

# Central Maine Youth Softball



## League Handbook

2023

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### **Organization Mission**

CMYS will provide a structure for communities to utilize in the development of a youth softball program that serves as a feeder program for High School softball teams.

CMYS's purpose is to operate a youth travel softball league for children up to the age of 12 that live in Maine communities. Becky Haskell will act as league administrator, and will prepare the schedules, keep accurate standings, and collect the league fee and rosters.

### **3 Divisions: 8U, 10U & 12U**

**8U Instructional Level:** This level is for girls ages 6-8 and must be in Grade K or higher. This level will focus on the players learning to develop the proper skills to play the game of softball. Coaches will pitch to players. Score will not be kept at games as this is strictly a learning environment.

**10U Minor Level:** This level is primarily for girls ages 9 & 10, but any girl born in 2012 or after is eligible to play if ability is on par with players at this level. Players in this level should have prior playing experience. This level will focus on having the girls develop in a real game situation. Girls will be able to pitch. Games will be officiated by umpires whenever possible.

**12U Major Level:** This level is primarily for girls ages 11 & 12, but any girl born in 2010 or after is eligible to play if ability is on par with players at this level. This level will be based on the same rules as junior high school softball utilizing the 10th fielder. Girls will be allowed to pitch with full windmill techniques. Games will be officiated by umpires.

### **Teams and Players – Rules and Eligibility**

1. Any community that fields more than one team in a division must divide the talent as equally as possible.
2. If a team has insufficient players at a game, the team with insufficient players will forfeit the game but it is recommended that the opposing team rotates some players "on loan" so the game can be played.
3. Teams must be affiliated with a school, recreation department program, or through the YMCA/Boys & Girls Club. No parent organized teams will be permitted to participate in the league.
4. Some communities may charge an additional fee per player.
5. All players on a team are encouraged to play at age level. Only in rare cases will any player be allowed to "play down". Such exceptions may include player inexperience, no community team in that level, etc. Exceptions will be made at the community level, with the assistance of the League Administrator, when needed.
6. Players must play for the community/recreation program for the town for which they reside. If a player wishes to play for a different community instead, permission must be obtained from the coordinator of the program in which they reside and the league commissioner. Players may, however, play on multiple divisions in the same community (re – swing players between 10u & 12u).
7. A player or coach ejected from a game by an official will receive a one (1) game suspension to be served the next game the team plays.
8. Any player or coach that is ejected more than once during the course of the season will be removed from the League for the balance of the season.

## **Other Important Information**

### ***Safesport Federal Law Requirements for all levels:***

Federal Law requires ALL coaches (8U-12U) to register at RegisterUSAsoftball.com. This is for coaches or anyone working with youth on the field or in the dugout. Once registered, a background check will be completed at a cost of \$10-\$12. After registering, you will be brought to a Safesport site where you need to register again (you can use the same user name as registerUSAsoftball.com to keep things simpler) to be able to take the Safesport course and print a certificate. Safesport is a Federal Mandate and ALL coaches **NEED** to watch the 90 minute video this year! Returning coaches, will have only a short video to watch in future years. Make sure you go back in and sync ASA and Safesport. If you have any questions for Safesport, you can contact them at 720-676-6417.

### ***Registration with USA softball:***

For 10U and 12U ONLY—The triplicate form registers the team with USA softball. Please remember to complete the triplicate Team Registration form for Maine Amateur Softball Association and send it along with the \$25 fee to Stephen Belanger, USA Softball of ME District 6, 255 Middle Road, Oakland, Maine 04963.

### ***League Fee:***

The League fee will be determined each year by the League Administrator. The league fee for the 2023 season will be \$40 for 10U & 12U. This covers the cost of playoff awards and administrative costs. Cost of umpires for playoffs will be determined once the number of teams involved in playoffs is determined.

### ***Schedule:***

The schedule will be established by the League Administrator. The season will last approximately 6 weeks. Games will be scheduled for a specific night and location. Teams are responsible for any necessary changes after the schedule has been published. If a game is canceled due to weather, it is up to the teams to discuss a date/time that works for both teams to play the game.

### ***Rosters:***

Rosters will be submitted to the League Administrator by **April 20**. Please completely fill out the form provided at the end of the handbook.

### ***Code of Conduct Forms:***

Everyone must complete a code of conduct form (player, parent, and coach) to participate in CMYS and return to their program coordinator.

### ***Standings:***

In order to keep accurate and up-to-date standings, it is essential that teams notify the League Administrator with all game results by 4pm Sunday following their games, or both teams will be listed as losses. You can send results by email to [youthsoftball207@gmail.com](mailto:youthsoftball207@gmail.com) or text to 207-446-9017.

### ***Playoffs:***

The format for playoffs is a single elimination style tournament. 12U Teams are seeded based upon the game results submitted to the League Administrator. 10U Team match-ups for playoff games are picked at random.

### ***Umpires:***

Games will be officiated by ASA Certified Umpires as often as possible. The umpire fee is \$50 per game. It is the responsibility of the home team to pay all umpire fees for regular season games. An umpire assigning fee for each team will be \$45.

## **Coaching Hints**

1. Be the coach you would have wanted to play for. Model good sportsmanship. It is a habit, most of which is established in practice.
2. Believe in your players.
3. Be prepared to teach your players how to learn and how to accept coaching. Remember players do not learn skills or strategies during a game situation.
4. Give liberal praise but minimize talking. Kids learn by doing. Comment on a player's actions only when you really have something to say, otherwise they will tune out the constant chatter.
5. Don't give false or constant praise. It will be tuned out too.
6. Inject and encourage fun, humor and laughter. Don't use sarcasm, it does not feel good and undermines your ability to coach.
7. Don't substitute yelling for constructive coaching.
8. Understand that spirit is contagious, and success is infectious. Know that a team with spirit and cohesiveness can beat a higher skilled team.
9. Practice fairness. Treat kids equally. Every player should receive equal practice time and be expected to share equally in duties such as picking up equipment, trash, etc.
10. Say no without feeling guilty and yes without resenting it. Avoid hemming and hawing. Don't hesitate to say "I'm Sorry", "I am wrong" and "I don't know".
11. Never single out an individual player and scold or humiliate them in front of other people. Embarrassment creates contempt and insecurity.
12. Be open to player and parent comments and suggestions at appropriate times.
13. Realize learning usually comes by making mistakes.
14. Know that for older players understanding the purpose of a drill is just as important as the ability to execute the skill.
15. Ask for help when you need it.

## **Coaching Responsibilities**

Coaches must know that they have tremendous influence, good or bad, on the players. They should never value winning over good sportsmanship and other ideals of good character.

1. Be a role model at all league activities.
2. Keep a copy of this handbook with you at all games in case questions arise.
3. Have a copy of the league rules available for umpires to review in case a question/issue arises.
4. Notify your opponent in a timely manner if you anticipate having insufficient players for a scheduled contest.
5. Keep the information on the registration and medical information/release forms private and destroy the forms by shredding or burning them at the end of the season. Failure to do so is in violation of the Freedom of Information Policy for children.
6. Provide for effective supervision during and after practices and games. Never leave a child waiting to be picked up.
7. Notify the League Administrator and your community coordinator within 24 hours of any inappropriate conduct on the part of a participant, spectator, coach or parent.
8. Make sure all participants and spectators are aware that smoking is not allowed, and possession of intoxicants and/or illegal substances is prohibited at recreation events and on school and recreational property.
9. Cancel or suspend a contest, if in the coach's view it becomes apparent that the contest cannot continue due to improper conduct or unsafe conditions.

The coaching responsibilities listed above are not all-inclusive. Coaches are expected to use common practices and common sense.

## **Expectations for Spectator Behavior**

The Central Maine Youth Softball league appreciates your support and participation in this season's softball program.

We ask that you help us to make the season a productive, safe and enjoyable one for all involved by showing your respect for and good sportsmanship toward all players, coaches, umpires, league organizers and spectators. Specifically:

1. Please make it a priority for players to attend all practices and games. If missing a session is necessary, be sure the coach knows this as soon as possible.
2. Try to praise each player's contribution to the game, whether it was a good play or a good try. Don't focus on winning or losing. If a player is developing skills, getting exercise and having fun, she is experiencing success in the program.
3. Please don't coach from the sidelines. It is confusing for the players, and it's the coach's job. If you have questions or concerns about a coach's actions or strategies, find a time after a game or practice to ask the coach about them. Keep in mind that coaches are volunteers who contribute a lot of time over the season to make the league possible.
4. Umpires, although paid, give up many hours so that the kids can play. Please remember that umpires do not win or lose ball games, and please do not express any disagreement you may have with an umpire's calls.
5. The Central Maine Youth Softball league has adopted league-specific rules that are designed to help young players develop. If you have any questions about a league rule, feel free to ask a coach, umpire, or league administrator about it at a time that is convenient for both parties.

## **COACHES' CODE OF CONDUCT**

I hereby pledge to live up to my responsibilities as a CMYS Coach by adhering to the **CMYS Coaches' Code of Conduct** as follows:

- I will place the emotional well-being of my players ahead of a personal desire to win.
- I will treat each player as an individual, remembering the large range of emotional and physical development for the same age group.
- I will do my best to provide a safe playing situation for my players.
- I will do my best to organize practices that are fun and challenging for my players.
- I will lead by example in demonstrating fair play and sportsmanship to all my players.
- I will remember that I am a **youth** sports coach, and that the game is for the children and not the adults.
- I will not be under the influence of any drugs, tobacco or alcohol at any CMYS practice, game or event.
- I will be responsible for unruly actions of my players and my assistant coaches. I will assist CMYS staff in dealing with unruly players' parents or spectators.
- I will not verbally or physically abuse any player, referee, parent or staff for any reason.
- I will abide by all the rules and regulations established by CMYS.

I understand that failure to abide by the above Code of Conduct or any serious violation of rules and guidelines may result in the removal, suspension, or termination of a volunteer coach.

Coaches' name \_\_\_\_\_

Team \_\_\_\_\_

Coaches' signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_



## **PARENT AND PLAYERS' CODE OF CONDUCT**

I hereby pledge to provide support, care, and encouragement for my child participating in the CMYS program by adhering to the **Parents' Code of Conduct** as follows:

- I will encourage good sportsmanship by demonstrating positive support for all players, coaches, umpires and staff at every game, practice, or other CMYS event.
- I will place the emotional well-being of my child ahead of any personal desire to win and will maintain a "fun is #1" attitude.
- I will support coaches and umpires working with my child, in order to encourage a positive, enjoyable experience for all.
- I will remain calm during the games and if my child or their teammates makes a mistake, I will help them learn from their mistakes.
- I will demand a sports environment for my child that is free of drugs, tobacco, and alcohol, and will refrain from their use at all CMYS practices, games, and events.
- I will insist that my child treat other players, coaches, spectators and umpires with respect.
- I will require that my child's coach be trained in the responsibilities of being a CMYS coach and that the coach upholds the Coaches' Code of Conduct.

It is imperative that parents conduct themselves in a proper manner. Use of profanity, verbal or physical harassment towards officials, staff, coaches, other spectators or players will not be permitted. I understand that failure to abide by the above Code of Conduct may result in parents being asked to leave the premises, and possibly excluded from attendance at future games.

Parents' Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

I hereby pledge to be positive about my CMYS experience and accept responsibility for my participation by adhering to the **Players' Code of Conduct** as follows:

- I will demonstrate and encourage good sportsmanship from myself and my fellow players at every practice and game.
- I will attend every practice and game that I can and will notify my coach if I cannot.
- I will do my best to listen and learn from my coach.
- I will treat my coach, other players, umpires and spectators with respect.
- I will abide by the rules of the game and will always play fair.
- I will accept the judgment of the calls of the game officials.
- I will offer encouragement to my teammates.
- I deserve to have fun during my sports experience and will alert my parents or coach if it stops being fun!
- After each game I will demonstrate "Winning without gloating" or "Losing without complaining".

It is imperative that players conduct themselves in a proper manner. Use of profanity, verbal, or physical harassment towards officials, staff, coaches or players will not be permitted. I understand that failure to abide by the Code of Conduct may result in game suspension or league expulsion.

Players' Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Team \_\_\_\_\_

## **2023 LEAGUE RULES (8U)**

1. Games are scheduled to begin at 6pm. There will be times when teams have to wait for others to finish on the field.
2. Games will consist of 6 innings. No innings start after 7:30pm.
3. One lineup and everyone bats. Teams will bat through their line, up to 10 batters per inning. If a team has more than 10 players, they will bat the same number of players as the opposing team each inning. Free substitution is allowed.
4. All players may be on the field for defense with a regular infield set up and the remaining players in the outfield.
5. Coaches will pitch. They will pitch from any area between the batter and the pitching rubber. The batter will receive 5 pitches. If they have not hit the ball, the tee will be used for the 6<sup>th</sup> try.
6. No one strikes out.
7. Runner will sit when the play results in an out.
8. No stealing is allowed.
9. Players may take an extra base on a hit into the outfield.
10. Home team is responsible to cancel games due to weather or field conditions by calling the opposing coach and/or coordinator.

## **2023 LEAGUE RULES (10U & 12U)**

### **GENERAL RULES**

1. Games are scheduled to begin at 6pm. There will be times when teams have to wait for others to finish on the field or for the arrival of their umpire from another game they were assigned to officiate.
2. Games will consist of 6 innings. No innings shall start after 7:30pm.
3. One lineup and everyone bats. Free fielding substitutions are allowed.
4. ASA rules prevail after league rules.
5. Home team is responsible to cancel games due to weather or field conditions by calling the opposing coach and/or coordinator.
6. Home teams are responsible for paying umpires, and notifying Vaughn Clark (email at [theclarks@gwi.net](mailto:theclarks@gwi.net) or text 649-0084) when games are canceled.
7. No mercy rule in effect.
8. Bunting is allowed. However, a player may **NOT** show bunt, then pull back and swing.
9. No metal cleats.

### **10U (MINORS)**

1. Stealing and leads will be on the release of the ball. No stealing when coach is pitching.
2. No stealing home.
3. 10 players will be on the field using a short fielder. The short fielder must be on the grass.
  - a. There is no penalty for playing with less than 10 players on the field.
  - b. A minimum of 8 players is required on the field.
4. 11" balls will be used.
5. No infield fly rule.
6. The inning will end when there have been 6 runs scored or 10 batters per inning, whichever comes first. When ending on the 10th batter, the inning ends at the completion of the play. As soon as a player gets the ball and steps on home plate, the inning is over. (ie. If the 10th batter walks, the catcher gets the ball and steps on home plate and the inning is over. IF the ball is hit, the play should be attempted by fielders and at the end of the play, the ball goes back to the catcher and the catcher steps on home plate with the ball. This ends the inning.)
7. No dropped 3<sup>rd</sup> strike rule.
8. Players will start to pitch each inning of the game until there is 3 base on balls or HBP per inning. Coaches will pitch to their players the remainder of the inning. Pitching distance is 35'. Umpires will continue to call strikes.

## **10U (MINORS) Continued**

9. The coaches will pitch a maximum of 6 pitches per batter. A batter can strike out. A batter may not walk/HBP while a coach is pitching. After the 6<sup>th</sup> pitch, the batter is out. If the last pitch is fouled off, the batter may continue to bat.

## **12U (MAJORS)**

1. Stealing may occur after the pitcher releases the ball. Players can steal home.
2. 10 players on the field using a short fielder. The short fielder must be on the grass.
  - a. There is no penalty for playing with less than 10 players on the field.
  - b. A minimum of 8 players is required on the field.
3. 12" ball will be used.
4. Infield fly rule is in effect.
5. 10 batters per inning. When ending on the 10th batter, the inning ends at the completion of the play. As soon as a player gets the ball and steps on home plate, the inning is over. (I.e. If the 10th batter walks, the catcher gets the ball and steps on home plate and the inning is over. IF the ball is hit, the play should be attempted by fielders and at the end of the play, the ball goes back to the catcher instead of the pitcher, and the catcher steps on home plate with the ball. This ends the inning.)
6. Dropped 3<sup>rd</sup> strike rule is in effect.
7. Pitching distance is 40'.
8. The winning team is responsible to report the game results to the league administrator either by emailing [youthsoftball207@gmail.com](mailto:youthsoftball207@gmail.com) or texting 207-446-9017. If the game is not reported by Sunday at 4pm, both teams will be recorded as a loss for playoff rankings.



