



2011

**WHITFIELD COUNTY YOUTH
SOFTBALL LEAGUE RULES
Dixie Angels (9-10) Ponytails (11-12) Belles (13-15)**

I. PURPOSE

The Whitfield County Youth Softball Program is organized to provide a recreational activity for girls' ages 9-15. The program is designed for the following purposes:

1. To aid in the physical development through fun and exercise.
2. To teach the basic fundamental skills of the game of softball.
3. To aid in the social development through good sportsmanship and moral character with adult guidance.
4. To teach good attitudes and discipline to our youth participants.

II. ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

A. Governing Authority

1. The governing body of this league will be composed of one representative from each community forming an Executive Committee with the Athletic Coordinator as Chairman.
2. The program shall be carried out under the guidance and direction of the Whitfield County Recreation Department and the Executive Committee.

B. Governing Rules

1. The Whitfield County Recreation Department Youth Softball League will be governed by the current rules and regulations of the Dixie Softball Official Rule Guide, with the exception of the local league rules which supersede any rules in the current Dixie Softball Official Rule Guide.
2. The League Rules will be developed by the Executive Committee and the Whitfield County Recreation Department.

C. Coaching Requirements

1. A person of high moral character who is a respected member of the community.
2. A coach should have a basic knowledge and understanding of the fundamentals of softball.

3. A coach should never use profanity, drink alcoholic beverages, smoke, or use tobacco in any form during any activity with players.
4. A coach must never incite players or parents by criticizing an official.
5. A coach should not be overly concerned with winning, but more concerned that each child participating has fun and learns the fundamentals of softball.
6. A coach is expected to be present at all practice sessions, games, and meetings or have an approved coach present.
7. A coach should try to the best of their ability to keep each player (especially the weaker players) interested and participating throughout the season.
8. It is the responsibility of each coach to be knowledgeable of all rules governing the Whitfield County Youth Softball League.
9. Each coach is responsible for having a scorekeeper at each game.
10. Each coach must be National Youth Sports Coaches Association Certified (NYSCA). To get certified go online to www.nays.org/nyscaonlineclinics.

III. PARTICIPANT ELIGIBILITY

- A. Participants must attend school in the Whitfield County School System or be a resident of Whitfield County.
- B. Participants must play in the Whitfield County Elementary School district in which they live or attend school. If a community does not have a team, the participant may go to the next nearest elementary school community within the same middle school district.
- C. If a participant changes residence to a new Whitfield County Elementary School district and does not change schools; the participant may participate in either community, but can only change communities once. The same rule will apply if the participant changes Whitfield County Elementary schools but does not change residence.
- D. Any Whitfield County resident living and attending school outside the Whitfield County Elementary School Boundaries may choose any community to participate in the Whitfield County Recreation Program. Once this community is selected, the participant must stay in that community for all sports in the youth program. If the participant moves to a Whitfield County Elementary School District she must participate in that community.
- E. A completed Whitfield County Recreation Department Roster accompanied by birth certificate and registration form (Green Card) must be on file before any team is eligible to compete in regular season games.
- F. Each participant must have insurance, whether private or through the Recreation Department.

G. Playing ineligible players shall result in the forfeiture of all games in which illegal players participated. Any coach that allows an illegal player to participate will be suspended from coaching for the remainder of the season and for a one year time period.

IV. LEAGUE RULES AND REGULATIONS

A. The Game

1. Dixie Softball Official Rule Guide Fast-pitch Rules currently in use will be the basic set of rules for this program, except where changed by local league rules.

2. The type of play, age divisions, base path and pitching distances, and time limits are as follows:

a. Dixie Angels 9&10 Fast Pitch, 11" softball, 60' bases, 35' pitching distance and 1 hour and 20 minute time limit.

b. Dixie Ponytails 11&12 Fast Pitch, 12" softball, 60' bases, 40' pitching distance and 1 hour and 20 minute time limit.

c. Dixie Belles 13 &15 Fast Pitch, 12" softball, 60' bases, 43' pitching distance and 1 hour and 20 minute time limit.

d. The age limit cut off date is prior to January 1st of the current year for girls.

3. Team rosters shall consist of no more than 15 players per team. Once a roster is submitted to the Recreation Department it becomes official. An official roster cannot be revised unless permission is granted by the Recreation Department. No participants may be added the last two weeks of the season.

4. Any Official size DSI, ASA, NSA, ISA or USSSA approved ball may be used.

5. The recommended uniform shall be matching T-Shirts in color and style with numbers.

6. Shoes should be rubber cleats or tennis shoes. No metal cleats will be allowed.

7. Only players, managers, coaches, and one bat boy/girl will be allowed in the dugout or on the field. The coaching staff shall be made up of one (1) manager and not more than two (2) assistants.

8. All Dixie Angel (9-10) Division games will consist of five innings, Dixie Ponytails (11-12) games will consist of six innings, Dixie Belles (13-15) games will consist of seven innings; or the designated time limit ,whichever occurs first.

9. **The Fast Pitch leagues will be limited to five runs per inning.**

10. The Dixie Angels 9-10 and Dixie Ponytails 11-12 Fast Pitch leagues may play 10 (ten) players on defense, 4 (four) of these players must play in the outfield grass as outfielders.

11. **LEAGUE BATTING RULE:** All available players will be listed in the starting offensive batting lineup and bat in this order until all have completed one turn at bat. After all players in the initial batting lineup have batted once, the official offensive lineup may revert to the first nine/ten players listed for the remainder of the game or stay with the “continuous order”. The players not listed in the first nine/ten batting positions will become official substitutes and will be eligible to return to the official lineup in one of the first nine/ten offensive batting lineup positions (one time) during the course of the game. A coach must make his/her decision known to the umpire and both scorekeepers before the start of the game and may not be changed during the game.

13. All players must play at least three outs defensively. If a player becomes ill or injured while this rule is in effect, those players will be skipped in the batting order, after announcing to the umpire, with no penalty until the legal number of players requirement is met. A player that is ejected, when their time comes in the batting order is due and there is no legal substitute. Then an out will be recorded.

13. The game will be stopped when a team is mathematically eliminated, because of the five run per inning rule.

14. Only the first game of the day will have a 10 minute grace period. Umpires should consider extenuating circumstances before forfeiting a game.

15. A team may start or finish a game with eight (8) players with no penalty. (Exception) an ejection will result in the vacated batting position being called an out.

16. Dixie Belles 13-15 Fast Pitch league. Only nine players will play on defense.

17. If all players have entered the game and no legal substitute can be made because of an injury or illness, then the opposing coach may select a substitute from the bench to replace the injured player.

18. Each team is required to turn in their line-up five minutes before game time.

19. All bats will be checked before the beginning of the game by the umpires. Illegal bats will be removed prior to the start of the game. Bats with official logo missing due to wear will not be considered illegal.

20. If a game is stopped by the time limit before three innings are complete all players must have been in the game.

21. Any player (starter or a substitute) who has been removed for a substitute may reenter the game once provided:

a. She occupies the same position in the batting order she originally occupied.

b. The substitute has played a minimum of one complete inning.

22. A coach making a substitution must announce the change to the opposing team's scorekeeper, before the inning starts.

23. The team at bat, with two outs, must use a courtesy runner for the catcher. If there are players on the bench and not currently in the game one of these players must be used as the courtesy runner. If all players are listed in the batting order, then the player that made the last out will be the courtesy runner.

24. A coach may hold a player out of a game for disciplinary reasons if he announces to the opposing coach before the game.

25. In Fast Pitch catchers are required to wear a face mask with throat protector, approved helmet with ear flaps, shin guards which protect the knee caps and chest protector.

26. Batting helmets with ear flaps chin straps and face mask must be worn by batters and base runners. Players that wear helmets with a face mask will be called out for sliding head first.

27. Intentional walk: Pitcher must pitch to the batter

28. Pitchers in Angels 9-10 can pitch 7 innings and Ponytails 11-12 can pitch 8 innings in a calendar week. Belles 13-15 can pitch 10 innings in a calendar week.

29. Base Runners may leave base when ball leaves the pitcher's hand in Dixie Angels 9-10, Dixie Ponytail 11-12 and Dixie Belles 13-15

30. **Dropped third strike:**

The catcher shall NOT be required to catch the third (3rd) strike **except for a foul tip**. The batter shall be out and all base runners advance at their own risk. With a runner occupying 1st base and there are less than two outs, then the batter is out. (Exception) If there are two outs or if no runner occupies 1st base and third strike is dropped, batter is entitled to try to reach 1st base before being tagged or thrown out.

31. **Base Stealing**

A. The base runner may attempt to steal bases in all league play. **In Dixie Angels 9-10 the base runner may only steal one (1) base at a time. Runner may not continue on over throws.**

B. If a base runner leaves her base before the pitcher releases the ball, the base umpire shall signal "delayed dead ball" to indicate the violation at the time it occurs. The defensive team shall have the privilege of having nullified any portion of the play that occurred on the violation.

32. The home team scorekeeper will be the official scorekeeper. It is recommended both scorekeepers sit as close as possible to make sure they have the same score.

33. The winning coach is responsible for calling in the publicity information to the Recreation Department before noon the following day (226-8341 or FAX 279-1515).

B. Activities

1. There will be three activities allowed per week, including games and practices, plus one activity on the weekend. Practice sessions should be limited to ninety minutes and finished by 10:00 p.m.

2. There will be no practice on Wednesdays after 5:00 p.m. and no games will be scheduled on Wednesdays except during post season tournaments.

V. GAME POSTPONEMENT

A. Postponement for Inclement Weather

1. The Recreation Department will cancel games if fields are too wet.

2. If coaches and officials are not notified of a postponement, they must report to their designated field prepared to play.

3. If rain occurs before game time and both coaches are at the field, then both coaches must agree to play or postpone. When the umpire arrives and game time is reached, then the decision shall be the responsibility of the umpire to play or postpone the game.

4. Rained out games will be rescheduled by the recreation department.

5. Any game suspended for rain and not played the required number of innings (four in Angels 9-10 and Ponytails 11-12, five in Belles) to become official will be played from the point of suspension until the game is finished.

6. If the Recreation Department cancels games because of inclement weather it will be announced on the rain-out hotline # 706-281-2588 and WYYU 104.5 FM

B. Postponement for Other Purposes

1. Any schedule conflict should be brought to the attention of the Athletic Coordinator before season schedules are complete. **Only school and/or church functions will be considered as a conflict.**

2. Games will not be rescheduled after the official schedule has been published.

VI. PROTESTS

A. All protests must be submitted by the manager to the Recreation Department Athletic Coordinator in writing before 5:00 p.m. the following workday.

B. The only protest acceptable will be concerning eligibility or rules misinterpretation and must be announced to the umpire and opposing coach before the next pitch.

C. All protests shall include any and all pertinent information and facts leading up to the protest, i.e. involved players, score of the game, name of umpires, date, location and the rule misinterpreted.

D. All protests will be decided by the executive committee, if accepted as valid by the Athletic Coordinator.

E. The Athletic Coordinator shall cast the deciding vote in case of a deadlock by the committee. In the event the Athletic Coordinator is directly involved in the outcome of the protest, the deciding vote will be cast by the Recreation Director.

F. Protests received will be decided during the week of receipt of the protest letter. A representative from each team involved in the protest should be present with scorebooks and any additional information needed. All parties will be notified in advance of the meeting, and if the protesting team is not represented it will be determined that the team has decided not to pursue the protest and it will be dropped accordingly.

G. Games replayed as a result of a protest will be rescheduled by the Athletic Coordinator.

H. The decision made by the protest committee is final.

VII. CONDUCT

A. If a participant or coach is ejected from the game, the coach must leave the bench area, the player will sit out the remainder of that game and the player/coach can not participate in the next scheduled game. If a spectator is ejected that individual must leave the compound area.

B. If a coach, player or spectator is ejected from a game or a game area two times during the course of a season, they will be suspended for the remainder of the season or longer.

C. All coaches or managers will be held responsible for fan and team conduct.

VIII. POST SEASON TOURNAMENT – To be announced.