coach or manager, NOT the scorekeeper.

## SUBSTITUTION PROCEDURES

**Number of Players**

* The required number of players to start or continue a game is eight (8) players.
* There is no automatic out for the ninth batting position.
* When a team cannot field eight (8) players, the game is forfeited. When a game is forfeited, there will be no rescheduling of the game. The team who forfeits will take a loss and their opponent will take the win.

**Universal Substitution -** Is the rotation of players into the field such that all players participate in every game.

* Defensive rotation is defined such that no player shall sit more than one inning, until all players have had an inning on the bench.
* Players are designated with the order in which they will have their bench inning on the line-up card/ score sheet.
* Batting order – all players presents are listed on the score sheet and bat in the order listed. Players arriving late are added to the end of the batting order and will have their designated bench order inning assigned or arranged, as necessary.
* Player Coding Adjustment – Bench inning designation may be changed to allow for substitution in the event of an injury, ejection, discipline, pitcher substitution. In the event of player ejection or removal, the player is removed from the batting order and may not re-enter.

## INJURY

ABC and Universal Substitution – An injured player has until the end of the following inning to resume their place in the batting order. If the player is removed from the game, they should be designated as “IJ” on the score sheet. If the player cannot return to the game, all players batting moves up one spot. If the player was injured while on base, the player furthest away from the top of the order that half inning replaces the injured player offensively. If the player cannot return remove the injured player from the lineup. If they can return, they return to their original spot in the order.

## REPLACEMENT PLAYER REQUIRED FOR BLOOD RULE

Lethbridge Minor Softball will follow Softball Canada Rule 4, section 10. In the event of any player bleeding during the game that cannot be stopped in a reasonable time, that player must be withdrawn from the game with no penalty. The withdrawn player shall not return to the game until all bleeding ceases, the area cleaned and covered and, if necessary, the player’s uniform covered. The withdrawn player can then return to the game if safe.

**GAME PROCEDURES AND CANCELLATIONS**

**Scheduled Start Time**:

The Division Director will schedule the start times for single or double header games. Games can be cancelled by the Division Director when deemed that the weather conditions are unsafe.

**A Regulation game:**

Shall consist of seven innings (Softball Canada Rule 5.3). The umpire is empowered to call a game at any time because of darkness and/or weather conditions that may put players at risk. A game called by the umpire shall be regulation provided any one of the following conditions is met:

* five (5) or more completed innings have been played,
* the team second at bat has scored more runs than the other team has scored in four and one-half (4½).
* the time limit allotted for the game has expired and the current inning is completed. If the team second at bat has scored more runs than the other team, the team second at bat does not take its bat.
* Run Ahead Rule (Mercy rule) has been applied.

**Note**: Games that are less than 4 ½ innings that have not reached or exceeded the time limit shall be rescheduled if possible and replayed from the beginning.

**Note:** The game is over and complete when the winning run is scored.

**League Game Time Limits** – no new inning to start after the allotted time limit has passed. The Open inning is considered the final inning and the game is over. The game start time is recorded on the home team score sheet, as determined by the umpire. Mercy Rules is in effect. If the open inning has been played, the game is over even if there is still time remaining. Only 1 open inning will be played. No Open Innings for double headers.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Category | Game Length |
| U13 | 1 hour & 30 minutes |
| Double Header | 1 hour & 30 minutes |

**Note:** A league game that is tied at the end of seven innings or time limit shall be declared a regulation tie game.

**Note:** Adjustments to length of game can be made at the discretion of the Executive Director or Coaches to accommodate schedule changes or weather circumstances.

**Game Cancellations:**

The Divisional Director is responsible for rescheduling a rained-out game. Disputes shall be resolved   by the Executive Director, Category Chair and the Commissioner or League Director. The Executive Director or League Director will have the authority to schedule double headers & reschedule rainout games cancelled by the league due to weather conditions.

If weather conditions prevent a regular scheduled league game, Lethbridge Minor Softball will do their best to reschedule. It will be the responsibility of the teams to make sure they can field a team. The regular forfeit rule will apply for all make up games. If neither team can field a team, the game will result in a tie. If for any reason, Lethbridge Minor Softball is not able to reschedule a makeup game, the game will result in a tie.

**Game Locations:**

It will be the responsibility of Lethbridge Minor Softball coaches or managers to have their team at the scheduled game locations.

All games, including City Playoffs, must be played as scheduled even though a LMSUA umpire is not present. If there is no certified LMSUA umpire the Home team supplies a parent volunteer home plate umpire.

**LEAGUE PROCEDURES (REGULAR SEASON & PLAYOFFS)**

* Final League Standings
* 2 Points for a win
* 1 Points for a tie
* 0 Point for a loss
* 0 Point for a forfeit

* Ranking: the final standings in league play shall be established using:
* Win/Loss records; if still tied, then
* Winners of games between tied teams; if still tied, then
* Difference of Plus or Minus total runs scored, in games between tied teams (only full innings are used).

* Tie Breaking: the above criteria shall be used except for the last playoff position or where subject tied teams have not played one another, then:
* If two (2) teams are tied, they will play a sudden death playoff game.
* If three (3) teams are tied, a bye shall go to the team ranked highest who will play the winner of a game between the other two.
* If four (4) teams are tied, then ranking shall be used to determine pairing for the two semi- final games.
* All other positions will be settled with a coin toss.

* **League City Playoffs**
* All teams in each category will be entered into City Playoffs.
* League City & Divisional Playoffs are a Double Knockout Tournament to be started on a date set annually by the Board. City Playoffs will be formatted on an annual basis based upon schedule for Provincials. Double Headers may be played at each category if required.
* The Divisional Director will coordinate the Playoffs for their respective Divisions.
* Home team will be decided by ranking.

Note: The double knockout format may be revised to a single knockout for any reason deemed necessary when required.

* The Run Ahead Rule and Run/inning Rule are the same as during League Play.

* Teams involved in a game tied at the end of seven innings or a completed inning at time limit shall complete the game using a variation of Softball Canada Rule 5.7, Tiebreaker on the subsequent innings. Starting with the top of the next inning and each half inning thereafter, the offensive team shall begin its turn at bat, with the player which is scheduled to bat last in that respective half-inning being placed on second base. The player who is running can be substituted in accordance with the substitution rules.

* If weather conditions prevent a playoff final game from being completed, Lethbridge Minor Softball will set a date and time for a makeup game to enable the playoff round to be completed within a two-week time frame. Weather conditions, ONLY, preventing the playoff game will result in co-winners.

* Lethbridge Minor Softball can adjust or reschedule games, dates and times for any reason deemed necessary when required.

**NO WALK RULE:** Example: Batter # 1 (B1) is at the plate. The game is played normally up until the batter receives a 4th ball, which would normally result in a walk. This is where the game changes. After the 4th ball, the batter will have a count against him/her. It will either be 4 balls, 0 strikes (4-0), 4-1 or 4-2. The coach, or designated pitcher for the offensive team (B1’s coach or selected parent), will now come in to pitch to his/her own batter. The number of pitches that the batter will receive from the coach/parent is dependent upon the number of strikes that the pitcher had achieved against that batter prior to throwing the 4th “ball”. All batters continue using the same rules.

If the count was 4-0, and the batter did not have a strike, the coach parent may throw up to 3 pitches.

If the count was 4-1, and the batter had 1 strike against him/her, the coach parent may throw up to 2 pitches.

If the count was 4-2, and the batter had 2 strikes against him/her, the coach parent may throw only 1 pitch.

Pitches (pitch) from the coach or parent are the only opportunity that the batter will get to hit the ball and get on base. There is no opportunity to walk. Every pitch will be considered a called strike. If the batter has 2 or 3 pitches to work with, he/she may leave the pitch and wait for a potentially better pitch. The coach/parent will pitch from the pitching rubber (normal distance) and may pitch orthodox (underhand toss) or regular fastpitch.

If the batter uses up all his/her strikes without hitting the ball, he/she is out. Once again, every pitch is considered a called strike no matter where the pitch is thrown. The batter does not have to swing to strike out, nor does the pitch have to be in the strike zone.

On the third strike only, if the batter hits a foul ball, he/she will be granted an additional pitch, unless of course the foul ball is caught! This will be the same as regular rules regarding a third strike foul ball.

The defensive pitcher will remain on the field-to-field balls hit into play.

Should a ball be hit into play by the batter and this ball comes in contact with or is touched by the parent/coach, whether intentional or accidental, as determined by the umpire, the play will be called dead. If there is any interference on the play in regard to the coach/parent acting as the pitcher, as determined by the umpire, the play will be called dead. In both cases, the batter will be ruled out and the runners will return to their original base prior to the hit ball.

The implementation of this section will have many major benefits.

# 1 – No walks means that every run will have come off a hit ball!

# 2 – More hits mean more defensive plays for the infield!

# 3 – Less pressure on parent umpires regarding calling balls and strikes.

# 4 – Wider variety of pitchers may be used. Every player that wants to pitch can try without having to worry about walking in 5 runs.

# 5 – Lower scoring games. There will an increased number of strikeouts and hopefully defensive outs, which should result in less 5 run innings.

# 6 – Innings will be quicker which should result in more innings played per game.

# 7 – The home run line will become a major factor and the home run will be an exciting play for all players and fans to look forward to.