

Homer Athletic Club
Mustang Girls Softball Rules

Mustang's players are girls 9 or 10 as of January 1, of the current year. Season lasts from April through June with Playoffs in June. HAC sponsors a season ending All-Star team for both the 9 and 10 year old ages that competes in local tournaments against other towns' All-Star teams. The All-Stars compete in July. HAC follows ASA Rules (See Softball Home Page for ASA rules link) except for special rules and guidelines contained in this document. All play will be judged according to the rules set down by the American Softball Association (ASA) with the following exceptions, variations, etc. A situation not specifically covered in these local rules will be governed by ASA rules.

Players: Each team consists of ten (10) players. A minimum of 8 players is required for a team to start the game. A team that cannot field the minimum number of players within 15 minutes after the scheduled start of the game will automatically forfeit and the game will not be rescheduled. A team that loses a player(s) to injury or other cause during the game and as a consequence finds itself with less than the minimum number of players may continue to play the game at the Manager's discretion or they may ask for and be granted a forfeit. A player must play at 50% of the regular season games to be eligible for the playoffs. Under NO circumstances will a team be allowed to field more than the standard 10 players in the field. This will not be allowed even if both Managers consent to this practice.

Lineups: Lineups must be submitted to the opposing team Manager for each game no later than ten minutes prior to the start of the game. These lineups will include the name of the girl, her number, and the continuous batting order that will be employed for the duration of the game.

Uniforms: Each player must be in proper attire to participate. Proper attire includes the standard **uniform**, team hat (**optional**), and safety equipment as further defined. Uniform shirts are to be tucked into pants.

Equipment: All batters and on-deck batters and base runners will be required to wear protective batting helmets at all times. A player who in the judgment of the Umpire intentionally removes a helmet while base running during a live play will be called out. Catchers must wear catchers' helmets as well as a chest protector, shin guards, and face mask. Pitcher is required to wear a protective face mask. Only official softball bats are allowed. Bats made of aluminum, graphite or ceramic material must have an official softball insignia on it or have had such an insignia before being worn off. Little League/baseball bats are prohibited, as are T-ball bats. Softball: The home team will provide one (1) new ball for each game and one slightly used practice ball. An Official 11" softball will be used for Mustang Divisions.

Umpires: HAC will provide 1 Umpire. At least one (1) Umpire will be used in this division during regular season play. The Umpire will have total responsibility for deciding matters such as darkness, curfew, minimum players etc. The Umpire will have general responsibility

for calling games due to weather conditions. If lightning and/or thunder is observed and the Umpire has not elected to call the game the Managers of the teams will be empowered to make a joint decision to remove her/his players from the field. If there is disagreement as to the merits of this action it must be reported by the disagreeing party to the League Protest Committee within 48 hours.

Protest/Disciplinary Committee- The Protest/Disciplinary Committee shall be comprised of **the Pinto/Mustang League Coordinators and Softball Director**. The Protest Committee will handle only the following matters: Protests pertaining to lightning/thunder scenario. All other weather, darkness, curfew etc. decisions are the sole responsibility of the Umpire. The committee will review reported incidents of improper conduct by team Managers, Coaches, players or fans that are of a nature that poses a threat to the health and well being of the players and/or the league. No other protests are allowed.

Base Lengths: The base path distance for the Mustang Division is 60 feet. For Mustang, chalk lines will be drawn half way between 1st & 2nd, 2nd & 3rd, and 3rd & home.

Pitching Distance: The distance from the pitching rubber to the back edge of home plate is 35 feet for the Mustang Division. A 16' diameter circle (8 Radius) will be drawn around the pitcher's rubber. There are no exceptions and Managers are NOT permitted to adjust this distance.

Schedules: Schedules will be submitted to all Managers and will be followed accordingly. In the case of a rainout the League Coordinators or League Director will assist in rescheduling games and umpires. Games other than weather related may only be rescheduled if both teams playing agree to reschedule and field time is available, otherwise the game will be played (even if forfeited).

Rosters: Each team will have a maximum of 12 players. Additional players may be added to a roster only for vacancies caused by dropout's injuries or to allow for the placement of any girls moving into an area. Notification of any variation from an original roster must be given to the opposing team Manager before the start of each game. New players must first register into the organization.

Batting Order: A continuous batting order including all team members must be employed. Players will bat at their spot in the order regardless of whether they are employed in the field or not. In the Mustang Divisions, a team may not score more than 6 runs in an inning regardless of the number of outs. All existing runners on base may continue to round the bases until the ball becomes dead within the pitcher's circle as any other play ends.

Defensive Substitutions: All girls participating must play a minimum of 4 complete innings defensively (12 outs) in a seven-inning game. No player should sit out 2 consecutive innings unless due to injury. Free defensive substitution will be permitted.

Pitchers may not pitch more than 3 innings per game **and may re-enter once during the game.** One pitch in an inning counts as a full inning. If a pitcher hits 3 batters she must be removed from pitching the rest of the game. Pitcher must wear a protective face mask. **Teams are encouraged to develop 3-4 pitchers on each team; utilizing pitchers for 2 innings at a time.**

Disciplinary Actions: Disciplinary action for whatever reason deemed necessary by a Manager may be taken at her/his discretion. Notification of such action must be given to the opposing team Manager prior to the start of a game or at the time the action should be necessary. Foul language and unsportsmanlike conduct shall be determined by the Umpire who may elect to eject the offending party from the game. Bats or any other equipment thrown in anger will result in the batter being declared OUT and dismissal from the game with the ball being declared dead. A bat that slips from the batter's hand will result in a warning to the team for the first occurrence. The second team occurrence will result in the batter being called OUT with the ball being declared dead and the runners unable to advance. This ruling is based on the judgment of the Umpire.

Game Times: All games should begin promptly at the scheduled time as listed on the master schedule. Forfeit for lack of sufficient players occurs 15 minutes subsequent to the scheduled start time.

Game Length: The standard game length is 7 innings. A game becomes official after the after 5 innings have been completed, or 4 1/2 innings if the home team is leading by **15** or more runs. If a game does not become official, the game will be considered complete and over if one of the following factors caused the cessation of the game:

- a. Rainout/Dangerous Weather Rule: Any game called off due to unseasonable weather (i.e. rain snow/cold, lightning etc.) shall be replayed from the beginning if 1 full inning or less has been played. A game that has been stopped due to unseasonable weather in the 2nd through 3rd inning shall be continued from the point of the stoppage at a later date. If the game is stopped in the 4th inning or later it shall be considered a complete game if the losing team has finished their 4th at bat. Otherwise the continuation rule shall apply. If game is tied after the 4th inning, then game will end in a tie.
- b. Darkness Rule: The judgment of the umpire will dictate a game's end due to weather/darkness. His decision is final.
- c. Time Limits: Games shall be played for 1 hour 45 minutes. No new inning should be played after 1 hour 45 minutes. Play the inning to completion. Any game starting more than 15 minutes late is subject to 1 hour 30 minutes time limit. Play the inning to completion. If the first game cannot start within 30 minutes of its scheduled start time it should be cancelled and rescheduled. Speed-up Rules will be in effect until games are back on schedule. A pinch-runner (the last recorded out) will be used for the player who will be the catcher in the next inning. This player must catch the entire next inning unless he is injured/or replaces the pitcher. No infield or outfield practice after the 1st inning. Returning pitchers are allowed 3 warm-up throws. New pitchers are allowed 5 warm-up throws.

- d. Mercy Rule: There is a 15 run mercy rule in effect after the 5th inning.
- e. Extra Innings: A maximum of two extra innings are allowable, however, the darkness rule and time limit applies. A regular season game may end in a tie.

Rules of Play: All Divisions all pitching will be according to ASA Fast Pitch Rules. The Umpire is the only judge of the strike zone. In the event of an obvious injury to any player the Umpire may declare the ball dead and call time out. The Umpire will be responsible for the judgment as to the position of the runners. When a player is due to bat but can't, the manager must declare the batter out of the game or temporarily out of the game. If the batter is out of the game it is not considered an out and the batter cannot return. If the batter is out temporarily, it is considered an out and the player may return. No jewelry allowed. **If a team is short players, they may pull girls from other 10U or 8U teams only. The borrowed player will play the outfield and bat last.** Players must be registered with the Association. A team may bring up players to roster a maximum of eleven (11) players for the game. Players brought up are eligible for tournament play upon approval of the lower level manager. **If a batter is hit by a pitch and the batter attempts to get out of the way, it is at the umpire's discretion to send the batter to 1st base. Hit by a pitch means straight from the pitcher's hand or on a bounce then hits the batter.** The pitcher must start with 2 feet on the rubber and her first step must be forward. There will be 4 outfielders and no short center. Outfield must be positioned 15 ft. behind the infielder. An outfielder can't be the first player to receive a throw at any base. **Bunting will be allowed at the rate of 1 ball bunted in play per inning. Once a batter squares to bunt they must bunt or pull the bat back. They are not allowed to show the bunt to pull the 3rd baseman in and then swing away. If this happens, the batter will automatically be called out. After 1 fair bunt, all players must swing away the rest of their at bat. Any player attempting to bunt or squaring up to bunt after their team has bunted once will be called out.** No Drop 3rd strike. No infield fly rule. Runners may not lead off the base. The player will be called out if leaving the base early. **They can only leave the base after the ball crosses the plate. There are a maximum of 3 steals per team/inning. No stealing HOME.** Once the pitcher has control of the ball in the circle, play is stopped and no runner may advance. The umpire will determine if the runner was past the half way line and what base they should go to. If an attempt is made on a base runner and the ball or player leaves the circle before the umpire stops play the play will continue and runner can advance until the ball is returned to the circle and play is stopped. All base runners must make an attempt to slide or to avoid a collision with a defensive player. The Umpire will call a runner out **if contact is made with a fielder attempting to tag a runner and they fail to slide.**

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