

# MISSOULA CHRISTIAN SPORTS LEAGUE

## **SOFTBALL RULES**

LEAGUE RULES- amended 2020

### ***Mission***

***The Missoula Christian Sports League is dedicated to providing a Christian and family environment for sports activities. It is recommended that any person coaching or playing in the Missoula Christian Sports League be associated with a Christian church, of their choice, in the greater Missoula area.***

### **All Rules Subject to Board Review During the Season**

**The Missoula Christian Softball League (MCSL) will use USA rules with the following additions:**

#### **#1 – Home Team defined/ score sheet responsibility**

- ☒ The home team is listed on the schedule.
- ☒ Home team will open in prayer before the game begins.
- ☒ Visiting team will close in prayer after game ends.
- ☒ Home team will keep the official book for the game. If there is a question of final score, home team book will count. Teams should compare scores.
- ☒ **Both teams must turn in a score sheet** with team members (including last names), and pick-up players who played in the game, for every game.
- ☒ Score sheets need to be turned in the night the game is played.

#### **#2- Spirit of Christ Award**

- ☒ The award is to recognize the utmost Christian attitude, on and off the field, while playing in the MCSL.
- ☒ The award is presented to one team in each division at the tournament.
- ☒ Teams awarded Spirit of Christ will have their name added to the traveling plaque and receive t-shirts of recognition.
- ☒ Guidelines for ranking teams for Spirit of Christ are:
  - Did the team Glorify God?
  - Did they encourage one another?
  - Did they encourage your team?
  - Did they call themselves out, even when the umpire called them safe?
  - Were they a fun team to play?
  - Was playing a fair and fun game more important than the score?
- ☒ This should be a team vote and be recorded on the score sheet of the game.
- ☒ Score sheets must include Spirit of Christ rating for opposing team. Teams who do not fill out Spirit of Christ will be penalized by -5. The opposing team will receive a score of their average scores from all their other games. If sheet is turned in without score, the team turning in the sheet will receive a zero and the other team will get an average of their combined other scores.

#### **#3- Games/ time**

All games will begin and end on time.

- ☒ Early game- 6:00 PM; no new innings after 7:15 PM; game ends at 7:25.
- ☒ Second game-7:30 PM; no new innings after 8:45 PM; game ends at 8:55 PM.
- ☒ Third game-9:00 PM; no new innings after 10:15 PM; game ends at 10:25 PM.
- ☒ If a team is late or cannot field a legal team, after 15 min. that team will forfeit the game. Please check rule #10 for player eligibility in regards to a forfeited game.
- ☒ The batting line up needs to be turned in to the opposing team at 5:55 for the early game and 7:25 and 8:55 for the late games.
- ☒ Last inning will be called at the top of the inning when possible.
- ☒ Once last inning has been called, a new inning will not be started.

- ☑ If a game is called because of time, the score at the end of the last complete inning will determine the winner, games can end with a tie.
- ☑ If a game is called because of rain, before the 5<sup>th</sup> inning, it will be rescheduled on the rain make-up days.
- ☑ If lightning is observed, games will be stopped until no lightning has been observed for 15 min. If the game is past the 5<sup>th</sup> inning, the game will be called and considered a full game.

#### #4- Legal team defined

- ☑ This is a co-ed league and must have a minimum of 3 women on the field
- ☑ The team may play a legal game, without having to forfeit, with 2 women and 7 men but **must take an out** for the missing woman and can only play 9 in the field. If a woman comes to fill the spot she must be on their roster **PRIOR** to game night. She can come in and bat right away (she must be put in the *out position*) without playing the field first.
- ☑ If batting 10 players you must start with a minimum of 3 women in the lineup (exception being above rule). If batting 11 or 12 players you must start with a minimum of 4 women in the lineup.
- ☑ Once the game has started if a team has a player that must leave because of work or an injury the team **does not need to take an out** for the missing player. They must leave a position in the field empty and skip the person in the batting order.
- ☑ Minimum number of players on the field will be 8 (3 must be women, with above rule exception)
- ☑ Maximum number of players on the field will be 10 (3 must be women)
- ☑ There is no guy/girl pitcher/catcher rule in effect.
- ☑ Teams will be allowed to pick up rostered players before the game starts, up to two, from another team to make 10
  - Teams may pick-up from their division or lower.
  - They must put them in the last slots in the batting line-up
  - If one of their own rostered players' shows up they must be put in for the pick-up player. The pick-up player can not keep playing
  - Pick-up players must be listed along with their rostered team/division on the score sheet for that night.
  - Teams may not pick up players during the tournament.
- ☑ All players must be at least 14 years old before they step on the field.
- ☑ All players must be on your team roster before play begins, exception being the above pick-up rule.
- ☑ Players on your roster may not be on any other church league team roster.

#### #5- Substitutions

- ☑ Any player substituted out of the game, must have played defense at least 1 inning and have batted at least once.
- ☑ An original player and his/her substitute may not be in the game at the same time.
- ☑ If batting 10 players you must start with a minimum of 3 women in the lineup. If batting 11 or 12 players you must start with a minimum of 4 women in the lineup.
- ☑ A person may come back in the game, after they have been substituted out, only to replace a player that has been injured in the game.

#### #6- Conduct of players and coaches

- ☑ Obscene or objectionable language will not be tolerated. At the discretion of the umpire or league commissioner, any person who uses such language will be ejected from the game and the complex
- ☑ Tobacco products (including chew), vaping products and alcoholic products are not allowed in the field complex at any time.
  - Any player with the above stated product(s) will be ejected from the game and/ or complex.
- ☑ Uniforms: If any type of the following is worn, players must change clothes or they won't play:
  - Bar sponsored uniforms of any kind are not permitted.
  - T-shirts, hats and other apparel that advertise tobacco or alcohol are not permitted.
  - Metal cleats are not permitted. If a player is found with metal cleats they must change shoes at once!

## #7- Conduct in the field of play

- ☑ Any player on the offensive team, who shouts or yells at another player attempting to make any type of play, will be called out.
- ☑ Players must play their own position
  - Any player may back up another player, but must not interfere with the primary player
  - The pitcher may take the play for the catcher if they are more than halfway towards third base. If more than halfway to home it is the catchers play.
- ☑ Any **player interference** (is from offensive player, umpire) will result in the batter and base runners being called safe, with the base runners advancing only one base.
- ☑ Players running to 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> and home must get down or out of the way. If the offensive player does not get down or out of the way and the defensive player attempts the throw the offensive player closest to home will be called out.
- ☑ Base-runners who interfere with a fielder attempting to throw a ball to make a play will be called out.
- ☑ **Player obstruction** is when any fielder who is not in possession of the ball, in the act of fielding a batted ball, impedes the progress of the runner or batter-runner who is running the bases (contact is not necessary)
  - Any obstruction will result in the base runner being called safe. (USA)
  - Any runner, who is impeded from advancing to another base by an obstruction, will be awarded the base they were trying to get to. (USA)
- ☑ With the above listed rules there is no warning, the offending player will be out!!
- ☑ Infielders: **Do not stand on the base if the ball is not being thrown to you!**
- ☑ Outfielders must stay at least 10 yards off the infield until the ball is hit.

## #8- Rules of the game

- ☑ Do not argue balls and strikes with the umpire!!
- ☑ Third strike foul rule does not apply in this league.
- ☑ Home runs - 3 over and then they are singles.
- ☑ Courtesy runners are for injured players only. If batter comes up to bat already injured they must inform umpire before first pitch.
  - The courtesy runner must be the last completed batter regardless of gender. Last completed batter is the batter that just came home or the batter that has just been called out, whichever has happened last.
  - The courtesy runner must be switched at first base. If the batter goes past first on their hit they must finish running the bases.
- ☑ Pitching arc is 12-6' and pitchers must keep their anchor foot between the tufts of the mound.
- ☑ Players playing defense must also play offense.
- ☑ If a player hits a home run he/she must run all the bases.
- ☑ A foul tip that is caught must reach 6 feet to be called an out.
- ☑ If a team is ahead by 12 or more runs by the bottom of the 5<sup>th</sup> inning the team that is down has the **option** of ending the game. If the game continues the score is whatever it is when the game ends.

## #9- FIVE RUN RULE

- ☑ A team may score no more than five (5) runs in any inning except in the following situations:
  - ☑ If the team who is up to bat (offensive team) is behind, they may score more than 5 runs in one inning but only until they are 5 runs ahead.
  - ☑ In the 7<sup>th</sup> inning, or last inning of play if called, there is **NO LIMIT** to the number of runs that may be scored.
  - ☑ The FIVE RUN RULE will also apply in tournament play except for the Championship Game. (rule #12)
  - ☑ During the Championship game and the If game, the game will be called if a team is up by 20 runs in the 4<sup>th</sup> inning or up 12 runs in the 5<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup> or 7<sup>th</sup> innings. (rule #12)

### **#10- Team rosters**

- ☑ A coach may add players to their roster throughout the season, the new team player must sign the roster, but must do so before they play in a game
- ☑ A player must play in three regular season games (at least one full inning), with their **rostered** team, to be eligible to play in the season tournament, pick-up games don't count. (rule #12)
- ☑ If a team forfeits their game before the night they are scheduled to play, after every effort to reschedule, they receive no roster credit for that game. The opposing team gets full roster credit. If a team forfeits the night of the game both teams get credit for the players actually at the field.
- ☑ An Extra Hitter must EH for half the game for at least four games to be eligible for the tournament. They can only EH for the tournament.

### **#11- Injuries**

- ☑ If a team is playing with 3 or 4 women and a women gets injured, the team may keep playing without taking an out. The tournament will be considered one game. The team can play 8 men and 2 women; they must keep the third women's spot in the line up empty for the rest of the tournament. (Rule #5, last line)
- ☑ All players must sign a waiver of liability, found on the roster sheet, to play in this league.

### **#12- Tournament Play**

- ☑ To play in the year-end tournament all players must have played at least one full inning in three separate games with the team they are rostered with.
- ☑ During tournament play teams are not allowed pick-ups. You must field a team from your eligible rostered players.
- ☑ The FIVE RUN RULE will also apply in tournament play except for the Championship Game.
- ☑ During the Championship game and the If game, the game will be called if a team is up by 20 runs in the 4<sup>th</sup> inning or up 12 runs in the 5<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup> or 7<sup>th</sup> innings.

**This is a great softball league. We want you to have fun. Use this league to bring glory to our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. This league is a great place to bring your friends who may not know the Lord as their Savior. It brings Christian people together who become friends forever. Thank you for being part of the league. Please keep the league and all of the volunteers in your prayers.**

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