2018 Lancaster Depew Ponytails Softball

House League Rules





**2018 House League Rules**

**Mission Statement**

The mission of The Lancaster Depew Ponytails is to manage, serve and promote the game of girls fastpitch softball at all levels of play within the Lancaster Depew area.

* We are a non-profit, all volunteer organization that is community based.
* We provide a safe fun environment for girls to learn and play the game of softball.
* We provide the opportunity for girls to grow and develop their talents to the best of their ability.
* We encourage physical, emotional, and social development of all youth.
* We promote the value and importance of sport: sportsmanship and self-confidence.
* We are proud of our facilities, reputation and strong support.
* We strive to be financially responsible ensuring this opportunity for future participants.

**Overview**

The Lancaster Depew Ponytails are one of the WNY premier girls fastpitch softball organizations. An all-volunteer organization, the house league provides more than 500 girls from the age of 5 through 18 years the opportunity to learn and play organized softball, including Coaching, Umpiring and community service.

The tournament and travel unit of the Lancaster Depew Ponytails league known as the "HEAT" allows for the girls who wish to play softball at the highest level. The "HEAT" competes in age groups from 10 years and under through 18 years and under. Through the years these highly competitive tournament/travel teams have won numerous WNY league championships, tournaments as well as representing the Lancaster Depew area in the NSA, ASA and PONY National championships. Our "HEAT" teams are regarded as some of the best in their age groups in WNY and the Buffalo Metro Area.

The league has a Batting and Training Facility located in Walden Pond Park that has been almost entirely designed and built by volunteers. It houses two (2) collapsible batting cages, equipment and concession stand storage areas, conference room, "Pro-Shop" and restroom facilities. All players in both House and Travel will have multiple opportunities to use the facility during the year.

**House League Play**

**Divisions of Play**

* **Pee Wee (ages 5 -6) Ball used in play 11" DX1**
* **Ponytail (ages 7-8) Ball used in play 11" DX1**
* **Junior (ages 9-10) Ball used in play 11" DX5**
* **Middle School (ages 11-13) Ball used in play 12"**
* **High School (ages 14-18) Ball used in play 12"**

Placement within divisions is based on the player’s age as of January 1. Players are required to play within their assigned division. An exception will be made for Pee Wee players that have played two (2) seasons in that division. However, advancement amongst remaining divisions will remain age based. All requests for exceptions must be approved by the league president and division coordinators.

**General Rules of Play (all divisions)**

Games are played at Walden Pond Park located at Walden and Ransom Roads in Lancaster. NY. Additional diamonds used for play are located in Westwood Park, Lancaster and at Meadow Lea Park located on Broezel Street in Lancaster.

See Addendum to Softball Rules for the league's lightening policy.

The League is currently affiliated with NSA Softball and our Governing Rules of play are adapted from their current years- rulebook

1. Games on weekdays are to start at 6:15pm no later than 6:30pm.
2. Weekday games: NO New inning is to start after 8:15pm. All games, including weekends, will have a **2 hour** time limit from the first pitch.
3. A game is considered a complete game in accordance with the division rule addendums.
4. House league players are assigned to teams by an annual draft. Player and Coach requests are taken into consideration however, placement on a specific team is not guaranteed. All efforts will be made to limit each team to a maximum of two (2) HEAT tournament/ travel players.
5. Grey Softball pants must be worn for all games. (No exceptions other than High School as noted.)
6. No Jewelry is permitted, including earrings and rubber band bracelets. Medical alert bracelets or necklaces are not considered jewelry. If worn, they must be taped to the body so the medical alert information remains visible. Exposed jewelry, which is judged by the umpire to be dangerous, must be removed and may not be worn during the game.
7. Team Managers/Coaches must report injuries within 24 hours of the incident to their Division Coordinator.
8. All Managers and Coaches are required to attend the yearly Ponytail Orientation Sessions that are held each season and abide by the Lancaster-Depew Ponytails Girl’s Fastpitch Softball Organization Code of Conduct. Code of Conduct must be signed and returned to the League on an annual basis prior to being assigned a team.
9. Assistant Coaches are strongly encouraged to participate in all for the benefit of all.
10. During the playoff season, the International Tie Breaker rule will be in effect. Inthe Junior, Middle School and High School Divisions, the extra innings will erase all previous pitched innings and hit by pitch counts for each teams pitcher. The extra innings can be called due to darkness by the umpire. If the game is called then seeding will determine the winner.
11. Smoking, including e-cigarettes and vaping, is not permitted with 50 feet of the players' benches. Alcoholic beverages are not permitted in the park while games are being played.

**Schedules**

1. There is **NO RESCHEDULING** of house league games by managers or coaches.
2. Rained out games will be rescheduled on the first available Friday or Sunday following a rained out game.
3. Team Managers will be notified of game cancellations no later than 45 minutes prior to the start of their game.
4. Tournament and Travel Games take precedence over house games.
5. House League Games take precedence over Tournament & Travel Team practices.
6. Use of divisional call up lists is mandatory among all managers and coaches and is to be used when a team does not have enough players to field a team. Refer to Manager and Coaches Responsibilities for further clarification on call up requirements.

**Umpires**

The league will provide trained umpires for Ponytail, Junior, Middle School and High School divisions. The umpire coordinator will conduct training and scheduling to meet the league’s needs.

Badgering of umpires will not be tolerated.  Failure to comply will result in ejection for the park.

**Managers and Coaches Responsibilities**

1. All Managers and Coaches are required to attend the yearly Ponytail Orientation Sessions that are held each season and abide by the Code of Ethics of the NYSCA.
2. Every team Manager and Coach for the 2018 season is required to complete NYSCA’s online coaches training at [**NAYS.org**](http://NAYS.org).
3. Managers must respect their players, umpires and opposing coaches in compliance with the Lancaster-Depew Ponytails Girl’s Fastpitch Softball Organization Code of Conduct. Code of Conduct must be signed and returned to the League on an annual basis prior to being assigned a team.
4. Managers are expected to be providing clear and accurate communication to players and parents.
5. Managers are responsible for the conduct of their fans and spectators and may be required to enforce umpire ejection of same.
6. Managers are required to have at least 3 team practices throughout the season. This is in addition to assigned cage times.
7. Every attempt will be made that teams be given three (3) weekend time slots to use the training facility after the seasons draft is completed. (As assigned by Facility’s Coordinator) The Managers/Coaches must use these slots so that every girl in this league is able to benefit by practicing in the facility.
8. Managers are responsible to maintain his/her scorebook for each game. The scorebook allows Managers to keep players in their batting order and track outs. In the PeeWee division the scorebook can be used to help with awarding POGs. Managers are responsible for reporting wins, losses, and final game scores to the Umpire upon completion of the game.
9. Managers may call up players from lower age divisions using the “farm system” approach to address a depleted roster due to illness, injury or personal schedule conflict. Each Division Coordinator will make available a list or pool of qualified players (2-3 players from each team) for the upper division to call players up. Managers in need of call up players must call qualified player(s) on the call-up list. Qualified players are limited to players registered for a house team. HEAT players may not be called up if they are not registed for and playing on a house team.

All call ups can play infield or outfield and bat last in the order. Call up players cannot Pitch or Catch.

1. Player evaluations are required by each manager for his/her team. Evaluations must be turned in to the division coordinator by the Friday Night Bash.

**Player Responsibilities**

1. Play for Fun.
2. Work hard to improve your skills.
3. Be a team player — get along with your teammates.
4. Learn teamwork, sportsmanship and discipline.
5. Be on time for practices and games.
6. Learn the rules and play by them. Always be a good sport.
7. Respect your coach, your teammates, your parents, opponents and officials.
8. Never argue with an official's decision.
9. No taunting of opposition players.
10. Homework and schoolwork come first.

**Parents Responsibilities**

Parents are expected to respect all players, coaches, umpires and spectators and conduct themselves appropriately.

Parents are subject to ejection from the park for inappropriate behavior and not complying with League rules or Code of Conduct.

Parents are required to fulfill their volunteer and fundraising commitments and are encouraged to play an active role in their child's development.

**Fans and Spectators (Cheers and Jeers)**

All fans and spectators are expected to conduct themselves with good sportsmanship at all times.

The league promotes cheers that are favorable and positive. Negative cheers will not be tolerated.

Badgering of umpires will not be tolerated. Failure to comply will result in ejection for the park.

All fans and spectators are subject to ejection from the park for inappropriate behavior and not complying with League rules.

**League Uniform**

The league will provide a jersey and pants for each registered house player. All players are required to wear grey softball pants and team uniform shirts during games. Shirts are recommended to be worn tucked in.

**Equipment**

Each team is provided an age appropriate equipment bag including first aid kit, catchers equipment, bats, balls, pitching rubber and bases. The league will make every effort to accommodate special needs players.

Managers are responsible for their teams’ equipment given them by the Equipment Coordinator. All equipment is to be returned to the league by the date set forth by the Equipment Coordinator.

Cleats are optional.

Facemasks are STRONGLY recommended at all levels of play. Pitchers MUST wear facemasks while playing and practicing.

All batting helmets must be equipped with a face mask. Helmets and masks must be NOCSAE certified.

**House League Play**

**Pee Wee (ages 5 -6)**

Addendum to Official Softball Rules

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1. Weekday games start at 6:15pm, or no later than 6:30pm. Games shall not exceed a 2 hour time limit. Actual duration of the game may be shortened at the discretion / agreement of the Coaches depending on game conditions. Minimum four (4) innings should be played per game.
2. Players arriving after the game has started will be placed at the bottom of the batting order and may join the game in progress.
3. There are no umpires. Defensive outs will be determined by Managers/Coaches. Players called out on the bases must come off the base.
4. There will be no official scoring.
5. The end of each inning will be determined once the maximum number of batters has appeared at the plate regardless of number of defensive outs. Coaches may rotate batter line-ups throughout the game. Coaches are responsible for acknowledging when the last batter in each inning.
6. Team Manager or Coach will pitch to his/her team. Players do not "pitch" during games; however they will field the position. The pitcher must wear a helmet at all times.
7. **4 Swing Rule** - if the hitter has not successfully hit the ball in play after swinging four (4) times, a batting tee will be brought out.
8. Maximum two Coaches allowed in the field of play to instruct and position players. Managers and Coaches need to be a minimum of 18 years of age. **The role of the coach is to teach the fundamentals of softball and prepare players on their team for the next level.**
9. Stealing / leadoffs are not allowed and no extra bases are awarded due to over throws or errors.
10. Players advance one base on a hit ball. Final batter for each inning will run all bases.
11. Infielders (Pitcher, Catcher, 1B, 2B, SS, 3B) will play at appropriate depths for the dimensions of the base paths being used. Remaining players will fill the outfield positions. There must be separation between infielders and outfielders. Outfielders are required to start from the grass.
12. The pitcher and 1B must wear a defensive facemask or helmet w/mask.
13. Distance between bases is 45 feet.
14. Each game a player or two should be recognized for a special achievement and awarded with a Player of the Game (POG) award. The POG award could be rewarded due to a good hit, catch, hard work, or other aspect of the game exhibited during a game. Each player should only receive one POG award during the season.
15. The Lancaster Depew Ponytails Lightning Policy applies to all practices, games and team events. If activity has been suspended due to lightning, the designated umpire or league official will wait at least 30 minutes after the last lightning flash before resuming activity. Each time additional lightning is observed the minimum 30 minute waiting period should be reset. A clear sky or lack of rainfall is not adequate indicators for resuming play. The minimum return to play waiting period if any signs of thunderstorm activity remain in the area or if the weather forecast indicates the threat is not over.

**No lightning safety guidelines can guarantee absolute safety. It is the responsibility of every person to be aware of weather conditions and take appropriate action to be safe. Use common sense and good judgment, plan ahead and make safety your number one priority.**

**Ponytail (ages 7-8)**

Addendum to Official Softball Rules

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1. Weekday games start at 6:15pm, or no later than 6:30pm. No new inning is to start alter 8:15pm. All games, including weekend games, have a **2 hour** time limit from the first pitch. A complete game consists of six (6) innings. An official game may be called after four (4) innings.
2. A mercy rule is in effect fifteen (15) runs differential at the end of the 5th inning. The team ahead by fifteen (15) or more runs at the end of the 5th inning is declared the winner.
3. A team must play with no more than ten (10) fielders on the field. However, a team with less than ten (10) players may play with a minimum of seven (7) to avoid a forfeit. A maximum of six (6) infielders (including the pitcher and catcher). The 7-10th players shall play an outfield position, no closer than the edge of the grass.

Every effort should be made to avoid a forfeit and allow the games to proceed. Defensive players may be borrowed from opposing teams as necessary.

1. All players present must be in the lineup and bat.
2. Only ten (10) players will play on defense at one time; however, each team may substitute freely at any time.
3. Any player arriving after the beginning of the game will automatically assume the last position in the batting order.
4. You cannot sit out one of your players in order to play a called up girl. Player may not sit two (2) innings until every other player has sat one (1) inning.
5. A player cannot stay at one position for more than two (2) innings a game. Additionally, each player must be afforded two (2) innings in the infield. The mission of our organization is to provide an opportunity for girls to learn and play the game of softball. In order to do this, we need to allow the players to experience playing various positions throughout the season.
6. Pitching will be a combination of player and offensive pitcher-coach that will pitch to his/her team. Pitcher-coach is to remain off the field until required to pitch. Pitching distance shall be 35 feet.
7. The pitcher and 1B must wear a defensive facemask or helmet w/mask.
8. A pitcher can pitch a maximum of two (2) innings per six (6) inning game. Pitching one (1) pitch in an inning constitutes an entire inning. A pitcher that is removed in an inning can re-enter the same inning as a pitcher. All pitchers will be charged with one (1) inning pitched.

Coaches are required to allow all players an opportunity to pitch throughout the season.

1. The pitcher will start each at bat with up to three (3) pitches after which if the batter has not gotten a hit the offensive pitcher-coach will then have up to three (3) additional pitches. Players cannot be walked to 1st base.
2. The end of each inning will be determined by three (3) defensive outs, or six (6) runs being scored, or if the maximum number of batters has appeared at the plate prior to three (3) defensive outs being made. The team with the most players will dictate the number of players in the batting order for each team. Defensive team must record three (3) outs in innings 5 and 6 as well as any extra innings.
3. A play is ended when the ball is thrown from an infielder in the vicinity of the pitcher’s mound (occupied by the pitcher), even if the ball is overthrown. The pitcher's mound is approximately 10' in diameter. OR You throw the ball to a base in front of the runner. Example, if the girl is running from 2nd to 3rd throwing the ball to first base will not stop her. Throwing it to 3rd or home will stop her. If the ball is overthrown to third the girl has to stop at 3rd. OR You throw a ball that enters the outfield when batted into the infield. In this instance a Half Way Rule will be applied.
4. Halfway rule is measured when ball reaches the infield; defensive team can make a softball play on runner.

Example: Ball is thrown in from outfield to infield. Base runner is between 2nd & 3rd base. Defensive team can make a play on the runner that may result in an out. The out counts regardless of whether the base runner was halfway or not when the ball reached the infield. If base runner successfully makes it to 3rd base the umpire may send the runner back to 2nd base if he believes that the runner was not yet halfway to 3rd when the ball reached the infield.

1. The offensive team will be allowed three coaches. One first base coach, one third base coach, and one pitcher-coach serving as pitcher as necessary.
2. Unless coaches are coaching a base or serving as pitcher, they must remain behind the player bench fences. Attempting to influence the umpires calls will be considered badgering and violates the Code of Conduct.
3. In order to challenge a call by the umpire, coaches must request a time out. Coaches from each team must be present. Umpires have the final decision on all calls.
4. No bunting will be allowed.
5. Hit batters are not allowed to advance to first base. (The intent is to teach batters to avoid being hit).
6. All bats used in a game must be "Official Softball Bats", no more than 2 1/4" or less at its widest point. (No "T" ball bats allowed)
7. An injured player may re-enter the game but must return to the same position in the batting order.
8. No play situation or dead ball shall be declared if a batter hits the ball with one or both feet outside the batter’s box. If the pitch is the fifth pitch, the batter will be declared out.
9. For safety reasons, coaches will caution players about intentionally throwing the bat. Each player will receive one warning from the umpire for throwing/slinging the bat. Upon the second offense the player will be called out.
10. Each team must let all players bat according to the batting order. If a player is sick, hurt, or refuses to bat, this must be brought to the attention of the other coach, umpire and the scorekeeper.
11. There will be no infield fly rule.
12. No dropped 3rd strike rule. The batter is out.
13. If the catcher catches a foul ball the batter is out, even if the ball goes right into her mitt. It does not have to break the plane in order for there to be an out.
14. There is no advancing on an overthrown ball.
15. Stealing is not allowed. The runner must stay on the base until the batter makes contact with the ball.
16. Sliding is permitted. The defensive player cannot block the bag without having possession of the ball.
17. Bases are to be spaced at 60 feet.
18. Gray softball pants must be worn for all games. NO Exceptions.

 Managers and Coaches are expected to enforce this rule. Girls not wearing gray pants will be given one (1) warning. The 2nd game without gray pants, they **will not** be allowed to play in the game.

1. No jewelry of any kind is permitted. This is a league and insurance regulation. NO Exceptions. The game umpire AND coach will not allow a girl to play until the jewelry that she is wearing is removed.
2. The Lancaster Depew Ponytails Lightning Policy applies to all practices, games and team events. If activity has been suspended due to lightning, the designated umpire or league official will wait at least 30 minutes after the last lightning flash before resuming activity. Each time additional lightening is observed the minimum 30 minute waiting period should be reset. A clear sky or lack of rainfall is not adequate indicators for resuming play. The minimum return to play waiting period if any signs of thunderstorm activity remain in the area or if the weather forecast indicates the threat is not over.

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**PITCHING COACHES**

1. Each team will provide their own pitching coach.
2. The ball must be delivered to the batter in a safe manner, and no arch required.
3. Within reason, the pitcher-Coach cannot communicate with their players while on the field. Also, cannot communicate with the other coaches while the ball is live but can on a dead ball.
4. After the ball is hit fair, the pitcher-Coach must clear to the opposite side of the field that the ball is hit or move forward or back in order to not interfere. If the ball hits the pitcher-Coach, a dead ball will be called. Batter may advance to 1st base.

**Junior (ages 9-10)**

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1. Weekday games start at 6:15pm, or no later than 6:30pm. No new inning is to start alter 8:15pm. All games, including weekend games, have a 2 hour time limit from the first pitch. A complete game consists of seven (7) innings. An official game may be called after four (4) innings.
2. A mercy rule is in effect fifteen (15) runs differential at the end of the 5th inning. The team ahead by fifteen (15) or more runs at the end of the 5th inning is declared the winner.
3. A team must play with no more than ten (10) fielders on the field. However, a team with less than ten (10) players may play with a minimum of seven (7) to avoid a forfeit. A maximum of six (6) infielders (including the pitcher and catcher). The 7-10th players shall play an outfield position, no closer than the edge of the grass.

Every effort should be made to avoid a forfeit and allow the games to proceed. Defensive players may be borrowed from opposing teams as necessary.

1. You cannot sit out one of your players in order to play a called up girl. Player may not sit two (2) innings until every other player has sat one (1) inning.
2. A player cannot stay at one position for more than two (2) innings a game. Additionally, each player must be afforded two (2) innings in the infield. The mission of our organization is to provide an opportunity for girls to learn and play the game of softball. In order to do this, we need to allow the players to experience playing various positions throughout the season.
3. A play is ended when the pitcher has possession of the ball while standing in the pitcher's mound circle. The pitcher's mound circle is approximately 10' in diameter.
4. Only one (1) base is allowed on an out of play overthrow. NO ADVANCEMENT from 3rd base when the catcher attempts a throw down to get an out. There is NO ADVANCEMENT home by a player unless the runner is walked in or hit into play.
5. A pitcher can pitch a maximum of three (3) innings per seven (7) inning game. Pitching one (1) pitch in an inning constitutes an entire inning. A pitcher that is removed in an inning can re-enter the same inning as a pitcher, unless removed for hitting the maximum number of batters. All pitchers will be charged with one (1) inning pitched.

 Coaches are strongly encouraged to allow all players an opportunity to pitch during regular season play.

1. Any pitch that hits the batter WILL be counted as a hit by pitch for the batter and scored the same: the pitcher will not be charged with a hit by pitch count against the game maximum three (3).
2. The batter MUST make an attempt to avoid being hit by the pitch, even if it bounces off the ground, in the opinion of the umpire.
3. If a pitcher hits two (2) batters in one (1) inning, that pitcher shall be removed (as the pitcher) for the remainder of that inning. The removed pitcher can return to pitch in another inning providing that she has not exceeded the maximum number of innings pitched. If she hits a 3rd batter, she will not be permitted to pitch for the remainder of that game (unless the international tie breaker is in effect). The maximum number of "hit-batters" in a game is three (3) per pitcher. The removed pitcher may play another position in that game.
4. The end of each inning will be determined by three (3) defensive outs, or five (5) runs being scored, or if the maximum number of batters has appeared at the plate prior to three (3) defensive outs being made. The team with the most players will dictate the number of players in the batting order for each team. Defensive team must record three (3) outs in innings 6 and 7 as well as any extra innings.
5. Stealing is allowed. The runner must stay on the base until the ball crosses the plate.
6. No dropped 3rd strike rule. The batter is out.
7. The Infield Fly Rule is NOT in effect.
8. Bunting and sliding is allowed. The defensive player cannot block the bag without having possession of the ball.
9. Bases are to be spaced at 60 feet.
10. All bats used in a game must be "Official Softball Bats", no more than 2 1/4" or less at its widest point.
11. Pitching rubber is set at 35 feet. The pitcher must start with both feet on the pitching rubber when starting her motion.
12. Unless coaches are coaching a base, they must remain behind the player bench fences. Attempting to influence the umpires calls will be considered badgering and violates the Code of Conduct.
13. In order to challenge a call by the umpire, coaches must request a time out. Coaches from each team must be present. Umpires have the final decision on all calls.
14. Gray softball pants must be worn for all games. NO Exceptions.

Managers and Coaches are expected to enforce this rule. Girls not wearing gray pants will be given one (1) warning. The 2nd game without gray pants, they **will not** be allowed to play in the game. Sliding pants are strongly recommended.

1. No jewelry of any kind is permitted. This is a league and insurance regulation. NO Exceptions. The game umpire AND coach will not allow a girl to play until the jewelry that she is wearing is removed.
2. The Lancaster Depew Ponytails Lightning Policy applies to all practices, games and team events. If activity has been suspended due to lightning, the designated umpire or league official will wait at least 30 minutes after the last lightning flash before resuming activity. Each time additional lightening is observed the minimum 30 minute waiting period should be reset. A clear sky or lack of rainfall is not adequate indicators for resuming play. The minimum return to play waiting period if any signs of thunderstorm activity remain in the area or if the weather forecast indicates the threat is not over.

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**Middle School (ages 11-13)**

Addendum to Official Softball Rules

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1. Weekday games start at 6:15pm, or no later than 6:30pm. No new inning is to start alter 8:15pm. All games, including weekend games, have a **2 hour** time limit from the first pitch. A complete game consists of seven (7) innings. An official game may be called after four (4) innings.
2. A mercy rule is in effect fifteen (15) runs differential at the end of the 5th inning. The team ahead by fifteen (15) or more runs at the end of the 5th inning is declared the winner.
3. A team must play with no more than ten (10) fielders on the field. However, a team with less than ten (10) players may play with a minimum of seven (7) to avoid a forfeit. A maximum of six (6) infielders (including the pitcher and catcher). The 7-10th players shall play an outfield position, no closer than the edge of the grass.
4. No regular member of the team using a "called-up" player shall sit out except due to injury.
5. The end of each inning will be determined by three (3) defensive outs or if the maximum number of batters has appeared at the plate prior to three (3) defensive outs being made. The team with the most players will dictate the number of players in the batting order for each team. Defensive team must record three (3) outs in innings 6 and 7 as well as any extra innings.
6. A pitcher can pitch a maximum of four (4) innings per seven (7) inning game. Pitching one (1) pitch in an inning constitutes an entire inning. A pitcher that is removed in an inning can re-enter the same inning as a pitcher, unless removed for hitting the maximum number of batters. All pitchers will be charged with one (1) inning pitched.
7. If a pitcher hits two (2) batters in one (1) inning, that pitcher shall be removed (as the pitcher) for the remainder of that inning. The removed pitcher can return to pitch in another inning providing that she has not exceeded the maximum number of innings pitched. If she hits a 3rd batter, she will not be permitted to pitch for the remainder of that game (unless the international tie breaker is in effect). The maximum number of "hit-batters" in a game is three (3) per pitcher. The removed pitcher may play another position in that game.
8. Any pitch that hits the batter (even if the hall hits the ground before striking the batter) WILL be counted as a hit by pitch for the batter and scored the same; the pitcher will not be charged with a hit by pitch count against the game maximum three (3).
9. The batter MUST make an attempt to avoid being hit by the pitch, even if it bounces off the ground, in the opinion of the umpire.
10. Stealing of ALL bases, including home is permitted. The runner must remain on the base until the ball leaves the pitcher's hand. Batters must slide feet first when stealing home.
11. Bunting and Sliding are permitted. The defensive player cannot block the bag without having possession of the ball.
12. The Designated Hitter rule is NOT in effect.
13. The Dropped 3rd Strike rule IS in effect.
14. Pitching rubber is set at 40 feet. The pitcher must start with both feet on the pitching rubber when starting her motion.
15. Unless coaches are coaching a base, they must remain behind the player bench fences. Attempting to influence the umpires calls will be considered badgering and violates the Code of Conduct.
16. In order to challenge a call by the umpire, coaches must request a time out. Coaches from each team must be present. Umpires have the final decision on all calls.
17. Gray softball pants must be worn for all games. NO Exceptions.

Managers and Coaches are expected to enforce this rule. Girls not wearing gray pants will be given one (1) warning. The 2nd game without gray pants, they **will not** be allowed to play in the game. Sliding pants are strongly recommended.

1. No jewelry of any kind is permitted. This is a league and insurance regulation. NO Exceptions. The game umpire AND coach will not allow a girl to play until the jewelry that she is wearing is removed.
2. All bats used in a game must be "Official Softball Bats", no more than 2 1/4" or less at its widest point.
3. The Lancaster Depew Ponytails Lightning Policy applies to all practices, games and team events. If activity has been suspended due to lightning, the designated umpire or league official will wait at least 30 minutes after the last lightning flash before resuming activity. Each time additional lightening is observed the minimum 30 minute waiting period should be reset. A clear sky or lack of rainfall is not adequate indicators for resuming play. The minimum return to play waiting period if any signs of thunderstorm activity remain in the area or if the weather forecast indicates the threat is not over.

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**High School (ages 14-18)**

Addendum to Official Softball Rules

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1. Weekday games start at 6:15pm, or no later than 6:30pm. No new inning is to start alter 8:15pm. All games, including weekend games, have a **2 hour** time limit from the first pitch. A complete game consists of seven (7) innings. An official game may be called after four (4) innings.
2. Currently our House Teams compete with the Cheektowaga Intra-League. The Division Coordinator will advise The Board on the current years Rules of Play
3. A team must play with no more than ten (10) fielders on the field. However, a team with less than ten (10) players may play with a minimum of seven (7) to avoid a forfeit. A maximum of six (6) infielders (including the pitcher and catcher). The 7-10th players shall play an outfield position, no closer than the edge of the grass. Teams must bat nine (9) players or take an out at the missing player(s) turn at bat (with the agreement of both coaches).
4. No regular member of the team using a "called-up" player shall sit out except due to injury.
5. The end of each inning will be determined by three (3) defensive outs or if the maximum number of batters has appeared at the plate prior to three (3) defensive outs being made. The team with the most players will dictate the number of players in the batting order for each team. Defensive team must record three (3) outs in innings 6 and 7 as well as any extra innings.
6. Stealing of ALL bases, including home is permitted. The runner must remain on the base until the ball leaves the pitcher's hand.
7. Bunting and Sliding are permitted. The defensive player cannot block the bag without having possession of the ball.
8. The Designated Hitter rule is NOT in effect.
9. The Dropped 3rd Strike rule IS in effect.
10. Teams must have their entire lineup of players.
11. Pitching rubber is set at 40 feet. The pitcher must start with both feet on the pitching rubber when staring her motion.
12. If a pitcher hits two (2) batters in one (1) inning, that pitcher shall be removed (as the pitcher) for the remainder of that inning. The removed pitcher can return to pitch in another inning providing that she has not exceeded the maximum number of innings pitched. If she hits a 3rd batter, she will not be permitted to pitch for the remainder of that game (unless the international tie breaker is in effect). The maximum number of "hit-batters" in a game is three (3) per pitcher. The removed pitcher may play another position in that game.
13. Each team has the option to wear either gray softball pants or black shorts; however the entire squad MUST be outfitted in the same option. NO EXCEPTIONS. If this rule is not followed, the team will forfeit the next game that its players are not dressed following this rule.
14. No jewelry of any kind is permitted. This is a league and insurance regulation. NO Exceptions. The game umpire AND manager will not allow a girl to play until the jewelry that she is wearing is removed.
15. The Middle School and High School Divisions will not have weeknight games scheduled during the month of May.
16. The Lancaster Depew Ponytails Lightning Policy applies to all practices, games and team events. If activity has been suspended due to lightning, the designated umpire or league official will wait at least 30 minutes after the last lightning flash before resuming activity. Each time additional lightning is observed the minimum 30 minute waiting period should be reset. A clear sky or lack of rainfall is not adequate indicators for resuming play. The minimum return to play waiting period if any signs of thunderstorm activity remain in the area or if the weather forecast indicates the threat is not over.

**No lightning safety guidelines can guarantee absolute safety. It is the responsibility of every person to be aware of weather conditions and take appropriate action to be safe. Use common sense and good judgment, plan ahead and make safety your number one priority.**

1. All rules are subject to the affiliated league (for example if the team is a member of the Cheektowaga Interleague, Metro Softball organization, or any other WNY league the team participates in.)

***LANCASTER-DEPEW PONYTAILS GIRL’S FASTPITCH SOFTBALL ORGANIZATION***

***CODE OF CONDUCT***

**For all Managers and Coaches to participate in the Lancaster-Depew Ponytails league this form must be read, signed, dated and returned to the L-D Board prior to the beginning of the season including practices prior to the first game. By signing this pledge the Manager, Head Coach and Assistant Coaches agree to abide by the Lancaster-Depew Ponytails League House Rules as well as Conduct rules set forth below and to conduct themselves in an appropriate manner. The team Manager/ Coaches are also held responsible for the parents and players on their team. This form must be submitted by all Managers and Coaches prior to the start of practices. Failure to comply will automatically prohibit a coach/manager to participate for this season.**

**I will agree to provide positive support, care and encouragement for my team participating in the Lancaster-Depew Ponytails league and will follow the Code of Conduct rules:**

* **I will positively support all coaches, board members, and others working with my team and encourage a positive and enjoyable atmosphere for all to participate in.**
* **I will do all that I can to make sure my team participates in a healthy and safe environment.**
* **I will encourage and expect my team to treat players, parents, coaches, umpires, board members and spectators with respect at all times regardless of race, religion, sex, sexual orientation and creed and bullying will not be tolerated of any type.**
* **I will not use any vulgar, lewd, obscene language or gestures while coaching or participating in any team event.**
* **I will do all that I can to make sure my team participates in an alcohol and drug-free event.**
* **At all times I will demonstrate positive support for all players, parents, coaches, umpires, board members and staff at events and encourage good sportsmanship.**
* **I will keep at the fore-front that I am a youth sports coach for the L-D Ponytails, an organization founded for the players, not for adults and I will place the physical, emotional and psychological well-being of my team and of the other teams ahead of any personal desires that I may have.**
* **I will respect the decision of the umpires, and discuss calls with them in a professional and adult manner.**
* **To the best of my ability, I will create an environment among the players and parents to respect the umpires and opponent, and intervene if anyone is acting in a manner that is confrontational or disrespectful.**

**Coach’s Signature: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Coach’s Printed Name:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Division/Age Group:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Team Name:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**