



# Vienna Girls Softball League (VGSL)

## Vienna, Virginia

(last updated 12/1/10)

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### 8U Division Rules (Machine Pitch)

8U players will likely be advanced 1<sup>st</sup> graders, 2<sup>nd</sup> graders and some beginning 3<sup>rd</sup> graders. Ideally girls will play two spring seasons in 8U. The division will continue to build on the skills learned in 6U and prepare players for the increased pace and level of play the girls will see in 10U.

Goals are to teach the girls:

- to correctly and accurately throw the ball
- to catch a ball thrown or hit in the air
- to correctly and safely field a ground ball
- to swing correctly
- to be comfortable swinging at and hitting a swiftly pitched ball
- to be smart base runners
- to know where to throw the ball to make a play and to swiftly do so

### Regulations

- In the spring season, teams will play one weeknight and one Saturday game per week, and have one practice per week. Teams will play approximately 15 games per season (varies from year to year).
- There are no tryouts for 8U. Teams will be formed primarily by parent request and by school when possible. Once rosters are final and uniforms have been ordered, player placement will be at the division director's discretion and based on maintaining a balanced league.
- A game consists of 3 full innings pitched with a pitching machine. Each girl bats each inning in a fixed rotation. After the last batter hits, she rounds all the bases and the half inning is over. Fielders should still field the last ball hit and attempt to make the out.
- Games will run a maximum of 1 & ½ hours. Coaches should promptly clear the dugout when the game ends if another team is waiting to play. Please be sure to remove all items/trash from the dugout after your game.
- Score is NOT kept and season standings are NOT kept. Emphasis should be on skill building, learning the rules and keeping the pace of the game exciting for the girls.
- The offensive team may have 4 coaches on the field: one running the pitching machine/pitching, one at home plate to assist batters and help keep the pace of play on task, one at 1<sup>st</sup> base and one at 3<sup>rd</sup> base.

- The defensive team may have 2 coaches on the field: one between 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> base, and one between 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> base. Their role will be to verbally assist the fielders to make the correct play.
- All players will bat and play in the field each inning. However, only 6 players may play in the infield, the rest will be in the outfield.
- Batters will hit balls thrown by the pitching machine. Players get 5 machine pitched balls, then 3 coach pitched balls, and if she is not able to hit a pitched ball, the pitching coach will leave the field and a Tee will be brought out.
- After the ball is hit, players may continue to advance bases until the fielders have gotten the ball back into the pitcher. The ball is dead when it crosses the plane of the pitching circle. If the ball is hit to the pitcher and the pitcher fields it before the runner reaches 1<sup>st</sup> base, the pitcher must attempt to make the play at 1<sup>st</sup> base.
- Runners can attempt to advance 1 base on an overthrow. After 1 overthrow, the ball is dead.
- Stealing bases is not allowed. Runners may take a lead after the pitching machine/pitcher has released the ball.
- Fielders are encouraged to make outs and players must leave the base when an out is made. The offensive coach at 1<sup>st</sup> base will call plays at 1<sup>st</sup> base. The offensive coach at 3<sup>rd</sup> base will call plays at 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> base, and the batting coach will call plays at home plate.
- If 3 outs are made in an inning, the bases must be cleared.
- Towards the end of the season, at the division director's discretion, teams can begin to use a kid pitcher if both teams agree to this on game day. The offensive home plate coach will call the pitches. Pitchers may only pitch 1 inning per game. Batters can strike out after 3 strikes. After 4 balls, the coach will step in and pitch until the batter hits the ball or strikes out. The bases will be cleared after 3 outs. All batters will still bat each inning.
- A single elimination tournament will be played at the end of the spring season using the machine pitch rules. Since we do not keep season standings, tournament match ups will be selected "randomly". All girls will receive a participation trophy from the league after the season, and the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> place teams from the tournament will receive medals.