

**2017 MADISON GIRLS SOFTBALL
LOCAL RULES
3RD AND 4TH GRADE DIVISION**

GENERAL

OUR GOAL IS SIMPLE: EVERYONE HAS FUN! Good sportsmanship is expected from coaches, players and fans. Coaches are to strive to teach girls the basic fundamental skills appropriate for their level so that they can improve over the course of the season and have a foundation to build upon for future years. Zero tolerance for drugs, alcohol, or cigarettes for players and coaches. No jewelry during practice or games (except medical alert tags). The Division Manager for 3/4th Grade Division is Carmen DeCaro.

LEAGUE DETAILS

The # of teams in each league is dependent upon the # of players who sign-up before drafts are conducted. Players who sign up AFTER the Drafts are added to each team based on DRAFT order (continuing from the last girl placed in the draft). Leagues may become closed after the draft is conducted dependent upon the # of players on each team. Players are placed into a specific league based on their school grade.

LEAGUE DRAFTS

All teams are drafted new every season. Drafts are conducted by the Division Manager(s) and Player Agent Dave Carver. All coaches who participate in the DRAFT must have a) been approved by Madison SB Leadership and b) completed all of the items documented on our website, <http://madisonsoftball.teamsnapsites.com/home/coaches-information/>. Note that background checks completed for other town sports which remain valid through June 30th satisfy our background check requirement.

The Head Coach of each team will draft their own child in the first round. Starting with the second round, players will be picked using "snake" draft order (Rnd1: 1234567, Rnd2: 7654321, etc). Coaches may request 1 Asst Coach Player combination at the outset of the draft. Additionally, after the draft, it may become necessary to add a late entry. The decision to place the player will be made by the Player Agent. Coaches should aim to create teams with comparable balance of players at each age and assessment level in an attempt to strive for competitive balance. There may be cases where players could be drafted as pairs, as in the case of siblings or special cases. These cases will be made prior to the draft and indicated before the draft begins.

FIELDS

Softball will be played at the Madison Recreation Center and the Madison Junior School fields. Final game schedules will be released in early March. Fields will become available for practice reservation during March. However, if the Rec department closes fields, STAY OFF. . The Madison Division Mgr is responsible to confirm rain outs at least X minutes before ALL games to Madison Coaches. If you hear nothing, expect to play ball!

EQUIPMENT

Each team will receive an equipment bag containing a) bats, b) practice softballs and adequate supply of new softballs to ensure each team can supply 1 ball for every game, c) protective helmets d) fielders masks and e) catcher's equipment (shin guards, chest protector, helmet). All equipment will be returned immediately following your team's final game of the season.

SAFETY

Catchers are required to wear protective equipment while catching during all games and practices. Batters and base runners must wear a helmet. Infielders (pitcher, 1B, 2B, SS and 3B) are required to wear a fielder's mask during games and batting practices. Only the current batter shall have a bat in their hands. All players not in the games shall remain in the dugout. Spectators are not permitted on the team bench. No on-deck swings are permitted. Only certified coaches that have a completed the above noted coaching requirements are allowed to participate with the players during games and practices.

INCLEMENT WEATHER

At the first sound of thunder or sight of lightening "CLEAR THE FIELD". At present we are using 20 minute wait if the thunder is present and the 30 minute wait if lightening was spotted. Restart the time delay if subsequent thunder/lightning occurs during a delay. If after a delay conditions do not improve, suspend game or if enough innings have been played, declare a Rain-Out. Complete information on Madison's lightning policy can be found at- <http://www.rosenet.org/319/Lightning-Alerts>

ACCIDENTS:

In the event of an injury, contact the police and emergency squad immediately. When in doubt, play it safe.

PLAYOFFS

In order to participate in the end of season playoff, teams must play 80% of their scheduled games. Teams will be seeded based on total points earned during the season. A Win is worth 3 points, a loss is worth 1 point, a tie gives each team 2 points. In the case of a forfeit, the winning team earns 3 points, the team who forfeits earns 0 points. In the case of a tie in the final standings, the head to head record of the teams will be used to break the tie. If the teams split the regular season games, the coaches will flip a coin to set the final seeding.

UMPIRES

The league will coordinate umpires for all games. Contact via phone call or text the Division Manager and Umpire Coordinator (Carmen DeCaro, 201-230-2126) if an umpire does not show up by the start of any game. If an umpire does not show, a coach from each must serve as umpire for the game (umpire when your team is in the field). Only certified coaches that have a current certification card and have signed a Volunteer application are allowed to serve as an umpire. Umpires' equipment is stored in the field storage shed.

GAME RULES

GENERAL

6 innings constitutes a complete game. Starting time must be confirmed with both coaches and umpire before First Pitch. Do not start a new inning after one hour and 45 minutes. Last inning must be confirmed with both coaches and umpire before first pitch thrown at top of inning. With bad weather and darkness, always consider the safety of your players FIRST. Each team supplies one game ball for each game.

If weather/darkness/time prevents you from completing a game, you have two options: 1) the head coaches from both teams may agree to accept the game as final with the score reverting to the score at the end of the previous complete inning. 2) You may agree to complete the game on a future date, continuing from the point of game stoppage. Both coaches should agree on a date and communicate to the Division Manager(s) for scheduling. Mercy rule is 15 runs at the end of 5 full innings (4.5 inning if home team ahead).

Winning coach is responsible to report game results via email to Division Manager(s). It is important to report results on a timely basis so that we can maintain standings and ensure rescheduled games are completed.

BATTERS

Girls are required to wear batting helmets at all times when at bat and on base. Helmets need to have chin strap. There is no "on deck" circle. Players should not pickup their bat until they walk to the batters box. Practice swings in batter's box only. Do not throw bats. Batting order includes all players who attend game. Original batting order should only be changed if injury or early departure required. Bunting is allowed. A batter hit by a pitched ball takes first base at their coach's' discretion. If the pitched ball hits the ground first, it is a ball and the batter is not considered "hit by the pitch".

FIELDING

Infielders (pitcher, 1B, 2B, SS and 3B) are required to wear a fielder's mask during games and batting practices. Coaches are not allowed on the field when ball is in play except for situations with coach pitch (see below for more details on coach pitch). All Players should be taught to make eye contact before throwing ball to partner. No infield fly rule is in effect. Ten (10) players on defense. All Outfielders must have BOTH Feet on the grass (or at least 10 feet behind base path at MRC field) when the pitch is thrown. All players to play minimum of three innings on defense.

If the ball is out of play on an overthrow, all runners are awarded the base to which they were heading plus one base. All other plays end when the fielding team throws the ball to the pitcher and both the pitcher AND the ball are inside the pitching circle. Runners who are less than halfway to the next base must return to the prior base. The pitcher does not need to have control of the ball so play ends even if the pitcher fails to catch the throw.

RUNNING

Runners en route to first base must run either on the foul line or in foul territory. Runners must slide or avoid contact at 2nd, 3rd and home. Runners are allowed to steal 3rd base, however may not advance to home on a steal attempt (ie errant throw). Runners may only leave base (to take a lead or steal 3rd base) when the pitch crosses home plate. Runners who leave early are out. One warning per team each game. A courtesy runner may be inserted for the catcher when there are 2 outs in an inning and the catcher is on base.

PITCHING

Pitching distance is 35 feet from the back of home plate. Pitchers may not exceed THREE innings per game regardless of total innings played. Pitchers may leave the mound and return later in the game as long as their total pitching does not exceed three innings. One Pitch = One Inning. No dropped third strike rule in effect. The pitcher (player and/or coach) must have at least 1 foot in contact with the pitching plate when initiating the pitching motion and cannot take more than 2 steps before pitch release. Any pitcher who hits three batters in a game MUST be removed from the mound and will be ineligible to pitch for the remainder of that game.

There are no walks and an expanded strike zone (one softball width added to inside, outer, top and bottom edge of strike zone). A coach must enter to pitch to their own batter upon the opposing pitcher throwing four balls during the at bat. Please encourage girls to swing at any ball that is reasonably hittable. When a coach enters for coach pitch, the player/pitcher should be positioned to their side with at least one foot in pitching circle. Umpires may not handle wild pitches or passed balls that are in play. Pitching circle is circular area with an 8ft radius measured from pitcher's plate.

SCORING

The five run rule will be in effect except for the last inning. The five run rule is as follows: the inning will end upon the offensive team making three outs, or after a play in which the offensive team has scored the fifth run of that inning. All runs scored on the final play of the inning will count. For example, if the play results in the fourth, fifth and sixth runs of the inning being scored, all runs would count and the offensive team would then take the field. There is no limit on runs in the last inning.