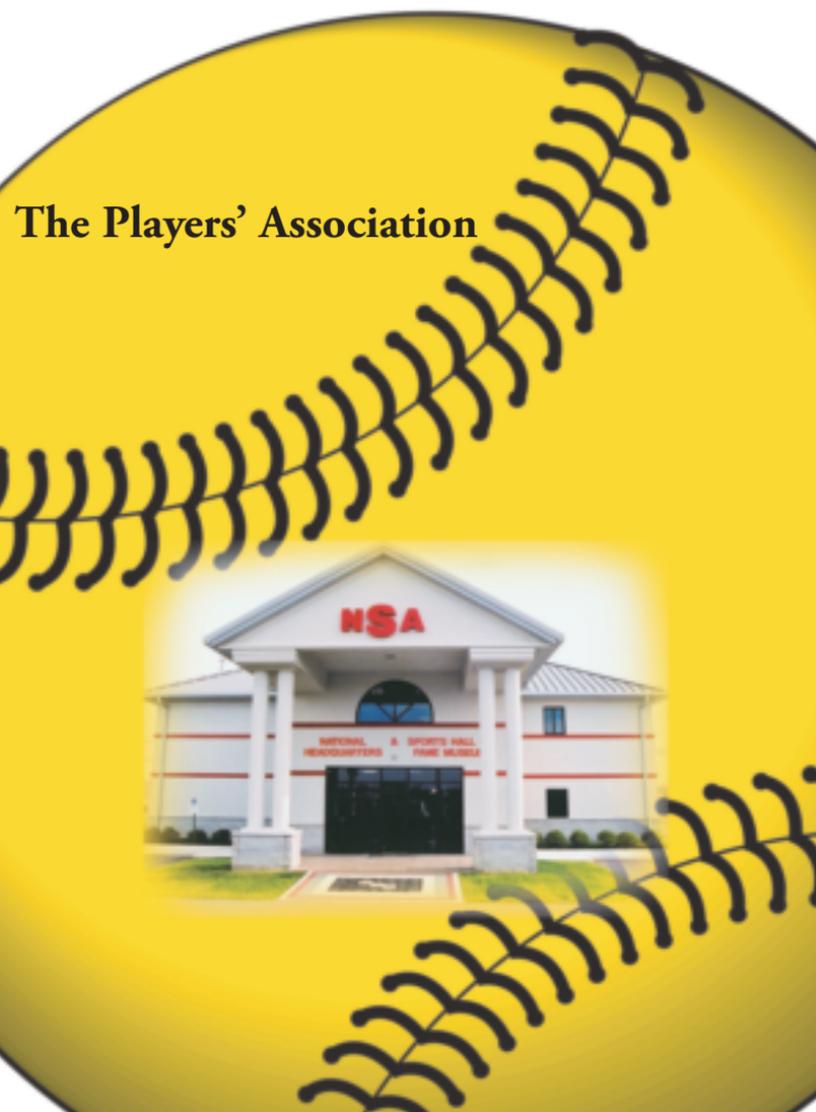




Official Softball Rule Book

www.PlayNSA.com



The Players' Association



2016

\$3.00



UNIQUE AND PLENTIFUL SPORTING VENUES TO
FIND YOUR **ELEMENT** IN CENTRAL FLORIDA.



Central Florida's Polk County is home to more than 220 sporting events annually and was the proud host of the 2013 National Softball Association Girls Fastpitch B Southern World Series. With more than 35 softball fields, Polk County is undoubtedly one of the leaders in hosting national and world championship softball events. Polk County is a wonderful place to play and stay, with sports-friendly lodging and restaurants, the all-new LEGOLAND® Florida, and is only minutes away from the world's most popular attractions.

The staff at Central Florida's Polk County Sports Marketing is ready to assist in any way possible to make your event a success. For more information about sports facilities in Polk County visit CentralFloridaSports.com or call **863-551-4750**.



 facebook.com/cfsports  twitter.com/centralflsports

NSA
Apparel & Sporting Goods

P. O. Box 7
101 NSA Way
Nicholasville, KY 40340
(859)887-4114
(859) 887-4874 fax

nsaapparel@playnsa.com

**View and order all of your Umpire and Director Apparel
Online at
www.Playnsa.com**

You may order either online 24 hours a day or by calling the Apparel Department between the hours of 8:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. EST Monday thru Friday.

All NSA and BPA items are copyright protected, all rights reserved. Any reproduction or copy of the NSA logo or Umpire Uniforms is strictly prohibited by law.

~~~~~  
**NSA INSURANCE PROGRAM**

**No Team should be without NSA WestPoint Insurance Coverage. All Youth Teams are required to have WestPoint Insurance to participate in NSA.**

Proper insurance is a concern of all the NSA Teams, Leagues, and Field Owners who host the NSA sanctioned competitions.

\$100,000 Accident Medical Coverage - Excess

Accidents happen, and with today's soaring medical costs, they can ruin an injured player financially. The NSA Program offers \$100,000 of excess accident medical insurance for each covered injury which pays the bills left unpaid by other collectable insurance or health plans after a \$100 deductible.

To learn more about the NSA / WestPoint Insurance Program, please visit our web site at [www.PlayNSA.com](http://www.PlayNSA.com)

You may also call the WestPoint Office @ 1- 800-318-7709 or Email [sales@westpointinsurance.com](mailto:sales@westpointinsurance.com)

Membership & Coverage begins with receipt of your full payment and enrollment request.

## **Eastern Zone**

**David Butler**

**Zone VP**

**5737 North Graham St.**

**Charlotte, NC 28269**

**704-596-2270**

**[dbutler@playnsa.com](mailto:dbutler@playnsa.com)**

**States:** Canada (Quebec), Connecticut, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Vermont, Virginia, West Virginia

## **North / Central Zone**

**Bill Horton**

**Zone VP**

**P.O. Box 187**

**Fenton, MI 48430**

**810-629-9551**

**[bhorton@playnsa.com](mailto:bhorton@playnsa.com)**

**States:** Canada (Manitoba and Ontario), Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota, Wisconsin

## **Western Zone**

**Marty Lalley**

**Zone VP**

**1200 Mission Del Mar Way**

**Las Vegas, NV 89123**

**702-217-5776**

**[mlalley@playnsa.com](mailto:mlalley@playnsa.com)**

**States:** Alaska, Arizona, California, Canada (British Columbia and Alberta), Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Utah, Washington, Wyoming

## **Southern Zone**

**Sonja Ritchie**

**Zone VP**

**1024 Elizabeth Street, Suite 4**

**Nicholasville, KY 40356**

**859-887-4114**

**[sritchie@playnsa.com](mailto:sritchie@playnsa.com)**

**States:** Alabama, Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Oklahoma, Tennessee, Texas

**For an Up-To-Date list of NSA State Directors and UIC's  
Go to [www.Playnsa.com](http://www.Playnsa.com) and select State Directors or State UIC's**

# 2016 NSA RULE BOOK

*Editor – Eddie Ray Cantrell / President / National Director of Umpires*

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

|                                 |                 |
|---------------------------------|-----------------|
| General Slowpitch Playing Rules | Pages 7 - 50    |
| Church Softball                 | Pages 51        |
| Coed Softball                   | Pages 52 - 55   |
| Women's Softball                | Pages 56 - 57   |
| Hispanic & Indoor Softball      | Page 57         |
| Youth Slowpitch                 | Pages 58 - 62   |
| Sixteen Inch Softball           | Pages 62 - 64   |
| Coed Sixteen Inch Softball      | Pages 64 - 65   |
| Masters Softball                | Pages 65 - 67   |
| Senior Softball                 | Pages 67 - 71   |
| Military Softball               | Pages 72 - 74   |
| Industrial Softball             | Pages 74 – 75   |
| Black American Softball         | Page 76         |
| Native American                 | Page 76         |
| Fastpitch                       | Pages 78 - 132  |
| Eight Under & Coach Pitch Rules | Page 132 – 141  |
| Adult Men's Fast Pitch          | Pages 141 – 142 |
| Modified                        | Page 143        |

**By Laws are located on the web site ([www.PlayNSA.com](http://www.PlayNSA.com)) under the NSA Rulebook**

**Official playing rules can be found at [www.playNSA.com](http://www.playNSA.com). All updates or corrections can be found there as this book is only a guide.**

*Copyright 2016 All rights reserved. Any reproduction or copy of this Rule Book, without the express written consent of the National Softball Association is prohibited.*

***Changes & Additions are shown in bold & highlighted print.***

# *NSA – The Players Association*

## INDEX TO SLOWPITCH RULES

(References are to Rule, Section and Subsection)

|                                    | <u>Page</u> | <u>Rule</u> | <u>Sec.</u> | <u>Sub.</u>          |
|------------------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|----------------------|
| ALTERED BAT                        | 7           | 1           | 1           | effect               |
| Bat Specifications                 | 16-18       | 3           | 1           | a-m, note            |
| Batter in Box                      | 31          | 7           | 1           | d, effect            |
| APPEAL PLAY                        | 7           | 1           | 2           |                      |
| Baserunner                         | 42          | 8           | 8           | f-j, effect          |
| Batting Out of Order               | 32          | 7           | 2           | a-c                  |
| Dead Ball Appeal                   | 44          | 9           | 1           | m                    |
| Appeal Before Time is Called       | 46          | 9           | 2           | u                    |
| <b>Negating a run from scoring</b> | <b>7</b>    | <b>1</b>    | <b>2</b>    |                      |
|                                    | <b>41</b>   | <b>8</b>    | <b>7</b>    | <b>k</b>             |
| APPROVED BAT                       | 7           | 1           | 3           |                      |
| BALL                               |             |             |             |                      |
| Ball Rotation                      | 7-8         | 1           | 4           |                      |
| Blocked Ball                       | 8           | 1           | 10          | effect, note         |
| Called by Umpire                   | 33          | 7           | 8           | a-g, effect          |
| Dead Ball                          | 44-45       | 9           | 1           | a-y                  |
| Fair Ball                          | 34          | 7           | 9           | a-g                  |
| Foul Ball                          | 34          | 7           | 10          | a-e                  |
| Official Ball                      | 18          | 3           | 2           | note                 |
| BASE HIT                           |             |             |             |                      |
| Hits Runner or Umpire              | 37          | 8           | 2           | d 1-2                |
|                                    | 37          | 8           | 3           | d                    |
| Batter Becomes a Baserunner        | 36-37       | 8           | 2           | a-d                  |
| BASE PATH                          | 8           | 1           | 5           |                      |
| BASERUNNER                         | 8           | 1           | 6           |                      |
| Assisted                           | 42          | 8           | 8           | f                    |
| Award of Bases on Overthrow        | 39          | 8           | 5           | e, effect 1-4        |
| Contact with Fielder               | 43          | 8           | 9           | c                    |
| Contact with Base                  | 44          | 8           | 9           | k-effect             |
| Hit by Batted Ball                 | 42          | 8           | 8           | l                    |
|                                    | 43-44       | 8           | 9           | d, k, n              |
| Illegal Glove Used                 | 35          | 7           | 12          | penalty              |
| Interferes with Play               | 42-43       | 8           | 8           | k, n, s              |
| Must Return to Base                | 40          | 8           | 6           | a-f                  |
| Obstructed                         | 37-38       | 8           | 5           | b, effect 1-3        |
| Out of Basepath                    | 41          | 8           | 8           | a                    |
| Passes Another Runner              | 41          | 8           | 8           | e                    |
| Two Occupy Same Base               | 36          | 8           | 1           | e, effect            |
| BAT                                | 16-18       | 3           | 1           | a-m, note            |
| Hitting Ball Second Time           | 32-33       | 7           | 6           | effect, exc.<br>note |
| BATTER                             |             |             |             |                      |
| Becomes a Baserunner               | 36-37       | 8           | 2           | a-d                  |
| Hit by Fair Ball                   | 33          | 7           | 9           | d                    |
| Hit by Pitch                       | 33          | 7           | 7           | g-effect             |

|                                         | <u>Page</u> | <u>Rule</u> | <u>Sec.</u> | <u>Sub.</u>  |
|-----------------------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|--------------|
| Illegal Glove Used                      | 35          | 7           | 12          | penalty      |
| Intentional Walk                        | 36          | 8           | 2           | b            |
| Not Taking Position                     | 31          | 7           | 1           | a-e          |
| Interfered by Catcher                   | 36          | 8           | 2           | c,1-3        |
| On-Deck Batter                          | 35          | 7           | 13          | a- f         |
| Out                                     | 34          | 7           | 11          | a-i          |
| When Out is Made at Bat                 | 34          | 7           | 11          | a- d         |
| When 3 <sup>rd</sup> Out is Made at Bat | 32          | 7           | 4           |              |
| BATTER'S BOX                            | 8           | 1           | 7           |              |
|                                         | 13          | 2           | 3           | c            |
|                                         | 31-32       | 7           | 1           | a- e,effect  |
| BATTER-BASERUNNER                       | 8           | 1           | 8           |              |
|                                         | 36-37       | 8           | 2           | a- d         |
|                                         | 37          | 8           | 4           | a- c         |
| Over Running 1 <sup>st</sup> Base       | 43          | 8           | 9           | g            |
|                                         | 37          | 8           | 4           | a-b          |
| Runs Outside 3 Foot Line                | 41          | 8           | 7           | e            |
| BATTING ORDER                           | 8           | 1           | 9           |              |
| Out of Order                            | 32          | 7           | 2           | a-c          |
| Extra Player (EP)                       | 21          | 4           | 2           | b            |
| Removal of EP                           | 22          | 4           | 4           | b-d          |
| BLOCKED BALL                            | 8           | 1           | 10          | effect, note |
| BUNT                                    | 8           | 1           | 11          | effect       |
|                                         | 34          | 7           | 11          | h            |
| CASTS                                   | 20          | 3           | 6           | d            |
| CATCH                                   | 8-9         | 1           | 12          | note/eff.    |
| CATCHER'S BOX                           | 9           | 1           | 13          | exception    |
|                                         | 13          | 2           | 3           | d            |
|                                         | 29          | 6           | 3           | d-penalty    |
| CHARGED CONFERENCE                      | 9           | 1           | 14          | a-b          |
| Defensive                               | 31          | 6           | 9           | note         |
| Offensive                               | 27          | 5           | 10          | penalty      |
| CHOPPED BALL                            | 9           | 1           | 15          |              |
|                                         | 34          | 7           | 11          | h            |
| COACH                                   | 9           | 1           | 16          |              |
| Assists Runner                          | 42          | 8           | 8           | f            |
| Box                                     | 14          | 2           | 3           | e            |
| Draws a Throw                           | 42          | 8           | 8           | o            |
| Interferes                              | 42          | 8           | 8           | r            |
| CONDITION OF FIELD                      | 25          | 5           | 4           |              |
| COURTESY RUNNER                         | 24          | 4           | 10          | note         |

|                                  | <u>Page</u> | <u>Rule</u> | <u>Sec.</u> | <u>Sub.</u>  |
|----------------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|--------------|
| DEAD BALL                        | 9           | 1           | 17          |              |
|                                  | 44-45       | 9           | 1           | a - y        |
| Carried Ball into Dead Ball Area | 40          | 8           | 5           | g, note      |
| DISLODGED BASE                   | 35          | 8           | 1           | c            |
| EJECTION FROM GAME               |             |             |             |              |
| Altered Bat                      | 31          | 7           | 1           | d-effect     |
|                                  | 34          | 7           | 11          | c            |
|                                  | 41          | 8           | 7           | i            |
| Deliberate Crash                 | 43          | 8           | 8           | t-note       |
| Violation of Rules               | 48          | 10          | 7           | a- d         |
| EQUALIZER RULE                   | 28          | 5           | 16          |              |
| EXTRA PLAYER (EP)                | 21-22       | 4           | 2           | a-d, note    |
|                                  | 22          | 4           | 4           | b            |
| FAIR BALL                        | 10          | 1           | 19          | a-f, note    |
|                                  | 33-34       | 7           | 9           | a- g         |
| FAKE TAG                         | 38          | 8           | 5           | b, (3), note |
| FLAGRANT OBSTRUCTION             | 10          | 1           | 20          | penalty      |
| FORCE OUT                        | 10          | 1           | 21          |              |
|                                  | 37          | 8           | 4           | a            |
|                                  | 41          | 8           | 7           | b            |
| FORFEITED GAME                   | 26          | 5           | 5           | d, 1-8       |
| FOUL BALL                        | 10          | 1           | 22          | a-d, note    |
|                                  | 33          | 7           | 7           | d            |
|                                  | 34          | 7           | 10          | a-e          |
| FOUL TIP                         | 10          | 1           | 23          | note         |
|                                  | 33          | 7           | 7           | c            |
| GROUND RULES                     | 13          | 2           | 2           |              |
|                                  | 46          | 10          | 1           | a            |
| HOME RUN LIMITS                  | 27-28       | 5           | 12          | note,exc.    |
| Exceeding the Home Run Limit     | 28          | 5           | 13          | note         |
| Ball Touched Goes Over Fence     | 28          | 5           | 14          | effect       |
| Home run – not run out           | 28          | 5           | 15          | effect       |
| ILLEGAL BAT                      | 10          | 1           | 24          |              |
|                                  | 16-18       | 3           | 1           | a-m, note    |
|                                  | 31          | 7           | 1           | c, effect    |
|                                  | 45          | 9           | 1           | t            |
| ILLEGAL PITCH                    | 29-30       | 6           | 1 – 7       |              |
| ILLEGAL PLAYER                   | 11          | 1           | 27          | a-c,penalty  |
| ILLEGALLY BATTED BALL            | 11          | 1           | 25          | a-c          |
|                                  | 16-18       | 3           | 1           | a-m,note     |
|                                  | 31          | 7           | 1           | c, effect    |
|                                  | 45          | 9           | 1           | t            |

|                            | <u>Page</u> | <u>Rule</u> | <u>Sec.</u> | <u>Sub.</u>   |
|----------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|---------------|
| ILLEGALLY CAUGHT BALL      | 11          | 1           | 26          |               |
| Detached Equipment         | 38-39       | 8           | 5           | d,note,effect |
| Illegal Glove              | 35          | 7           | 12          | penalty       |
| INELGIBLE PLAYER           | 11          | 1           | 28          | a-f, note     |
| IN JEOPARDY                | 11          | 1           | 29          |               |
| IN PLAY                    | 45-46       | 9           | 2           | a-w,effect    |
| INFIELD FLY                | 11          | 1           | 30          | note          |
|                            | 34          | 7           | 11          | e             |
|                            | 45          | 9           | 1           | u             |
| INNING                     | 12          | 1           | 31          |               |
| INTENTIONALLY DROPPED BALL | 34          | 7           | 11          | f,eff./note   |
|                            | 45          | 9           | 1           | u             |
| INTERFERENCE               | 12          | 1           | 32          |               |
| By Batter at Home Plate    | 42-43       | 8           | 8           | k-s,effect    |
| By Catcher (Obstruction)   | 41          | 8           | 7           | g             |
|                            | 36          | 8           | 2           | c, 1-3        |
| JEWELRY                    | 20          | 3           | 6           | c             |
| LEGAL PITCH                | 29-30       | 6           | 3           | a- f, effect  |
| LEGAL TOUCH                | 12          | 1           | 33          |               |
| LEGALLY CAUGHT BALL        | 12          | 1           | 34          |               |
| LIVE BALL                  | 45-46       | 9           | 2           | a-w,effect    |
| NON-APPROVED BAT           | 12          | 1           | 35          |               |
| OBSTRUCTION                | 12          | 1           | 36          | note          |
|                            | 37-38       | 8           | 5           | b,eff,1-3     |
| OVERSLIDE                  | 12          | 1           | 37          |               |
| OVERTHROW                  | 12          | 1           | 38          |               |
| Award of Bases             | 39-40       | 8           | 5           | e-f,eff.      |
| PITCH                      |             |             |             |               |
| Arch of Pitch              | 29          | 6           | 3           | c             |
| Illegal Pitch              | 29-30       | 6           | 1 – 7       | exception     |
| No Pitch                   | 30-31       | 6           | 8           | a-e, effect   |
| Returned by Catcher        | 29          | 6           | 3           | e, eff.       |
| Warm-Up Pitches            | 30          | 6           | 7           | eff, ex. note |
| PITCHING DISTANCES         | 14          | 2           | 5           |               |
| PLAYER PARTICIPATION       | 12          | 1           | 39          |               |

|                             | <u>Page</u> | <u>Rule</u> | <u>Sec.</u> | <u>Sub.</u>   |
|-----------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|---------------|
| PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT        | 20          | 3           | 7           |               |
| PROTESTS                    | 49-50       | 11          | 1-7         |               |
| QUICK PITCH                 | 13          | 1           | 40          |               |
| RE-ENTRY                    | 22          | 4           | 3           | a-b           |
| ROSTER SIGNING/PLAYER ELIG. | 27          | 5           | 11          |               |
| RUNS NOT SCORED             | 26          | 5           | 7           | a-f           |
|                             | 36          | 8           | 1           | f             |
|                             | 37          | 8           | 4           | a             |
| SHOES                       | 19          | 3           | 4           | penalty       |
| STEALING                    | 13          | 1           | 41          |               |
| STRIKE                      | 33          | 7           | 7           | a-g,eff.,note |
| STRIKE ZONE                 | 13          | 1           | 42          |               |
| SUBSTANCES (pitchers)       | 30          | 6           | 6           |               |
| SUBSTITUTE                  |             |             |             |               |
| Extra Player (EP)           | 21-22       | 4           | 2           | a- d note     |
| No Substitute Available     | 26          | 5           | 5           | d,(7)-ex.     |
| Notify Umpire               | 22          | 4           | 5           | a,note        |
| Officially in Game          | 22-23       | 4           | 5           | b, 1-4        |
| SUSPENSION OF PLAY          | 26          | 5           | 5           | e, f          |
|                             | 47          | 10          | 6           | a-e           |
| THIRD STRIKE RULE           | 34          | 7           | 11          | i             |
|                             | 40          | 8           | 6           | e, effect     |
| THREE FOOT LINE             | 13          | 1           | 43          |               |
| TIME                        | 13          | 1           | 44          |               |
| By Umpire                   | 44          | 9           | 1           | l, m          |
|                             | 47          | 10          | 6           | e             |
| By Player, Manager, Coach   | 30-31       | 6           | 8           | e, effect     |
| TURN AT BAT                 | 13          | 1           | 45          |               |
| UMPIRES                     | 46-49       | 10          | 1-9         |               |
| UNIFORMS                    | 19-20       | 3           | 6           | a-f, note     |
| VIOLATIONS/PENALTIES        | 48          | 10          | 7           | a- d          |
| WIND-UP                     | 30          | 6           | 4           | a-e note      |
| WRISTBAND ON PITCHER        | 20          | 3           | 6           | a             |

# *The National Softball Association*

## **GENERAL PLAYING RULES**

Official playing rules can be found at [www.playNSA.com](http://www.playNSA.com). All updates or corrections can be found there as this book is only a guide.

*It is the responsibility of coaches, managers, sponsors and players to know the NSA Rules and By-Laws. Ignorance of these Rules and By-Laws is not grounds for protest or appeal. Softball is a contact sport, played with Composite, Aluminum, Wood and other approved materials in design of approved bats. The game of softball can be a dangerous sport to participate in. In playing the game of softball, the player and the parents of the youth players participating in the game of softball assume for themselves and for the youth children participating in the game of softball the risk of serious injury or possible death. By agreeing to be placed on an NSA roster, the participants or parents of participants understand these risks.*

### **RULE 1 DEFINITIONS**

#### **SECTION 1 ALTERED BAT**

A bat is considered altered when the physical structure of a legal bat has been changed, or an illegal or non-approved bat has been changed to resemble a legal bat. Examples of altering a bat are, but not limited to, the following: painting a bat, replacing the handle of a metal bat with a wooden or other type handle, or inserting material inside the bat. A flare or cone grip that does not meet the specifications of Rule 3 is considered an altered bat. Compressing a bat in a vise or similar instruments, rolling, beating a bat with a rubber mallet, on a post or another bat; or any other process that exerts more pressure on the bat other than typical bat and ball collision is considered altering a bat.

**EFFECT:** *The ball is dead, the batter is out and baserunners may not advance. The batter is ejected for using an altered bat.*

#### **SECTION 2 APPEAL PLAY**

A play in which an umpire cannot make a decision until requested by a manager, coach or player. The appeal must be made before the next legal or illegal pitch, or before all infielders (including the pitcher) have left the field (crossed the foul lines). The appealed play does not change the type of out that is being appealed. There is such a thing as a fourth out appeal. This appeal is only done in order to prevent a run from scoring. **An appeal may be made after the 3<sup>rd</sup> out, to negate a run if appealed properly.**

#### **SECTION 3 APPROVED BAT**

A bat model becomes approved after the bat manufacturer submits the bat to the NSA after being tested by the official test facility and said model meets the requirements of a legal bat as defined in Rule 3, Sec. 1

#### **SECTION 4 BALL ROTATION**

A pitcher will have a choice of balls at the start of each half inning, with the exception that if both balls do not get into play in the first half inning, the pitcher, in the bottom of the first inning, must pitch the unused ball. Thereafter, every third out, the ball in play must be returned to the pitcher's plate. The pitcher, now taking the field, has a ball to start the next half inning. Before

throwing a warm-up pitch, the pitcher may request the other ball, giving the ball in his/her possession to the plate umpire. A choice has now been made, and the pitcher must pitch this ball until it goes out of play or becomes blocked.

#### **SECTION 5 BASE PATH**

The imaginary direct line, as well as three feet to either side of the direct line, between a base and a runner's position at the time a defensive player is attempting to apply a tag.

#### **SECTION 6 BASERUNNER**

A player on the team at bat who has finished his/her batting turn, reached first base, and has not yet been put out.

#### **SECTION 7 BATTER'S BOX**

The area in which the batter is restricted to while in position to bat. The batter must have both feet entirely within the lines of the box prior to the pitch (the lines are considered to be within the box).

#### **SECTION 8 BATTER-BASERUNNER**

A player who has finished his turn at bat but has not yet been put out or touched first base.

#### **SECTION 9 BATTING ORDER**

The batting order is the official lineup of offensive players, listing the order in which team members must come to bat. A lineup card must include each player's name and defensive position; also the player's number must be indicated. (Also, the spot of the extra player when used.)

#### **SECTION 10 BLOCKED BALL**

A live ball that is touched, stopped or handled by a person not engaged in the game; or which touches any object that is not part of the official equipment or playing area.

**EFFECT:** *The ball is dead. See Rule 8, Sec. 5(e) for enforcement.*

**NOTE:** *A blocked ball is not called when a live ball strikes a base coach unintentionally.*

**NOTE:** *For offensive equipment causing a blocked ball, the runner closest to home plate will be declared out and all other runners must return to the last base touched when the ball becomes blocked.*

#### **SECTION 11 BUNT**

A bunt is a fair ball in which the batter does not take a full swing at the ball but holds the bat in such a manner in the path of the ball to tap the ball slowly to the infield.

**EFFECT:** *The ball is dead, the batter is out, and baserunners may not advance.*

#### **SECTION 12 CATCH**

A catch is a legally caught ball that occurs when a fielder secures a batted or thrown ball with his/her hand or glove. If the ball is merely held in the fielder's arms, or prevented from dropping to the ground by some part of the fielder's body or clothing, the catch is not complete until the ball is in the grasp of the fielder's hand or glove. It is not a catch if a fielder, immediately after he/she contacts the ball, collides with another player, or wall (fence), or falls to the ground and drops the ball as a result of the collision or falling to the ground. In establishing a valid catch, the fielder shall have complete control of the ball, and his/her release of the ball is voluntary and intentional. If a player drops the ball while in the act of throwing, it is a valid catch.

**NOTE:** *An intentional dropped ball is a ball that has first been caught, by the definition of a catch, and is then intentionally dropped in an attempt to confuse or obtain additional outs.*

**EFFECT:** *The ball is dead, the batter- baserunner is called out, and all other runners are protected under the obstruction rule.*

**PLAY (1)** A batted fly ball, before touching the ground, strikes F5 on the head, and while still in the air, is caught by F6.

**RULING:** *A legal caught fly ball by F6. Batter is out.*

**PLAY (2)** The batter hits a sharp line drive, which after passing F4 strikes the umpire over fair ground. The ball ricocheted and is caught by F4 while still in flight.

**RULING:** *No catch. Ball is alive and batter would have to be thrown out or tagged out. A ball which strikes anything other than a defensive player, while in flight, is ruled the same as having struck the ground.*

### **SECTION 13 CATCHER'S BOX**

The catcher's box is the area in which the catcher must stay until the pitched ball is batted or reaches the catcher's box (the lines of the box are considered within the box). All of the catcher's body and equipment must be within the catcher's box until the ball is batted or reaches the catcher's box. An illegal pitch is called if the batter does not swing.

**EXCEPTION:** *When the batter is positioned in the front of the batter's box, the catcher may move closer without effect.*

### **SECTION 14 CHARGED CONFERENCE**

A charged conference takes place when:

- a) Defensive Conference - the defensive team requests a suspension of play for any reason, and a representative, not in the field, enters the playing field and delivers a message, by any means, to the pitcher. It is not a conference when the representative enters the field and removes the pitcher or when the defensive team confers while the offense is in conference.
- b) Offensive Conference - the offensive team requests a suspension of play to allow the manager or other team representative, on or off the field, to confer with the batter or baserunner. It is not a charged conference when an offensive pitcher is putting on a warm-up jacket on base or if the offensive team confers while the defensive team is in conference.

### **SECTION 15 CHOPPED BALL**

When the batter strikes downward with a chopping motion so that the ball bounces high into the air, this is considered a chopped hit ball. The chopping motion should resemble that of chopping a piece of wood lying on the ground.

### **SECTION 16 COACH**

A member of the team at bat who takes his place in the coach's box to direct his/her players in running the bases. Two coaches are allowed, one positioned at first base and one positioned at third base. One coach can have in his possession a scorebook and an indicator, which shall be used for scorekeeping purposes only. The defensive coaches/manager must remain in the dugout, as their normal position, when their team is playing defense. Failure to obey this rule, after a warning is issued, will result in the coach/manager being ejected.

### **SECTION 17 DEAD BALL**

The ball is not in play and not considered in play again, until the pitcher has the ball in his possession and the umpire has called "play ball".

## **SECTION 18 DELAYED DEAD BALL**

An infraction, signaled by the umpire, in which the ball remains alive until all play has been completed and the umpire calls time.

## **SECTION 19 FAIR BALL**

A fair ball is a batted ball that:

- a) Settles on fair territory between home plate and 1<sup>st</sup> base or home plate and 3<sup>rd</sup> base.
- b) Is on or over fair territory, including any part of 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> bases, when bounding toward the outfield, or touches 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> base.
- c) First falls in fair territory beyond 1<sup>st</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> base.
- d) While in or over fair territory, touches the person of any umpire or player.
- e) While over fair territory, passes out of the playing field beyond the outfield fence.
- f) Hits an outfield fence on or between the foul poles.

**NOTE:** *A fair fly shall be judged according to the relative position of the ball and foul line and not as to the position of the fielder at the time he/she touches the ball. It does not matter whether the ball first touches fair or foul territory, as long as it does not touch anything foreign to the natural ground in foul territory and complies with all other aspects of a fair ball. Home plate is in fair territory.*

**PLAY (1)** Batted ball first hits foul ground, and before being touched, rolls into fair territory between home and 1<sup>st</sup> where it settles.

**RULING:** *Fair ball*

## **SECTION 20 FLAGRANT PLAYER OBSTRUCTION**

A defensive fielder shall not at any time flagrantly, and with excessive force, impede the batter/runner or runner.

**PENALTY:** Immediate ejection of the defensive player.

## **SECTION 21 FORCE OUT**

A force out is an out which can be made only when a baserunner loses the right to the base he is occupying because the batter becomes a batter-baserunner and before the batter-runner or a succeeding baserunner has been put out. If a batted ball is caught prior to the ball touching the ground, there cannot be a force out(s).

## **SECTION 22 FOUL BALL**

A foul ball is a batted ball that:

- a) Settles on foul territory between home plate and 1<sup>st</sup> base or home plate and 3<sup>rd</sup> base.
- b) Bounds past 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> base on or over foul territory.
- c) Falls first on foul territory beyond 1<sup>st</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> base.
- d) While on or over foul ground, touches an umpire, player or foreign object to the natural ground.

**NOTE:** *A foul fly ball shall be judged according to the relative position of the ball and the foul line, and not the position of the fielder.*

## **SECTION 23 FOUL TIP**

A foul tip is a batted ball that goes directly from the bat, not higher than the batters head, to the catcher's hands or glove, and is legally caught by the catcher. A foul tip is a strike. The batter is out if it is the third strike. A foul tip is a dead ball.

**NOTE:** *Any foul tip is a strike.*

## **SECTION 24 ILLEGAL BAT**

An illegal bat is one that does not meet the requirements of Rule 3, Sec.1

### **SECTION 25 ILLEGALLY BATTED BALL**

An illegally batted ball occurs when:

- a) A batter's entire foot is completely out of the box on the ground when he/she hits the ball, fair or foul.
- b) Any part of the batter's foot is touching home plate when he/she hits the ball.
- c) The batter hits the ball with an illegal, altered, or non-approved bat.

### **SECTION 26 ILLEGALLY CAUGHT BALL**

Occurs when a fielder catches a batted or thrown ball with his cap, illegal glove or any part of his/her uniform detached from its proper place. See Rule 1, Sec. 12.

### **SECTION 27 ILLEGAL PLAYER**

A player who enters the line-up without the right to the offensive or defensive position.

Examples of an illegal player(s) but not limited to are:

- a) Illegal use of the re-entry rule.
- b) Using a player to pitch who was removed from the pitching position.
- c) Unreported substitute.

**PENALTY:** An illegal player violation results in the immediate ejection of the illegal player.

### **SECTION 28 INELIGIBLE PLAYER**

A player who is unregistered or who does not meet requirements to register.

Examples of an ineligible player but not limited to are:

- a) Playing under an assumed name.
- b) Players not on the team roster.
- c) Violating residence requirements.
- d) Violating divisional age requirements.
- e) Player(s) that are listed on two (2) official NSA sanctioned rosters without an official release form on file in the State Director's Office.
- f) An ejected player

**NOTE:** *Use of an ineligible player will result in a forfeit of the game if protested properly.*

### **SECTION 29 IN JEOPARDY**

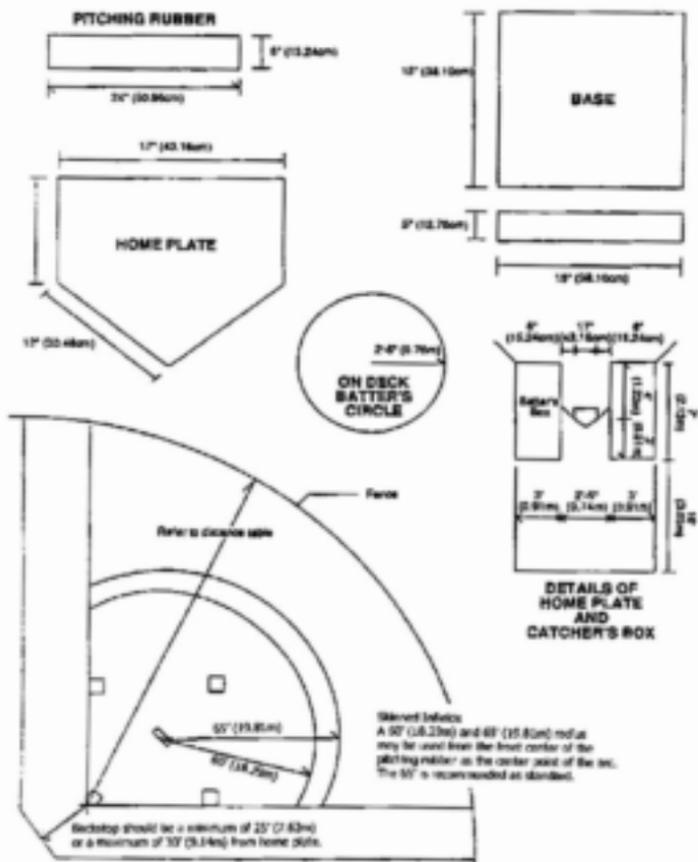
A term indicating that the ball is in play and an offensive player may be put out.

### **SECTION 30 INFIELD FLY**

An infield fly is a fair ball, not including a line drive, which can be caught by an infielder with ordinary effort when 1st and 2nd or 1st, 2nd, and 3rd bases are occupied before two are out. Any fielder can catch an infield fly.

**NOTE:** *When it seems apparent that a batted ball will be an infield fly, the umpire shall immediately declare "INFIELD FLY – BATTER IS OUT" to aid the runners. If the ball is near the foul lines, the umpire shall declare "INFIELD FLY – BATTER IS OUT, IF FAIR". The ball is alive and runners may advance at the risk of the ball being caught, or retouch and advance after a fielder touches the ball. If the hit ball becomes a foul ball, it is treated the same as any other foul ball.*

## INFIELD DIMENSIONS PLATE & BASE SPECIFICATIONS



### **SECTION 31 INNING**

An inning is that portion of a game within which the teams alternate between offense/defense and there are three outs for each team. A new inning begins when the third out of the bottom of an inning is recorded.

### **SECTION 32 INTERFERENCE**

Interference is the act of an offensive player or team member, which impedes or confuses a defensive player while attempting to execute a play. If judged so by the umpire, vocal interference may be called.

### **SECTION 33 LEGAL TOUCH**

A legal touch occurs when a runner or batter-runner, who is not touching a base, is touched by the ball while the ball is held securely in a fielder's hand. The ball is not considered as being securely held if it is juggled or dropped by the fielder after having touched the runner, unless the runner deliberately knocks the ball from the hand of the fielder. It is sufficient for the fielder to touch the runner with the glove which holds the ball.

### **SECTION 34 LEGALLY CAUGHT BALL**

A legally caught ball occurs when a fielder catches a batted or thrown ball, provided the ball is not caught in the fielder's cap, hat, pocket, protector or any other part of his/her uniform. It must be caught and firmly held with the hand or hands.

### **SECTION 35 NON - APPROVED BAT**

A non-approved bat is one that does not bear the NSA 2012 logo (See Rule 3 Equipment) or one that bears the NSA 2012 logo from a bat company that is not listed on the Approved Bat Company list found at [www.PlayNSA.com](http://www.PlayNSA.com) or that is listed on the Non-Approved Bat List.

### **SECTION 36 OBSTRUCTION**

Obstruction is the act of:

A defensive team member who hinders or impedes a batter's attempt to make contact with a pitched ball or who impedes the progress of a runner or batter-runner legally running the bases, unless the fielder is in possession of the ball or is fielding a batted ball, executing a play or catching a thrown ball. The act may be intentional or unintentional, physical or verbal.

**NOTE:** *Catcher obstruction is called when the catcher obstructs the batter who is attempting to hit or swing at a pitch. Prior to the pitch, catcher obstruction does not apply, a dead ball shall be called and allow the batter to reset themselves.*

### **SECTION 37 OVERSLIDE**

An over slide is the act of the offensive player sliding over and beyond a base he is attempting to reach. This is usually caused when his/her momentum causes him/her to lose contact with the base, which then causes him/her to be in jeopardy. The batter-runner may over slide 1<sup>st</sup> base, without being in jeopardy, if he/she immediately returns to that base.

### **SECTION 38 OVERTHROW**

An overthrow is a play in which a ball is thrown to retire a runner who has not yet reached or is off base and goes into foul territory beyond the boundary lines of the playing field.

### **SECTION 39 PLAYER PARTICIPATION**

NSA considers a player to be a participant of a game when the line – up card with substitutions is turned in to the umpire, or official scorekeeper, or is announced.

## **SECTION 40 QUICK PITCH**

A quick pitch is made by the pitcher with the attempt to catch the batter off balance. This would be before the batter takes his/her position in the batter's box, or while he/she is still off balance as a result of the previous pitch.

## **SECTION 41 STEALING**

The act of a runner attempting to advance during the pitch or after the pitch has reached the plate is considered to be the act of stealing.

## **SECTION 42 STRIKE ZONE**

The strike zone is that space over any part of the plate between the batter's highest shoulder and his/her front knee when the batter assumes a natural batting stance. Where the ball contacts the ground or glove has no bearing on the actual strike zone.

## **SECTION 43 THREE-FOOT LINE**

Is a line parallel to, and three feet from the base line, starting at a point halfway between home plate and 1<sup>st</sup> base. The batter-baserunner is declared out when he/she runs outside the three foot line, and in the judgment of the umpire interferes, intentionally or unintentionally, with the fielder attempting to field a batted ball, or interfering with a thrown ball.

## **SECTION 44 TIME**

The term used by the umpire to order suspension of play.

## **SECTION 45 TURN AT BAT**

A player's turn at bat begins when he/she enters the batter's box and continues until he/she is put out or becomes a baserunner.

# **RULE 2 PLAYING FIELD**

## **SECTION 1**

The playing field is the area within which the ball may be legally played and fielded. The playing field shall have a clear and unobstructed area within radius of the prescribed fence distances from home plate between the foul lines.

| <u>ADULT DIVISION</u> | <u>MINIMUM DISTANCE</u> |
|-----------------------|-------------------------|
| Male                  | 275 feet                |

## **SECTION 2**

Ground rules or special rules establishing the limits of the playing field may be agreed upon by leagues or opposing teams whenever backstops, fences, stands, vehicles, spectators, or other obstructions are within the prescribed area.

## **SECTION 3**

The playing field layout should include, in addition to marking for foul lines, the following:

- THE THREE-FOOT LINE is drawn parallel to and 3 feet from the base line, starting at a point halfway between home plate and 1<sup>st</sup> base.
- THE BATTER'S ON-DECK CIRCLE is a 5 foot circle placed between home plate and 1<sup>st</sup> base and between home plate and 3<sup>rd</sup> base.
- THE BATTER'S BOX, one on each side of home plate, shall measure 3 feet by 7 feet. The inside lines of the batter's box shall be 6 inches from home plate. The front line shall be 4 feet in front of the center of the plate. The lines are considered as being in the box.
- THE CATCHER'S BOX shall be 10 feet in length from the rear outside corners of the batter's boxes and shall be 8 feet 5 inches wide.

- e) THE COACHES BOX is behind a line 15 feet long drawn outside the diamond. The line is parallel to, and eight feet from, the foul lines extended from the bases toward home plate.

#### **SECTION 4**

The official diamond shall have base lines as follows:

- a) MEN AND WOMEN ADULT DIVISIONS – 70 FEET.

- b) Distances from Home Plate to 2<sup>nd</sup> Base:

90° bases – 127' 3 ¼"

85° bases – 120' 2 ½"

80° bases – 113' 1 ¾"

75° bases – 106' 1 ¾"

70° bases – 99'

65° bases – 91' 11"

60° bases – 84' 10 ¼"

55° bases – 77' 9 ½"

50° bases – 70' 8 ½"

#### **SECTION 5**

The official diamond shall have Men and Women adult pitching distance of 53 feet from the rear tip of the plate to the front edge of the pitching rubber.

#### **SECTION 6**

If during the playing of any game the base distance or pitching distance is found to be in error, the error should be corrected immediately and the game should be continued. This is not a point to be protested.

## **RULE 3 EQUIPMENT**

**By taking the field (no matter if a pre-game conference with the coach/manager was held or not, or if an equipment check was performed or not) the coach and/or team manager automatically verifies that his/her team is legally and properly equipped.**

### ***NSA Altered Bat and Altered Ball Procedures***

*For the past several years the NSA has embarked on more stringent test procedures for bats and balls. NSA feels that it has the very best testing procedures in the game; however, there are always players, coaches and outside agencies who will do their best to get around these rules. The rules were implemented to keep our patrons safe and to make this game the safest it can be. With the one word "SAFETY" in mind, NSA will not tolerate anyone who would embark in any manner that would put our patrons in peril. As a Director, UIC or Umpire, if you feel that a player may be using an altered bat or ball in NSA play, the Director or UIC will have the authority to inspect the bat or ball and to suspend the suspected player(s). The offending player(s) will have two choices only: 1) He/she can allow the NSA representative to inspect the bat or ball and the NSA representative can reach a conclusion as to whether the bat or ball may be altered or he/she can refuse to allow the representative to inspect the bat or ball and take an immediate five (5) year suspension from any and all NSA play with no right of appeal. In addition to the immediate five (5) year suspension by the offending player and/or team, failure to allow a site inspection of the bat or ball or failure to allow the bat or ball to be sent into the NSA National Headquarters for further inspection, will result in forfeit of the game in progress, and forfeiture of all remaining games*

*in the tournament; WITH NO REFUND of entry fees. 2) He/she may after allowing the NSA representative to inspect the bat or ball and the NSA representative has decided that the bat or ball "could be" altered; the player may allow the director to send the bat or ball to the NSA National Headquarters for inspection. If the NSA National Headquarters decides that the bat or ball may be altered, the NSA will then send the bat or ball to the Manufacturer of the bat or ball for a final determination on whether the bat or ball is altered, or he/she can accept an immediate two (2) year suspension without the right of appeal. During the time of the examination of the bat or ball by NSA and/or the Manufacturer, depending on the sole discretion of the NSA National Headquarters, the NSA may suspend the suspected offending player pending the findings from the Manufacturer and or NSA or final decision of the NSA. If the NSA and/or the Manufacturer determine in their sole discretion that the bat or ball has been altered, the NSA may suspend a first time offender no less than two (2) years and no more than five (5) years. A suspension decision may be appealed by contacting the Executive VP of the National Softball Association and scheduling an Appeal hearing at the convenience of the National Softball Association at the NSA National Headquarters, which is located at 101 NSA Way, Nicholasville, Kentucky. A second time offender under this altered bat/ball suspension process will be suspended for life.*

*The responsibility for knowing whether a bat or ball is altered is that of the user and/or the owner of the bat or ball. If an individual uses a bat or ball in NSA play or is the owner of a bat or ball that is brought into an NSA game or facility, the suspensions will be imposed without regard to what the individual knew about the bat or ball being altered. "An individual must know that his/her bat or ball is not an altered bat or ball, if he/she brings either into an NSA facility or game. If not, the individual can be suspended from any and all NSA activities. The fact that the individual did not know that the bat or ball was altered is not a factor in imposing the suspension. The question is only whether the bat or ball is altered or not.*

*An altered bat is considered altered when the physical structure of the legal bat has been changed in any way, or when an illegal or non – approved bat has been made up in such a way as to appear to be a legal bat. Examples of altering a bat are, but not limited to the following: Painting a bat, replacing the handle rolling, compressing the bat in any way that is not done during the act of batting/hitting a softball or shaving the handle or barrel or the taper changed in any way such as by sandpapering or applying a solvent to the surface such as fingernail polish remover or by any other means, removing or replacing the plug or changed in any way other than factory repairs, had the knob removed/ replaced or changed in any way or had anything removed or added to the inside or outside of the bat other than the legal way to tape the bat the specified and appropriate place as described in the NSA Rule Book.*

*Examples of an altered ball (but not limited too) are: Any ball frozen, or kept cold in a cooler to make the core harder or livelier or any ball that has been cooked in a microwave oven, or the seams/stitches or cover that has been altered in any way. If the physical structure of the ball (inside or outside) has been altered in any way other than the alterations that is caused by usage, that*

ball is to be considered altered. Should an umpire or player be thrown a ball that is colder than the outside temperature, that ball is to be immediately thrown out of the game, the game forfeited and the offending person(s) suspended for altering a softball. At any time during any NSA game an umpire has the authority to not allow a ball to be played with if the umpires suspects in any way shape or form that some sort of altering has been done to the approved NSA softball that is presently being played with or attempted to be played with.

**NOTE:** For every Division contained inside the cover of this Rule Book all equipment must be 100% conforming, 100% of the time. The NSA reserves the right to approve or reject any softball related equipment for its intended use in the NSA Program. Equipment does not merely need to meet industry standards, but must meet NSA Standards before approval for its use is granted. If the NSA should believe in any way shape or form that a particular piece of equipment is dangerous and/or not acceptable for fair play, the NSA reserves the right to ban such equipment immediately.

**\*NOTE:** The NSA has adopted a Bat Performance Factor (BPF) of 1.20 or less. All bats with a BPF of 1.20 or less for the entire length of the barrel or hitting surface are approved for use in the NSA Program, unless the NSA believes in any way shape or form that a particular bat is dangerous and/or not acceptable for fair and safe play.

**\*\*NOTE:** The NSA reserves the right to ban such equipment immediately. All bats used in NSA Play must be stamped with a BPF of 1.20 or less (exception: Wooden Bats do not have to be stamped with a BPF of 1.20 and may be used and are legal in all NSA Play if they meet the standards set forth in Rule 3, Sec. 1 a-m).

## **SECTION 1 OFFICIAL BAT**

The official bat shall bear the NSA 2012 logo and be a bat manufactured by a bat company that is listed on the Official Licensed Bat Company list found at [www.PlayNSA.com](http://www.PlayNSA.com). The official bat cannot be a bat listed on the Non-Approved Bat list or be a bat from a company that is not listed as an Approved Bat Company. The official bat shall be of one piece or interchangeable construction and can be made of wood (hardwood) or other materials approved by the NSA, or formed from a block of wood consisting of two or more pieces of wood bonded together with an adhesive, in such a way, that the grain direction of all pieces is essentially parallel to the length of the bat. When the interchangeable barrel bat is joined together properly, the two piece bat must meet all NSA official bat requirements. Below is a list of additional requirements for all approved NSA BATS:

- a) The bat shall not be more than 34 inches in length and no more than 38 ounces in weight and shall meet the NSA bat standards. (See Above **\*NOTE** and **\*\*NOTE** for further bat standards.) Any bat which cannot be identified by markings on the bat as an approved bat shall be considered illegal.

**EXCEPTION:** *Wooden bats need only meet the standards described in Rule 3 Sec. 1 above.*

- b) The bat shall have a safety grip of cork, tape (not smooth plastic type), or combination material.
- c) The grip shall not be less than ten inches long and shall not extend more than 15 inches from the small end of the bat.

**NOTE:** *Spray or Pine Tar or other approved substances may be applied to the handle of the bat to enhance the players' ability to grip the bat (i.e. Pine tar, Spray or other sticky substances). However, the application of such substances may not exceed 15 inches from the knob of the bat and at no time will such substances be applied to the barrel of the bat.*

**PENALTY:** *The bat will be deemed and illegal bat.*

- d) In the case of well used bats, sufficient markings must remain to make the bat identifiable as an NSA Approved bat. (Bat name and/or model number should suffice for this purpose.)
- e) The bat may be made of metal or other materials approved by the NSA and may be angular; however, the NSA must approve any material before it is used in sanctioned events.
- f) All exposed surfaces of the bat must be smooth and free of burrs, pins, rivets, DEEP DENTS OR DANGEROUS DENTS, fractures/cracks of any type, hairline or otherwise, sharp edges or any type of exterior fastener that would present a safety hazard. Those bats are to be removed from the game immediately.

**EXCEPTION:** *At the umpires discretion slightly dented metal bats may be considered legal.*

- g) Unless the bat is made of one-piece construction or interchangeable two piece barrel construction with the barrel end closed, it should have a tamper resistant rubber or plastic insert in the barrel. All Bats manufactured on or later than 1/1/2012 must be fitted with a tamper proof end cap or roll over end and tamper proof knob combination. Bats manufactured on or after 1/1/2012 must also bear the NSA Approved 2012 logo on the taper of the bat. See Graphic Below



- h) A one-piece rubber grip and knob combination is illegal.
- i) Metal or other approved material bats must have a knob on the handle and welded or mechanically fastened.
- j) All bats must have a safety knob of a minimum of ¼ inch protruding at a 90 degree angle from the handle. The ¼ inch is measured from the outer edge of the knob 90 degrees to the outside layer of wrapping. The knob portion of the bat may be taped as long as the bat does not exceed 34 inches in length; however, the umpire may request tape to be removed from both the handle and knob, if there is any question concerning the bat being altered or illegal. After determining the bat legal, the player may tape the bat back to his/her preference, providing the bat meets the requirements set forth by Rule 3, Sec. 1 (a-m).
- k) A flare or cone grip may be attached from the factory or a factory flare or cone may be attached to the bat by the player, but the flare or cone

must be installed properly to the bat. The flare or cone must be taped or covered by an approved bat grip and the bat must meet all requirements of Rule 3, Sec. 1 (a-m) after installation to be considered legal. Taped bats do not have to be of consistent thickness on the handle (**EXAMPLE:** *a player may place 5 layers of tape beginning at the knob portion of the bat and 2 layers where the players top hand would rest on the bat*)

**STINGERS ARE APPROVED FOR NSA PLAY PROVIDED THEY ARE PROPERLY INSTALLED.**

- l) Shall be rounded, and shall be smooth. Shall not be more than 2 1/4 inches in diameter at its largest part. A tolerance of 1/16 inch is permitted, to allow for expansion on the round bat.
- m) All bats must be submitted by the manufacturer to a test facility approved by NSA and must have a Bat Performance Factor (BPF) of 1.20 or less under the ASTM BPF test as applied under the standard NSA Bat test including passing the ABI standard. All bats must be 100% conforming to all of Rule 3 and remain 100% conforming 100% of the time. Only those model bats from licensed NSA bat companies that bear the NSA2012 logo and are not listed on the NSA Non-Approved Bat List will be considered legal for NSA play.

**EXCEPTION:** Senior Division bats must have a Bat Performance Factor (BPF) of 1.21 or less stamped on the bat. However, Senior Bats from a non-licensed NSA bat manufacturer are illegal. Only those companies listed on the Official NSA Approved Bat List are considered licensed.

**NOTE:** *Sec. 1 (a-m) Any bat that does not comply with these guidelines must be removed from the game, penalties (if any) administered, and the bat may no longer be used in any NSA sanctioned play.* **\*NOTE:** *Any player using a Senior Bat during any division of play that is not considered a Senior Division Tournament (all participants being 50 yrs. old and older per the Official NSA Rule Book) will be suspended immediately on the spot with NO right to an appeal.*

**SECTION 2 OFFICIAL BALL**

The official softball shall be a smooth seam, or raised seam, concealed-stitched, or flat-surfaced ball. The center of the ball may be made of either long fiber kapok or mixture of cork and rubber, and/or machine wound, with a fine twisted yarn and covered with latex or rubber cement or it may be made of other materials approved by the NSA. The single layer cover of the ball shall be optic yellow, tanned horsehide, cowhide or any other materials approved by the NSA, cemented to the ball by application of cement to the underside of the cover and sewn with black waxed cotton or black linen thread to form a black stitched softball. The softball MAY NOT be multi layered. The solid core ball must be stamped with the official NSA logo that contains the maximum C.O.R. and compression standards. The ball **MAY NOT** bear any other logos except for the NSA official logo unless otherwise approved by the Executive Director or the Executive Vice President of the NSA. Maximum Compression for NSA softballs is 275 pounds for the .52 C.O.R. softball with no tolerance.

**NOTE:** *The men's division will use the twelve (12) inch softball. The women's division will use the eleven (11) inch softball.*

- a) During “hit your own ball” tournaments, the pitcher will be responsible for ensuring the correct legible ball is being used. If the ball cannot be identified or is illegal, or otherwise does not conform to Rule 3, the pitcher will notify the umpire and a proper, legal ball will be entered into the game. *EFFECT: If the ball is hit, the play will stand.*

### **SECTION 3 GLOVES**

Gloves must be worn by all fielders. The catcher’s glove may be any size. Gloves that are *entirely* gray, white or optic in color are illegal. Gloves that have circles on the outside or inside of the glove and prove to be distracting are illegal. The gloves worn by all fielders with the exception of the catcher shall be governed by the following specifications:

- a) The height of the glove measured from the bottom edge across the center of the palm to a line even with the highest point of the glove shall be a minimum of eight (8) inches and may be increased by either ½ or 1 inch to reach a maximum height of fifteen (15) inches.
- b) Width of the glove measured from the bottom edge of the webbing farthest from the thumb in a horizontal line to the outside edge of the little finger shall be eight (8) inches.
- c) The webbing across the glove shall be measured parallel to the top end and shall be 5 ¾ inches.

### **SECTION 4**

All players, coaches, and participants must wear shoes. Sandals are considered proper shoes for non-players. A shoe shall be made with either canvas or leather uppers or similar materials. The sole may be either smooth or have soft or hard rubber or polyurethane cleats. Metal cleats or any type of shoe that has exposed metal on the sole, other than a rivet, may not be worn in any division of play. Shoes that have steel or any type of metal tips on the cleats such as (but not limited to) soccer shoes, golf shoes, football, and track shoes are illegal.

**PENALTY:** If it is discovered that an offensive or defensive player is wearing metal cleats, the player will be ejected. If the player is an offensive player and has entered the batter’s box or is on the bases, an out will be called and any baserunner(s) must return to the last base occupied at the time of the pitch. If the offending player is discovered after the player was called out, any baserunner(s) must return to the last base occupied at the time of the pitch. The defense will keep any out(s) earned on the last play prior to the discovery of the player wearing cleats. A defensive player wearing metal cleats will be ejected.

### **SECTION 5**

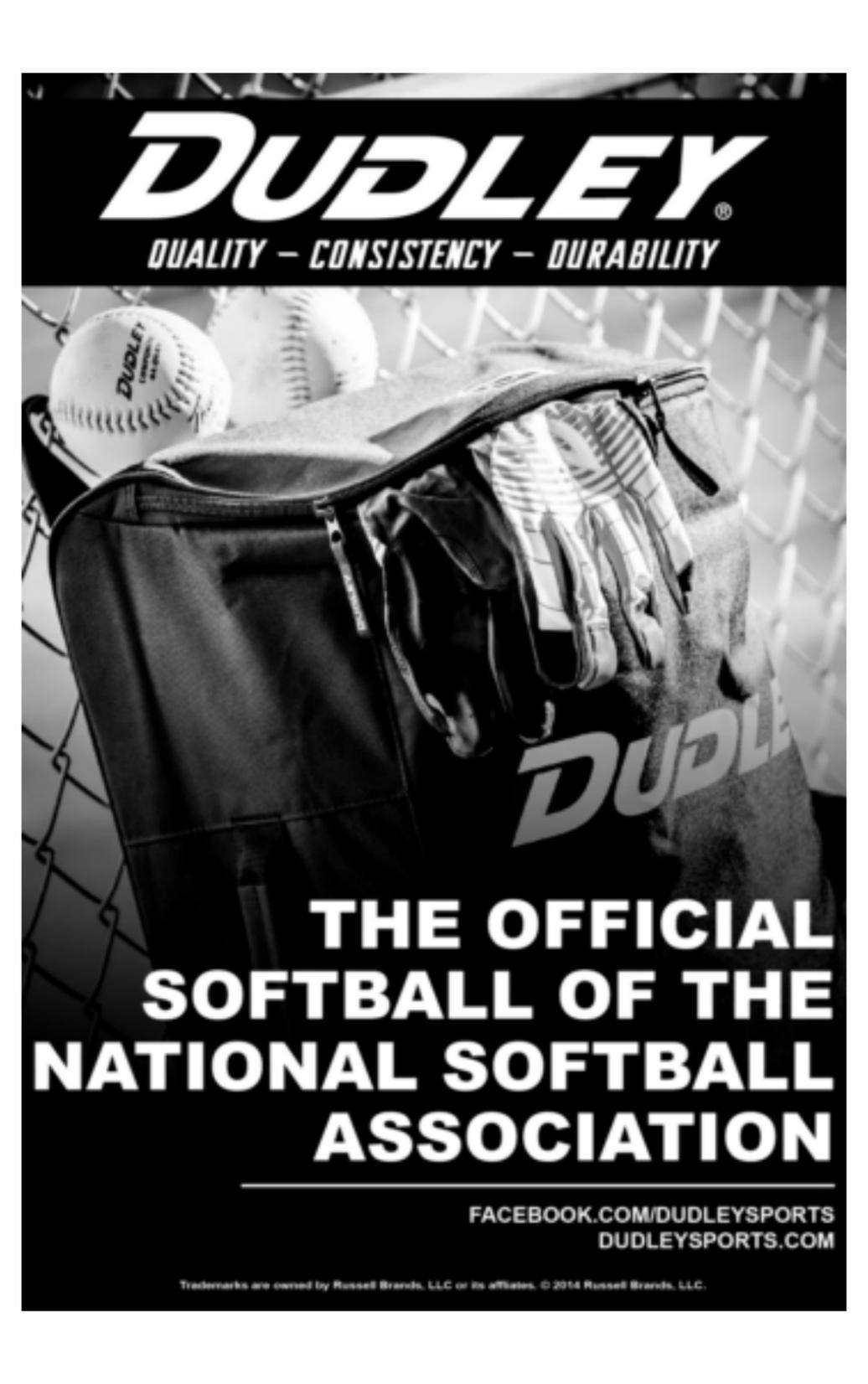
No Equipment shall be left lying on the field, either in foul or fair territory.

### **SECTION 6 UNIFORM**

All players on a team shall wear uniforms alike in color with same team name/logo.

Hard plastic visors, bandanas, scarf and handkerchiefs are not approved headgear.

**NOTE:** *Shirts may have sleeves or no sleeves and still be considered matching. Players CANNOT EXCHANGE shirts with other players when they are substituted for during the game. All players must have their own shirt with separate distinguishable numbers.*



# **DUDLEY**<sup>®</sup>

*QUALITY – CONSISTENCY – DURABILITY*

**THE OFFICIAL  
SOFTBALL OF THE  
NATIONAL SOFTBALL  
ASSOCIATION**

[FACEBOOK.COM/DUDLEYSPORTS](https://www.facebook.com/dudleysports)  
[DUDLEYSPORTS.COM](http://DUDLEYSPORTS.COM)

Trademarks are owned by Russel Brands, LLC or its affiliates. © 2014 Russel Brands, LLC.

**PENALTY:** For sharing shirts will be an illegal substitution.

**EXCEPTION:** *When a jersey is saturated with blood, team members can exchange shirt or wear identical numbers.*

- a) A pitcher shall not wear any item on the pitching hand, wrist, arm or thigh, which may be distracting to the batter. **Optic Yellow or Lime Green pin stripes or side leg trim will be permitted. Players may wear multi colored undergarments under their uniform shirts or shorts.** It is not mandatory that all players wear these undergarments, but if worn, they shall not be ragged, frayed, or slit on the exposed areas.
- b) Distinguishable numbers must be worn on all uniforms. No players on the same team may wear identical numbers. **EXAMPLE:** #07 and # 7 are distinguishable numbers and are NOT identical.
- c) **THE NATIONAL SOFTBALL ASSOCIATION STRONGLY RECOMMENDS THAT ANY TYPE OF JEWELRY NOT BE WORN IN ANY NSA PLAY.**
- d) Casts, (plaster, metal or other hard substances) or other items judged dangerous by the umpire may not be worn during the game, by any coach coaching the bases or by any player.
- e) Coaches in wheelchairs MAY be on the field of play during live ball situations. NSA recommends, though not mandatory, that coaches who choose to coach on the field who are in wheelchairs would pad exposed metal that potentially may be dangerous to other participants.
- f) NSA Uniform requirements: In NIT and all other post season play, violation of uniform requirements is not grounds for protest.
  - 1) Once a team has won home team according to the uniform rule, the home team must remain in compliance of the uniform rule for the duration of the game. No player not in compliance with the uniform rule will be allowed to play at any time during the game.

**NOTE:** *In NIT and all other post season play, if a team is not in compliance with the uniform rule, the opposing team, if in total uniform, has the choice of being the home or visiting team. If both teams are in compliance, or if both teams are not in compliance, then a flip of a coin will determine the home and visiting team.*

**Elite thru Bronze Divisions - Matching shirts with numbers**

## **SECTION 7 PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT RECOMMENDATION**

The National Softball Association **HIGHLY RECOMMENDS** protective equipment for **ALL DIVISIONS** of softball. All players are permitted to wear any approved protective equipment including catcher's equipment, batter's helmet, and soccer style shin guards. If used, the equipment must not be detached. Detached equipment can be an obstruction. Repeated acts could be grounds for ejection.

## **RULE 4 PLAYERS & SUBSTITUTIONS**

*Any non-player who is not yet considered an adult, may not be between the fences or boundaries that are considered the playing field without a NOCSAE approved helmet with a NOCSAE approved face mask properly attached. Any youth division bat boys/bat girls who are the teams official bat boy/bat girl or who are team members serving as bat boy/bat girl must wear a NOCSAE approved helmet with a NOCSAE approved face mask properly*

**attached. The coach/manager or player representing the team is responsible for insuring that the non-player be in compliance with the batting helmet rule or age rule.**

**PENALTY:** The player, non-player, bat boy or bat girl will put the helmet on or be removed from the playing area.

### **SECTION 1**

A team shall consist of nine (9), ten (10), eleven (11), or twelve (12) players if the optional extra player (EP) is used. Players of the team in the field may be stationed anywhere on fair territory, except the catcher, who must be in the catcher's box, and the pitcher, who must be in a legal pitching position at the start of each pitch. No part of the defensive player's foot (except catcher) may be on or outside the foul line from the time when the pitcher steps on the rubber or until the pitch is released. Teams can play a maximum of ten (10) players on defense and a minimum of nine (9). *In the case where a team starts a game with nine players, the vacant 10<sup>th</sup> spot in the batting order shall be declared an out for the entire game.* However, should the 10<sup>th</sup> player arrive, the team may insert the 10<sup>th</sup> player into the line-up with no penalty. Inserting the 10<sup>th</sup> player into the line-up would eliminate the automatic out. *If a team is playing the game with ten(10) players, and a player is removed from the game for any reason, that team may continue to play with nine (9) players, with the vacated spot in the batting order being declared an out. When a team is left with a vacant spot in the lineup because of the removal of a player or having only nine (9) players, as described in Rule 4 Sec 4 (a), the opposing team with two (2) outs may not intentionally or unintentionally walk the previous batter, in order to get to the "automatic out" created by the vacant spot in the batting order. Refer to Rule 4 Sec. 4 (b) & (c). Under no circumstances may a team play with less than nine (9) players.*

- a) A team must have the required number of players present in the team area to start or continue a game. Players listed in the starting line-up and not available at game time may be substituted for and re-entered later.
  - 1) Official line-up cards are to be completed and submitted to the official scorekeeper or the umpire at the start of each game. The line-up shall contain the first and last name, position and uniform number of each player.

**NOTE:** *If a wrong number is on the line-up card, correct it and continue playing ball with no penalty.*
  - 2) Their last name, first name and uniform number should be listed for all available substitutes in the designated place on the line up card.
  - 3) Eligible roster members may be added to the available substitute list any time during the game.

### **SECTION 2      EXTRA PLAYER (EP)**

- a) Any team may use one (1) or two (2) Extra Players (EP) per game provided it is made known prior to the start of the game and properly indicated in the lineup.
- b) The EP must remain in the same position in the batting order for the entire game.
- c) The EP may play defense at any time without his/her status being affected. He/she may go in and out of the defensive lineup as often as needed as long as his/her position in the official batting order is not altered.

- d) The EP may be substituted for at any time with the substitute becoming the new EP. The substitute must be a player who has not been in the game.

**NOTE:** See Rule 4, Section 4, for removal of the EP from the game.

### **SECTION 3**

Any of the starting players may be withdrawn from the game and re-entered once (including the starting EP), provided that the players occupy the original position in the batting order whenever in the game.

**NOTE:** The original player and his/her substitute cannot be in the game at the same time.

- a) Violation of the re-entry rule results in the use of an illegal player. Penalty shall be the immediate ejection of the illegal player when the violation is brought to the attention of the umpire by the offended team.  
**EFFECT:** An illegal player violation results in the immediate ejection of the illegal player. In youth play the coach is also ejected.
- b) Violation of the re-entry is handled as an appeal, which can be made anytime during the game.

### **SECTION 4**

A team must have the required number of players to start or continue a game. Requirements are:

- a) A team must have a minimum of nine (9), ten (10), eleven (11), or twelve (12) players with which it started the game with the exception of vacated spots where players are removed for any reason. At no time may a team play more than ten (10) players defensively.
- b) If a team starts with the EP'S and any player is removed, injured, or ejected from the game with no substitute to replace the removed, injured or ejected player, the vacated spot automatically becomes an out each time the vacant spot comes to bat or anytime a runner is removed from the base with no legal substitution.
- c) When a team is left with a vacant spot in the lineup because of the removal of a player, as described in Section 4 (a), the opposing team may not with two (2) outs intentionally or unintentionally walk the previous batter, in order to get to the "automatic out" created by the vacant spot in the batting order.
- d) If the previous batter is walked, the vacant spot in the batting order is skipped, the "automatic out" is waived, and the next batter is the player whose name follows the vacant spot in the batting order. This only applies when there are two (2) outs.

### **SECTION 5**

A player shall be officially in the game when his/her name has been entered on the official score sheet or has been announced. The following regulations govern the substitution of players:

- a) The manager or team representative shall notify the plate umpire at the time a substitute enters the game. Failure to notify the umpire of a substitution would create an illegal substitution with the penalty – IMMEDIATE EJECTION FROM THE GAME WHENEVER THE INFRACTION IS DISCOVERED.

**NOTE:** Re-entry is considered a substitution, and if an illegal entry occurs, the penalty is the immediate ejection of the illegal player.

- b) Substitute players will be considered in the game as follows:
- 1) When a batter, when he/she takes his/her place in the batter's box.

- 2) When a fielder, when he/she takes the place of the fielder he/she is substituting.
- 3) When a runner, when he/she replaces the player on the base he/she is holding.
- 4) When a pitcher, when he/she takes his/her place on the pitcher's plate.

In 1-4 above, in each case a pitch has to be thrown or a play has to have been made.

- c) Each pitcher (starter or substitute) must pitch until the first batter facing him/her has completed his/her turn at bat, the side has been retired or he/she has been removed from the game, unless the pitcher sustains an injury or illness which in the judgment of the home plate umpire incapacitates the pitcher from pitching. A pitcher removed from the game, by rule or ejection, is not subject to this rule 5 (c). Any other player may be removed from the game at any time.
- d) A player substituted for in the game shall not participate in the games except as a coach.

**EXCEPTION:** *The starting lineup, including the "EP" may re-enter once.*

**NOTE:** *Any player participating in any NSA sanctioned event must be physically able to participate. By physically able, the player must be able to walk on and off the field and play the game as intended. This is intended to keep injured people from further injury.*

**NOTE:** *A player's correct name supersedes error if an incorrect number has been entered on the score sheet.*

## **SECTION 6 DIVISIONS OF PLAY**

The National Softball Association has divisions for men and women, and a coed division for both to compete in jointly. The men's division is specifically for men ages 16 and older, and the women's division is specifically designed for women ages 16 and older. With the exception of Coed division, women may not compete in the men's program and men may not compete in the women's program of any division. This also applies to the Youth Program.

## **SECTION 7**

The Tournament Director or the Tournament Umpire-in-Chief may declare a higher-class player ineligible immediately without having a team protest, no matter their roster status.

## **SECTION 8 ILLEGAL PLAYER**

The use of an illegal player is handled as an appeal that can be made at any time while the player is in the game. A player will not violate the illegal player provision until he/she enters the game and one (1) pitch is thrown. Any action before one (1) pitch is thrown is correctable. An illegal player violation results in the immediate ejection of the illegal player (in youth play the coach is also ejected). In addition, the following penalties will apply:

- a) If the illegal player has completed a turn at bat and before the next pitch, the illegal player is called out. Any advance by any runner as a result of the illegal player becoming a batter-runner is nullified. Any additional outs recorded on the play stand.
- b) If the illegal player has made a defensive play and before the next pitch (or the defensive team or the umpires have left the field), the offensive team has the option of 1) the result of the play or 2) replaying the last pitch.

**NOTE:** *The illegal player can be legally replaced by any eligible substitute.*

**PLAY (1)** Smith enters the game in the 4<sup>th</sup> inning and was not reported. In the 6<sup>th</sup> inning the opposing team reports this to the umpire.

**RULING:** *The player (Smith) is immediately ejected from the game. All play by or on Smith is legal.*

**PLAY (2)** Smith enters the game in the 4<sup>th</sup> inning and was not reported. Smith legally reaches 1<sup>st</sup> base and before the next pitch is reported to the Home Plate Umpire.

**RULING:** *The player Smith is called out and immediately ejected from the game. All runners must return to the base occupied when Smith first came to bat.*

## **SECTION 9 COMMUNICABLE DISEASE PROCEDURES**

When a player is bleeding or has an open wound, the bleeding must be stopped and the open wound covered with a bandage/dressing strong enough to withstand the rigors of competition. This treatment must be immediate and a suspension of play for a *\*reasonable amount of time* will be awarded the team. Should the treatment of this wound exceed a *\*reasonable amount of time*, the affected player must be substituted for. If no substitute is available and the team is using the EP, the team may play on with ten players until the affected player can continue, with all penalties as set forth by Rule 4, Sec. 4 in effect. When the affected player can continue, he may re-enter the line-up. Return to play will be determined by appropriate medical personnel or the home plate umpire. Any player whose uniform is saturated with blood, regardless of the source, must follow the same guidelines as stated above for a person bleeding and must have that uniform changed, if determined necessary, before returning to the game.

**\*NOTE:** *A reasonable amount of time will be determined by the home plate umpire and will be no less than 5 minutes. Soiled clothing must be changed, and the change of clothing need not be matching team clothing. This is not a point of protest.*

## **SECTION 10 COURTESY RUNNER**

A Courtesy Runner (which is not recorded as a substitute in the line-up) may be used for 1 player per inning. The Courtesy Runner can be any player on the team roster who is present, eligible and not been ejected and may be used for 1 player per inning per team. The Courtesy Runner DOES NOT have to be the same player each time the player in need of the courtesy runner becomes a runner. The courtesy runner will be entered into the game by the Head Coach through the home plate umpire before play resumes. Once play resumes by the umpire declaring play ball; that courtesy runner will be officially entered. If the courtesy runner comes to bat while on base, the courtesy runners spot in the batting order becomes an out and the next batter listed in the batting order comes to bat. The courtesy runner "MAY NOT" under any circumstances be substituted for. The defensive team "MAY" walk to get to the vacated spot in the lineup. Rule 7 Section 3 is not in effect for this rule.

**NOTE:** *A player needing a Courtesy Runner is not restricted to any certain number of times per inning that he/she may have a Courtesy Runner.*

# **RULE 5 THE GAME**

*Softball is a contact sport, played with Composite, Aluminum, Wood and other approved materials in the design of approved bats and softballs. The game of*

**softball can be a dangerous sport to participate in. In playing the game of softball, the player and the parents of the youth players participating in the game of softball assume for themselves and for the youth children participating in the game of softball the risk of serious injury or possible death. By agreeing to be placed on an NSA roster, the participants or parents of participants understand these risks. To reduce the risk of Injury; the National Softball Association HIGHLY RECOMMENDS THAT EVERY PLAYER wear protective equipment!**

**NOTE:** It is the option of the Tournament Director to use or not use an official scorekeeper. If an official scorekeeper is not used, the home team will be the official scorer and it is the obligation of the visiting team to verify the score at the end of each half inning. Scorekeepers are NOT mandatory in Super World Series Tournaments if the host has operable scoreboards.

#### **SECTION 1**

No alcoholic beverages will be allowed in the dugouts or on the field during any NSA sanctioned event.

#### **SECTION 2**

No youth player will be charged admission to any NSA youth tournament, above and beyond the team entry fee.

#### **SECTION 3**

The choice of the first or last bat in the inning shall be decided by the toss of a coin unless otherwise stated in the rules of the organization under which the schedule of games is being played. If a team is not in compliance with the uniform rule, the opposing team has the choice of being the home or visiting team if they are in total uniform compliance.

#### **SECTION 4**

The fitness of the grounds for a game shall be decided by the Tournament Director, Tournament Umpire-In-Chief and the Home Plate Umpire.

#### **SECTION 5**

A regulation game shall consist of seven (7) innings. A regulation game officially begins when the defensive team has taken the field and the umpire indicates (verbally or physically) play ball. A full seven (7) innings need not be played if the home team (the team second at bat) scores more runs in six innings or before the third out of the seventh inning.

**NOTE:** The game is officially over when BOTH umpires have left the playing field.

**EXCEPTION:** In the Men's Gold, Silver, and Bronze divisions of play and all other adult classes, unless otherwise stated in their particular Division of play, the NSA will play with a Run Rule of 15 runs after 3 innings, 12 runs after 4 innings, and 10 runs after 5 innings. Men's Elite Division play, the run rule will be 20 after 3 innings, 20 after 4 innings and 12 after 5 innings. If the home team is trailing, by any number of runs, they get to bat in their half of the inning.

- a) A game that is tied at the end of seven innings shall be continued by playing additional innings, or until one side has scored more runs in their half of the inning before the third out is made.
- b) The umpire is empowered to call a game at any time because of darkness, rain, fire, panic, or other causes that place the patrons or players in peril.
- c) These provisions do not apply to any acts on the part of the players or spectators that might call for the forfeiture of the game. The umpire may forfeit the game if attacked physically by any team member or spectator.

- d) The umpire shall forfeit a game in favor of a team not at fault in the following cases:
- 1) If a team fails to appear on the field, or being on the field refuses to begin a game at the time the team is scheduled to play, or within a time set for forfeitures (grace period) by the organization in which the team is playing.
  - 2) If after the game has started, one team refuses to continue play unless the game has been suspended or terminated by the umpire.
  - 3) If after the umpire has suspended the game, one side fails to resume playing within two minutes after the umpire has called "play ball".
  - 4) If a team uses tactics to delay or to hasten the game.
  - 5) If, after being warned by the umpire, any one of the rules is willfully violated.
  - 6) If the order for the removal of a player or manager/coach from the game, is not obeyed within one minute.
  - 7) If because of the removal of a player by the umpire, or for any reason, there are less than 9 players on the team.  
**EXCEPTION:** See Rule 4, Sec. 1
  - 8) The score of a forfeited game will be 7-0 to the winning team.
- e) During all tournament play (Qualifying, State, Regional, NIT'S, World Series, Super World Series), in the event of rain or any other causes which interrupt a game, the game must be resumed at the exact point where it was stopped unless the teams mutually agree to accept the existing score as the final score.  
**NOTE:** *Players not listed in the lineups, and not available at game time, may be substituted for when the game is resumed.*
- f) In the event that a tournament cannot be completed, an official game may be called after 5 innings of play or 4 ½ innings of play, if the home team is ahead.

#### **SECTION 6**

The winner of the game shall be the team that scores the most runs in a regulation game. The score of a called regulation game shall be the score at the end of the last complete inning, unless the home team has scored more runs than the visiting team in the incomplete inning. In this case, the score shall be that of the incomplete inning.

#### **SECTION 7**

A run shall not be scored if the third out of the inning is a result of:

- a) The batter being put out before legally touching 1<sup>st</sup> base.
- b) A baserunner being forced out due to the batter becoming a baserunner.
- c) A baserunner leaving base before a pitched ball reaches home plate or before the pitched ball is batted.
- d) An appeal play at 1<sup>st</sup> base on the batter/runner for the 3<sup>rd</sup> out of the inning.
- e) **If the 3<sup>rd</sup> out is declared on an appeal play resulting in a force out, this play takes precedence if enforcing this appeal would negate a score.**
- f) **When there is more than 1 out to end the half inning (i.e. the 4<sup>th</sup> out appeal) the defensive team may choose the out which is to their advantage.**

#### **SECTION 8**

No succeeding runner shall score a run when a preceding runner has been declared the third out of an inning.

## **SECTION 9**

A baserunner shall not score a run ahead of the baserunner preceding him/her in the batting order, if the preceding runner has not been put out.

## **SECTION 10**

A manager and/or team representative, on or off the field, shall be allowed only one (1) charged conference with a batter or baserunner in any one inning.

**PENALTY:** A strike will be called on the batter if more than one conference occurs.

## **SECTION 11 PLAYER ELIGIBILITY/ROSTERS**

The National Softball Association Official Roster must be entered online with all information correct and complete or the player(s) and/or team(s) will be considered ineligible to participate in any National Softball Association sanctioned Tournaments, including Qualifiers, NIT's or Post Season Tournaments.

FOR COMPLETE PLAYER ELIGIBILITY/ROSTER INFORMATION

REFER TO THE BYLAWS

## **SECTION 12**

Home run limits for independent teams: (Any untouched ball hit over the fence)

|        |       |     |                      |
|--------|-------|-----|----------------------|
| Open   | Eight | (8) | one-up home run rule |
| Elite  | Five  | (5) | one-up home run rule |
| Gold   | Three | (3) | one-up home run rule |
| Silver | Two   | (2) | inning ending out    |
| Bronze | Zero  | (0) | inning ending out    |

COMBINATION TOURNAMENT HOME RUN LIMITS:

|                  |      |     |                        |
|------------------|------|-----|------------------------|
| Bronze vs Silver | One  | (1) | with inning ending out |
| Bronze vs Gold   | Two  | (2) | with one – up HR Rule  |
| Silver vs Gold   | Two  | (2) | with one – up HR Rule  |
| Silver vs Elite  | Four | (4) | with one – up HR Rule  |
| Gold vs Elite    | Four | (4) | with one – up HR Rule  |

**EFFECT:** Silver and Bronze Divisions: The inning ending out is in effect during the half inning that the offensive team is at bat.

**NOTE:** *The one-up home run rule is in effect. Once both teams have reached their respective home run limits, either team may hit an additional home run; however, no team may ever go more than one home run up on the other team. Any additional home runs above the one-up will be scored as an out.*

**EXAMPLE:** *During Gold Division Play; Teams have hit their respective three (3) home runs by the bottom of the fourth inning. During the 5<sup>th</sup> inning, the visiting team is now allowed to hit another home run to go one up. In the bottom of the 5<sup>th</sup> the home team can now hit 2 home runs to go one-up. If one team does not hit their allotted home run limit, the one-up home run rule will not be used. The home team, in the bottom of the 7<sup>th</sup> or later innings, may hit one home run to pull even in the number of home runs as the opposing team, but may not hit a home run to go one up.*

**\*NOTE:** *In the case of inclement weather or other circumstances, and a time limit is implemented, the home team cannot go one-up once the time limit has expired.*

**\*\*NOTE:** *NSA no longer has a progressive home run rule for championship play. However, Rec tournaments or leagues that still choose to use the rule can do so. Example of the progressive home-run rule is as follows: once a team reaches its home run limit, a batter shall be declared out for hitting any additional home runs, and the defensive team is awarded a progressive number*

of runs for each untouched home run hit over the fence. For the first home run hit, the defensive team will receive one (1) run, for the second home run hit the defensive team will receive (2) runs, three (3) runs for the third homerun, etc.

**\*\*\*NOTE:** In all programs that have competitive and recreation divisions, the recreational teams can hit one (1) home run, then any home runs hit after one will come under the progressive penalty home run rule. The competitive teams can hit the number of home runs specified for that particular program, and then the one-up home run rule is in effect.

**EXCEPTION:** For all Home Run Rules: If a player has batted out of turn or has been substituted for illegally and has been called out by proper appeal after hitting a home run, that home run DOES NOT count against the teams total.

### **SECTION 13**

Each untouched ball over the fence, exceeding a team's home run limit, will be scored as an out.

**NOTE:** Any untouched batted ball that goes over the fence in fair territory shall be considered a home run against the teams home run total, regardless if the batter/baserunner or baserunners miss a base, pass a runner or otherwise get called out in the act of running the bases.

### **SECTION 14**

Any ball touched by a defensive player which then goes over the fence in fair territory, shall not be included in the total of over the fence home runs.

**EFFECT:** The ball is dead. The batter is awarded 4 bases. All other runners are entitled to advance to home plate without liability to be put out.

**PLAY (1)** Fly ball to the outfield that first strikes the fence and ricochets to the player who is in the field of play, then ricochets over the fence is a ground rule double.

**PLAY (2)** Fly ball to the outfield that ricochets over the fence off the outfielder's glove who is jumping to catch the ball. Ruled as a homerun but is not included in the total of over the fence home runs.

### **SECTION 15**

The tournament director can declare that the homeruns do not have to be run out for all divisions. This would include the Competitive Division in special programs. *IF THIS RULE IS INSTITUTED, THE PLAYERS SHALL BE INSTRUCTED TO "HIT AND SIT".* In all "Hit and Sit" play; the Batter-runner and all baserunners are not required to touch the succeeding base.

**EFFECT:** In all "Hit and Sit" play, each over the fence home run is a dead ball.

### **SECTION 16 EQUALIZER**

Equalizer Rule is an option for the tournament director utilize when there is a tournament with combined classes.

**RULE:** Spot a lower class team 3 runs for each class below the higher class team.

Example: Elite vs Gold      Gold is awarded 3 runs to start the game  
          Elite vs Silver      Silver is awarded 6 runs to start the game  
          Elite vs Bronze     Bronze is awarded 9 runs to start the game  
Women:  
          Upper vs Lower: Lower is awarded 3 runs to start the game

## **SECTION 17      AMPLIFIED SOUND/MUSIC**

Players and fans are prohibited from broadcasting excessive external electronic amplified sound or music through any type of electronic system during the game including between innings.

**PENALTY:** *1<sup>st</sup> offense is a warning, 2<sup>nd</sup> offense is an ejection of the coach, and 3rd offense is forfeiture of the game.*

## **RULE 6      PITCHING REGULATIONS**

*The National Softball Association HIGHLY RECOMMENDS THAT THE PITCHER (as well as all other players) use protective equipment at all times.*

### **SECTION 1**

The pitcher shall take a position with one or both feet in contact with the pitcher's plate.

- a) Preliminary to pitching, the pitcher must come to a full stop with the ball held in the pitching hand or both hands in front of the body.
- b) This position must be maintained at least one (1) second and not more than five (5) seconds before making the delivery.

**EXCEPTION:** *Sixteen (16) inch program will use ten (10) seconds.*

- c) The pitcher shall not be considered in the pitching position unless the catcher is in the catcher's box.

### **SECTION 2**

The pitch starts when the pitcher makes any motion that is part of his/her wind-up after the required pause. Prior to the required pause any wind up may be used. The pivot foot must remain in contact with the pitcher's plate until the ball leaves the hand.

- a) It is not necessary to step, but if a step is taken, the step may be forward, backward or sideways as long as the ball remains within six (6) inches of the hip.

### **SECTION 3**

A legal delivery shall be delivered with an underhand motion.

- a) The pitch shall be released at a moderate speed. The speed is left up to the judgment of the umpire who shall warn the pitcher who delivers a pitch with excessive speed. If the pitcher repeats such an act after being warned, he/she shall be removed from the pitcher's position for the remainder of the game.
- b) The hand shall be below the hip.
- c) The ball must be delivered with an arch and reach a height of at least 6 feet from the ground while not exceeding a maximum height of 10 feet from the ground.
- d) The catcher must be within the lines of the catcher's box until the pitched ball reaches the plate or until the ball is batted.

**PENALTY:** The ball is dead, a ball is called on the batter, and a warning given to the catcher and the defensive coach that if the catcher repeats such an act after this warning, they will be removed from the catcher's position for the remainder of that game.

- e) The catcher shall return the ball directly to the pitcher after each pitch, except after a strike out or put out made by the catcher. The pitcher has five seconds to release the next pitch.

**EFFECT:** *Sec. 3 (e) – An additional "BALL" is awarded to the batter.*

- f) Any action or motion by the pitcher (i.e. stops or pauses in the pitching motion or fakes a pitch or any other illegal action prior to the release of the pitch) while on or off the pitching rubber shall result in:  
**EFFECT:** *Dead ball, a ball shall be called on the batter and a warning issued to the pitcher, that a similar act would be grounds for removal from the pitching position. These acts are considered illegal pitching actions, and are not to be considered illegal pitches.*

#### **SECTION 4**

The pitcher may use any wind-up desired providing:

- a) He/she does not make any motion to pitch without immediately delivering the ball to the batter whether on or off the pitching rubber.
- b) His/her wind-up is a continuous motion.
- c) He/she does not use a windup in which there is a stop or reversal of the forward motion.
- d) He/she delivers the ball on the first forward swing of the pitching arm past the hip.
- e) He/she does not pitch the ball behind his/her back or between his/her legs.

**NOTE:** *(a-e) These examples are illegal pitching actions. Refer to Rule 6, Sec. 3 (f).*

#### **SECTION 5**

The pitcher shall not deliberately drop, roll, or bounce the ball to the batter either on or off the pitching rubber.

#### **SECTION 6**

The pitcher shall not at any time during the game be allowed to use tape or other substances on the ball, the pitching hand or fingers nor shall any other player apply a foreign substance to the ball. Under the supervision of the umpire, powdered resin may be used to dry the hands.

#### **SECTION 7**

At the beginning of each half inning or when a pitcher relieves another, not more than 1 minute may be used to deliver not more than 3 pitches to the catcher or other teammate. Play shall be suspended during this time.

**EFFECT:** *Sec. 1 – 7 is an illegal pitch and the ball is dead. A ball shall be called on the batter and baserunners do not advance.*

**EXCEPTION:** *If a batter strikes at any illegal pitch, it shall be a strike and there shall be no penalty. The ball remains in play if hit by the batter.*

**NOTE:** *The umpire shall not or will not give a vocal warning or a delayed dead ball signal to the batter on an illegally pitched ball. An umpire will declare “Dead Ball, No Pitch” on any illegal pitching action. These are illegal actions by the pitcher prior to the release of the pitched ball. A pitched ball that hits the ground or home plate is a dead ball and may not be hit by the batter.*

#### **SECTION 8**

No pitch shall be declared when:

- a) The pitcher pitches during the suspension of play.
- b) The runner is called out for leaving the base too soon.
- c) The pitcher pitches before a base runner has retouched his/her base after a foul ball and the ball is dead.
- d) The ball slips from the pitcher’s hand during his/her wind-up or during the back swing.
- e) No player, manager or coach shall call “Time”, employ any other word or

phrase, or commit any act while the ball is alive and in play for the obvious purpose of trying to make the pitcher commit an illegal pitch.

**EFFECT:** *No pitch shall be declared and a warning issued to the offending team. A repeat of this type of act shall result in the offender being removed from the game.*

### **SECTION 9**

There shall be only one charged conference between the manager or other team representative from the dugout with each and every pitcher in an inning. The second charged conference shall result in the removal of the pitcher from the pitching position for the remainder of the game.

**NOTE:** *It is not a charged conference when the coach or team representative enters the field of play and removes the pitcher from the pitching position. The player may return to the pitching position.*

### **SECTION 10**

At no time during the game shall an offensive or defensive player or coach be allowed to leave their positions on the field or come from the dugouts to argue whether a pitch was a strike or a ball. The three players involved (pitcher, catcher, batter) may be allowed to question balls or strikes.

**NOTE:** *Anyone other than the pitcher, catcher or batter who leaves his/her positions on the field or the dugout to question balls and strikes, will be immediately ejected.*

## **RULE 7 BATTING**

### **SECTION 1**

The batter shall take his/her position within the lines of the batter's box. In taking his/her position in the batter's box, the batter automatically assumes a one (1) ball and one strike (1) count.

- a) The batter shall not have his/her entire foot touching the ground completely outside the lines of the batter's box or touching home plate when the ball is hit.
- b) The batter shall not step directly across in front of the catcher to the other side of the batter's box while the pitcher is in position to pitch.

**EFFECT:** *Sec. 1(a-b) The ball is dead, the batter is out, baserunners may not advance.*

- c) The batter shall not enter the batter's box with an illegal bat.  
**EFFECT:** *The ball is dead, batter is out and ejected, baserunners may not advance.*
- d) The batter shall not enter the batter's box with an altered bat or non-approved bat.  
**EFFECT:** *The ball is dead, the batter is out, and without warning, is ejected from the game. Baserunners may not advance. (In youth play the coach is ejected).*
- e) The batter must take his/her position within five (5) seconds after the umpire has called "play ball". He/she must have both feet within the lines of the box before the start of the pitch. He/she may touch the line, but no part of his/her foot may be outside of the lines prior to the pitch.

**EFFECT:** *The ball is dead. The umpire will call a strike on the batter, also issue a warning to the batter to take his/her position or risk being*

*called out. If the batter refuses to take his/her position after the warning, he/she will be called out. The warning will be given to a batter only one time per game. Any repeated violation during the game by that player, will result in an out being called. This rule is intended to help speed up the play of the game, and umpires, while using good judgment in enforcement of the rule, must prohibit the batter from delaying the game by taking an excessive or unnecessary amount of time entering the batter's box.*

## **SECTION 2**

Each player of the side at bat shall become a batter in the order in which his/her name appears on the score sheet. The batting order of each team must be on the score sheet and delivered by the manager or captain to the home plate umpire. The batting order must be followed throughout the entire game unless a player is substituted for. When this occurs, the substitute must take the place of the player he/she is replacing in the batting order. The first batter in each inning shall be the batter whose name follows that of the last player who completed a turn at bat in the preceding inning.

**NOTE:** *Batting out of order is an appeal play which may be made by the defensive team only.*

- a) If the error is discovered while the incorrect batter is at bat, the correct batter takes his/her place and legally assumes any balls and strikes.
- b) If the error is discovered after the incorrect batter has batted, and before the next pitch to the following batter, the player who should have batted is out, and any out(s) that has been made prior to the discovering the infraction remain an out(s). Any advance or score made because of a batted ball by the improper batter's advance to 1<sup>st</sup> base on a hit, error or a base on balls shall be nullified. The next batter is the player whose name follows that of the player called out for failing to bat.
- c) If the error is discovered after the first pitch to the next batter, the turn at bat of the incorrect batter is legal, all runs scored and bases run are legal and the next batter shall be the one whose name follows that of the incorrect batter. No one is called out for failure to bat. Players who have not batted and who have not been called out have lost their turn at bat until reached again in the regular order.

## **SECTION 3**

No baserunner shall be removed from the base he/she is occupying to bat in his/her proper place. He/she merely misses his/her turn at bat with no penalty. The batter following him/her in the batting order becomes the legal batter.

## **SECTION 4**

When the third out of the inning is made before the batter has completed his/her turn at bat, he/she shall be the first batter in the next inning and shall have the ball and strike count on him/her canceled.

## **SECTION 5**

Members of the team at bat shall not interfere, either physically or vocally, with a player attempting to field either a fair or foul ball. This includes a base coach.

**EFFECT:** *The ball is dead, the batter is out, and any baserunner(s) must return to the base that they occupied at the time of the pitch.*

## **SECTION 6**

The batter shall not hit a fair ball a second time with the bat in fair territory.

**EFFECT:** *The ball is dead, the batter is out and baserunners may not advance.*

**EXCEPTION:** *If the batter is standing in the batter's box and contact is made while the bat is in the batter's hands, it is a foul ball even if the ball is hit a second time over fair territory.*

**NOTE:** *If the batter drops the bat and the ball rolls against the bat in fair territory and in the umpire's judgment, there was no intention to interfere with the course of the ball, the batter is not out and the ball is alive and in play.*

### **SECTION 7**

A strike is called by the umpire:

- a) For each legally pitched ball entering the strike zone before touching the ground and at which the batter does not swing. It is not a strike if the ball touches home plate and is not swung at.
- b) For each pitched ball swung at and missed by the batter.
- c) For each foul tip held by the catcher. The batter is out if it is the third strike. The ball is dead on any strike.
- d) For each foul ball not legally caught, including the 3<sup>rd</sup> strike.
- e) For each pitched ball swung at and missed which touches any part of the batter.
- f) When any part of the batter's person is hit with his/her own batted ball, when he/she is in the batter's box, and he/she has less than two strikes.
- g) When a pitched ball hits the batter while the ball is in the strike zone.

**EFFECT:** *Sec.7 (d-g) The ball is dead and baserunners must return to their bases without liability to be put out.*

**NOTE:** *A pitched ball that hits the ground or home plate is a dead ball and may not be hit by the batter.*

### **SECTION 8**

A ball is called by the umpire:

- a) For each pitch, which does not enter the strike zone, or touches home plate, which is not hit or swung at by the batter.
- b) For each illegally pitched ball not hit or swung at by the batter.
- c) When a pitch hits the batter outside of the strike zone.
- d) When the catcher fails to return the ball directly to the pitcher as required in Rule 6, Sec. 3 (e).
- e) When the pitcher fails to pitch within five (5) seconds.
- f) For each excessive warm-up pitch. (See Rule 6, Sec. 7)
- g) When the pitcher attempts a quick return pitch, the pitcher shall be given a warning.

**EFFECT:** *Rule 7, Sec. 7 (a-g). The ball is dead and baserunners may not advance.*

### **SECTION 9**

A fair ball is a legally batted ball which:

- a) Settles or is touched on fair ground between home plate and 1<sup>st</sup> base or home plate and 3<sup>rd</sup> base.
- b) Bounds past 1<sup>st</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> base on or over fair ground.
- c) Touches 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> base.
- d) While on or over fair ground, touches the person or clothing of an umpire or player.
- e) First falls on fairground beyond 1<sup>st</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> base. A fair fly ball must be judged according to relative position of the ball and the foul line, regardless of whether the fielder is on fair or foul ground at the time he/she touches the ball.

**EFFECT:** Rule 7, Sec. 7(a-e) *The ball is in play and baserunners are entitled to advance any number of bases with liability to be put out. The batter becomes a baserunner unless the infield fly rule applies.*

- f) While on or over fair ground, lands behind a fence or into a stand beyond the outfield fence, this is a home run.
- g) Hits a foul pole on the fly. If the ball hits the pole above the fence level, it shall be a home run.

#### **SECTION 10**

A foul ball is a legally batted ball which:

- a) Settles on foul ground between home plate and 1<sup>st</sup> base or between home plate and 3<sup>rd</sup> base.
- b) Bounds past 1<sup>st</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> base on or over foul ground.
- c) First touches on foul ground beyond 1<sup>st</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> base.
- d) While on or over foul ground, touches the person or clothing of an umpire or player, or it is blocked.

**EFFECT:** Rule 7, Sec. 8 (a-d) *The ball is dead. A strike is called on the batter for each foul ball, including the third strike. Baserunners must return to their bases without liability to be put out. Baserunners may not advance on a third strike foul ball, including a legally caught foul ball; however, all runners may advance on any other legally caught foul ball.*

- e) Is caught, with less than two strikes, allowing all runners to tag-up and advance at their own risk of being put out.

#### **SECTION 11**

The batter is out:

- a) When the batter has three strikes.
- b) When the 3<sup>rd</sup> strike is struck at, missed including if the ball touches any part of the batter's person.
- c) When a batter appears in the batter's box with, or is discovered using an illegal bat, altered bat or a non-approved bat, prior to or after hitting the ball. The batter is also ejected from the game for using an altered or non-approved bat. *In Youth Divisions, the coach is ejected.*
- d) When a fly ball is legally caught.
- e) Immediately when he/she hits an infield fly and the umpire has declared "Infield Fly". Refer to Rule 1, Sec. 30.
- f) If a fielder intentionally drops, or let's drop, a pop fly ball, a line drive, which can be caught by an infielder with ordinary effort with 1<sup>st</sup>, 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> or 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> bases occupied with less than two outs.

**EFFECT:** Rule 7, Sec. 9 (e). *The ball is dead, the batter is out and baserunners must return to the last base touched at the time of the pitch. This does not apply to an infield fly; the dropped ball remains alive on an infield fly.*

**NOTE:** *A trapped ball shall not be considered as having been intentionally dropped.*

- g) If a preceding runner, in the umpire's judgment, intentionally interferes with a fielder who is attempting to catch a thrown ball, or is attempting to throw a ball in an attempt to complete a play, the preceding runner and the batter are both declared out.
- h) When the batter bunts or chops the ball downward. (See Rule 1, Sec. 11 and Sec. 15)
- i) When hit by his/her own-batted ball, in fair territory, outside the batter's box.

# TRUMP

STOTE®

NSA

FRED VERONEZI (800) 234-2775

WWW.ANACONDASPORTS.COM



POWERED BY  
**Lids**  
Anaconda Sports® Team sports

## **SECTION 12**

The batter or baserunner is not out if a fielder making a play on him/her uses an illegal glove.

**PENALTY:** If an illegal glove is involved in a play, a delayed dead ball signal will be signaled and 3 bases awarded to the batter unless the batter gains 4 bases or the ball is deflected by the illegal glove and goes over the fence. The Coach in both instances has the option to take the result of the play. If illegal glove is spotted prior to a play, the umpire shall remove the glove and resume play.

## **SECTION 13 ON-DECK BATTER**

- The on-deck batter is the offensive player whose name follows the name of the batter in the batting order.
- The on-deck batter shall take a position within the lines of either of the on deck circles without interfering with the view of any manager or coach.
- The on-deck batter may loosen up with two official softball bats, an official warm up bat, or the player may use the Power Wrap, Worth WBS, H & B BW1, Swing Sock, or any other official warm-up bat or product that has been approved by the NSA National Headquarters. Nothing else may be attached, such as a donut, fan etc. when loosening up.
- The on-deck batter may leave the on-deck circle when he/she becomes the batter or to direct baserunners advancing from 3<sup>rd</sup> base to home plate.
- When the on-deck batter interferes with the defensive player's opportunity to make a play on a runner, the runner closest to home plate at the time of the interference is declared out.
- The provision of Rule 7, Sec. 3 shall apply to the on-deck batter.

# **RULE 8 BASERUNNING**

*The National Softball Association does NOT require baserunners to slide.  
See Sec 8 (t)*

## **SECTION 1**

The baserunner must touch bases 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> and Home Plate in that order.

**EXCEPTION:** *The batter-runner and all baserunners do not have to run the bases on a homerun in "Hit and Sit" play.*

- When a baserunner must return to bases while the ball is in play, he/she must touch the bases in reverse order.  
**EFFECT:** *The ball is in play and baserunners must return with liability to be put out.*
- When a baserunner acquires the right to a base by touching it before being put out, he/she may hold the base until he/she has legally touched the next base in order or is forced to vacate it for a succeeding runner.
- When a runner dislodges a base from its proper position neither he/she nor the succeeding runners in the same series of plays are compelled to follow a base unreasonably out of position. The ball is in play and runners may advance with liability of being put out.
- A baserunner may not run the bases in reverse order, either to confuse the fielders, or to make a travesty of the game.

**EFFECT:** *The ball is dead and the runner is out.*

**NOTE:** *A runner in a double play situation who stops or retreats back towards the base left is not to be considered as running the bases in reverse order or considered making a travesty of the game.*

- e) Two baserunners may not occupy the same base simultaneously.  
**EFFECT:** *The runner who first legally occupied the base is entitled to it. The other runner can be put out by being touched with the ball.*
- f) Failure of a preceding runner to touch a base or to leave a base legally on a caught fly ball and who is declared out, does not affect the status of a succeeding runner who touches the bases in proper order. However, if the preceding runner were to be called out for the third out of the inning, no succeeding runner may score a run.
- g) No runner may return to touch a missed base, or one left illegally, after a succeeding runner has scored.
- h) When the ball is dead, no runner may return to touch a missed base, a base he/she has left illegally, even after the ball becomes alive. However, when a dead ball occurs, a runner may return to a missed base or a base he/she left illegally, if he/she is required to by the umpire in the awarding or determination of bases. The runner is not liable to be put out for missing a base beyond the base he/she is required to by the umpire in the awarding or determination of the bases. The runner is not liable to be put out for missing a base beyond the base he/she is required to return to.
- i) No runner may return to touch a missed base or one left illegally once he/she enters his/her dugout or bench area.
- j) When the umpire has called four (4) balls or when a walk is issued, all runners must touch all bases in legal order. Baserunners do not advance unless forced.
- k) Bases left too soon on a caught fly ball must be retouched before advancing to awarded bases. Awarded bases must also be touched in proper order.
- l) **When the batter-runner passes 1<sup>st</sup> base, the batter-runner is considered to have touched 1<sup>st</sup> base, this also applies to an awarded 1<sup>st</sup> base.**

**NOTE:** *The batter-runner is in jeopardy to be put out when returning to the base.*

## **SECTION 2**

The batter becomes a batter-baserunner:

- a) As soon as he/she hits the ball.
- b) When the umpire has called four (4) balls, the ball is dead. Baserunners do not advance unless forced. A batter may be awarded an intentional walk by the defensive team by merely notifying the umpire. A second intentional walk cannot be administered until the first walked batter reaches 1<sup>st</sup> base.
- c) When the catcher or any other fielder obstructs or hinders the batter from striking at or hitting a pitched ball.
  - 1) The umpire will signal “delayed dead ball”.
  - 2) The offensive team manager has the option of taking the base awarded the batter for catcher’s obstruction or he/she may take the result of the play.
  - 3) If the batter reaches first base safely and all other runners advance at least one base on the batted ball, catchers’ obstruction is cancelled and no other options are given.

- d) When a fair ball strikes the umpire or baserunner on fair ground.
  - 1) If the ball hits the umpire or baserunner after passing an infielder, other than the pitcher or touches an infielder, including the pitcher, the ball is in play.
  - 2) If the ball hits the umpire or baserunner before passing an infielder, the ball is dead and the batter is entitled to first base without liability of being put out. Runners not forced by the batter-runner must return.

### **SECTION 3**

Baserunners are entitled to advance with liability to be put out:

- a) When the ball is thrown into fair territory or foul territory and is not blocked.
  - b) When the ball is batted into fair territory and is not blocked.
  - c) When a legally caught fly ball is first touched.
- EXCEPTION:** *Baserunners may not advance on a caught third strike foul ball.*
- d) If a fair ball strikes an umpire or a runner after passing an infielder other than the pitcher, or having been touched by an infielder, including the pitcher, the ball shall be in play.
  - e) Runner(s) may not attempt to steal on a third strike out, nor can a runner(s) steal a base if the pitched ball hits any part of the batter's person, other than the bat, while the pitched ball is in the air, or if the pitched ball hits the ground and bounces into the batter's person before being touched by the catcher. Any interference of the live-pitched ball by a batter, or offensive player will negate any attempted steal, and runner(s) must return to the base occupied at the time of the pitch.

### **SECTION 4**

A player forfeits his/her exemption from liability to be put out:

- a) If while the ball is in play, he/she fails to touch the base he/she is entitled to before attempting to make the next base. If the runner put out is the batter-runner at 1<sup>st</sup> base or any other runner forced to advance because of the batter-runner at 1<sup>st</sup> base, or any other runner, forced to advance because of the batter-runner, this is a force out.
- b) If after over running 1<sup>st</sup> base, the batter-runner attempts to continue to the next base.
- c) If after dislodging the base, the batter-runner attempts to continue to the next base.

### **SECTION 5**

Baserunners are entitled to advance without liability to be put out:

- a) When forced to vacate a base because the batter was awarded a base on balls, the ball is dead.
 

**EXCEPTION:** *Open, the ball remains alive.*
- b) When a fielder obstructs a baserunner from making a base, (including a run-down) unless the fielder is trying to field a batted ball or has the ball ready for a tag.
 

**EFFECT:** *When obstruction occurs, the umpire shall call "OBSTRUCTION" and give a delayed dead ball signal for obstruction.*

**NOTE:** *Failure of the umpire to call Obstruction DOES NOT negate the Obstruction.*

- 1) If the obstructed runner is put out prior to reaching the base they would have reached had there not been obstruction, a dead ball is called and the obstructed runner and each runner affected by the obstruction shall be awarded the base(s) in the umpire's judgment, the runner(s) would have reached had there not been obstruction. An obstructed runner cannot be called out between the bases where they were obstructed.

**EXCEPTIONS:**

- a) *When an obstructed runner safely obtains or returns to the base that h/she would have been awarded in the umpires judgment had there been no obstruction, and there is subsequent play on another runner, the obstructed runner no longer has protection by the umpire between the bases in which the obstruction occurred and may be put out.*
  - b) *When properly appealed for missing or leaving a base early on a fly ball.*
  - c) *When the runner interferes with the defense.*
  - d) *When the runner physically passes another runner.*
  - e) *When the batter flies out for the 3<sup>rd</sup> out.*
  - f) *When the batter is obstructed between 2 bases and he/she flies out.*
- 2) If no play is being made on the obstructed runner at the time of obstruction, the play shall proceed until the play is completed. The umpire shall call "time" and impose such penalties, if any, as in his judgment, will nullify the act of obstruction.
  - 3) If a fielder without the ball fakes a tag, the umpire may award the obstructed runner and each other runner affected by the obstruction, the bases they would have reached had there been no obstruction.
  - 4) If the obstructed runner is put out after obtaining the base he/she would have reached in the umpires judgment had there not been obstruction, the obstructed runner shall be called out and the ball shall remain alive.
  - 5) When a runner while advancing or returning to a base is obstructed, the obstructed runner and all other runners affected by the obstruction will be awarded the base(s) which he/she would have reached in the umpires' judgment had obstruction not occurred.

**NOTE:** In case of a "fake tag", the fielder will be automatically ejected from the game.

- c) When forced to vacate a base because the batter was awarded a base for catchers obstruction.
- d) When a fielder contacts or catches a batted or thrown ball with an illegal glove or with his/her cap, glove or any part of his/her uniform while detached from its proper place.

**NOTE:** *The umpire(s) will give the “delayed dead ball” signal.*

**EFFECT:** *If an illegal glove is involved in a play; a delayed dead ball signal will be given and 3 bases awarded to the batter unless the batter gains 4 bases or the ball is deflected by the illegal glove and goes over the fence. The Coach in both scenarios has the option to take the result of the p lay. If illegal glove is spotted prior to a play, the umpire shall remove the glove and resume play.*

**EFFECT:** *For a player making a play with his/her cap, detached glove or uniform, a runner shall be entitled to three (3) bases if a batted ball or two (2) bases if a thrown ball. In either case, runners may advance further, at their own risk. If an illegal catch was made of a fair ball; that, in the judgment of the umpire, would have cleared the outfield fence in flight, a home run shall be awarded. The umpire will signal a delayed dead ball.*

- e) When the ball is in play and is overthrown (beyond the boundary lines) or is blocked.

**EFFECT:** *Awarded bases shall be determined by the position of the baserunners at the time of the infraction.*

**EFFECT:** *For offensive equipment or an offensive player causing a blocked ball, the player closest to home plate is declared out, and all other runners must return to the last base touched when the ball becomes blocked.*

- 1) The ball is dead. In all cases where a thrown ball goes into the spectators’ seats, goes over, through or under any fence surrounding the playing field hits any person or object not engaged in the game, including bats lying near benches, goes into the players benches, whether the ball rebounds onto the playing field or not, or remains in the meshes of any wire screen, each and every baserunner shall be awarded two (2) bases.
- 2) When the first throw is made by an infielder, two (2) bases shall be awarded. The award shall be governed by the position of each runner at the time the pitch was made; however, if all runners, including the batter-runner, have advanced at least one (1) base when the infielder makes the wild throw on the first play after a pitch, the award shall be governed by the position of the runners when the wild throw was made.
- 3) When a throw is made by an outfielder or is the result of any succeeding play or attempted play, the two (2) base award shall be governed by the position of each runner and the last base he/she has touched at the time the throw was made. If two runners are between the same bases, the award is based on the position of the lead runner.
- 4) When a fielder loses possession of the ball such as on an attempted tag and the ball enters a dead ball area or becomes blocked, all runners are awarded one (1) base from the last base touched at the time the ball entered the dead ball area or became blocked. If a runner touches the next base and returns to his/her original base, the original base he/she left is considered the “last base touched” for the purposes of an over throw award.

- f) When a ball bounds or rolls into a stand, over, under, or through a fence; bounds out of play unintentionally off a defensive player or other obstruction marking the boundaries of the playing field.  
**EFFECT:** *The ball is dead and all baserunners are awarded two (2) bases from the time of the pitch.*
- g) When a live ball is unintentionally carried by a fielder from playable territory into a dead ball area, the ball becomes dead immediately. All baserunners are awarded one base from the last base touched at the time the fielder enters dead ball territory. If, in the judgment of the umpire, a fielder intentionally carries a live ball into dead ball territory, the ball becomes dead and all baserunners are awarded two (2) bases from the last base touched at the time he/she entered the dead ball area.  
**NOTE:** *A fielder carrying a live ball into the dugout or team area to tag a player is considered to have intentionally carried it there. A dead ball line is considered in play.*

### **SECTION 6**

A baserunner must return to his/her base:

- When a foul ball is illegally caught and so declared by the umpire.
- When the umpire declares an illegally batted ball.
- When a batter or baserunner is called out for interference, other baserunners shall return to the last base touched at the time of the interference.
- When a pitched ball that is swung at and missed, touches any part of the batters' person.
- When a foul ball is not caught.  
**EFFECT:** *Sec 6 (a – e) The ball is dead and baserunners must return to last base occupied prior to the pitch except when forced by the batter becoming a baserunner. Baserunners need not touch the intervening bases in returning, but must return promptly; however, they must be allowed sufficient time to return.*
- Base stealing. Under no circumstances is a runner permitted to steal a base when a pitched ball is not batted.

### **SECTION 7**

Batter – baserunner is out:

**NOTE:** *1<sup>st</sup> base double base – At facilities that use the **white and orange** double bag at 1<sup>st</sup> base, the following rules will be implemented. If the first play is at 1<sup>st</sup> base, either from the infield or outfield, a batter/runner will be called out for touching the inside base. If the play is elsewhere, the inside base may be tagged in a continuation or possible continuation toward 2<sup>nd</sup> base. The batter/runner running toward 1<sup>st</sup> base may cross over to the inside bag to avoid a collision if a wild throw occurs. The fielder may tag the outside of the bag to record the out in this situation. This is only permissible on the initial play at 1<sup>st</sup> base. If a batter/runner on the first play at 1<sup>st</sup> base touches “ANY” part of the orange bag, that runner is considered to have touched the bag legally. If the runner touches “ANY” part of the white bag in a continuation or possible continuation to 2<sup>nd</sup> base, the runner is considered to have touched the bag legally.*

**\*NOTE:** *Once the batter – baserunner becomes a baserunner, the double base becomes one bag.*

- When after hitting a fair ball, he/she is legally touched with the ball before he/she touches 1<sup>st</sup> base.

- b) When after hitting a fair ball, the ball is held by a fielder touching 1<sup>st</sup> base with any part of his/her person, before the batter-baserunner touches 1<sup>st</sup> base.
- c) When, after a fly ball is hit, a fielder catches the ball before it touches the ground or any object other than a fielder.
- d) When, after hitting a fair ball or a base on balls is awarded, he/she fails to advance to the next base.

**EFFECT:** *Rule 8, Sec. 7(a – d). The ball is in play and the batter-runner is out.*

- e) When he/she runs outside the three (3) foot line, and in the judgment of the umpire, interferes with the fielder taking the throw at 1<sup>st</sup> base; however, he/she may run outside the three foot line to avoid a fielder attempting to field a batted ball.
- f) When he/she interferes with a fielder attempting to field a batted ball or intentionally interferes with a thrown ball. If the interference, in the judgment of the umpire, is an obvious attempt to prevent a double play, the baserunner closest to home plate shall be called out.
- g) When a batter runner interferes with a play at home in an attempt to prevent an obvious out at home plate, the runner is also out.
- h) When he/she moves back towards home plate to avoid or delay a tag by a fielder.
- i) When he/she is discovered using an altered or illegal bat.

**EFFECT:** *Rule 8, Sec. 7(e–i). The ball is dead and the batter-runner is out. Other baserunners must return to the last base legally touched at the time of the illegal action.*

- j) Any batter-runner who carries the bat and legally reaches or touches first base, while still holding the bat, during a live ball situation (including a homerun, **SEE EXCEPTION**), will be declared out. Should this be the 3<sup>rd</sup> out of an inning, no preceding runner shall score.

**EFFECT:** *If less than two (2) outs, a delayed ball signal will be given and the ball will remain alive.*

**EXCEPTION:** *“Hit and Sit” tournaments the home run ball is a dead ball.*

- k) **When a Legal Appeal is made after the 3<sup>rd</sup> out, to negate a run from scoring.**

## **SECTION 8**

The baserunner is out:

- a) When in running to any base, he/she runs more than three (3) feet from a direct line between that base and the next base in regular or reverse order to avoid being touched by the ball in the hand of a fielder. When a play, such as a rundown, is made on a runner who has “rounded” a base, and that runner is outside of a direct line between bases, the runner establishes his/her baseline as a direct line between him/her and the next base in regular or reverse order.
- b) When, while the ball is in play, he/she is legally touched by the ball in the hand of a fielder while not in contact with a base.
- c) When on a force out, a fielder tags him/her with the ball or tags the base.
- d) When the baserunner fails to return to touch the base he/she previously occupied when play is resumed after suspension of play.
- e) When a baserunner physically passes a preceding runner before that runner has been put out.

- f) When anyone, other than another baserunner, physically assists a baserunner while the ball is in play.
- g) When the baserunner leaves his/her base to advance to another base before a caught fly ball has been touched by a fielder, provided the ball is returned to a fielder and legally held on that base, or a fielder legally touches the baserunner before he/she returns to his/her base.
- h) When the baserunner fails to touch the intervening base or bases, in regular or reverse order, and the ball is in play and legally held on that base, or the baserunner is legally touched while off the base he/she missed.
- i) When the batter runner legally over runs 1<sup>st</sup> base attempts to run to 2<sup>nd</sup> base and is legally touched while off the base.
- j) In running or sliding for home plate, he/she fails to touch home plate and makes no attempt to return to the base, when a fielder holds the ball in his/her hand while touching home plate and appeals to the umpire for a decision.

**EFFECT:** *Rule 8, Sec. 8(g – i). These are appeal plays, and the defensive team loses the privilege of putting the baserunner out if the appeal is not made before the next legal or illegal pitch. If an appeal is made after the ball is dead and before the next pitch is made, the ball remains dead and runners may not advance. The pitcher must have the ball in his/her possession, around the area of the pitcher’s plate. Any player in the game, coach or manager may then make an appeal by announcing to the umpire, which runner is being appealed, which base has been missed, or which base has been left too soon. Any player may also make an appeal while the ball is still alive, and before the ball becomes dead by tagging the runner or the base being appealed with the ball.*

- k) When the baserunner interferes with a fielder attempting to field a batted ball, or intentionally interferes with a thrown ball. If this interference, in the judgment of the umpire, is an obvious attempt to prevent a double play, and occurs before the baserunner is put out, the immediate succeeding runner shall be called out also.
- l) When a baserunner is struck with a fair-batted ball in fair territory while off base and before it passes an infielder, excluding the pitcher.
- m) When a runner intentionally kicks a ball, which an infielder has missed.
- n) When with a baserunner on 3<sup>rd</sup> base, the batter interferes with a play being made at home plate with less than two (2) outs.
- o) When the coach near 3<sup>rd</sup> base runs in the direction of home plate, on or near the baseline, while a fielder is attempting to make a play on a batted or thrown ball, and thereby draws a throw to home plate. The baserunner nearest to 3<sup>rd</sup> base shall be declared out.
- p) When one or more members of the offensive team stand or collect at or around a base, which a baserunner is advancing, thereby confusing the fielders and adding to the difficulty of making the play. This includes the bat boy/girl or any other person authorized to sit on the team’s bench.
- q) When any baserunner runs the bases in reverse order to confuse the defensive team, or to make a travesty of the game. This includes the batter-runner moving backward toward home plate to avoid or delay a tag.
- r) If a coach intentionally interferes with a thrown ball.
- s) When a runner, after being declared out or after scoring, interferes with a

defensive player's opportunity to make a play on another runner. The runner closest to home plate at the time of the interference shall also be called out.

**EFFECT:** *Rule 8, Sec. 8(k – s) The ball is dead and the baserunner is out. Other runners must return to the last base legally touched at the time of the illegal action.*

- t) When a defensive player has the ball and is waiting for the runner and the runner remains on his feet and deliberately, with great force, crashes into the defensive player, the runner is declared out. The ball is dead and all runners must return to the last base touched at the time of the collision unless Rule 8, Sec. 8 (j) or Rule 8, Sec. 8 (s) applies.

**NOTE:** *IF THE ACT IS DETERMINED TO BE FLAGRANT, THE OFFENDER SHALL BE EJECTED.*

- u) When the baserunner fails to keep contact with his/her base until a legally pitched ball has reached home plate, the ball is dead. "No Pitch" is declared and the baserunner is called out.
- v) When he abandons a base, does not attempt to advance to the next base, and enters the team area or leaves the field of play, the base runner shall be called out immediately.
- w) If hit by an infield fly when not in contact with the base, the ball is dead and the runners and the batter are both declared out. Other runners must return to the base occupied, without liability to be put out, at the time of the pitch.
- x) When prior to a pitch being made to the next batter, it is discovered that the previous batter used an altered, illegal or a non-approved bat.

**PENALTY:** The baserunner is declared out. If the bat was altered or non-approved bat, the player is ejected from the game and in the NSA youth divisions, the coach is also ejected. Any out(s) made on the play shall remain an out(s). All other baserunner(s) must return to the last base legally touched at the time of the illegal action.

## **SECTION 9**

Baserunner is not out:

- a) When a baserunner runs behind or in front of a fielder and outside the baseline in order to avoid interfering with a fielder who is attempting to field the ball in the baseline.
- b) When a baserunner does not run a direct line to the base, providing the fielder, in the direct line, does not have the ball in his/her possession.
- c) When more than one fielder attempts to field a batted ball, and the baserunner comes into contact with the one who, in the umpires judgment, was not entitled to field the ball.
- d) When a baserunner is hit with a fair-batted ball that has passed through an infielder, excluding the pitcher, and in the judgment of the umpire, no other fielder has a chance to make a play on the ball.
- e) When a baserunner is touched with a ball not securely held by a fielder.
- f) When the defensive team does not request the umpire's decision on an appeal play until after the next pitch.
- g) When a batter runner over runs 1<sup>st</sup> base, after touching it, and makes no attempt to advance to the next base.
- h) When the baserunner is not given sufficient time to return to a base, he/she shall not be called out for being off the base before the pitcher pitches the ball. The umpire shall call no pitch.

- i) When a runner, who has legally started to advance, cannot be stopped by the pitcher receiving the ball while on the pitching plate, nor by stepping on the plate with the ball in his/her possession.
- j) When a baserunner holds his/her base until a fly ball touches a fielder, and then attempts to advance.
- k) When a runner is in contact with the base, and is hit by a batted ground ball or fly ball in fair territory, the baserunner is not out and the ball is dead. All runners advance one (1) base if forced.  
**EFFECT:** *Ball is dead; Batter is awarded 1<sup>st</sup> base and all runners advance one (1) base, if forced.*
- l) When a baserunner slides into a base and dislodges it from its proper place. The base is considered to have followed the runner. See Rule 8, Sec. 1 (c) and Rule 8, Sec. 4 (c).
- m) When a fielder makes a play on a batter or baserunner while using an illegal glove. See Rule 7, Sec. 12 for option given to the manager of the offensive team.
- n) When a fair-batted ball hits the baserunner, after it touched or touches any fielder, including the pitcher.

## RULE 9 DEAD BALL – BALL IN PLAY

### SECTION 1

The ball is dead and not in play:

- a) When the ball is batted illegally.
- b) When a batter steps from one box to another when the pitcher is ready to pitch.
- c) When a ball is pitched illegally.  
**EXCEPTION:** *If the batter swings at an illegal pitch, the play stands.*
- d) When the umpire declares “No Pitch”.
- e) When a pitched ball touches any part of the batter’s person or clothing, whether or not the ball is struck at.
- f) When a foul ball is not caught.
- g) When a baserunner is called out for leaving a base too soon on a pitched ball.
- h) When the offensive team causes interference.
- i) When the ball is outside the playing limits of the playing field. A ball is considered “out of play” when it touches the ground, person on the ground or object outside the playing area.
- j) In case of interference with the batter or fielder.
- k) When the batter bunts or chops a pitched ball.
- l) When the umpire calls time.
- m) When the umpire calls time and an appeal play follows, the ball remains dead throughout the appeal.
- n) When any part of the batters person is hit by his own batted ball while he is in the batter’s box.
- o) When a runner runs the bases in reverse order.
- p) When a coach near third base runs in the direction of home plate on or near the baseline while the fielder is attempting to make a play, and thereby draws a throw to home plate.

- q) When a baserunner fails to keep contact with his/her base until the pitched ball has reached home plate.
- r) When a play is being made on an obstructed runner, or if the batter-runner is obstructed before he/she reaches first base.
- s) When a blocked ball is declared.
- t) When the batter enters the batter's box with, or uses, an illegal bat or altered bat.
- u) When a caught fair ball, including a line drive, which can be handled by any infielder with ordinary effort, is intentionally dropped, with less than two outs, and with a runner on 1<sup>st</sup>, 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> or 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> bases.
- v) When a fielder carries a live ball into dead ball territory.
- w) When a foul ball is caught and the batter has 2 strikes.
- x) When a batter is hit with his/her own-batted ball in fair territory outside the batter's box.
- y) When a fair ball strikes an umpire or baserunner on fair ground before passing or touching an infielder.

## **SECTION 2**

The ball is in play:

- a) At the start of each half inning, when the pitcher has the ball in the pitching position and the umpire has called "Play Ball".
- b) When the infield fly rule is enforced.
- c) When a thrown ball goes past a fielder and remains in playable territory.
- d) When a fair ball strikes an umpire or baserunner on fair ground after passing or touching an infielder.
- e) When a fair ball strikes an umpire on foul ground.
- f) When the baserunners have reached the bases which they are entitled, when the fielder illegally fields a batted or thrown ball.
- g) When a baserunner is called out for passing a preceding runner.
- h) When no play is being made on an obstructed runner, the ball shall remain alive until the play is over.
- i) When the batter legally hits a fair ball.
- j) When a baserunner must return, in reverse order, while the ball is already in play.
- k) When a baserunner acquires the right to a base by touching it before being put out.
- l) When a base is dislodged while runners are running the bases.
- m) When a runner runs out of the base line in regular or reverse order to avoid a tag by a fielder.
- n) When a runner is forced or tagged out.
- o) When the umpire calls the baserunner out for failure to return and touch the base when play is resumed, after a suspension of play.
- p) When a live ball strikes a groundskeeper, photographer, policeman etc., assigned to the game.
- q) When a thrown ball strikes an offensive player.
- r) If the batter drops the bat and the ball rolls against the bat in fair territory, and in the judgment of the umpire, there was no intention to interfere with the course of the ball. The batter is not out and the ball is alive and in play.
- s) When a thrown ball strikes an umpire.

- t) When a thrown ball strikes a coach.
- u) As long as there is a play as a result of the hit by the batter. This would include an immediate live ball appeal before the umpire has called “time”. Once the umpire has called “time” however, the ball remains dead during a subsequent appeal play.
- v) When a foul ball is caught and the batter has less than two strikes.
- w) When, in the judgment of the umpire, a coach touches or physically helps a runner.

**EFFECT:** *A delayed dead ball signal will be given and play shall continue. The touched or assisted runner shall be ruled out and all other subsequent play will be ruled upon accordingly.*

### **SECTION 3**

The ball remains alive until the umpire calls “time”, which should be done when the ball is held by a player in the infield area, and in the judgment of the umpire, all play has ceased.

## **RULE 10 UMPIRES**

**NOTE:** *Failure of umpires to adhere to Rule 10 shall not be grounds for protest. These are guidelines for the umpires.*

### **SECTION 1 POWERS AND DUTIES**

The umpires are the representatives of the league or organization for the particular game that they have been assigned. They are authorized and required to enforce the rules contained in this book. The umpires have the power to order a player, coach, captain, or manager to do or refrain from doing, any act that is necessary to enforce any of these rules; and to inflict any penalties prescribed. The plate umpire shall have the authority to rule on any situation not specifically covered in these rules.

**NOTE:** *An umpire shall not be a member of either team (i.e. player, coach, officer scorekeeper, or sponsor.)*

- a) The umpire should inspect the playing field, equipment, and clarify all ground rules to both teams and managers/coaches prior to the start of the game.
- b) Each umpire shall have the power to make decisions on violations committed anytime during playing time or suspension of play until the game is over.
- c) No umpire has the authority to set aside or question decisions made by another umpire within the limits of his/her respective duties.
- d) An umpire may consult with his/her partners at any time; however, the final decision shall rest with the umpire whose authority it is to make the decision and who requested the opinion of the other umpires.
- e) The plate and base umpires shall have equal authority to :
  - 1) Call a runner out for leaving a base too soon.
  - 2) Call “time” for suspension of play.
  - 3) Remove a player, manager, coach, or other team member from the game for violation of the rules.
- f) *Unless appealed, the umpire shall not call a player out for having failed to touch a base, leaving a base too soon on a caught fly ball, batting out of order or making an attempt to go to second base after reaching first base, as provided in these rules.*

## **SECTION 2 THE PLATE UMPIRE**

- a) Shall take a position behind the catcher and have full responsibility for the proper conduct of the game.
- b) Shall call all balls and strikes.
- c) Shall be in agreement and in cooperation with the base umpire(s) call on plays, fair or foul balls, legally or illegally caught balls. On plays, which require the base umpire to leave the infield, the plate umpire shall assume the duties that the base umpire is normally required to cover.
- d) Shall determine and declare whether a batter chops or bunts a ball, whether a batted ball touches the person or clothing of the batter, and also whether a fly ball is an infield fly.
- e) Shall render decisions on the bases when required by the instruction in the umpire's manual.
- f) Shall determine when a game is forfeited.

## **SECTION 3 THE BASE UMPIRE**

- a) Shall take a position(s) on the playing field as outlined in the Umpire's Manual.
- b) Shall assist the plate umpire in every way to enforce the rules of the game.
- c) Can call an Infield Fly.

## **SECTION 4 CHANGING OF UMPIRE**

Umpires cannot be changed during a game unless injury or illness incapacitates an umpire, or for other un-foreseen circumstances.

## **SECTION 5 UMPIRES JUDGMENT**

There shall be no appeal of any decision of any umpire on the grounds that he/she was not correct in his/her decision that a batted ball was fair or foul, a baserunner was out or safe, a pitched ball was a ball or a strike, or any other play involving accuracy of judgment. Any argument is grounds for a player or coach to be ejected from the game. No decision of an umpire shall be reversed, except when he/she is convinced it is in violation of a rule. If the manager, captain, or either team does not seek reversal of a decision based solely on a point of rules, the umpire whose decision is in question, shall, if in doubt, confer with his/her associates before taking any action. But under no circumstances shall any player or person, other than the manager or captain of either team, have any legal right to protest any decision and seek its reversal on a claim that it is in conflict with these rules. Under no circumstances should any umpire seek to reverse a decision made by his/her associates, nor shall any umpire criticize or interfere with the duties of his/her associates, unless asked to do so.

## **SECTION 6 SUSPENSION OF PLAY**

- a) An umpire may suspend play when, in his/her judgment, conditions justify such action.
- b) Play shall be suspended when the plate umpire leaves his/her position to brush the plate or to perform other duties not directly related with the calling of a play.
- c) The umpire shall suspend play whenever the batter or pitcher steps out of position for a legitimate reason.
- d) The umpire shall not call "Time" after the pitcher has started his/her pitching motion, or while play is in progress. "Time" shall not be called until all action, in progress by either team, has been completed.
- e) When in the judgment of the umpire, all immediate play is apparently completed should he/she call "Time".

## **SECTION 7 VIOLATIONS AND PENALITIES**

- a) Players, managers, coaches or other team members shall not make disparaging or insulting remarks to or about any opposing players, officials, or spectators, or commit other acts that could be considered unsportsmanlike conduct.
- b) There shall be no more than two coaches for each team to give words of assistance and direction to the members of the team while at bat. One coach shall be stationed near first base and the other near third base. Each coach must remain in the coach's box.
- c) The penalty for violations by a player is prompt removal of the offender from the game and grounds. For the first violation the manager or coach may be warned. For second offense the player is removed from the game. The offender shall go directly to the dressing room (if available) for the remainder of the game or leave the grounds. Failure to do so will warrant a forfeiture of the game.
- d) Any player or coach who leaves his/her position on the field, including the dugout, to argue balls and strikes, or to argue whether a batter stepped on or over home plate, will be ejected. Only the three players involved with the pitch (pitcher, catcher, and batter) will be allowed to question balls and strikes.

## **SECTION 8**

All NSA Umpires must be registered and have a valid registration number, prior to taking the field. All NSA Umpires must wear an Official NSA umpiring uniform consisting of the following:

- a) Official **White or Black** logoed umpire shirt.  
**NOTE:** *Any clothing worn under the official umpire shirt must be plain with no writing or graphics of any kind and be the matching color of the umpire shirt.*  
**EXCEPTION:** *Official embroidered NSA undergarments.*
- b) **Charcoal or Heather Grey trousers with belt loops (SP & FP).**  
**NOTE:** *Trousers do not include jeans, sweatpants, jogging pants, or other pants or slacks that **would not** be considered dress trousers.*
- c) Black shorts with belt loops w/official NSA Logo.  
**\*NOTE:** *Black shorts, with belt loops, may be worn at all levels of NSA sanctioned play.*  
**EXCEPTION:** **Fastpitch Softball.** *It is up to the discretion of the Tournament Director to allow umpires to wear shorts or trousers during all post season play. It is recommended that Umpires, in cooperation with the league/tournament Umpire-In-Chief, coordinate their uniforms to look alike, i.e. one Umpire wears shorts, both wear shorts. This is the same for trousers. When shorts are worn, solid white crew socks must be worn. Footie's/no show socks are not acceptable as part of the NSA OFFICIAL UNIFORM.*
- d) Black Belt.
- e) Black socks with trousers and white crew socks or white or black socks that cover the ankle with black shorts. Partners' sock color MUST match if shorts are worn.
- f) Black jacket with official NSA logo.
- g) Black half sleeve jacket with official NSA logo.

- h) Black shoes. Black official (umpire) shoes bearing the white logo, trademark or manufacturers name is legal. NO WALKING BOOTS OR CASTS PERMITTED.
- i) White mock with official NSA logo or plain white regular turtleneck.
- j) Black rain gear (top and bottom).
- k) Black cap with official NSA Logo.
- l) Black ball bag with official NSA logo. Ball bag must be worn on the hip or slightly to the rear of hip. **The ball bag is not required to be worn during Hit Your Own Ball tournaments.**
- m) Any umpire apparel (hat, jacket, etc.) that is issued to an umpire for being assigned to a special event (NIT, World Series, a Super World Series, etc.) may NOT be worn after the conclusion of said special event as a part of the official NSA Umpire uniform.
- n) The following item sold by NSA that bears the official NSA logo is mandatory wear and to be purchased from the NSA National Headquarters. NSA Official Jacket, NSA Official Shorts, NSA Official Half Sleeve Jacket, NSA Official Cap, NSA Official Shirt, NSA Official Rain Gear, NSA Official Mock Turtle Neck, NSA Official Ball Bag. To place an order, go to [www.NSASportingGoods.com](http://www.NSASportingGoods.com)

### **SECTION 9**

No player during the course of any NSA sanctioned softball event may wear any part of the NSA official umpire's uniform.

## **RULE 11 PROTESTS**

### **SECTION 1**

Protests shall not be allowed or considered if they are based solely upon a decision involving judgment on the part of any umpire.

**NOTE:** *Examples of a protest, which will not be considered, are:*

- a) Whether a batted ball was fair or foul.
- b) Whether a baserunner was safe or out.
- c) Whether a pitched ball was a strike or ball.
- d) Whether a runner did or did not touch a base.
- e) Whether a runner left his/her base too soon on a caught fly ball.
- f) Whether a fly ball was or was not legally caught.
- g) Whether it was or was not an infield fly.
- h) Whether there was or was not interference.
- i) Whether the field is fit to continue or resume play.
- j) Whether there is sufficient light to continue play.
- k) Any other matter involving only the accuracy of the umpire's judgment.

### **SECTION 2**

Protests that shall be received and considered concerning matters of the following types:

- a) Misinterpretation of a playing rule to a given situation.
- b) Failure of an umpire to apply the correct rule to a given situation.
- c) Failure to impose the correct penalty for a given violation.

### **SECTION 3**

Protests may involve the interpretation of a rule.

#### **SECTION 4**

The notification of intent to protest must be made immediately before the next pitch.

**EXCEPTION:** *Player eligibility.*

- a) The manager of the protesting team shall immediately notify the plate umpire that the game is being played under protest. The plate umpire will then notify the scorekeeper and the opposing manager.
- b) It is the umpire's responsibility to record the surrounding conditions to aid in the correct determination of the issue. (i.e. inning, outs, names of players involved, runners on base, score, etc.)

#### **SECTION 5**

The official protest must be filed within a reasonable time:

- a) Within forty-eight (48) hours after the scheduled time of the contest is generally considered a reasonable amount of time in league play. In tournament play, all play ceases until the protest is resolved.
- b) A protest fee of seventy-five dollars (\$75.00) cash will be paid in all qualifying and post season tournaments sanctioned by the NSA. In tournament play, the fee must be paid immediately. If the protest is upheld, the protest fee shall be returned. If protesting player eligibility, the fee is \$75.00 cash per player. Bat protests are \$200.00 per bat.

**EXCEPTION:** In the event a Bat compression test machine is on site, a bat protests are \$75 per bat. Ball protests will be \$75.00 per ball.

- c) In tournament play, protest concerning player eligibility must be filed before the end of the game being protested.

**NOTE:** *The Tournament Director/Coordinator or Tournament UIC may require a copy of the birth certificate or picture I.D. at any time. Play ceases until the protest is resolved. ALL PLAYERS MUST CARRY A GOVERNMENT ISSUED PICTURE ID ON HIS/HER PERSON AT ALL TIMES DURING TOURNAMENT PLAY.*

#### **SECTION 6**

The formal written protest should contain the following information:

- a) The date, time, and place of the game.
- b) The names of the umpires and scorekeeper.
- c) The rule and section of the Official Rules or local rules under which the protest is based.
- d) The decision and conditions surrounding the making of the decision.
- e) All essential facts involved in the matter protested.

#### **SECTION 7**

The decision made on a protested game must result in one of the following:

- a) The protest is found invalid and the game stands as played.
- b) When protest is allowed for misinterpretation of a playing rule, the game is replayed from the point at which the incorrect decision was made with the decision corrected.
- c) When protest for eligibility is allowed, the team shall forfeit the game played to the offended team.

## **PART II**

# **CHURCH SOFTBALL**

Any softball rules not covered or found in this section will be covered or found in Part I of the current edition of the Official NSA Rulebook.  
All Church World Series Tournaments will be held on the same weekend.  
CLASSIFICATION OF CHURCH SOFTBALL TEAMS: Competitive & Recreational.

## **RULE 3 EQUIPMENT**

### **SECTION 6 UNIFORM**

- a) NSA CHURCH UNIFORM REQUIREMENTS:  
Competitive - Matching uniforms with numbers  
Recreational - Matching shirts with numbers

## **RULE 5 THE GAME**

### **SECTION 10 HOME RUN LIMITS FOR CHURCH PLAY**

(Any untouched ball hit over the fence is considered a Home Run)

Competitive            2 with the One-up Home Run Rule.

Recreation            1 with the Progressive Penalty Home Run Rule.

**NOTE:** See Rule 5, Sec. 12 for explanation of each home run rule.

### **SECTION 14 CHURCH ELIGIBILITY**

- a) A player or team is eligible to play Church Softball if he/she, or they, meet the active membership of the Church, certified by the signature of the Official of the Church.

### **SECTION 15 QUALIFICATIONS FOR POST SEASON CHURCH**

- a) A team must compete in a Qualifying or State Tournament to qualify to play in the NSA Church World Series.

**NOTE:** *If there are no qualifying or state tournaments in a state or region, invitations can be issued by the National Headquarters for a team to participate in the World Series.*

### **SECTION 16**

The roster should be frozen by the State Director when that church team qualifies to play in the NSA Post Season Tournament.

## **PART III**

# **COED SOFTBALL**

*Any softball rules not covered or found in this section will be covered or found in Part I of the current edition of the Official NSA Rulebook.*

**CLASSIFICATION OF COED SOFTBALL TEAMS: THE YOUTH DIVISION OF COED IS ESTABLISHED FOR EACH AGE BRACKET (10 & UNDER THRU 19 & UNDER), AND WILL PLAY UNDER EXISTING ADULT COED RULES IN CONJUNCTION WITH YOUTH SLOW PITCH RULES.**

Based on a team's overall strength, State Directors or Zone Directors can change classification of a NSA Coed Team.

- a) Upper Division – All Players are eligible  
HR Rule is Two (2) with One (1) up
- Lower Division – No Gold Division or above players allowed  
No Women's Upper players allowed  
HR Rule is One (1) the first HR over the limit will be declared an out and any subsequent HR's will have the progressive HR rule in effect.

*The progressive penalty home run rule for the lower division. Once a team reaches its home run limit, a batter shall be declared out for hitting any additional home runs, and the defensive team is awarded a progressive number of runs for each untouched home run hit over the fence. For the first home run hit, the defensive team will receive one (1) run, for the second home run hit, the defensive team will receive (2) runs, three (3) runs for the third homerun etc.*

## **RULE 3 EQUIPMENT**

The men will use the twelve (12) inch softball. The women will use the eleven (11) inch softball.

**EXCEPTION:** The tournament director has the option of allowing the women players to hit the 11 or 12 inch softball for the entire tournament.

**NOTE:** *Any player using a Senior Bat during any division of play that is not considered a Senior Division Tournament (all participants being 50 yrs old and older per the Official NSA Rule Book) will be suspended immediately on the spot with NO right to an appeal.*

### **SECTION 4 UNIFORM**

Upper & Lower      Matching shirts with numbers

## **RULE 4 PLAYERS & SUBSTITUTIONS**

*Any non-player who is not yet considered an adult, may not be between the fences or boundaries that are considered the playing field without a NOCSAE approved helmet with a NOCSAE approved face mask properly attached. Any youth division bat boys/bat girls who are the teams official bat boy/bat girl or who are team members serving as bat boy/bat girl must wear a NOCSAE approved helmet with a NOCSAE approved face mask properly attached. The coach/manager or player representing the team is responsible for insuring that the non-player be in compliance with the batting helmet rule or age rule.*

**PENALTY:** The player, non-player, bat boy or bat girl will put the helmet on or be removed from the playing area.

### **SECTION 1**

A team shall consist of:

- a) Coed (Slowpitch) with extra players. Twelve (12) players - six (6) males and six (6) females. In Coed Indoor, a male player must play the pitching position. Or if the team uses the extra player rule; teams will be permitted to use seven (7) males and five (5) females  
**NOTE:** *If the "EP" is used in Coed, twelve (12) players must be used. It is not permissible to use eleven (11) players.*
- b) Coed (Slowpitch). Ten (10) player - five (5) males and five (5) females. Or the Tournament Director can host tournaments in which there are six (6) males and four (4) female players.
- c) A team must start a game with a minimum of ten (10) players and finish a game with ten (10) players. Coed teams may use the extra player (EP) rule.
- d) Five (5) male and five (5) female players must play defense at all times.  
**EXCEPTION:** *6 male and 4 female tournaments.*  
**NOTE:** *A female CANNOT be a pitcher in a 6/4 format, but can be the catcher. The other females can play any other position, other than pitcher, without regard to any specific number of infielders or outfielders being male or female, but must still have 1 female in both infield and outfield.*
- e) There must be two (2) of each sex in the outfield and infield positions during 5/5 tournaments, however the positioning is left up to the individual manager.  
**EXCEPTION:** *There cannot be a Rover (male or female). There must be two male and two female outfielders in the outfield at the time the ball is pitched and it is the umpire's discretion to determine if the defensive team is in compliance.*  
**PENALTY:** This is a Delayed Dead Ball Situation. The manager of the offended team has the option of having the batter bat over and assuming the ball and strike count he/she had prior to the pitch he/she hit (baserunners return), or taking the result of the play.
- f) Outfielders may not be on the infield surface.
- g) Each team must have a male/female pitcher/catcher combination.
- h) The Batting order in 6/4 tournaments shall be no more than two (2) male batters in a row. After two (2) male batters, there MUST be a female batter. If the male batter walks, and another male batter succeeds the walked male batter in the batting order, the walked male

batter would only be awarded one (1) base. If a female batter succeeds the walked male batter, the male batter will be awarded two (2) bases.

- i) No more than six (6) male player may play defense at one time
- j) A tournament director can conduct a seven (7) male and three (3) female tournament or an eight (8) male and four (4) female if the two optional EP's are used.
- k) A female CANNOT be a pitcher in the 7/3 format, but can be the catcher. The other female players can play any other position other than pitcher without regard to any specific number of infielders or outfielders being male or female.
- l) The batting order in the 7/3 format shall be no more than three (3) male batters in a row. After 3 male batters, there MUST be a female batter. Should the male batter walk with another male batter succeeding him in the batting order the male batter who was walked will only be awarded 1 base. Should a female batter succeed the walked male batter in the batting order, the male batter would be awarded two (2) bases.
- m) There shall be no more than seven (7) male batters on defense.

### **SECTION 2 EXTRA PLAYER (EP)**

If the extra player (EP) is used, a team must use two (2) extra players, one male and one female. These players may play defense at any time, but they must retain their original positions in the batting order. The batting order must remain the same unless a substitution is used in the offensive line-up.

**NOTE:** *When a team is using the extra player(s) (EP), and in the event a player or players are removed for any reason during the course of the game and no substitution is available, the player removed shall be scored as an out when his/her turn comes up in the batting order. In the event this occurs, the player immediately following the removed player is simply bypassed as a batter, but may still remain in the game as a defensive player.*

### **SECTION 3 COURTESY RUNNER**

A Courtesy Runner (which is not recorded as a substitute in the line-up) and of the same sex, may be used for one (1) male player and one (1) female player per inning. The Courtesy Runner can be any player on the team roster who is present, eligible and not been ejected and may be used for one (1) male and one (1) female player per inning per team. The Courtesy Runner DOES NOT have to be the same player each time the player in need of the courtesy runner becomes a runner. The courtesy runner will be entered into the game by the Head Coach through the home plate umpire before play resumes. Once play resumes by the umpire declaring play ball; that courtesy runner will be officially entered. If the courtesy runner comes to bat while on base, the courtesy runners spot in the batting order becomes an out and the next batter listed in the batting order comes to bat. The courtesy runner "MAY NOT" under any circumstances be substituted for. The defensive team "MAY" walk to get to the vacated spot in the lineup. Rule 7 Section 3 is not in effect for this rule.

**NOTE:** *A player needing a Courtesy Runner is not restricted to any certain number of times per inning that he/she may have a Courtesy Runner.*

## RULE 5 THE GAME

### SECTION 3

Coed Program run rule is as follows:

- a) Twenty (20) runs after 3 innings
- b) Fifteen (15) runs after 4 innings
- c) Ten (10) runs after 5 innings

### SECTION 9

Teams must have registered and entered their roster online with all information correct and complete or the player(s) and/or team(s) will be considered ineligible to participate in any National Softball Association sanctioned Tournaments, including Qualifiers, NIT's or Post Season Tournaments.

- a) Teams must PRINT a copy of the Official NSA ONLINE ROSTER (complete & correct), OBTAIN SIGNATURES of participants (and Parents or guardian if Youth) to turn in at ALL NSA sanctioned tournaments prior to their scheduled start or they will not be allowed to participate.

### SECTION 10

Home Run Limit for Coed (Slow Pitch) Teams

- a) UPPER Division – Two (2) HR's with the one up Home Run Rule.
- b) LOWER Division – One (1) HR, second (2) HR will be declared an out with any additional HR's starting the Progressive HR penalty.
- c) Industrial/Military Division – One (1) home run. Any home runs hit after one will be scored as an out.
- d) 35 & Over Master Coed – One (1) home run with the "One – up"

**NOTE:** See Rule 5, Sec. 12, for explanation of home run rules.

## RULE 7 BATTING

### SECTION 1

Each player on the side at bat shall become a batter in the order in which their names appear on the score sheet.

- a) Male and female players must alternate in the batting order. Either a male or female batter may bat first in the line-up. This order must also be maintained when using the extra player (EP) rule.
- b) When a male batter is walked intentionally or unintentionally, the male batter is awarded second base, *and the following female batter must bat.*

**EFFECT:** *The ball is dead and the male batter may go directly to the awarded 2<sup>nd</sup> Base without touching 1<sup>st</sup> base.* **EXCEPTION:** *WITH TWO OUTS the following female batter has the option to bat or walk.*

- c) It is the defensive team's responsibility to know whether or not the wrong ball is in the game. Only the team at bat shall be allowed to make the appeal on the wrong ball being pitched.

**EFFECT:** *The offensive team shall have the choice to either take the result of the play or bat again.*

# PART IV

## WOMEN'S SOFTBALL

Any softball rules not covered or found in this section will be covered or found in Part 1 of the Official NSA Rule book. The National Softball Association has divisions for men and women, and a coed division for both to compete in jointly. The men's division is specifically for men ages 16 and older, and the women's division is specifically designed for women ages 16 and older. With the exception of COED division, women may not compete in the men's program and men may not compete in the women's program of any division.

## RULE 2 PLAYING FIELD

### SECTION 1

Fence Distance - Women's Adult Slow Pitch Divisions

- a) Minimum Fence Distance – 250 feet

### SECTION 4

The Official Diamond shall have base lines as follows:

- a) Women's Adult Slow Pitch Divisions – 70 feet

### SECTION 5

The Official Diamond shall have a pitching distance as follows:

- f) Women's Adult Slow Pitch Divisions – 53 feet

## RULE 3 EQUIPMENT

**NOTE:** *Any player using a Senior Bat during any division of play that is not considered a Senior Division Tournament (all participants being 50 yrs old and older per the Official NSA Rule Book) will be suspended immediately on the spot with NO right to an appeal.*

### SECTION 2

The Official Softball shall be the eleven (11) inch softball.

No other changes, Refer to Rule 3, General Playing Rules.

### SECTION 6

- a) NSA Women Uniform Requirements:

Upper Matching shirts with numbers

Lower Matching shirts with numbers

## RULE 5 THE GAME

Women's Slow Pitch Softball will have Two (2) divisions: Upper and Lower

Upper Division – All Players are eligible to compete

Lower Division – No Upper Players allowed.

### SECTION 4 WOMEN'S HOME RUN RULES

Upper Two (2) with one up

Lower Zero (0) – with Progressive HR Penalty

Women's Varsity Military 2 HR's with the one up home run rule

*The progressive penalty home run rule is in effect for this division. Once a team reaches its home run limit, a batter shall be declared out for hitting any additional home runs, and the defensive team is awarded a progressive number of runs for each untouched home run hit over the fence. For the first home run hit, the defensive team will receive one (1) run, for the second home run hit, the defensive team will receive (2) runs, three (3) runs for the third homerun etc.*

## **PART V**

# **HISPANIC SLOWPITCH SOFTBALL**

*Any rules not covered or found in this section will be covered or found in Part I of the Official NSA Rulebook. A four-game format will be used in State Tournaments and above.*

Classifications of Hispanic softball divisions:

- a) Divisions:
  - Upper Division      4 Home runs with the one – up rule.
  - Lower Division      1 Home run with any additional home run will be scored as an out.
- NOTE:** See Rule 5, Sec. 12, for explanation of home run rules.
- b) Hispanic rosters are allowed four (4) non-Hispanic players, three of which may play at a time.

## **PART VI**

# **INDOOR SLOWPITCH SOFTBALL**

*Any rules not covered or found in this section will be covered or found in Part I of the current edition of the Official NSA Rulebook.*

## **RULE 6    PITCHING**

### **SECTION 1**

In the indoor Coed Division, a male must be used in the pitching position.

# **PART VII**

## **YOUTH SLOWPITCH**

*Any softball rules not covered or found in this section will be covered or found in Part I of the current edition of the Official NSA Rulebook.*

**NOTE:** *No alcoholic beverages will be allowed in the dugouts or on the field during any NSA sanctioned event. No tobacco products are allowed in the dugouts or on the field for the entire NSA Youth Program, and no youth player will be charged admission to any NSA youth tournament above and beyond the team entry fee.*

## **RULE 2 PLAYING FIELD**

### **SECTION 1**

The playing field is the area within which the ball may be legally played and fielded. The playing field shall have a clear and unobstructed area with a radius of the prescribed fence distances from home plate between foul lines.

### **THE FENCE DISTANCE (Slowpitch)**

| <u>YOUTH DIVISION</u>           | <u>MINIMUM FENCE DISTANCE</u> |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Girls 8 & Under thru 12 & Under | 200 feet                      |
| Boys 8 & Under thru 12 & Under  | 200 feet                      |
| Girls 14 & Under                | 225 feet                      |
| Boys 14 & Under                 | 275 feet                      |
| Girls 16 & Under                | 250 feet                      |
| Boys 16 & Under                 | 275 feet                      |
| Girls 19 & Under                | 250 feet                      |
| Boys 19 & Under                 | 275 feet                      |

### **SECTION 2**

The official diamond shall have base lines as follows:

| <u>YOUTH DIVISION</u> | <u>BASE DISTANCE</u> |
|-----------------------|----------------------|
| Girls 8 & Under       | 60 feet              |
| Boys 8 & Under        | 60 feet              |
| Girls 10 & Under      | 60 feet              |
| Boys 10 & Under       | 60 feet              |

| <u>YOUTH DIVISION</u> | <u>BASE DISTANCE</u> |
|-----------------------|----------------------|
| Girls 12 & Under      | 60 feet              |
| Boys 12 & Under       | 60 feet              |
| Girls 14 & Under      | 65 feet              |
| Boys 14 & Under       | 65 feet              |
| Girls 16 & Under      | 70 feet              |
| Boys 16 & Under       | 70 feet              |
| Girls 19 & Under      | 70 feet              |
| Boys 19 & Under       | 70 feet              |

### **SECTION 3**

The official diamond shall have pitching distances as follows:

#### **YOUTH DIVISION**

#### **PITCHING DISTANCES**

|                  |                                            |
|------------------|--------------------------------------------|
| Girls 8 & Under  | 35 feet with 8' circle around the pitching |
| Boys 8 & Under   | 35 feet mound – both 8 & Under only        |
| Girls 10 & Under | 40 feet                                    |
| Boys 10 & Under  | 40 feet                                    |
| Girls 12 & Under | 46 feet                                    |
| Boys 12 & Under  | 46 feet                                    |
| Girls 14 & Under | 46 feet                                    |
| Boys 14 & Under  | 46 feet                                    |
| Girls 16 & Under | 53 feet                                    |
| Boys 16 & Under  | 53 feet                                    |
| Girls 19 & Under | 53 feet                                    |
| Boys 19 & Under  | 53 feet                                    |

### **RULE 3 EQUIPMENT**

**NOTE:** *Any player using a Senior Bat during any division of play that is not considered a Senior Division Tournament (all participants being 50 yrs old and older per the Official NSA Rule Book) will be suspended immediately on the spot with NO right to an appeal.*

#### **SECTION 2**

The official softball shall be a smooth-seamed, concealed-stitched or flat-surfaced ball. The center of the ball may be made of either long fiber kapok or mixture of cork and rubber, and or machine wound, with a fine twisted yarn and covered with latex or rubber cement. Or it may be made of other materials approved by the NSA. The cover of the ball shall be optic yellow, tanned horsehide, cowhide or any other materials approved by the NSA, cemented to the ball by application of cement to the underside of the cover and sewn with black waxed cotton or black linen thread to form a black-stitched softball. The solid core ball must be stamped with THE official NSA logo that contains the maximum C.O.R. and compression standards. The ball **MAY NOT** bear any other logos except for the NSA official logo unless otherwise approved by the Executive Director or the Executive Vice President of the NSA. Maximum Compression for NSA softballs is 275 pounds for the .52 C.O.R. softball with no tolerance.

In the girls division of youth softball, all divisions will use the eleven (11) inch softball.

- In the boys division of youth softball, the eleven (11) inch softball will be used in the 8 & Under, 10 & Under, and 12 & Under age groups.
- In the boys division of youth softball, the twelve (12) inch softball will be used in the 14 & Under, 16 & Under, and the boys 19 & Under age groups.

#### **SECTION 3**

All players, coaches and participants must wear shoes. Sandals are considered proper shoes for non-players.

**TATTOO**



**AD  
STARR**



**NSA**

**WHERE BASEBALL AND SOFTBALL BEGIN**  
**WWW.ADSTARR.COM • 1-800-487-2448**

- a) No metal spikes are allowed in any Youth Division Softball play. No hard plastic or polyurethane spikes similar to metal sole and heel plates are allowed in any Youth Division play.

**PENALTY:** If it is discovered during the game that an offensive player is wearing metal cleats an out will be called and the player will be ejected and any baserunner(s) must return to the last base occupied at the time of the pitch. A defensive player who is wearing metal cleats will be ejected.

#### **SECTION 4 UNIFORM**

- a) Casts (plaster, metal or other hard substances) or other items judged dangerous by the umpires may not be worn during the game, by any coach coaching the bases or by any player. Coaches in wheelchairs MAY be on the field of play during live ball situation. NSA recommends, though not mandatory, that coaches who choose to coach on the field who are in wheelchairs would pad exposed metal that potentially may be dangerous to other participants.

- b) Uniform shirts are required to have a six (6) inch number.

#### **SECTION 5 HELMETS**

A batting helmet bearing the NOCSAE stamp is mandatory for each batter, on-deck batter, players, and youth coaches in the coaches' boxes, and all runners. The batting helmet worn by each batter, on-deck batter, player, youth coach in the coach's box, and all runners must have extended ear flaps which cover both ears and temples. If a pitcher wears a batting helmet while pitching, the outer covering must have a non-glare surface. Plastic visors are prohibited for players, coaches, and managers. At all times the batting helmet must be worn properly.

**PENALTY:** The umpire will issue a team warning if any player is found to be in noncompliance. All subsequent violations of the warned team will result in the ejection of the player not in compliance with this rule.

**NOTE:** *When an umpire detects a runner (including the batter/runner) deliberately removing his/her batting helmet during playing action, a dead ball will be declared immediately.*

**PENALTY:** The violator is declared out immediately, and if a force play was in order at the time of the pitched ball, the runner closest to home plate will also be declared out, with other runners returning to the base occupied at the time of the pitch.

**NOTE:** *No runner shall score a run when a batter/runner or runner has been declared the 3<sup>rd</sup> out of an inning for deliberately removing his/her batting helmet.*

#### **SECTION 6 CATCHER'S PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT**

It is mandatory for the catcher to wear a **NOCSAE approved head protector and protective mask**, with throat protector (commercially manufactured, properly attached, and not altered in any manner), body protector, baseball/softball shin guards and the male catcher or any male player warming up a pitcher shall wear an approved protective cup. Any player warming up a pitcher at any location within the confines of the park or facility will be required to wear an approved head protector and an approved mask with throat protector. All protective equipment must conform to industry standards.

## **RULE 4 PLAYERS & SUBSTITUTIONS**

*Any non-player who is not yet considered an adult, may not be between the fences or boundaries that are considered the playing field without a NOCSAE approved helmet with a NOCSAE approved face mask properly attached. Any youth division bat boys/bat girls who are the teams official bat boy/bat girl or who are team members serving as bat boy/bat girl must wear a NOCSAE approved helmet with a NOCSAE approved face mask properly attached. The coach/manager representing the team is responsible for insuring that the non-player be in compliance with the batting helmet rule or age rule.*

**PENALTY:** The player, non-player, bat boy or bat girl will put the helmet on or be removed from the playing area.

**NOTE:** *In the youth division only: Violation of an ineligible player constitutes the immediate forfeiture of the game. Violation of an illegal player constitutes the immediate ejection of both the illegal player and his/her coach.*

**\*NOTE:** *Any team may use two (2) extra players per game. All other rules pertaining to the extra player remain as written.*

## **RULE 5 THE GAME**

**\*NOTE:** *THE NSA HAS ESTABLISHED A YOUTH COED DIVISION FOR EACH AGE DIVISION.*

### **SECTION 1**

A regulation game shall consist of seven innings.

- a) A game will be forfeited if, because of the removal of the player(s) from the game by the umpire, or for any cause, there are less than ten (10) players on either team.
- b) During all tournament play (Qualifying, State, Regional, NIT, World Series and Super World Series) in the event of rain or any cause which interrupts a game, the game must be resumed at the exact point where it was stopped.
- c) In the event that a tournament cannot be completed, an official game may be called after 5 innings of play or 4 ½ innings of play if the home team is ahead.

**NOTE:** *Players listed in the line-up and not available at game time may be substituted for.*

- d) At the discretion of the Tournament Director a 1 hr. and 15 min. time limit is recommended by the National Softball Association.
- e) Run Rules for Youth Slow Pitch are Fifteen (15) runs after three (3) innings; Twelve (12) runs after four (4) innings; Ten (10) runs after five(5) innings.

### **SECTION 2 YOUTH AGE ELIGIBILITY**

The youth sanction year is August 1<sup>st</sup> to July 31<sup>st</sup>. The cutoff date for the youth age eligibility is December 31<sup>st</sup> of the current sanction season. The players age on December 31st during the CURRENT SANCTIONING SEASON will be the age group the player is eligible for during the ENTIRE sanction year. All players must meet the age requirements to be put on a current year's roster.

Example: If a player turns 15 years old on December 31<sup>st</sup> of 2015, they CANNOT be put on a 14u roster for the 2016 sanction year that begins August 1<sup>st</sup>, 2015.

A copy of the original birth certificate and/or a Government Issue photo ID must accompany youth players at all times.

- a) All players can play in only one age group
- b) A player cannot play in two (2) age divisions in one tournament.
- c) A player may play up one age group but not down in an age group.  
**EXCEPTION:** *A player who turns 11, 13, or 15 years of age in the current year may move up two (2) divisions and may play in the 14, 16, or the 19 Under age divisions, respectively.*
- d) Teams may have no more than twenty (25) players on their rosters.
- e) Proof of age must be verified by one of the following: government issued I.D. and/or birth certificate copies. Proof of age must accompany the player at all times.

### **SECTION 3**

**At all levels of Youth Fastpitch play, a certificate of team insurance must be presented to either the League or Tournament Director prior to participating in any NSA event.**

**NOTE:** Teams are required to purchase NSA Team Insurance through Westpoint Insurance or the Tournament Director is required to purchase tournament insurance offered through Westpoint Insurance.

**NOTE:** Adult division teams are not required to have team insurance but it is highly recommended.

## **PART VIII**

# **SIXTEEN-INCH SOFTBALL**

*Any softball rules not covered or found in this section will be covered or found in Part I of the current edition of the official NSA Rulebook.*

## **RULE 2 THE PLAYING FIELD**

### **SECTION 4**

The official diamond shall have base lines as follows:

- a) Sixteen (16) inch softball base lines will be sixty (60) feet.

### **SECTION 5**

The official diamond shall have pitching distance as follows:

- a) Sixteen (16) inch softball pitching distance will be thirty-eight (38) feet.
- b) There shall be no batters box in the 16" Program

## **RULE 3 EQUIPMENT**

### **SECTION 1 THE OFFICIAL BAT**

- a) The bat shall have a safety grip of cork, tape or any combination of materials.

- b) The grip should not be less than ten (10) inches long and shall not extend more than fifteen (15) inches from the small end of the bat.
- c) The bat can be any ounce and length and does not have to meet the ABI /BPF standards.
- d) The bat can be made of wood, metal or other materials approved by the NSA.

### **SECTION 2 THE OFFICIAL SOFTBALL**

- a) The sixteen (16) inch ball shall be between 15 ¾ and 16 ¼ inches in circumference and weigh between 9 and 10 ounces.

### **SECTION 3 GLOVES**

- a) Gloves are optional at the state tournament and above in the Men’s 16 Inch Program.
- b) No gloves are allowed in the Chicago land area for men or women. Other states or teams outside the Chicago land area may wear gloves. In the World Series, the teams from the Chicago land area can wear gloves when they play a team from outside the Chicago land area but cannot wear gloves when playing teams from within the Chicago land area. When teams from outside the Chicago land area play against each other, gloves are approved for play.

## **RULE 5 THE GAME**

*Softball is a contact sport, played with Composite, Aluminum, Wood and other approved materials in the design of approved bats and softballs. The game of softball can be a dangerous sport to participate in. In playing the game of softball, the player and the parents of the youth players participating in the game of softball assume for themselves and for the youth children participating in the game of softball the risk of serious injury or possible death. By agreeing to be placed on an NSA roster, the participants or parents of participants understand these risks. To reduce the risk of Injury; the National Softball Association HIGHLY RECOMMENDS THAT EVERY PLAYER wear protective equipment!*

### **CLASSIFICATIONS**

Men’s Major – Class “A” – Recreational

Women – Class “A”

## **RULE 6 PITCHING REGULATIONS**

### **SECTION 2**

A legal delivery shall be delivered with an under handed motion.

- a) The pitcher must present the ball to the batter while standing on the pitching rubber.
- b) After presenting the ball for one (1) second, the pitcher may take one (1) step in any direction.
- c) Once a pitcher has taken the step, the ball must be presented again before the ball is delivered.

**NOTE:** *The non-pivot foot may be placed in any direction except in front of the pivot foot.*

- d) The minimum and maximum pitching arcs from the ground are six (6) feet and twelve (12) feet, respectively.
- e) The pitcher shall be allowed two (2) fake delivery motions to either home plate or an occupied base. On the third motion, the ball must be delivered to home plate.
- f) At no time may a pitcher use a windmill motion.

## **RULE 8 BASERUNNING**

### **SECTION 1**

Base stealing is not permitted

- a) A baserunner is permitted to lead off the base but is subject to being picked off of that base.
- c) If a pick-off delivery is made on a baserunner off first, second, or third base, he/she may advance at his/her own risk to the next base if it is unoccupied.

## **COED SIXTEEN-INCH SOFTBALL**

## **RULE 4 PLAYERS & SUBSTITUTIONS**

*Any non-player who is not yet considered an adult, may not be between the fences or boundaries that are considered the playing field without a NOCSAE approved helmet with a NOCSAE approved face mask properly attached. Any youth division bat boys/bat girls who are the teams official bat boy/bat girl or who are team members serving as bat boy/bat girl must wear a NOCSAE approved helmet with a NOCSAE approved face mask properly attached. The coach/manager or player representing the team is responsible for insuring that the non-player be in compliance with the batting helmet rule or age rule.*

**PENALTY:** The player, non-player, bat boy or bat girl will put the helmet on or be removed from the playing area.

### **SECTION 1**

A team shall consist of:

- a) 9, 10, or 12 with the extra players. If a team uses the optional EP rule and plays twelve (12) players, six (6) must be male and six (6) must be female.  
**NOTE:** *It is never permissible to use eleven (11) players.*
- b) If the team uses 10 players, five (5) must be male and five (5) must be female.
- c) A team can start a game with a minimum of Nine (9) players. If a team has only nine (9) players, the 10<sup>th</sup> position in the batting order is scored as an out .  
**NOTE:** *When a team is left with a vacant 10<sup>th</sup> spot in the lineup, for any reason, the opposing team may not with two (2) outs intentionally or unintentionally walk the previous batter, in order to get to the "automatic out" created by the vacant spot in the batting order.*
- d) There must be one (1) female in the outfield at all times. All other positioning is left up to the individual manager.
  - 1) If a female player plays first base, she has the option of wearing a glove.

- 2) Outfielders may not be on the infield surface until the pitch is released.
- 3) Each team must have a male /female pitcher and catcher combination.

## **SECTION 10 COURTESY RUNNER**

A Courtesy Runner of the same sex may be used once per inning for a total of two (2) courtesy runners per inning one (1) male and (1) female. The courtesy runner must be the same sex. A Courtesy Runner (which is not a substitute) may be used once per inning. The Courtesy Runner can be any player on the team roster who is present, eligible and not been ejected and may be used once per inning per team. The courtesy runner will be entered into the game by the Head Coach through the home plate umpire before play resumes. Once play resumes by the umpire declaring play ball; that courtesy runner will be officially entered. If that courtesy runner comes to bat while on base, it is an out. The courtesy runner "MAY NOT" under any circumstances be substituted for. The defensive team "MAY" walk to get to the vacated spot in the line up. Rule 7 Section 3 is not in effect for this rule.

# **PART IX**

## **NSA MASTERS SOFTBALL**

*Any softball rules not covered or found in this section will be covered or found in Part I of the current edition of the official NSA Rulebook.*

### **35 & Over Divisions of Play: Open, Upper & Lower**

*40 & 45 & Over Divisions will be governed by the 50 & Over Division Rules of Major and AAA. **EXCEPTION:** The 40 & Over and the 45 & Over are still regulated by Part I Rule 3 of the official NSA playing rules.*

*A player is eligible to play in any particular division if the player's birthday falls within the calendar year. (i.e.—If a player turns 35 years of age on December 31<sup>st</sup> that player is eligible to compete in the 35 and Over Division for the entire year.)*

*Both competitive and recreation divisions shall be offered with the Tournament Director having the right to combine the two divisions due to the lack of teams. The Executive Director or the National Headquarters must approve any change in the format or the combining of the divisions.*

## **RULE 3 EQUIPMENT**

**NOTE:** *Any player using a Senior Bat during any division of play that is not considered a Senior Division Tournament (all participants being 50 yrs old and older per the Official NSA Rule Book) will be suspended immediately on the spot with NO right to an appeal.*

### **SECTION 6 UNIFORM**

All players on a team shall wear uniforms alike in color with same team name/logo.

**NOTE:** *Shirts may have sleeves or no sleeves and still be considered matching.*

**\*NOTE:** *Players CANNOT EXCHANGE shirts with other players when they are substituted for during the game. All players must have their own shirt with separate numbers.*

**PENALTY:** *For sharing shirts will be an illegal substitution.*

**EXCEPTION:** *When a jersey is saturated with blood, team members can exchange shirts.*

Ball caps or visors must be alike and must be worn properly. Caps or visors are not a mandatory part of the uniform. All headgear must be of the same predominant color and worn as intended by the manufacturer. Hard plastic visors, bandanas, and handkerchiefs are not approved headgear.

- a) A pitcher shall not wear any item on the pitching hand, wrist, arm, or thigh which may be distracting to the batter. Players may wear solid colored undergarments under their uniform shirts or shorts. It is not mandatory that all players wear these undergarments, but if worn they shall not be ragged, frayed, or slit on the exposed areas.
- b) Numbers must be worn on all uniforms. No players on the same team may wear identical numbers.
- c) NSA uniform requirements: In NIT and all other Post season play, violation of uniform requirements is not grounds for protest.

**NOTE:** *In NIT and all other post season play, if a team is not in compliance with the uniform rule the opposing team, if in total uniform, has the choice of being the home or visiting team. If both teams are in compliance or if both teams are not in compliance, a flip of a coin will determine the home and visiting team.*

## **RULE 5 THE GAME**

### **SECTION 3 MASTERS RUN RULE:**

- |                   |                                                  |
|-------------------|--------------------------------------------------|
| a) Upper Division | Twenty (20) runs after Three (3) innings         |
|                   | Twenty (20) runs after Four (4) innings          |
|                   | Twelve (12) runs after Five (5) innings          |
| b) Lower Division | <b>Fifteen (15) runs after Three (3) innings</b> |
|                   | <b>Twelve (12) runs after Four (4) innings</b>   |
|                   | <b>Ten (10) runs after Five (5) innings</b>      |

**NOTE:** *If the Tournament Director is running a combination tournament, the run rule used will be the Lesser Home Run Rule of the Divisions involved in the combination tournament.*

### **SECTION 10 CLASSIFICATION**

- a. Upper Division – No more than one (1) player from the restricted players list
- b) Upper Division – No more than five (5) players from the Elite or Higher classifications
- c) Upper Division – No more than five (5) player from Class B or higher classification from another Association
- d) Lower Division – No players Classified Elite or Higher permitted.
- e) Lower Division – No more than three (3) Gold Classified Players.
- f) Lower Division – No Class C or higher players from another Association permitted.

**NOTE:** *Players retain the last Classification Played.*

## **SECTION 11 HOME RUN LIMITS**

- a) Upper Division – Three (3) home runs plus the one up home run rule
- b) Lower Division – Two (2) home runs. Any subsequent HR's will result in an Inning Ending Out.

**NOTE:** Refer to the General Rules for the one up home run rule and the progressive home run rule.

# **PART X**

## **NSA SENIORS SOFTBALL**

Any softball rules not covered or found in this section will be covered or found in Part I of the current edition of the official NSA Rulebook.

*40 & 45 & Over Divisions will be governed by the 50 & Over Division Rules of Major and AAA.*

**EXCEPTION:** *The 40 & Over and the 45 & Over are still regulated by Part 1 Rule 3 of the official NSA playing rules.*

## **RULE 2 PLAYING FIELD**

### **SECTION 4**

The Official Diamond will have base distances of 65 feet.

**NOTE:** *The NSA Senior Division will use a double base at 1<sup>st</sup> base.*

- a) If the first play is at first base, either from the infield or outfield a runner will be called out for touching the inside of the base.
- b) If the play is elsewhere the inside of the base may be tagged in a continuation toward 2<sup>nd</sup> base.
- c) A runner running toward 1<sup>st</sup> base may cross over to the inside of the base to avoid a collision if a wild throw occurs.
- d) The batter-runner or the baserunner can use the inside of the base if they are attempting to get back to 1<sup>st</sup> base.
- e) If in the judgment of the Umpire, the batter-runner touches the inside bag solely in an effort to avoid collision, the play will be called as though the batter-runner actually touched the outside base.

### **SECTION 5**

The Official Diamond will have a pitching box fifty-three (53) feet from home plate and extending back three feet perpendicular to the pitcher's mound towards second base.

### **SECTION 6**

A strike mat will be used in all senior play and will be 17" wide by 32.5" long to include home plate. Strike mat includes the plate.

## **RULE 3 EQUIPMENT**

**NOTE:** For every Division contained inside the cover of this Rule Book All equipment must be 100% conforming, 100% of the time. The NSA reserves the right to approve or reject any softball related equipment for its intended use in

*the NSA Program. Equipment does not merely need to meet industry standards, but must meet NSA Standards before approval for its use is granted. If, should the NSA believe in any way shape or form that a particular piece of equipment is dangerous and/or not acceptable for fair play, the NSA reserves the right to ban such equipment immediately.*  
*Refer to Part 1 of the Official Playing rules for complete information concerning all equipment.*

### **SECTION 1**

The Senior Division 50 years old and older divisions may use the Senior bats. The BPF may not exceed 1.21. Seniors MAY NOT use Senior Bats in any tournament or league that is NOT a Senior (all participants 50 & Over) tournament or league. Anyone caught using a Senior Bat in anything other than Senior Competition will be suspended for one (1) year immediately on the spot with no right of Appeal.

### **SECTION 2**

The official softball shall be a smooth-seamed, raised seam, concealed-stitched, or flat-surfaced ball. The center of the ball may be made of either long fiber kapok or mixture of cork and rubber, and/or machine wound, with a fine twisted yarn and covered with latex or rubber cement. Or it may be made of other materials approved by the NSA. The cover of the ball shall be optic yellow, tanned horsehide, cowhide or any other materials approved by the NSA, cemented to the ball by application of cement to the underside of the cover and sewn with one black waxed cotton or black linen thread and a Second Contrasting waxed cotton linen thread to be determined by NSA to form a dual colored stitched softball. The solid core ball must be stamped with the official NSA logo that contains the maximum C.O.R. and compression standards. The ball MAY NOT bear any other logos except for the NSA official logo unless otherwise approved by the Executive Director or the President of the NSA. Maximum C.O.R. is .44, Maximum Compression for NSA Senior softballs is 400 pounds with no tolerance.

**NOTE:** *The men's division will use the twelve (12) inch softball. The women's division will use the eleven (11) inch softball.*

### **SECTION 6**

Players must wear visible numbers of a minimum of six (6) inches in height with no number being identical on the same team.

## **RULE 4 PLAYERS & SUBSTITUTIONS**

*Any non-player who is not yet considered an adult, may not be between the fences or boundaries that are considered the playing field without a NOCSAE approved helmet with a NOCSAE approved face mask properly attached. Any youth division bat boys/bat girls who are the teams official bat boy/bat girl or who are team members serving as bat boy/bat girl must wear a NOCSAE approved helmet with a NOCSAE approved face mask properly attached. The coach/manager or player representing the team is responsible for insuring that the non-player be in compliance with the batting helmet rule or age rule.*

**PENALTY:** The player, non-player, bat boy or bat girl will put the helmet on or be removed from the playing area.

## **SECTION 1**

- a) A team is allowed 10 players on defense in the 50+, 55+, 60+ and 65+ divisions.
- b) AAA and AA team is allowed 11 players on defense in the 65+ Division.
- c) A Team is allowed 11 players on defense in the 70+ and 75+ division.
- d) A team is allowed 15 players on offense in the 50+, 55+, 60+, 65+ and 70+ and 75+ divisions.

## **RULE 5 THE GAME**

*Softball is a contact sport, played with Composite, Aluminum, Wood and other approved materials in the design of approved bats and softballs. The game of softball can be a dangerous sport to participate in. In playing the game of softball, the player and the parents of the youth players participating in the game of softball assume for themselves and for the youth children participating in the game of softball the risk of serious injury or possible death. By agreeing to be placed on an NSA roster, the participants or parents of participants understand these risks. To reduce the risk of Injury, the National Softball Association HIGHLY RECOMMENDS THAT EVERY PLAYER wear protective equipment!*

## **SECTION 1**

National Softball Association Senior teams 50+ to 70+ must participate in a NSA sanctioned tournament to be eligible to advance to the NSA World Series. All teams and their rosters will be subject to the National Senior Softball Ratings.

The NSA Senior Softball Program will use a three (3) to five (5) tournament game format.

- a) If a five (5) game format is used, the tournament format will consist of a three (3) game pool play and then a double elimination championship bracket.
- b) Teams must play in pool play to participate in the bracket play. Failure to participate in the pool play (round robin) will result in elimination from the tournament and a last place finish.

## **SECTION 2**

In the 50+ to 70+ age divisions: When the game has been played 60 minutes (1 hr.), the home plate umpire will notify the teams that they will finish that inning and play one (1) additional inning. No time limit will be played in the Semi Final, Championship and IF Game. A regulation game shall consist of seven (7) innings. A full seven (7) innings need not be played if the home team (the team 2<sup>nd</sup> at bat) scores more runs in six innings or before the third out of the seventh inning.

**EXCEPTION:** *When the ten (10) run rule is in effect.*

- a) A game that is tied at the end of seven innings or time limit will use the tie-breaker rule in the top of the succeeding inning and continues with each successive inning.
- b) **TIE BREAKER RULE:** The last batter of the previous inning whose turn at bat had been completed, assumes 2<sup>nd</sup> base with no outs and the game continues until one team scores more runs at the end of a completed inning (bottom of the inning).

### **SECTION 3**

The NSA Senior Softball Division will have the following run rules:

- a) 10 runs after 4 and a half or (5) innings.
- b) Senior games will have the following maximum run rule of five (5) runs scored in an inning.

**EXCEPTION:** *When the last inning is reached or declared or is in the tie breaker; this inning will be an "open run inning" which allows the team unlimited runs scored.*

### **SECTION 9**

Senior Competition shall begin at the age of 50 and will advance each five years thereafter to include the following age divisions of play: 55+, 60+, 65+ and 70+ and 75+. Eligibility for all senior players pertaining to age shall be the calendar year. Senior players must have a legal picture identification card (i.e., photo ID, in their possession at all sanctioned events. Senior players may **participate with Two (2) teams in a** Qualifying and Post Season Tournament on the same weekend. Senior Players may play down in another age division but must maintain the same classification level. (Example: 60+ major could play in either a 55+ or 50+ Major Division, but would not be permitted to play in a 55+ or 50+ AAA or AA Division. An Official Senior Roster shall not exceed twenty (20) players. Rosters will be based upon state boundaries. A player may only play with a team from their home state or a state whose borders touch the borders of the player's own state. The teams "home state" is established by where the majority of players reside with their primary residence. The Senior Women's Program have NO state boundary restrictions.

**EXCEPTION:** *Major+ and Major teams may have One (1) additional player from outside the State Boundaries restrictions. This player must be noted on the roster when turned into the Stat Director and/or Tournament Director. The NSA National Headquarters must approve any exceptions.*

### **SECTION 10 SENIOR SOFTBALL TEAM CLASSIFICATIONS**

- a) Major Plus
- b) Major
- c) Class AAA
- d) Class AA

### **SECTION 11 SENIOR HOME RUN LIMITS**

- a) Major Plus - Six home runs plus the one up home run rule
- b) Major - Four home runs plus the one up home run rule
- c) Class AAA - One home run plus the one up home run rule. Each untouched ball that goes over the fence which exceeds the team's home run limit will be scored as a single. Runners advance one base if forced
- d) Class AA - Zero home runs – Each untouched ball that goes over the fence will be scored an out.

## **RULE 6 PITCHING REGULATIONS**

### **SECTION 1**

The pitcher must release the ball after coming to a complete stop with one foot or both feet in contact with the pitcher's plate or anywhere within the pitcher's box. One foot must remain in contact with the plate/box when the pitch is

released with an underhand motion. A step simultaneous with release of the ball may be taken (but not mandatory) in any direction with the non-pivot foot. The pitcher must be facing the batter when delivering the pitch. The catcher must remain within the lines of the catcher's box until the pitched ball is swung at or reaches the plate. If, anytime during the course of the game the pitching distance is found to be in error, the error should be corrected immediately, and the game should continue. THIS IS NOT A POINT OF PROTEST.

## **RULE 8 BASERUNNING**

### **SECTION 1**

The three (3) foot commitment line shall be marked across and perpendicular to the foul line and placed twenty (20) feet from home plate. Once a runner's foot touches the ground on or past this line, the runner is committed to advance to the scoring plate.

**NOTE:** *If a runner retreats across the commitment line, he will be declared out and the ball will remain alive. A runner may retreat across the commitment line to retag base on a caught fly ball.*

### **SECTION 2**

A scoring plate shall be located with its right corner eight (8) feet from the back of home plate. The scoring plate shall be situated on an imaginary extension of the first base foul line. The scoring plate should be anchored to the ground to prevent slippage and changes of position of the plate during the game. The offensive team must always touch the scoring plate when scoring a run. Or facilities that do not have a scoring plate may use a scoring line that is an extension of the first base line. The scoring line should begin at the back line of the right handed batter's box and extend to the fence. If the runner touches home plate or runs through the batter's box, the runner is out and no run shall be scored.

**EFFECT:** *If the runner touches home plate that runner is automatically out. The defensive team must have possession of the ball and always touch home plate to record the out. If the defensive team attempts to tag the runner, the runner is automatically safe.*

### **SECTION 9**

Sliding is permissible at second base, third base and returning to 1<sup>st</sup> base. No sliding at home plate or going to 1<sup>st</sup> base the first time.

**EFFECT:** *The runner is declared out.*

### **SECTION 10**

Running off or through a base is not permissible in Senior Competition. It is permissible at 1<sup>st</sup> base and home plate.

### **SECTION 11 COURTESY RUNNER(S)**

In the NSA Senior Division an unlimited number of courtesy runners shall be allowed in all divisions. A courtesy runner may not be used more than once per inning. Any courtesy runner caught running more than once per inning, or when it is their turn to bat will be declared out. If a courtesy runner is on base when it's their time to bat an out will be recorded on that runner on base with the runner being allowed to bat. In all Senior Divisions, the courtesy runner may not run for another courtesy runner, with the exception of a courtesy runner being injured. If a courtesy runner is substituted for illegally, the infraction must be caught before the next pitch.

# PART XI

## MILITARY RULES

*Any softball rules not covered or found in this section will be covered or found in Part I of the official NSA Rulebook.*

### RULE 4 PLAYERS & SUBSTITUTIONS

*Any non-player who is not yet considered an adult, may not be between the fences or boundaries that are considered the playing field without a NOCSAE approved helmet with a NOCSAE approved face mask properly attached. Any youth division bat boys/bat girls who are the teams official bat boy/bat girl or who are team members serving as bat boy/bat girl must wear a NOCSAE approved helmet with a NOCSAE approved face mask properly attached. The coach/manager or player representing the team is responsible for insuring that the non-player be in compliance with the batting helmet rule or age rule.*

**PENALTY:** The player, non-player, bat boy or bat girl will put the helmet on or be removed from the playing area.

#### SECTION 10 DIVISIONS OF PLAY

- a) **MEN'S MILITARY OPEN:** The Open Division teams will be a team comprised of male players that can provide a valid Common Access Card or Department of Defense Card.  
**EXCEPTION:** *This will not be a Department of Defense Service team.*
- b) **MEN'S VARSITY "A":** The Varsity A Division teams will be a team comprised of male players from one (1) installation or a team that is comprised of male players from combining of two (2) installations from the same State.
- c) **MEN'S VARSITY "B":** The Varsity B teams will be a team comprised of male players from one (1) installation.
- d) **MEN'S INTRAMURAL:** The Intramural Division teams will be a team comprised of players (teams may have women play) from the same unit.  
The following levels of Command apply:
- |                 |                                            |
|-----------------|--------------------------------------------|
| 1) Air Force    | Squadron or lower                          |
| 2) Army         | Company or lower                           |
| 3) Navy         | Command, squadron or unit of 1,000 or less |
| 4) Marine Corps | Division or lower                          |
| 5) Coast Guard  | Group of 1,000 or less                     |
- e) **WOMEN'S VARSITY "A":** The Varsity A Division teams will be a team comprised of female players from one (1) installation or a team that is comprised of female players from combining two (2) installations from the same State.
- f) **WOMEN'S VARSITY "B":** The Varsity B Division teams will be a team comprised of female players from one (1) installation.  
**\*NOTE:** *To participate in the NSA Military World Series a team will have to play in one (1) Military Tournament or two (2) NSA Sanctioned Tournaments.*

## **RULE 5 THE GAME**

*Softball is a contact sport, played with Composite, Aluminum, Wood and other approved materials in the design of approved bats and softballs. The game of softball can be a dangerous sport to participate in. In playing the game of softball, the player and the parents of the youth players participating in the game of softball assume for themselves and for the youth children participating in the game of softball the risk of serious injury or possible death. By agreeing to be placed on an NSA roster, the participants or parents of participants understand these risks. To reduce the risk of Injury, the National Softball Association HIGHLY RECOMMENDS THAT EVERY PLAYER wear protective equipment!*

### **SECTION 11 PLAYER ELIGIBILITY/ROSTERS**

- a) An Official Men's Military team will consist of Active Duty, Reserves, National Guard, Active Duty dependents (18 years or older), Military Retirees along with Department of Defense civilians assigned to the same duty installation.
- b) An Official Women's Military team will consist of Active Duty, Reserves, National Guard, Active Duty dependents (18 years or older), Military Retirees along with Department of Defense civilians assigned to the same duty installation.
- c) All players must have a valid ID card or a Common Access card (CAC) for verification. Retired military personnel and retired Department of Defense civilians are eligible to play with a team from the State where they retired or a team from the State of their proven place of residence. If the distance of that installation is over a reasonable distance away, the player with the Military Program Director's approval may be able to play with the installation geographically closest to their residence.
- d) Personnel who are on Temporary Duty (TDY) for 45 days or more may participate in any NSA Military Tournament. Personnel will present a copy of their orders to the tournament director for eligibility. Personnel who have Permanent Change of Station (PCS'D) have a 30 day grace period in which they may participate in any NSA Military Tournament with the installation that they have left. Personnel will present a copy of their orders to the tournament director for eligibility.
- e) A person who wants to participate in the NSA Military World Series and they do not have a base team that is participating in the tournament must submit in writing to the NSA Military Program Director to request to play. If approved the Director will put the Personnel in a players pool, that any Open or Varsity "A" team may be able to pick up.

**\*NOTE:** *All players must have a Department of Defense ID Card.*

### **SECTION 12 HOME RUN LIMITS**

#### **MEN'S PROGRAM**

|             |           |                       |
|-------------|-----------|-----------------------|
| OPEN        | Seven (7) | one-up home run rule  |
| Varsity "A" | Five (5)  | one-up home run rule  |
| Varsity "B" | Three (3) | one-up home run rule  |
| Intramural  | One (1)   | progressive home rule |

\*Refer to Rule 5, Section 12

#### **WOMEN'S PROGRAM**

|             |           |                      |
|-------------|-----------|----------------------|
| Varsity "A" | Three (3) | one-up home run rule |
| Varsity "B" | One (1)   | one-up home run rule |

**\*\*NOTE:** *When a lower Class team plays an upper Class team, the home run rule will be the split difference between the 2 teams.*

**EXAMPLE:** *Team "A" versus team "B". The home run rule will be four (4) with the one-up home run rule.*

**EXAMPLE:** *If an Intramural team plays any Varsity team, the home run rule will be two (2) with the one-up home run rule.*

## **PART XII**

# **INDUSTRIAL RULES**

*Any softball rules not covered or found in this section will be covered or found in Part I of the official NSA Rulebook.*

## **RULE 3 EQUIPMENT**

### **SECTION 6**

Industrial teams can have uniforms that have additional sponsors' names on them. The entry form should show the team's employer company name with a (/) then the additional sponsors' names.

## **RULE 5 THE GAME**

*Softball is a contact sport, played with Composite, Aluminum, Wood and other approved materials in the design of approved bats and softballs. The game of softball can be a dangerous sport to participate in. In playing the game of softball, the player and the parents of the youth players participating in the game of softball assume for themselves and for the youth children participating in the game of softball the risk of serious injury or possible death. By agreeing to be placed on an NSA roster, the participants or parents of participants understand these risks. To reduce the risk of Injury; the National Softball Association HIGHLY RECOMMENDS THAT EVERY PLAYER wear protective equipment!*

### **SECTION 3 INDUSTRIAL RUN RULE**

Industrial Run Rule is as follows:

- a) 20 runs after three (3) innings
- b) 15 runs after four (4) innings
- c) 10 runs after five (5) innings

### **SECTION 9**

**NOTE:** *Industrial teams participating in Post Season Tournaments must submit with their roster, a letter signed by an executive of the Personnel Department or an officer of the company in order to certify that each player listed on that team's roster is a bona fide full-time employee with more than sixty (60) days of continuous service with that team's sponsor.*

**Industrial guidelines for player eligibility:**

- a) Full time employee of the team sponsor at the time the tournament is played. This would include any Board of Director(s) of the mentioned corporation sponsor.
- b) A full time employee with less than sixty (60) days of continuous service with the team sponsor will not be eligible to compete in the Industrial

Program as an employee, but is eligible to play if he/she is listed on the roster as one of the three (3) non-employee players.

- c) Industrial sponsors, that would include full-time or retired personnel of corporations, unions, businesses, government, hospital, and military teams, shall be allowed to compete in the Industrial Program.
- d) Any of the agencies and/or organizations that operate in more than one location within a state may be considered as one sponsor. Such sponsors will not be allowed to combine teams with an out of state location.
- e) If any team members are also from a registered Men's "B" or above team, they must participate in the NSA Class "A" Industrial Program.
- f) Industrial team will be allowed to have three (3) non-employees on their roster for any Industrial Tournament play.

**NOTE:** *The team must designate those three (3) non-employee player(s) on the roster.*

**\*NOTE:** *Union teams are eligible to participate in the Industrial Program as long as they meet the following requirements:*

- 1) *All players must be active members of the union they are representing.*
- 2) *All players must have sixty (60) days of continuous service with the union they are representing.*

#### **SECTION 10 INDUSTRIAL HOME RUN RULE**

- a) Industrial Class A - Four (4) with the one-up rule
- b) Industrial Class B - One (1) with progressive penalty

## **PART XIII**

# **BLACK AMERICAN SOFTBALL**

*Any softball rules not covered or found in this section will be covered or found in Part I of the current edition of the official NSA Rulebook.*

**NOTE:** *A four (4) game format will be used in all post season play.*

## **RULE 4 PLAYERS & SUBSTITUTIONS**

**NOTE:** *Black American Rosters are allowed four (4) non-blacks. No more than three (3) non-blacks may be in the line-up at one time. If origin is in question, a birth certificate must be supplied to show proof of origin.*

## **RULE 5 THE GAME**

*Softball is a contact sport, played with Composite, Aluminum, Wood and other approved materials in the design of approved bats and softballs. The game of softball can be a dangerous sport to participate in. In playing the game of softball, the player and the parents of the youth players participating in the game of softball assume for themselves and for the youth children participating in the game of softball the risk of serious injury or possible death. By agreeing to be placed on an NSA roster, the participants or parents of participants understand these risks. To reduce the risk of Injury, the National Softball Association HIGHLY RECOMMENDS THAT EVERY PLAYER wear protective equipment!*

## **SECTION 10 HOME RUN LIMITS**

|             |                                            |
|-------------|--------------------------------------------|
| Upper Class | Eight (8) Home runs + 1                    |
| Lower Class | Two (2) Home runs then progressive penalty |
| Women's     | 16-Inch Unlimited                          |
| Men's 50+   | Super Division Unlimited                   |

**\*NOTE:** *In Class Upper the one-up homerun rule will be in effect.*

**\*\*NOTE:** *In Class Lower the progressive homerun penalty will be in effect.*

# **PART XIV NATIVE AMERICAN**

*Any softball rules not covered or found in this section will be covered or found in Part I of the current edition of the Official NSA Rulebook.*

## **RULE 4 PLAYERS & SUBSTITUTIONS**

*Any non-player who is not yet considered an adult, may not be between the fences or boundaries that are considered the playing field without a NOCSAE approved helmet with a NOCSAE approved face mask properly attached. Any youth division bat boys/bat girls who are the team's official bat boy/bat girl or who are team members serving as bat boy/bat girl must wear a NOCSAE approved helmet with a NOCSAE approved face mask properly attached. The coach/manager or player representing the team is responsible for insuring that the non-player be in compliance with the batting helmet rule or age rule.*

**PENALTY:** The player, non-player, bat boy or bat girl will put the helmet on or be removed from the playing area.

**NOTE:** *Native American Rosters are allowed three non-Native Americans on any team.*

## **RULE 5 THE GAME**

*Softball is a contact sport, played with Composite, Aluminum, Wood and other approved materials in design of approved bats and softballs. The game of softball can be a dangerous sport to participate in. In playing the game of softball, the player and the parents of the youth players participating in the game of softball assume for themselves and for the youth children participating in the game of softball the risk of serious injury or possible death. By agreeing to be placed on an NSA roster, the participants or parents of participants understand these risks. To reduce the risk of Injury; the National Softball Association HIGHLY RECOMMENDS THAT EVERY PLAYER wear protective equipment!*

### **SECTION 1 CLASSIFICATION**

Class A will be the only division in Native American.

### **SECTION 2**

Federally recognized tribes are eligible to participate in the Native American Program.

### **SECTION 10 HOMERUN LIMITS**

a) Class Upper - Eight (8) Home runs with the one up rule in effect

## **NSA INSURANCE PROGRAM**

**No Team, Youth or Adult, should be without NSA  
WestPoint Insurance Coverage**

Proper insurance is a concern of all the NSA Teams, Leagues, and Field Owners who host the NSA sanctioned competitions.

### **\$100,000 Accident Medical Coverage - Excess**

Accidents happen, and with today's soaring medical costs, they can ruin an injured player financially. The NSA Program offers \$100,000 of excess accident medical insurance for each covered injury which pays the bills left unpaid by other collectable insurance or health plans after a \$100 deductible.

**To learn more about the NSA / WestPoint Insurance Program,  
please visit our web site at [www.PlayNSA.com](http://www.PlayNSA.com)**

**You may also call the WestPoint Office @ 1- 800-318-7709 or  
Email [sales@westpointinsurance.com](mailto:sales@westpointinsurance.com)**

**Membership & Coverage begins with receipt of your full payment  
and enrollment request.**

**OFFICIAL**  
**NSA BPA**  
**PIN SUPPLIER**



**CONTACT US FOR YOUR  
NSA DISCOUNT**

**GH PINS**.com

**GH PINS.COM 1-844-566-PINS (7476)**

# *National Softball Association*

## *FASTPITCH & MODIFIED*

### *INDEX TO RULES*

|                                      | <u>Page</u> | <u>Rule</u> | <u>Sec.</u> | <u>Sub.</u>  |
|--------------------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|--------------|
| ALTERED BAT                          | 84          | 1           | 1           | effect       |
| Bat Specifications                   | 94-96       | 3           | 1           | a-m, note    |
| Batter Box                           | 112         | 7           | 1           | d, effect    |
| APPEAL PLAY                          | 84          | 1           | 2           |              |
| Baserunner                           | 123         | 8           | 8           | g-j, effect  |
| Batting Out of Order                 | 112-113     | 7           | 2           | a-c          |
| Dead Ball Appeal                     | 126         | 9           | 1           | m            |
| Appeal Before Time Called            | 127         | 9           | 2           | u            |
| APPROVED BAT                         | 84          | 1           | 3           |              |
| AUTOMATIC OUT                        | 101         | 4           | 6           | a-b, note    |
| BALL                                 |             |             |             |              |
| Blocked Ball                         | 85-86       | 1           | 12          | note, effect |
| Called by Umpire                     | 113-114     | 7           | 8           | a-g          |
| Dead Ball                            | 126         | 9           | 1           | a-v          |
| Fair Ball                            | 114         | 7           | 9           | a-h          |
| Foul Ball                            | 114         | 7           | 10          | a-d, effect  |
| Official Ball                        | 96          | 3           | 2           | a, exception |
| Rotation                             | 84-85       | 1           | 4           |              |
| BASE HIT                             |             |             |             |              |
| Hits Runner or Umpire                | 118         | 8           | 2/3         | g (1-2),e    |
| Batter Becomes a Runner              | 117-118     | 8           | 2           | a-g          |
| BASERUNNER                           | 85          | 1           | 6           |              |
| Assisted                             | 123         | 8           | 8           | f            |
| Awarded of Bases on Overthrow        | 120-121     | 8           | 5           | e-g          |
| Base on Balls                        | 117         | 8           | 1           | j            |
| Basepath                             | 85          | 1           | 5           |              |
| Baserunner is Out                    | 122-125     | 8           | 8           | a-z          |
| Batting Helmet                       | 85          | 1           | 10          |              |
| Contact with Fielder                 | 124         | 8           | 8           | t, penalty   |
|                                      | 125         | 8           | 9           | c            |
| Contact with Base                    | 125         | 8           | 9           | k, effect    |
| A Player Forfeits His Exemption From |             |             |             |              |
| Liability to be Put Out              | 118         | 8           | 4           | a-c          |
| Hit by Batted Ball                   | 123         | 8           | 8           | k, l         |
|                                      | 125         | 8           | 9           | d, k, n      |
| Illegal Glove Used                   | 116         | 7           | 12          | a, effect    |
| Interferes with Play                 | 123-124     | 8           | 8           | m, s, effect |
| Liability to be Put Out              | 118         | 8           | 3           | a-e          |
| Must Return to Base                  | 121         | 8           | 6           | a-e, effect  |
| Obstructed                           | 118-119     | 8           | 5           | b(1-5)       |
| Out of Base path                     | 122         | 8           | 8           | a            |
| Passes Another Runner                | 123         | 8           | 8           | e            |

|                               | <u>Page</u> | <u>Rule</u> | <u>Sec.</u> | <u>Sub</u>     |
|-------------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|----------------|
| Two Occupy Same Base          | 117         | 8           | 1           | e-effect       |
| BAT                           | 94-96       | 3           | 1           | a-m, note      |
| Hitting Ball a Second Time    | 113         | 7           | 6           | eff.,ex.,note  |
| BATTER                        |             |             |             |                |
| Becomes a Baserunner          | 117-118     | 8           | 2           | a-g            |
| Hit by Fair Ball              | 113         | 7           | 7           | f              |
| Hit by Pitch                  | 85          | 1           | 7           | exception      |
|                               | 113         | 7           | 7           | g, effect      |
| Illegal Glove Used            | 116         | 7           | 12          | a, effect      |
| Not Taking Position           | 112         | 7           | 1           | e, effect      |
| Obstructed by Catcher         | 119         | 8           | 5           | c              |
| On-Deck Batter                | 116         | 7           | 13          | a-f            |
| Position within Lines         | 111-112     | 7           | 1           | a-e            |
| When Out is Made While at Bat | 114-115     | 7           | 11          | a-l            |
| 3rd Out is Made While at Bat  | 113         | 7           | 4           |                |
| BATTER'S BOX                  | 85          | 1           | 8           |                |
|                               | 92          | 2           | 4           | c              |
|                               | 111-112     | 7           | 1           | a-e,effect     |
| BATTER-BASERUNNER             | 85          | 1           | 9           |                |
|                               | 117-118     | 8           | 2           | a-g            |
|                               | 118         | 8           | 4           | a-c            |
| Batting Helmet                | 85          | 1           | 10          |                |
|                               | 98          | 3           | 7           | ex.,pen.       |
| Overrunning 1st Base          | 123         | 8           | 8           | i              |
| Runs Outside 3 Foot Line      | 121-122     | 8           | 7           | e              |
| BATTING ORDER                 | 85          | 1           | 11          |                |
| Out of Order                  | 112-113     | 7           | 2           | a-c            |
| Extra Player (EP)             | 100         | 4           | 3           | b, 1-4         |
| Removal of EP                 | 100         | 4           | 3           | b              |
| BLOCKED BALL                  | 85-86       | 1           | 12          | note,eff.,note |
|                               | 120-121     | 8           | 5           | e-g            |
| BLOOD RULE                    | 104         | 4           | 12          | note           |
| BUNT                          | 86          | 1           | 13          |                |
|                               | 115         | 7           | 11          | h              |
| BUNT ATTEMPT                  | 86          | 1           | 14          |                |
|                               | 115         | 7           | 11          | e,eff.,note    |
| CAPS                          | 97          | 3           | 6           | a              |
| CASTS                         | 98          | 3           | 6           | g              |
| CATCH                         | 86          | 1           | 15          |                |
| CATCHER'S BOX                 | 86          | 1           | 16          |                |
|                               | 92          | 2           | 4           | d              |
|                               | 109         | 6           | 5           | d              |

|                                       | <u>Page</u> | <u>Rule</u> | <u>Sec.</u> | <u>Sub</u>     |
|---------------------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|----------------|
| CHAMPIONSHIP PLAY                     | 86          | 1           | 17          |                |
| CHARGED CONFERENCE                    | 86          | 1           | 18          | a-b            |
| Defensive                             | 111         | 6           | 15          | ex.,note, note |
| Offensive                             | 108         | 5           | 8           | penalty        |
| COACH                                 | 86-87       | 1           | 19          |                |
| Assists Runner                        | 123         | 8           | 8           | f              |
| Box                                   | 92          | 2           | 4           | e              |
| Draws a Throw                         | 123         | 8           | 8           | o              |
| Interferes                            | 124         | 8           | 8           | r              |
| CONDITION OF FIELD                    | 106         | 5           | 2           |                |
| COURTESY RUNNER                       | 102         | 4           | 8           | penalty        |
| CROW HOP                              | 87          | 1           | 20          |                |
|                                       | 109         | 6           | 4           | note 2         |
| DEAD BALL                             | 87          | 1           | 21          |                |
|                                       | 126         | 9           | 1           | a-v            |
| Ball Carried into Dead Ball Territory | 121         | 8           | 5           | g, note        |
| Delayed                               | 87          | 1           | 22          |                |
| Delivery                              | 87          | 1           | 23          |                |
| DISLODGED BASE                        | 116         | 8           | 1           | c              |
|                                       | 118         | 8           | 4           | c              |
| DOUBLE FIRST BASE                     | 124-125     | 8           | 8           | z              |
| EJECTION FROM GAME                    | 84          | 1           | 1           | effect         |
| Altered Bat                           | 112         | 7           | 1           | d, effect      |
|                                       | 114         | 7           | 11          | b              |
| Deliberate Crash                      | 124         | 8           | 8           | t, penalty     |
| Violation of Rules                    | 129         | 10          | 7           | a-d            |
| ELIGIBILITY (Youth)                   | 103-104     | 4           | 10          | a-f, note      |
| EQUIPMENT                             | 92-99       | 3           | 1-8         |                |
| Softball                              | 96          | 3           | 2           | a, exception   |
| Gloves                                | 97          | 3           | 3           |                |
| Batting Helmet                        | 98          | 3           | 7           | exc, pen.      |
| Catcher Protective Equip.             | 98-99       | 3           | 8           |                |
| EXTRA PLAYER (EP)                     | 100         | 4           | 3           | b,1-4          |
|                                       | 101         | 4           | 5           | note           |
| FAIR BALL                             | 87          | 1           | 24          | a-e, note      |
|                                       | 114         | 7           | 9           | a-h            |
| FAKE TAG                              | 118-119     | 8           | 5           | b, (3)&note    |
| FLAGARANT OBSTRUCTION                 | 87          | 1           | 25          | penalty        |

|                            | <u>Page</u> | <u>Rule</u> | <u>Sec.</u> | <u>Sub</u>    |
|----------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|---------------|
| FORCE OUT                  | 87          | 1           | 26          |               |
|                            | 118         | 8           | 4           | a             |
|                            | 121         | 8           | 7           | b             |
| FORFEITED GAME             | 106-107     | 5           | 3           | d, e, 1-8     |
| FOUL BALL                  | 87-88       | 1           | 27          | a-e & note    |
|                            | 113         | 7           | 7           | c & d         |
|                            | 114         | 7           | 10          | a-d & effect  |
| FOUL TIP                   | 88          | 1           | 28          | note          |
|                            | 113         | 7           | 7           | c             |
| GROUND RULES               | 128         | 10          | 1           | a             |
| GUEST PLAYERS              | 100-101     | 4           | 4           | a-d           |
| ILLEGAL BAT                | 88          | 1           | 29          |               |
|                            | 94-96       | 3           | 1           | a-m, note     |
|                            | 112         | 7           | 1           | c             |
|                            | 126         | 9           | 1           | r             |
| ILLEGAL PITCH              | 88          | 1           | 30          |               |
|                            | 108-110     | 6           | 1-8         |               |
| Modified                   | 143         | 6           | 1-3         |               |
| ILLEGALLY BATTED BALL      | 88          | 1           | 32          | a-c           |
|                            | 112         | 7           | 1           | c-d, effect   |
| ILLEGALLY CAUGHT BALL      | 88          | 1           | 33          |               |
| Detached Equipment         | 119-120     | 8           | 5           | d, effect     |
| Illegal Glove              | 116         | 7           | 12          | a, effect     |
| ILLEGAL PLAYER             | 88          | 1           | 31          |               |
|                            | 102-103     | 4           | 9           |               |
| IN JEOPARDY                | 88          | 1           | 35          |               |
| IN PLAY                    | 126-127     | 9           | 2           | a-v, effect   |
| INFIELD FLY                | 89          | 1           | 36          | note          |
|                            | 115         | 7           | 11          | d             |
| INJURED RUNNER             | 126         | 9           | 1           | j             |
| INNING                     | 89          | 1           | 37          |               |
| INSURANCE                  | 104         | 4           | 11          | note          |
| INTENTIONALLY DROPPED BALL | 115         | 7           | 11          | e, eff., note |
|                            | 126         | 9           | 1           | s             |
| INTERFERENCE               | 89          | 1           | 38          |               |
|                            | 123-124     | 8           | 8           | j-s, effect   |
| By Batter at Home Plate    | 123         | 8           | 8           | n             |
| By Catcher (Obstruction)   | 118         | 8           | 2           | f, 1-3        |

|                          | <u>Page</u> | <u>Rule</u> | <u>Sec.</u> | <u>Sub</u>    |
|--------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|---------------|
| JEWELRY                  | 97-98       | 3           | 6           | b, f          |
| LEAP                     | 89          | 1           | 39          | effect        |
|                          | 109         | 6           | 4           | note, 2       |
| LEGAL PITCH              | 108         | 6           | 1           | a-e           |
| Modified                 | 143         | 6           | 1           | a-e           |
| LEGAL TOUCH              | 89          | 1           | 40          |               |
| LEGALLY CAUGHT BALL      | 89          | 1           | 41          |               |
| LIVE BALL                | 126-127     | 9           | 2           | a-v, effect   |
| LOOK BACK RULE           | 124         | 8           | 8           | x             |
| NON-APPROVED BAT         | 89          | 1           | 42          |               |
| OBSTRUCTION              | 89-90       | 1           | 43          | note          |
|                          | 118-119     | 8           | 5           | b, eff., 1-5  |
| OVERSLIDE                | 90          | 1           | 44          |               |
| OVERTHROW                | 90          | 1           | 45          |               |
| Award of Bases           | 120         | 8           | 5           | e, eff., 1-4  |
| PASSED BALL              | 90          | 1           | 46          |               |
| PITCH Fastpitch          |             |             |             |               |
| Illegal Pitch            | 108-110     | 6           | 1-8         | penalty       |
| No pitch                 | 110         | 6           | 9           | a-c, penalty  |
| Returned by Catcher      | 109         | 6           | 5           | e             |
| Warm up Pitches          | 110-111     | 6           | 11          | penalty, note |
| PITCHING CIRCLE          | 92          | 2           | 4           | f             |
|                          | 124         | 8           | 8           | x             |
| PITCHING DISTANCES       | 91          | 2           | 2           |               |
| PITCHING REGULATIONS     |             |             |             |               |
| Modified                 | 143         | 6           | 1 - 3       |               |
| PIVOT FOOT               | 90          | 1           | 47          |               |
| PLAYING FIELD DIMENSIONS | 91          | 2           | 2           |               |
| PROTESTS                 | 131-132     | 11          | 1-7         |               |
| QUICK PITCH              | 90          | 1           | 48          |               |
| RE-ENTRY                 | 101         | 4           | 5           | a - b         |
| ROSTER SIGNING DATE      | 108         | 5           | 9           |               |

|                         | <u>Page</u> | <u>Rule</u> | <u>Sec.</u> | <u>Sub</u>      |
|-------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-----------------|
| RUNS NOT SCORED         | 107-108     | 5           | 5-7         |                 |
|                         | 117         | 8           | 1           | f               |
| SACRIFICE               | 90          | 1           | 49          |                 |
| SHOES                   | 96-97       | 3           | 4           | penalty         |
| SQUEEZE                 | 90          | 1           | 50          |                 |
|                         | 118         | 8           | 3           | a               |
| STOLEN BASE             | 90          | 1           | 51          |                 |
| STRIKE                  | 113         | 7           | 7           | a-g effect      |
| STRIKE ZONE             | 90          | 1           | 52          |                 |
| SUBSTITUTE              |             |             |             |                 |
| Extra Player (EP)       | 100         | 4           | 3           | b, 4            |
| No Substitute Available | 107         | 5           | 3           | e (7)           |
| Notify Umpire           | 101-102     | 4           | 7-8         | note            |
| Officially in the Game  | 101-102     | 4           | 7           |                 |
| SUSPENSION OF PLAY      | 107         | 5           | 3           | f,g,h           |
|                         | 129         | 10          | 6           | a-d             |
| THIRD STRIKE RULE       | 114-115     | 7           | 11          | a, h & i, notes |
| THREE FOOT LINE         | 90          | 1           | 53          |                 |
| TIE BREAKER             | 91          | 1           | 54          |                 |
| TIME                    | 91          | 1           | 55          |                 |
| By Umpire               | 126         | 9           | 1           | l, m            |
| Player, Coach, Manager  | 111         | 6           | 14          | penalty         |
| TURN AT BAT             | 91          | 1           | 56          |                 |
| TWIN PLAYERS            | 100         | 4           | 2           | a-d             |
| UMPIRES                 | 127-131     | 10          | 1-9         |                 |
| UNIFORMS                | 97-98       | 3           | 6           | a-d             |
| VIOLATIONS              | 129         | 10          | 7           | a-d             |
| WILD PITCH              | 91          | 1           | 57          |                 |
| WINDUP                  | 109-110     | 6           | 6           | a-e             |
| WRISTBAND OF PITCHER    | 110         | 6           | 8           | penalty         |

LAUREN  
CHAMBERLAIN  
NCAA CAREER HOME RUN  
RECORD HOLDER

KEILANI  
RICKETTS  
2013 WCWS MVP

**SWING LIKE A PRO**

FIND IT NOW ON [WORTHSPORTS.COM](http://WORTHSPORTS.COM)

**WORTH**  
fastpitch experts

# *The National Softball Association's FASTPITCH & MODIFIED OFFICIAL PLAY RULES*

**Official playing rules can be found at [www.playNSA.com](http://www.playNSA.com). All updates or corrections can be found there as this book is only a guide.**

*It is the responsibility of coaches, managers, players and sponsors to know the NSA Rules and Bylaws. Ignorance of these Rules and Bylaws is not grounds for protest or appeal. Softball is a contact sport, played with Composite, Aluminum, Wood and other approved materials in the design of approved bats. The game of softball can be a dangerous sport to participate in. In playing the game of softball, the player and the parents of the youth players participating in the game of softball assume for themselves and for the youth children participating in the game of softball the risk of serious injury or possible death. By agreeing to be placed on an NSA roster, the participants or parents of participants understand these risks.*

**NOTE:** *The following rules govern play in both the Fastpitch and Modified Programs of the National Softball Association. The only variation between the two programs is the Modified Pitching Rules, which can be found in Rule 6.*

**New Rule Changes & Additions are shown in bold highlighted print.**

## **RULE 1 DEFINITIONS**

### **SECTION 1 ALTERED BAT**

A bat is considered altered when the physical structure of a legal bat has been changed, or an illegal or non-approved bat has been changed to resemble a legal bat. Examples of altering a bat are, but not limited to, the following: painting a bat, replacing the handle of a metal bat with a wooden or other type handle, or inserting material inside the bat. A flare or cone grip that does not meet the specifications of Rule 3 is considered an altered bat.

**EFFECT:** *The ball is dead, the batter is out and baserunners may not advance. The batter is ejected for using an altered bat (In Youth Play the coach is also ejected).*

### **SECTION 2 APPEAL PLAY**

A play in which an umpire cannot make a decision until requested by a manager, coach, or player. The appeal must be made before the next legal or illegal pitch. Any dead ball appeal as a game ending play must be made before the umpires have left the field. The appealed play does not change the type of out that is being appealed. **An Appeal may be made after the 3<sup>rd</sup> out, to negate a run if appealed properly**

### **SECTION 3 APPROVED BAT**

A bat model becomes approved after the bat manufacturer submits the bat to NSA after being tested by the official test facility and said model meets the requirements of a legal bat as defined in Rule 3, Sec.1.

### **SECTION 4 BALL ROTATION**

A pitcher will have a choice of balls at the start of each half inning, with the exception that if both balls do not get put into play in the first half of the first inning; the pitcher in the bottom of the first inning must pitch the unused ball.

Thereafter, every third out, the ball in play must be returned to the eight-foot circle. The pitcher now taking the field has a ball to start the next half inning. Before throwing a warm-up pitch, the pitcher may request to pitch the other ball giving the ball in his/her possession to the plate umpire. A choice has now been made, and the pitcher must pitch this ball until it goes out of play or becomes blocked.

#### **SECTION 5 BASE PATH**

The base path is an imaginary line three feet on either side of a direct line between the bases.

#### **SECTION 6 BASERUNNER**

A player on the team at bat who has finished his batting turn, reached first base, and has not yet been put out.

#### **SECTION 7 BATTER HIT BY PITCH**

A legal or illegally pitched ball that hits the batter's person or clothing, provided the batter does not strike at the pitched ball. The plate umpire will award first base to the batter hit by the pitch. Any runners will advance one base if forced due to the batter being awarded first base. If an illegal pitch hits the batter, all baserunners will advance one base without liability to be put out.

**EXCEPTION:** *If the umpire calls the pitched ball a strike, the ball striking the batter is disregarded, and the ball is dead. The pitched ball is a strike or ball depending on the location of the pitched ball.*

#### **SECTION 8 BATTER'S BOX**

The area that the batter is restricted to while in position to bat. The batter must have both feet entirely within the lines of the box prior to the pitch. The lines are considered to be within the box.

#### **SECTION 9 BATTER-RUNNER**

A player who has finished his turn at bat but has not yet been put out or touched first base.

#### **SECTION 10 BATTING HELMET**

A batting helmet bearing the NOCSAE stamp is mandatory for each batter, on-deck batter, player, youth coach in the coach's box and any runner. The batting helmet worn by each batter, on-deck batter, player and youth coach in the coaches boxes and all runners must have extended ear flaps which cover both ears and temples. If a pitcher wears a batting helmet, the outer covering must have a non-glare surface. ALL HELMETS SHALL BE FITTED WITH A NOCSAE APPROVED FACE GUARD.

#### **SECTION 11 BATTING ORDER**

The batting order is the official lineup of offensive players listing the order in which team members must come to bat. A lineup card must include each player's name, number, and defensive position. Extra Players (EP) and Twin Player must also be included. In all tournaments during POOL PLAY ONLY, it is OPTIONAL to bat the entire team roster, resulting in NO FIXED NUMBER OF EP'S. However, should one or more players get injured, ill or otherwise unable to continue the game. All pertinent rules governing normal use of the EP rule as described in Rule 4 Sec 3 are in effect.

#### **SECTION 12 BLOCKED BALL**

A live ball that is touched, stopped, or handled by a person not engaged in the game, or which touches any object that is not part of the official equipment or playing area.

**NOTE:** *A blocked ball is not called when a live ball strikes a base coach unintentionally.*

**EFFECT:** *The ball is dead. See Rule 8. Sec. 5 (e) for enforcement.*

**\*NOTE:** *When offensive equipment causes a blocked ball, the runner closest to home plate will be declared out and all other runners must return to the last base touched at the time the ball became blocked.*

### **SECTION 13 BUNT**

A bunt is a fair ball in which the batter does not take a full swing but holds the bat in such a manner in the path of the ball to tap the ball slowly to the infield.

### **SECTION 14 BUNT ATTEMPT**

Any non-swinging movement of the bat intended to tap the ball into play. The mere holding of the bat in the strike zone is considered a bunt attempt no matter the placement of the pitch. To take a pitch the batter must withdraw the bat away from the ball.

### **SECTION 15 CATCH**

A catch is a legally caught ball, which occurs when a fielder secures a batted or thrown ball with his/her hand or glove. If the ball is merely held in the fielder's arms or is prevented from dropping to the ground by some part of the fielder's body or clothing, the catch is not completed until the ball is in the grasp of the fielder's hand or glove. It is not a catch if a fielder, immediately after he/she contacts the ball, collides with another player or wall or falls to the ground and drops the ball as a result of the collision or falling to the ground. In establishing a valid catch, the fielder shall have complete control of the ball and his/her release of the ball is voluntary and intentional. If a player drops the ball while in the act of throwing, it is a valid catch.

### **SECTION 16 CATCHER'S BOX**

The catcher's box is the area in which the catcher must stay until the pitched ball is released. The lines of the box are considered within the box. All of the catcher's body and equipment must be within the catcher's box until the pitcher releases the ball. The umpire indicates an illegal pitch if the catcher is not in this position.

**EXCEPTION:** *When the batter is positioned in the front of the batter's box, the catcher may move closer without effect.*

### **SECTION 17 CHAMPIONSHIP PLAY**

Championship Play designates tournaments that carry the title of NIT, STATE, REGIONAL AND WORLD SERIES.

### **SECTION 18 CHARGED CONFERENCE**

A charged conference takes place when:

- a) Defensive Conference - The defensive team requests a suspension of play for any reason, and a representative not on the field enters the playing field and delivers a message (by any means) to the pitcher or any defensive player. It is not a charged conference when the representative enters the field and removes the pitcher, or if the defensive team confers while the offensive team is in conference.
- b) Offensive Conference - The offensive team requests a suspension of play to allow the manager or other team representative, on or off the field, to confer with a batter or baserunner. It is not a charged conference when an offensive pitcher is putting on a warm-up jacket on base or if the offensive team confers while the defensive team is in conference.

### **SECTION 19 COACH**

A member of the team at bat who takes his/her place in the coach's box to direct his/her players in running the bases. Two coaches are allowed, one positioned at 1st base and one positioned at 3rd base. One coach can have in

his/her possession, a scorebook and an indicator that shall be used for scorekeeping purposes only. A defensive coach or manager must remain in the dugout at their normal position. If the manager or coach does not comply after a warning from the umpire, he/she will be ejected from the game.

#### **SECTION 20 CROW HOP**

Prior to delivering the pitch, the pitcher replants the pivot foot and pushes off from a spot other than the pitcher's plate.

#### **SECTION 21 DEAD BALL**

The ball is not in play, and not considered in play again, until the pitcher has the ball in his/her possession and the umpire has called "play ball".

#### **SECTION 22 DELAYED DEAD BALL**

An infraction, signaled by the umpire, in which the ball remains alive until all play has been completed and time has been called.

#### **SECTION 23 DELIVERY**

Delivery of the pitch begins when the hands separate and ends with the release of the ball.

#### **SECTION 24 FAIR BALL**

A fair ball is a batted ball that:

- a) Settles on fair territory between home plate and 1st base or home plate and 3rd base.
- b) Is on or over fair territory, including any part of 1st and 3rd bases, when bounding toward the outfield or touches 1st, 2nd or 3rd base.
- c) First falls in fair territory beyond 1st or 3rd base.
- d) Touches the person of any umpire or player while in or over fair territory.
- e) While over fair territory, passes out of the playing field, beyond the outfield fence.

**NOTE:** *A fair fly shall be judged according to the relative position of the ball and foul line and not as to the position of the fielder at the time he/she touches the ball. It does not matter whether the ball first touches fair or foul territory, as long as it does not touch anything foreign to the natural ground in foul territory and complies with all other aspects of a fair ball. Home plate is in fair territory.*

#### **SECTION 25 FLAGRANT PLAYER OBSTRUCTION**

Is the act of a defensive fielder flagrantly, and with excessive force, impedes the runner or batter/runner.

**PENALTY:** *Immediate ejection of the defensive player.*

#### **SECTION 26 FORCE OUT**

A force out is an out which can be made only when a baserunner loses the right to the base he/she is occupying because the batter becomes a batter-runner, and before the batter-runner or a succeeding baserunner has been put out.

#### **SECTION 27 FOUL BALL**

A foul ball is a batted ball that:

- a) Settles on foul territory between home plate and 1st base or home plate and 3rd base.
- b) Bounds past 1st and 3rd base on or over foul territory.
- c) Falls first on foul territory beyond 1st or 3rd base.
- d) While on or over foul ground, touches an umpire, player, or foreign object to the natural ground.
- e) Touches the batter or bat in the batter's hand while within the lines of the batter's box.

**NOTE:** *A foul fly ball shall be judged according to the relative position of the ball and the foul line and not the position of the fielder.*

#### **SECTION 28 FOULED TIP**

A fouled tip is a batted ball that goes directly from the bat, to the catcher's hands or glove, and is legally caught by the catcher. A fouled tip is a strike. The batter is out if it is the third strike. A fouled tip remains alive. A runner may advance with liability to be put out from one base to another on a fouled tip without tagging. The fouled tip is treated as if it were a swing and miss. A batted ball that travels directly from the bat not higher than the batter's head to any part of the catcher's body or equipment other than the hand(s) or glove is a fouled ball is dead and is not a fouled tip. A batted ball that goes higher than the batter's head is a fouled ball and it is not a fouled tip. If legally caught, the batter is out.

**NOTE:** *Any fouled tip is a strike, and the ball is in play.*

#### **SECTION 29 ILLEGAL BAT**

An illegal bat is one that does not meet the requirements. Rule 3, Sec. 1

#### **SECTION 30 ILLEGAL PITCH**

An illegal pitch is a delayed dead ball and is any infraction of the pitching. Rule 6, Sec. 1 – 8.

#### **SECTION 31 ILLEGAL PLAYER**

A Player who enters the line-up without the right to an offensive or defensive position.

Examples of an illegal player(s) but not limited to are:

- a) Illegal use of the re-entry rule.
- b) Using a player to pitch who was removed from the pitching position.

#### **SECTION 32 ILLEGALLY BATTED BALL**

An illegally batted ball occurs when:

- a) A batter's entire foot is completely out of the box, on the ground, when he/she hits the ball fair or foul.
- b) Any part of the batter's foot is touching home plate when he/she hits the ball.
- c) The batter hits the ball with an illegal, altered bat or non-approved bat.

#### **SECTION 33 ILLEGALLY CAUGHT BALL**

Occurs when a fielder catches a batted or thrown ball with his/her cap, illegal glove or any part of his/her uniform, detached from its proper place. See Rule 1, Sec.15.

#### **SECTION 34 INELIGIBLE PLAYER**

A player who is unregistered or who does not meet the requirements to register.

**PENALTY:** *The penalty for using an ineligible player is a forfeit of any/all games played or in progress.*

Examples of an ineligible player but not limited to are:

- a) Playing under an assumed name.
- b) Players not on a team roster.
- c) Violating residency requirements.
- d) Violating divisional age requirements.
- e) Player(s) that are listed on two (2) official NSA Sanctioned Rosters without an Official Release Form on file in the State Director's Office.
- f) An ejected player.

#### **SECTION 35 IN JEOPARDY**

A term indicating that the ball is in play and an offensive player may be put out.

## **SECTION 36      INFIELD FLY**

An infield fly is a fair ball (not including a line drive or an attempted bunt), which can be caught by an infielder with ordinary effort when 1st and 2nd or 1st, 2nd and 3rd bases are occupied before two are out. Any fielder can catch an infield fly.

**NOTE:** *All divisions play with an infield fly rule.*

**\*NOTE:** *When it seems apparent that a batted ball will be an infield fly, the umpire(s) shall immediately declare, "infield fly, the batter is out" to aid the runners. If the ball is near the foul lines, the umpire(s) shall declare "infield fly, the batter is out if fair". The ball is alive and runners may advance at the risk of the ball being caught or retouch and advance after the ball is touched by a fielder. If the hit ball becomes a foul ball, it is treated the same as any other foul ball.*

## **SECTION 37      INNING**

An inning is that portion of a game in which the teams alternate between offense/defense. There are three outs for each team. A new inning begins when the third out of the bottom of an inning is declared.

## **SECTION 38      INTERFERENCE**

Interference is the act of an offensive player or team member, who impedes or confuses a defensive player while attempting to execute a play. If judged so by the umpire, vocal interference may be called.

## **SECTION 39      LEAP**

The pivot foot must remain in contact with the pitcher's plate or the ground until the non pivot (front foot) touches the ground or the pitcher shall be considered leaping.

**EFFECT:** *An illegal pitch is called on the pitcher.*

## **SECTION 40      LEGAL TOUCH**

A legal touch occurs when a runner or batter-runner who is not touching a base, is touched by the ball while the ball is held securely in a fielder's hand(s). The ball is not considered as being securely held if it is juggled or dropped by the fielder after having touched the runner, unless the runner deliberately knocks the ball from the hand of the fielder. It is sufficient for the fielder to touch the runner with the glove that holds the ball.

## **SECTION 41      LEGALLY CAUGHT BALL**

A legally caught ball occurs when a fielder catches a batted or thrown ball, provided it is not caught in the fielder's cap, hat, pocket, protector, or any other part of his/her uniform. It must be caught and firmly held with the hand or hands.

## **SECTION 42      NON - APPROVED BAT**

**A non-approved bat is one that does not bear the NSA 2012 logo (See Rule 3 Equipment) or one that bears the NSA 2012 logo from a bat company that is not listed on the approved bat companies list found at [www.PlayNSA.com](http://www.PlayNSA.com) or that is listed on the Non-Approved Bat List.**

## **SECTION 43      OBSTRUCTION**

Obstruction is the act of a defensive team member who hinders or impedes a batter's attempt to make contact with a pitched ball, or who impedes the progress of a runner or batter-runner who is legally running the bases, unless the fielder is in possession of the ball or is fielding a batted ball. The act may be intentional or unintentional, physical, or verbal.

**NOTE:** *Catcher obstruction is called when the catcher obstructs the batter who is attempting to hit or swing at a pitch. Prior to the pitch catcher*

*obstruction does not apply, a dead ball shall be called and the batter shall be allowed to reset himself/herself.*

#### **SECTION 44      OVERSLIDE**

An over slide is the act of the offensive player sliding over and beyond a base he/she is attempting to reach. This is usually caused by his/her momentum making him/her lose contact with the base which causes him/her to be in jeopardy. The batter-runner may over slide first base without being in jeopardy if he/she immediately returns to that base.

#### **SECTION 45      OVERTHROW**

An overthrow is a play in which a ball is thrown to retire a runner who has not yet reached or is off base and goes into foul territory beyond the boundary lines of the playing field.

#### **SECTION 46      PASSED BALL**

A pitch the catcher fails to, with ordinary effort, stop or control and which enables a runner(s) to advance.

#### **SECTION 47      PIVOT FOOT**

The pitcher's foot that must be in contact with the pitcher's plate or ground until the pitcher steps towards home plate.

#### **SECTION 48      QUICK PITCH**

A quick pitch is made by the pitcher with the attempt to catch the batter off balance. This would be before the batter takes his/her position in the batter's box or while he/she is still off balance as a result of the previous pitch.

#### **SECTION 49      SACRIFICE**

A batter is credited with a sacrifice when, with not more than one out, a bunt or hit fly ball enables a runner to score. In either case, the batter-runner would be put out before reaching first base or would have been put out if the hit had fielded without error.

#### **SECTION 50      SQUEEZE**

A play in which the runner advances toward home plate from third base following the release of the pitched ball, and the batter bunts the ball permitting the runner to score.

#### **SECTION 51      STEALING (STOLEN BASE/DOUBLE STEAL)**

The act of a runner attempting to advance to the next base without the aid of a base hit, putout, or a fielding (including batter) error. An attempted steal involving more than one runner (two or three) is considered a double or triple steal. The act of a runner attempting to advance during the pitch or after the pitch has reached the plate is considered to be the act of stealing.

#### **SECTION 52      STRIKE ZONE**

The strike zone is that space over any part of home plate that is between the batter's armpit and the top of the batter's knees when the natural batting stance is assumed. Any part of the ball passing through this strike zone is considered a strike. The umpire is instructed to determine the batter's strike zone according to the batter's usual stance when swinging at a pitch.

#### **SECTION 53      THREE (3) FOOT LINE**

The three (3) foot line is a line parallel to, and three (3) feet from the base line, starting at a point halfway between home plate and first base. The batter-runner is declared out when he/she runs outside the three (3) foot line, and in the judgment of the umpire, interferes with the fielder attempting to field a batted ball or interfering with a thrown ball.

## **SECTION 54 TIE BREAKER/EXTRA INNINGS**

After the completion of seven (7) innings or when the time limit has expired and the score is still tied, the tie-breaker procedure will begin. **This would involve the last recorded out assuming a position on second base.** This would be done at the beginning of each half inning, until, at the conclusion of a full inning, a winner is determined.

## **SECTION 55 TIME**

The term used by the umpire to order the suspension of play.

## **SECTION 56 TURN AT BAT**

A player's turn at bat begins when he/she enters the batter's box and continues until he/she is putout or becomes a baserunner.

## **SECTION 57 WILD PITCH**

A pitch that cannot be handled by the catcher with ordinary effort.

# **RULE 2 THE PLAYING FIELD**

## **SECTION 1**

The playing field is the area within which the ball may be legally played and fielded. The playing field shall have a clear and unobstructed area within the radius of the prescribed fence distances, from home plate between the foul lines.

## **SECTION 2**

The playing field dimensions for youth and adult Fastpitch/modified softball programs are as follows:

| <u>AGE GROUPS</u> | <u>MINIMUM FENCE DISTANCE</u> | <u>MAXIMUM FENCE DISTANCE</u> | <u>BASE DISTANCE</u> | <u>PITCHING DISTANCE</u> |
|-------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------|--------------------------|
| GIRLS 10 & U      | 150 ft                        | 200 ft                        | 60 ft                | 35 FEET                  |
| GIRLS 12 & U      | 175 ft                        | 200 ft                        | 60 ft                | 40 FEET                  |
| GIRLS 14 & U      | 175 ft                        | 200 ft                        | 60 ft                | 43 FEET                  |
| GIRLS 16 & U      | 200 ft                        | 225 ft                        | 60 ft                | 43 FEET                  |
| GIRLS 18 & U      | 200 ft                        | 225 ft                        | 60 ft                | 43 FEET                  |
| ADULT WOMEN       | 200 ft                        | 225 ft                        | 60 ft                | 43 FEET                  |
| ADULT MEN         | 225 ft                        | 250 ft                        | 60 ft                | 46 ft                    |
|                   | NONE (MODIFIED)               |                               | 65 ft (MODIFIED)     |                          |

a) Distances from home plate to 2<sup>nd</sup> base:

65' bases - 91'11"

60' bases - 84'10"

55' bases - 77'9"

50' bases - 70'8 1/2"

### **SECTION 3**

Ground rules or special rules establishing the limits of the playing field may be agreed upon by leagues or opposing teams whenever backstops, fences, stands, vehicles, spectators, or other obstructions are within the prescribed area.

### **SECTION 4**

The playing field layout should include, in addition to marking for foul lines, the following:

- a) The three-foot line is drawn parallel to and 3 feet from the base line, starting at a point halfway between home plate and 1st base.
- b) The batter's on-deck circle is a 5-foot circle placed between home plate and 1st base and between home plate and 3rd base.
- c) The batter's box, one on each side of home plate, shall measure 3 feet by 7 feet. The inside lines of the batter's box shall be 6 inches from home plate. The front line shall be 4 feet in front of the center of the plate. The lines are considered as being in the batter's box.
- d) The catcher's box shall be 10 feet in length from the rear outside corners of the batter's boxes and shall be 8 feet 5 inches wide.
- e) The coach's box is behind a line 15 feet long drawn outside the diamond, toward home plate.
- f) There shall be a sixteen (16) foot circle drawn around the pitcher's plate, eight (8) feet in radius.

### **SECTION 5**

If during the course of any game, the base distance or pitching distance is found to be in error, the error should be corrected immediately, and the game should continue. This is not a point to be protested.

## **RULE 3 EQUIPMENT**

By taking the field (no matter if a pre-game conference with the coach/manager was held or not, or if an equipment check was performed or not) the coach and/or team manager/representative automatically verifies that his/her team is legally and properly equipped.

### ***NSA Altered Bat and Altered Ball Procedures***

*For the past several years the NSA has embarked on more stringent test procedures for bats and balls. NSA feels that it has the very best testing procedures in the game; however, there are always players, coaches and outside agencies who will do their best to get around these rules. The rules were implemented to keep our patrons safe and to make this game the safest it can be. With the one word "SAFETY" in mind, NSA will not tolerate anyone who would embark in any manner that would put our patrons in peril. As a Director, UIC or Umpire, if you feel that a player may be using an altered bat or ball in NSA play, the Director or UIC will have the authority to inspect the bat or ball and to suspend the suspected player(s). The offending player(s) will have two choices only: 1) He/she can allow the NSA representative to inspect the bat or ball and the NSA representative can reach a conclusion as to whether the bat or ball may be altered or he/she can refuse to allow the representative to inspect the bat or ball and take an immediate five (5) year suspension from any and all NSA play with no right of appeal. In addition to the immediate five (5) year suspension by the offending player and/or team,*

*failure to allow a site inspection of the bat or ball or failure to allow the bat or ball to be sent into the NSA National Headquarters for further inspection, will result in forfeit of the game in progress, and forfeiture of all remaining games in the tournament; WITH NO REFUND of entry fees. 2) He/she may after allowing the NSA representative to inspect the bat or ball and the NSA Representative has decided that the bat or ball "could be" altered; the player may allow the director to send the bat or ball to the NSA National Headquarters for inspection. If the NSA National Headquarters decides that the bat or ball may be altered, the NSA will then send the bat or ball to the Manufacturer of the bat or ball for a final determination on whether the bat or ball is altered, or he/she can accept an immediate two (2) year suspension without the right of appeal. During the time of the examination of the bat or ball by NSA and/or the Manufacturer, depending on the sole discretion of the NSA National Headquarters, the NSA may suspend the suspected offending player pending the findings from the Manufacturer and or NSA or final decision of the NSA. If the NSA and/or the Manufacturer determine in their sole discretion that the bat or ball has been altered, the NSA may suspend a first time offender no less than two (2) years and no more than five (5) years. A suspension decision may be appealed by contacting the Executive VP of the National Softball Association and scheduling an Appeal hearing at the convenience of the National Softball Association at the NSA National Headquarters, which is located at 101 NSA Way, Nicholasville, Kentucky. A second time offender under this altered bat/ball suspension process will be suspended for life.*

*The responsibility for knowing whether a bat or ball is altered is that of the user and/or the owner of the bat or ball. If an individual uses a bat or ball in NSA play or is the owner of a bat or ball that is brought into an NSA game or facility, the suspensions will be imposed without regard to what the individual knew about the bat or ball being altered. "An individual must know that his/her bat or ball is not an altered bat or ball, if he/she brings either into an NSA facility or game. If not, the individual can be suspended from any and all NSA activities. The fact that the individual did not know that the bat or ball was altered is not a factor in imposing the suspension. The question is only whether the bat or ball is altered or not.*

*An altered bat is considered altered when the physical structure of the legal bat has been changed in any way, or when an illegal or non-approved bat has been made up in such a way as to appear to be a legal bat. Examples of altering a bat are, but not limited to the following: Painting a bat, replacing the handle rolling, compressing the bat in any way that is not done during the act of batting/hitting a softball or shaving the handle or barrel or the taper changed in any way such as by sandpapering or applying a solvent to the surface such as fingernail polish remover or by any other means, removing or replacing the plug or changed in any way other than factory repairs, had the knob removed/replaced or changed in any way or had anything removed or added to the inside or outside of the bat other than the legal way to tape the bat the specified and appropriate place as described in the NSA Rule Book.*

*Examples of an altered ball (but not limited too) are: Any ball frozen, or kept cold in a cooler to make the core harder or livelier or any ball that has been*

cooked in a microwave oven, or the seams/stitches or cover that has been altered in any way. If the physical structure of the ball (inside or outside) has been altered in any way other than the alterations that is caused by usage, that ball is to be considered altered. Should an umpire or player be thrown a ball that is colder than the outside temperature, that ball is to be immediately thrown out of the game, the game forfeited and the offending person(s) suspended for altering a softball. At any time during any NSA game an umpire has the authority to not allow a ball to be played with if the umpires suspects in any way shape or form that some sort of altering has been done to the approved NSA softball that is presently being played with or attempted to be played with.

**NOTE:** For every Division contained inside the cover of this Rule Book all equipment must be 100% conforming, 100% of the time. The NSA reserves the right to approve or reject any softball related equipment for its intended use in the NSA Program. Equipment does not merely need to meet industry standards, but must meet NSA Standards before approval for its use is granted. If the NSA should believe in any way shape or form that a particular piece of equipment is dangerous and/or not acceptable for fair play, the NSA reserves the right to ban such equipment immediately.

**\*NOTE:** The NSA has adopted a Bat Performance Factor (BPF) of 1.20 or less. All bats with a BPF of 1.20 or less for the entire length of the barrel or hitting surface are approved for use in the NSA Program, unless the NSA believes in any way shape or form that a particular bat is dangerous and/or not acceptable for fair and safe play.

**\*\*NOTE:** The NSA reserves the right to ban such equipment immediately. All bats used in NSA Play must be stamped with a BPF of 1.20 or less (exception: Wooden Bats do not have to be stamped with a BPF of 1.20 and may be used and are legal in all NSA Play if they meet the standards set forth in Rule 3, Sec. 1 a-m).

## **SECTION 1**

The official bat shall bear the NSA 2012 logo and be a bat manufactured by a bat company that is listed on the Official Licensed Bat Company list found at [www.PlayNSA.com](http://www.PlayNSA.com). The official bat cannot be a bat listed on the Non-Approved Bat list or be a bat from a company that is not listed as an Approved Bat Company. The Official bat shall be of one piece or interchangeable barrel construction and can be made of wood (hardwood) or other materials approved by the NSA; or formed from a block of wood consisting of two or more pieces of wood bonded together with an adhesive, in such a way, that the grain direction of all pieces is essentially parallel to the length of the bat. When the interchangeable barrel bat is joined together properly, the two piece bat must meet all NSA official bat requirements. Below is a list of additional requirements for all approved NSA BATS:

- a) The bat shall not be more than 34 inches in length and no more than 38 ounces in weight and shall meet the NSA bat standards. (See Above \*NOTE and \*\*NOTE for further bat standards.) Any bat which cannot be identified by markings on the bat as an approved bat shall be considered illegal.

**EXCEPTION:** Wooden bats need only meet the standards described in Rule 3 Sec. 1 above.

Baden's top-of-the-line

# PERFECTION<sup>®</sup>

SOFTBALL



Licensed by the



- Perfection<sup>®</sup> Leather Cover for unbeatable grip and feel
- CoreBond™ keeps leather tight to the core
- Control Seam™ features rounded seams that maximize the pitcher's performance

**Baden**

badensports.com | 1.800.544.2998

- b) The bat shall have a safety grip of cork, tape (not smooth plastic type), or combination material.
- c) The grip shall not be less than ten inches long and shall not extend more than 15 inches from the small end of the bat.  
**NOTE:** *Spray or Pine Tar or other approved substances may be applied to the handle of the bat to enhance the players' ability to grip the bat (i.e. Pine tar, Spray or other sticky substances). However, the application of such substances may not exceed 15 inches from the knob of the bat and at no time will such substances be applied to the barrel of the bat.*  
**PENALTY:** *The bat will be deemed and illegal bat.*
- d) In the case of well used bats, sufficient markings must remain to make the bat identifiable as an NSA Approved bat. (Bat name and/or model number should suffice for this purpose.)
- e) The bat may be made of metal or other materials approved by the NSA and may be angular; however, the NSA must approve any material before it is used in sanctioned events.
- f) All exposed surfaces of the bat must be smooth and free of burrs, pins, rivets, DEEP DENTS OR DANGEROUS DENTS, fractures/cracks of any type, sharp edges or any type of exterior fastener that would present a safety hazard.  
**EXCEPTION:** *At the umpires discretion slightly dented bats may be considered legal.*
- g) Unless the bat is made of one piece construction or interchangeable two piece barrel construction with the barrel end closed, it should have a tamper resistant rubber or plastic insert in the barrel. All Bats manufactured on or later than 1/1/2012 must be fitted with a tamper proof end cap and knob or roll over end and tamper proof knob. Bats manufactured after 1/1/2012 must also bear the NSA Approved 2012 logo on the taper of the bat. See Graphic Below



- h) A one piece rubber grip and knob combination is legal.
- i) Metal or other approved material bats must have a knob on the handle and welded or mechanically fastened.
- j) All bats must have a safety knob of a minimum of ¼ inch protruding at a 90-degree angle from the handle. The ¼ inch is measured from the outer edge of the knob 90 degrees to the outside layer of wrapping. The knob portion of the bat may be taped as long as the bat does not exceed 34 inches in length; however, the umpire may request tape to be removed from both the handle and knob, if there is any question concerning the bat being altered or illegal. After determining the bat legal, the player may tape the bat back to his/her preference, providing the bat meets the requirements set forth by Rule 3, Sec. 1 (a-m).
- k) A flare or cone grip may be attached from the factory or a factory flare or cone may be attached to the bat by the player, but the flare or cone must

be installed properly to the bat. The flare or cone must be taped or covered by an approved bat grip and the bat must meet all requirements of Rule 3, Sec. 1 (a-m) after installation to be considered legal. ***STINGERS ARE APPROVED FOR NSA PLAY PROVIDED THEY ARE PROPERLY INSTALLED.***

- l) Shall be rounded, and shall be smooth. Shall not be more than 2 1/4 inches in diameter at its largest part. A tolerance of 1/16 inch is permitted, to allow for expansion on the round bat.
- m) All bats must be submitted by the manufacturer to a test facility approved by NSA and must have a Bat Performance Factor (BPF) of 1.20 or less under the ASTM BPF test as applied under the standard NSA Bat test including passing the ABI standard. All bats must be 100% conforming to all of Rule 3 and remain 100% conforming 100% of the time. Only those model bats from licensed NSA bat companies that bear the NSA2012 logo and are not listed on the Non-Approved Bat List will be considered legal for NSA play.

**EXCEPTION:** Senior Division bats must have a Bat Performance Factor (BPF) of 1.21 or less stamped on the bat. However, Senior Bats from a non-licensed NSA bat manufacturer are illegal. Only those companies listed in the Official NSA Approved Bat List are considered licensed.

**NOTE:** *Sec. 1 (a-m) Any bat that does not comply with these guidelines or that is not listed on the Official NSA approved bat list (REFER TO: [playnsa.com](http://playnsa.com) for approved bat list) must be removed from the game, penalties (if any) administered, and the bat may no longer be used in any NSA Sanctioned Play.*

**\*NOTE:** *Any player using a Senior Bat during any division of play that is not considered a Senior Division Tournament (all participants being 50 yrs. old and older) will be suspended immediately on the spot with NO right to an appeal.*

## **SECTION 2**

**The official softball** shall be a raised-seamed, concealed-stitched or flat-surfaced ball. The center of the ball may be made of either long fiber kapok, or mixture of cork and rubber, and/or machine wound with a fine twisted yarn and covered with latex or rubber cement, or it may be made of other materials approved by the NSA. The cover of the ball shall be optic yellow, tanned horsehide, cowhide or any other materials approved by the NSA, cemented to the ball by application of cement to the underside of the cover and sewn with black waxed cotton or black linen thread to form a black stitched softball. The solid core ball must be stamped with THE official NSA logo that contains the maximum C.O.R. and compression standards. The ball MAY NOT bear any other logos except for the NSA official logo unless otherwise approved by the Executive Director or the Executive Vice President of the NSA. MAXIMUM C.O.R. shall be .52. Maximum Compression for NSA softballs is 275 pounds with no tolerance.

- a) The official softball used for all divisions of the fast pitch Program will be the 12" raised-seam softball.

**EXCEPTION:** *The youth division, boys and girls 10 & under, will use the 11" softball.*

### **SECTION 3**

All fielders must wear gloves made of leather or other approved materials. The glove worn by a pitcher must be uniform in color. Gloves optic yellow circles on the outside, giving the appearance of a ball, may not be worn by any player and will be considered illegal. Maximum height of the glove shall be 15”

### **SECTION 4**

All players, coaches, and participants must wear shoes. Sandals are considered proper shoes for non-players. A shoe shall be made with either canvas or leather uppers or similar materials. The sole may be either smooth or have soft or hard rubber or polyurethane cleats. Metal cleats or any type of shoe that has exposed metal on the sole other than a rivet may not be worn in any division of youth play.

**EXCEPTION:** *Shoes with metal cleats are optional for the 14U, 16U and 18U age divisions.*

**EXCEPTION:** *When a ball park has specific rules that prohibit the use of metal cleats, the official park rules will take preference and be observed.* Metal cleats may be worn in all divisions of adult FP play.

**PENALTY:** If it is discovered during the game that an offensive player is wearing metal cleats an out will be called and the player will be ejected. A defensive player who is wearing metal cleats will be ejected, any baserunner(s) must return to the last base occupied at the time of the pitch.

### **SECTION 5**

No equipment shall be left lying on the field either in fair or foul territory.

### **SECTION 6 UNIFORM**

All players on a team shall wear uniforms alike in color and style.

**NOTE:** *If a team is not in compliance with the uniform rule, the opposing team, if in total uniform, has the choice of being the home or visiting team. If both teams are in compliance or if both teams are not in compliance, a flip of a coin will determine the home and visiting team. Non-compliance of the uniform rule must be brought to the attention of the home plate umpire before the first pitch of the game. Once the game starts, there is no penalty.*

- a) Ball caps or visors must be alike and must be worn properly. Caps or visors are not mandatory but when worn by one or more players must be identical and must be a team cap or visor. Hard plastic visors, bandanas, handkerchiefs and the like are not approved headgear.
- b) ***In the umpires judgment:*** No player may wear any object on their person, that would be a distraction, or wear any object that may be dangerous to the player’s person or any other player involved in the contest. *Examples are but not limited to: Glitter or sparkles, looped ear rings, necklaces that could create a hazard, pitchers with a helmet that creates a glare.* Effective 1/1/2016, no player will be permitted to wear “Optic Yellow” or “lime green” pants / shorts or any similar color that would resemble the softball. **Optic Yellow or Lime Green pin stripes or side leg trim will be permitted.**
- c) **Players may wear multi – colored undergarments under their uniform shirts or shorts.** It is not mandatory that all players wear these undergarments, but if worn, they shall not be ragged, frayed, or lit on exposed areas.
- d) Players may wear scrunchies or tie-ups if worn in good taste and not worn

in a derogatory fashion. Scrunchies may not be worn in a fashion to hide or prohibit the viewing of the player's number.

- e) Distinguishable numbers must be worn and visible on all uniforms and be a minimum of six (6) inches in height. No players on the same team may wear identical numbers. If this occurs, the umpire must ensure that this is corrected immediately.

**EXAMPLE:** # 7 and # 07 are distinguishable numbers and ARE NOT considered identical.

- f) **THE NATIONAL SOFTBALL ASSOCIATION STRONGLY RECOMMENDS THAT ANY TYPE OF JEWELRY NOT BE WORN IN ANY NSA PLAY.**
- g) Casts, (plaster, metal, or other hard substances) or other items judged dangerous by the umpire may not be worn during the game by any coach coaching the bases or by any player.
- h) Coaches in wheelchairs MAY be on the field of play during live ball situations. NSA Recommends, though not mandatory, that coaches who choose to coach on the field who are in wheelchairs would pad exposed metal that potentially may be dangerous to other participants.

**EXCEPTION:** *In some cases a protective device may be attached to an approved head protector, with prior approval by the local NSA Director.*

**NOTE:** *Play prior to detection of jewelry is not affected by violation of the jewelry rule. Violation of the jewelry rule is not grounds for protests.*

**\*NOTE:** *Prosthesis may be worn; however, any metal that is part of a brace or support must be covered by ½" soft foam or soft material and taped. Casts are prohibited.*

**\*\*NOTE:** *Prior to the start of the game, the manager/coach shall be responsible for verifying to the Umpire-in-Chief that all his/her players are equipped and in compliance with the Official NSA Rule Book.*

## **SECTION 7**

A batting helmet bearing the NOCSAE stamp is mandatory for each batter, on-deck batter, player, any runner, and youth coach in the coach's box. The batting helmet worn by each of these individuals must have extended earflaps that cover both ears and temples. For all youth Fast Pitch play: The helmet must have a properly attached face guard and the face guard must bear the NOCSAE stamp to be approved. If a pitcher wears a batting helmet while pitching, the outer covering must have a non-glare surface. Plastic visors are prohibited for players, coaches and managers. The batting helmet must be worn properly at all times.

**EXCEPTION:** *In the adult program, one or two earflaps are acceptable.*

**PENALTY:** The Umpire will issue a team warning if any player is found to be in non-compliance. All subsequent violations of the warned team will result in the ejection of the player not in compliance with this rule.

- a) When an umpire detects a runner (including the batter/runner) deliberately removing his/her batting helmet during playing action, a dead ball will be declared immediately. The violator is declared out with all runners returning to the last base touched at the time of the infraction. Preceding runners, scoring before the removal of the helmet, will score and are not required to return to the last base occupied.

## **SECTION 8 PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT**

The catcher must wear a NOCSAE approved head protector and protective mask, with throat protector (may be an extension of the mask or a

commercially manufactured, properly attached, and not altered in any manner.), body protector, and baseball/softball shin guards. The male catcher or any male player warming up a pitcher shall wear an approved protective cup. Any player warming up a pitcher at any location within the confines of the park or facility will be required to wear an approved head protector and an approved mask with throat protector. All protective equipment must conform to industry standards. ***The National Softball Association HIGHLY RECOMMENDS to the parents and coaches of ALL players (especially pitchers, 3<sup>rd</sup> & 1<sup>st</sup> basemen) to have their children and players wearing not only protective equipment, but wearing PROTECTIVE FACE MASKS during all live ball play!*** All players are permitted to wear any approved protective equipment including catcher's equipment, batter's helmet, and soccer-style shin guards. If used, the equipment must not be detached. Detached equipment can be an obstruction. Repeated acts could be grounds for ejection. For all additional Equipment that is approved for NSA play, refer to [www.playnsa.com](http://www.playnsa.com)

## **RULE 4 PLAYERS & SUBSTITUTION**

*Any non-player who is not yet considered an adult, may not be between the fences or boundaries that are considered the playing field without a NOCSAE approved helmet with a NOCSAE approved face mask properly attached. Any youth division bat boys/bat girls who are the teams' official bat boy/bat girl or who are team members serving as bat boy/bat girl must wear a NOCSAE approved helmet with a NOCSAE approved face mask properly attached. The coach/manager or player representing the team is responsible for insuring that the non-player be in compliance with the batting helmet rule or age rule.*

**PENALTY:** The player, non-player, bat boy or bat girl will put the helmet on or be removed from the playing area.

### **SECTION 1**

A team shall consist of a minimum of nine (9) players and a maximum of twelve (12) players if the two (2) optional Extra Player (EP) and the Twin Player are used. Teams can play a maximum of nine (9) players on defense.

**EXCEPTION:** *NON CHAMPIONSHIP PLAY (refer Rule 1 Sec 17) – teams will be allowed to start with 8 players with the 9<sup>th</sup> spot in the batting order being an out. If the 9<sup>th</sup> player shows up, he/she can be immediately inserted into the 9<sup>th</sup> spot in the batting order.*

Players of the team in the field may be stationed anywhere on fair territory, except the catcher, who must be in the catcher's box, and the pitcher who must be in a legal pitching position at the start of each pitch. No part of the defensive player's foot (except catcher) may be outside the foul lines, from the time when the pitcher steps on the pitching rubber or until the pitch is released.

A team must have the required number of players present in the team area to start or continue a game. Players listed in the starting line-up and not available at game time may be substituted for and re-entered later. Official line-up cards are to be completed and submitted to the official scorekeeper or the umpire at the start of each game. The line-up shall contain the first and last name, position, and uniform number of each player.

**NOTE:** *If a wrong number is on the line-up card, correct it and continue playing ball with no penalty.*

- 1) All available substitutes should be listed in the designated place by last name, first name and uniform number.
- 2) Eligible roster members may be added to the available substitute list any time during the game.

### **SECTION 2 TWIN PLAYERS**

- a) Any two players may be designated as “TWIN PLAYERS”. The use of TWIN PLAYERS must be made known at the pre-game meeting and written on the line-up card. Both names must be written on one (1) line on the line-up card, or write the names of the TWIN PLAYERS on two lines with the word TWIN PLAYERS before their names.
- b) The TWIN PLAYERS are interchangeable. The TWIN PLAYERS occupy one (1) slot in the batting order and are locked to that slot for the duration of the game. One TWIN can replace the other on offense (either as a batter or runner) at any time and as often as desired without the action being considered a substitution.
- c) Any 9 players in the line-up can play defense at any time. The TWIN PLAYERS may play defense at the same time.
- d) There is no requirement that a TWIN PLAYER play defense at any time during the game.

### **SECTION 3 EXTRA PLAYER**

- a) The Extra Player (EP) can play defense. Coaches have the option of using two (2) EP’s.
- b) An EP(s) is optional, but if one is used, it must be made known prior to the start of game and be listed on the line-up sheet or score sheet.
  - 1) If the EP(s) is used, he/she must be used the entire game.
  - 2) The EP(s) must remain in the same position in the batting order for the entire game.
  - 3) If an EP(s) is used, all players (10 or 11) must bat and any nine (9) can play defense. Defensive positions can be changed, but the batting order must remain the same.
  - 4) The EP(s) may be substituted for at any time, either by a pinch runner or a pinch hitter who then becomes the EP. The substitute may be a player who has not yet been in the game.

**EXCEPTION:** *In all tournaments during POOL PLAY ONLY, it is OPTIONAL to bat the entire team roster, resulting in NO FIXED NUMBER OF EP’S. However, should one or more players get injured, ill or otherwise unable to continue the game. All pertinent rules governing normal use of the EP rule as described in Rule 4 Sec 3 & 5 are in effect.*

### **SECTION 4 GUEST PLAYER**

- a) **Not all States may offer this program. Check with the Appropriate State Director**
- b) **Guest players are legal in non – championship play.**
- c) **If a teams’ home state permits guest players and the team plays in a different state from their own, the team shall play under the guidelines set forth by the state in which the team is playing. Teams traveling to a different state from their own should contact their State Director prior to leaving their own state.**

- d) Teams must request approval from their State Director or the Appointed Representative appointed by the State Director 24-48 hours prior to the starting time of the tournament or designated time for adding a Guest Player by the State Director or Appointed Representative of the State Director.
- e) The State Director or his/her Appointed Representative must also receive written or electronic approval from the Guest Players current coach.
- f) A Player may only be a Guest Player two (2) times per sanctioned season.

### **SECTION 5**

Any of the starting and substitute players may be withdrawn from the game and re-entered once. (This includes the EP(s) and/or Twin Players, provided that the players occupy the original position in the batting order whenever in the game).

**NOTE:** *The original player and her substitute cannot be in the game at the same time.*

- a) Violation of the re-entry rule results in the use of an illegal player. Refer to Rule 4, Sec 9.
- b) Violation of the re-entry is handled as an appeal that can be made ANYTIME during the game.

### **SECTION 6**

A team must have the required number of players to start or continue a game.

- a) Nine (9) Players, Ten (10) if one EP only is used, Eleven (11) players if two EP's are used, Twelve (12) players if the two EP's and the Twin Players is used. If a team starts the game with the EP(s), the team must finish the game with the EP(s) or be penalized as follows: if the EP(s) or any other player is removed, injured or ejected from the game with no substitute to replace the player, the vacated spot automatically becomes an out each time the vacant spot comes to bat or anytime a runner is removed from the base with no legal substitution. A team playing with nine (9) players and no available substitute may finish the game with eight (8) players if an injury occurs with the vacant spot being an out as described in Rule 4 Sec 6 (b). However, the team must start the game with the minimum of nine (9) players. In NON CHAMPIONSHIP PLAY teams may start the game with 8 players.
- b) When a team is left with a vacant spot in the lineup because of a player as described in Sec. 6 (a), the opposing team may not, with two outs, intentionally or unintentionally walk the previous batter in order to get the "AUTOMATIC OUT" created by the vacant spot in the batting order. This would also include catcher obstruction to the previous batter or the previous batter being hit by a legal or illegally pitched ball. If the previous batter is walked or hit by a legal or illegally pitched ball, the vacant spot is skipped, the "AUTOMATIC OUT" is waived, and the next batter is the player whose name follows the vacant spot in the batting order. This only applies when there are two (2) outs.

**NOTE:** *If a team has a vacant spot and a substitute arrives or the original player can play again, he/she must be inserted immediately into the vacant spot.*

### **SECTION 7**

A player shall be officially in the game when she is announced by the manager or team representative and entered on the official score sheet or enters the

batter's box "unannounced". A pitch does not need to be thrown for the player to be officially in the game. The following regulations govern the substitution of players:

**PENALTY:** For an unreported substitution the first offense will be a warning. Any repeated offense will result in an immediate ejection of the Head Coach. The unreported sub shall remain in the game and all activity will be official.

**NOTE:** A player's correct name supersedes an error if an incorrect number has been entered on the score sheet.

- a) A player substituted for a 2<sup>nd</sup> time in the game, shall not participate in the game except as a coach or courtesy runner. All players, starters and substitutes may re-enter one time.
- 1) When a batter takes his/her place in the batter's box.
  - 2) When a fielder takes the place of the fielder for which he/she is substituting.
  - 3) When a runner replaces the player on the base he/she is holding.
  - 4) When a pitcher takes his/her place on the pitcher's plate.

**\*NOTE:** Re-entry is considered a substitution and if an illegal re-entry occurs, this constitutes an illegal player. The use of an illegal player is handled as a protest which can be made at any time while the player is in the game. A player will not violate the illegal player provision until he/she enters the game and one (1) pitch is thrown. An illegal player violation results in the immediate ejection of the illegal player and in youth play the coach is also ejected.

## **SECTION 8 COURTESY RUNNER**

The player in the batting order where the last out was recorded or any player not currently in the game may replace the current (the player physically playing the position when the 3<sup>rd</sup> out was recorded) pitcher or catcher as a courtesy runner at any time. The pitcher or catcher will remain in the game and the courtesy runner will retain all substitution rights (if the courtesy runner has substitution rights). A player can be used only once per inning as a courtesy runner. Should the player that made the last recorded out be on base for any reason or is the pitcher or catcher, or batting or has already been a courtesy runner in that inning, the new courtesy runner would be determined by going back previous outs to the next allowable courtesy runner or to any player not currently in the game. If in the first inning a courtesy runner is used for either the pitcher or the catcher (who are listed in the line – up when the line ups are turned in) and there are no outs recorded, the courtesy runner will be the player furthest removed from the pitcher or catcher needing the courtesy runner or any player not currently in the game.

**PENALTY:** Using the wrong courtesy runner is the ejection of the head coach. The pitcher or catcher may be used as a courtesy runner and a player with no substitution privileges may also be a courtesy runner as long as the player has not been ejected. The pitcher or catcher may return to run for themselves if the courtesy runner is due up to bat.

## **SECTION 9 ILLEGAL PLAYER**

The use of an illegal player is handled as an appeal that can be made at any time while the player is in the game. A player will not violate the illegal player provision until he/she enters the game and one (1) pitch is thrown. Any action before one pitch is thrown is correctable. An illegal player violation results in the immediate ejection of the illegal player and his/her coach. In Youth Play,

an unreported substitute is not a violation of the Illegal Player Rule, however, the coach shall be ejected if Rule 4, Section 7(a) is met. In addition, the following penalties will apply:

- a) If the illegal player has completed a turn at bat and before the next pitch, the illegal player is called out. Any advance by any runner as a result of the illegal player becoming a batter-runner is nullified. Any additional outs recorded on the play stand.
- b) If the illegal player has made a defensive play and before the next pitch (or the defensive team or the umpires have left the field), the offensive team has the option of 1) the result of the play or 2) replaying the last pitch.

**NOTE:** *The illegal player can be legally replaced by any eligible substitute.*

**\*NOTE:** *The penalty for using an ineligible player is a forfeit of any/all games played or in progress. Violation of an illegal player constitutes the immediate ejection of both the illegal player and his/her coach.*

**\*\*NOTE:** *Re-entry is considered a substitution and if an illegal re-entry occurs, this constitutes an illegal player. The use of an illegal player is handled as a protest which can be made at any time while the player is in the game. A player will not violate the illegal player provision until he/she enters the game and one (1) pitch is thrown.*

#### **SECTION 10 DIVISIONS OF PLAY**

**NOTE:** *The National Softball Association has divisions of play for men and women and a Coed Division for both to compete in jointly. The Men's Division is designed for men 16 years of age and older. The Women's Division is designed for women 16 years of age and older. The player must already be 16 to compete in the Adult Division. Males may not compete in the female division and females may not compete in the male division in any program. This also applies to the Youth Program.*

**\*NOTE:** *The Tournament Director or the Tournament UIC may declare a higher-class player(s) ineligible without having a team protest.*

**\*\*NOTE:** *NSA Youth Fast pitch (10 & Under through 18 & Under) has an "A" and "B" Divisions which are determined by skill levels. Other NSA Fast pitch Divisions are 23 & Under and Adult.*

**\*\*\*NOTE:** *The 23 & Under teams are considered adult teams. The 23 & Under division will play by the adult rules including the age eligibility rule.*

The youth sanction year is August 1<sup>st</sup> to July 31<sup>st</sup>. The cutoff date for the youth age eligibility is December 31<sup>st</sup> of the current sanction season. The players age on December 31st during the CURRENT SANCTIONING SEASON will be the age group the player is eligible for during the ENTIRE sanction year. All players must meet the age requirements to be put on a current year's roster.

**Example:** If a player turns 15 years old on December 31<sup>st</sup> of 2015, they CANNOT be put on a 14u roster for the 2016 sanction year that begins August 1<sup>st</sup>, 2015.

A copy of the original birth certificate and/or a Government Issue photo ID must accompany youth players at all times.

- a) All players must play in one age group only.
- b) A player cannot play in two (2) age divisions in one tournament.
- c) A player may play up one age group but not down in an age group.

**EXCEPTION:** *A player who turns 11, 13, or 15 years of age in the current year, may move up two (2) divisions and may play in the 14, 16, or the 18 & Under age divisions, respectively.*

- d) Proof of age must be verified by one of the following: government issued I.D. and/or birth certificate copies. Proof of age must accompany the player at all times.
- e) Teams may have no more than twenty five (25) players on their roster.
- f) Adult Division softball (male & female) players are eligible for Adult Division play once they have reached their sixteenth (16th) birthday.

**NOTE:** *Any player participating in any NSA sanctioned event must be physically able to participate. The player must be able to walk on and off the field and play the game as intended. This is to keep injured players from further injury.*

#### **SECTION 11 INSURANCE PROCEDURES**

At all levels of Youth Fastpitch play, a certificate of team insurance must be presented to either the League or Tournament Director prior to participating in any NSA event.

**NOTE:** Teams are required to purchase NSA Team Insurance through Westpoint Insurance or the Tournament Director is required to purchase tournament insurance offered through Westpoint Insurance.

**NOTE:** Adult division teams are not required to have team insurance but it is highly recommended.

#### **SECTION 12 COMMUNICABLE DISEASE PROCEDURES**

When a player is bleeding or has an open wound, the bleeding must be stopped and the open wound covered with a bandage/dressing strong enough to withstand the rigors of competition. This treatment must be immediate and a suspension of play for a \*reasonable amount of time, will be awarded the team. Should the treatment of this wound exceed a \*reasonable amount of time, the affected player must be substituted. If no substitute is available, the team must comply with Rule 4 Sec 6. When the affected player can continue, he/she may re-enter the lineup. Return to play will be determined by appropriate medical personnel or the home plate umpire. Any player whose uniform is saturated with blood, regardless of the source, must follow the same guidelines as stated above for a person bleeding and must have that uniform changed, if determined necessary, before returning to the game.

**\*NOTE:** A reasonable amount of time will be determined by the home plate umpire and will be no less than five minutes.

# NSA INSURANCE PROGRAM

**No Team should be without NSA WestPoint Insurance Coverage. All Youth Teams are required to have WestPoint Insurance to participate in NSA.**

Proper insurance is a concern of all the NSA Teams, Leagues, and Field Owners who host the NSA sanctioned competitions.

## **\$100,000 Accident Medical Coverage - Excess**

Accidents happen, and with today's soaring medical costs, they can ruin an injured player financially. The NSA Program offers \$100,000 of excess accident medical insurance for each covered injury which pays the bills left unpaid by other collectable insurance or health plans after a \$100 deductible.

To learn more about the NSA / WestPoint Insurance Program, please visit our web site at [www.PlayNSA.com](http://www.PlayNSA.com)

You may also call the WestPoint Office @ 1- 800-318-7709 or Email [sales@westpointinsurance.com](mailto:sales@westpointinsurance.com)

Membership & Coverage begins with receipt of your full payment and enrollment request.

## **RULE 5 THE GAME**

Softball is a contact sport, played with Composite, Aluminum, Wood and other approved materials in design of approved bats and softballs. The game of softball can be a dangerous sport to participate in. In playing the game of softball, the player and the parents of the youth players participating in the game of softball assume for themselves and for the youth children participating in the game of softball the risk of serious injury or possible death. By agreeing to be placed on an NSA roster, the participants or parents of participants understand these risks. To reduce the risk of Injury, the National Softball Association HIGHLY RECOMMENDS THAT EVERY PLAYER wear protective equipment!

**NOTE:** At all levels of youth play, certificates of team insurance must be presented to either the League or Tournament Director. Teams do not need to purchase NSA team insurance, but any insurance purchased must be equal to or greater than the team insurance offered by the National Softball Association. 23 & Under teams that purchase insurance must purchase adult insurance.

**\*NOTE:** No alcoholic beverages will be allowed in the dugouts or on the field during any NSA sanctioned event. No tobacco products are allowed in the dugouts or on the field for the entire NSA youth program, and no youth player

will be charged admission to any NSA youth tournament, above and beyond the team entry fee.

**\*\*NOTE:** *It is the option of the Tournament Director to either use or not use an official scorekeeper. If an official scorekeeper is not used, the home team will be the official scorer and it is the obligation of the visiting team to verify the score at the end of each half inning.*

### **SECTION 1**

The choice of the first or last at bat in the inning shall be decided by the toss of a coin unless otherwise stated in the rules of the organization under which the schedule of games is being played. If a team is not in compliance with the uniform rule, the opposing team, if in total uniform compliance, has the choice of being the home or visiting team.

### **SECTION 2**

The fitness of the grounds for a game shall be decided by the Tournament Director, Tournament Umpire-In-Chief and the Home Plate Umpire.

### **SECTION 3**

**NOTE:** *In all Fast Pitch games with a time limit the official clock will start when the pre – game conference is concluded. The official game clock will be kept by the umpires.*

A regulation game shall consist of seven (7) innings.

- a) A full seven (7) innings need not be played if the home team (the team second at bat) scores more runs in six innings or before the third out of the seventh inning.

**EXCEPTION:** *The NSA will use the 12, 10 and 8 run rule in all tournament play. If one team is 12, 10 or 8 runs ahead after 3, 4 or 5 innings, or after 2½, 3½ or 4½ innings, if the home team is ahead by 12, 10 or 8 or more runs respectively, the team with the 12, 10 or 8 run lead shall be the winner.*

- b) A game that is tied at the end of seven innings will use the tie-breaking rule. This would involve the last recorded out in the official scorebook of the previous inning, assuming a position on second base. This would be done at the beginning of each half inning until, at the conclusion of a full inning a winner is determined. A game that is tied at the end of the time limit must complete the full inning if the time elapses during any part of an inning.

**NOTE:** *The NSA recommends a one hour and thirty minute (1:30) time limit in NIT, State, Regional, and World Series Tournaments (in youth play only). In the Adult Fastpitch & Modified Program, a one hour and forty-five minute (1:45) time limit is recommended. No new inning (top of the inning) will start after the allotted time limit has expired. Once an inning begins, that inning must be completed unless the home team is ahead when the time expires. The visiting teams one half inning must be completed.*

- c) The umpire is empowered to call a game at any time because of darkness, rain, fire, panic, or other causes which place the patrons or players in peril.
- d) These provisions do not apply to any acts on the part of the players or spectators, which might call for the forfeiture of the game. The umpire may forfeit the game if attacked physically by any team member or spectator.

- e) The umpire shall forfeit a game in favor of a team not at fault in the following cases:
- 1) If a team fails to appear on the field, or being on the field, refuses to begin a game at the time the team is scheduled to play, or within a time set for forfeitures (grace period) by the organization in which the team is playing.
  - 2) If after the game has started, one team refuses to continue play unless the game has been suspended or terminated by the umpire.
  - 3) If after the umpire has suspended the game, one side fails to resume playing within two minutes after the umpire has called "play ball".
  - 4) If a team uses tactics to delay or to hasten the game.
  - 5) If after being warned by the umpire, any one of the rules is willfully violated.
  - 6) If the order for the removal of a player, coach, or manager from the game is not obeyed within one minute.
  - 7) If because of the ejection of a player by the umpire, a team can no longer field nine (9) defensive players or for any other reason can no longer field eight (8) defensive players.
  - 8) The score of a forfeited game will be 7-0 to the winning team.
- f) During all tournament play (Qualifying, NIT, State, Regional and World Series) in the event of rain or any other cause which interrupts a game, the game must be resumed at the exact point where it was stopped, unless the teams mutually agree to accept the existing score as the final score.
- NOTE:** *Players listed in the line-ups and not available at game time may be substituted.*
- g) In the event that a tournament cannot be completed, an official game may be called after 5 innings of play or 4 ½ innings of play if the home team is ahead.
- h) Original lineups may be changed when the game is replayed.

#### **SECTION 4**

The winner of the game shall be the team which scores the most runs in a regulation game. The score of a called regulation game shall be the score at the end of the last complete inning unless the home team has scored more runs than the visiting team in the incomplete inning. In this case, the score shall be that of the incomplete inning.

#### **SECTION 5**

A run shall not be scored if the third out of the inning is a result of:

- a) The batter being put out before LEGALLY touching first base.
  - b) A baserunner being forced out due to the batter becoming a baserunner.
  - c) A baserunner leaving the base before a pitched ball to home plate leaves the pitchers hand.
  - d) An appeal play at first base on the batter/runner for the third out of the inning.
- e) **If the 3<sup>rd</sup> out is declared on an appeal play resulting in a force out, this play takes precedence if enforcing this appeal would negate a score.**

f) **When there is more than one (1) out to end the half inning (i.e. the 4<sup>th</sup> out appeal) the defensive team may choose the out which is to their advantage.**

#### **SECTION 6**

No succeeding runner shall score a run when a preceding runner has been declared the third out of an inning.

#### **SECTION 7**

A baserunner shall not score a run ahead of the baserunner preceding he/she in the batting order if the preceding runner has not been put out.

#### **SECTION 8**

A manager and/or team representative, on or off the field, shall be allowed only one charged conference with a batter or baserunner in any one inning.

**PENALTY:** A strike will be called on the batter if more than one conference occurs.

#### **SECTION 9**

Teams must have registered and entered their roster online with all information correct and complete or the player(s) and/or team(s) will be considered ineligible to participate in any National Softball Association sanctioned Tournaments, including Qualifiers, NIT's or Post Season Tournaments.

a) Teams must PRINT a copy of the Official NSA ONLINE ROSTER (complete & correct), OBTAIN SIGNATURES of participants (and Parents or guardian if Youth) to turn in at ALL NSA sanctioned tournaments prior to their scheduled start or they will not be allowed to participate.

**EXCEPTION:** *See Youth Tryout Rosters*

#### **SECTION 10**

a) Official NSA Bylaws for Youth team try-out rosters.  
b) Regarding information for Youth Fast Pitch Fall Tournaments and World Series Qualifiers.

#### **SECTION 11**

Players and fans are prohibited from broadcasting excessive external electronic amplified sound or music through speakers during the game. **EFFECT:** 1<sup>st</sup> Warning is to the coach. 2<sup>nd</sup> Warning the coach is ejected. 3<sup>rd</sup> Warning is a forfeit.

## **RULE 6 PITCHING REGULATIONS**

#### **SECTION 1**

Before starting the delivery (pitch), the pitcher shall comply with the following:

- The pitcher shall take a position with both feet on the ground and in contact with the pitching plate. The hands shall be separated with the ball being held in either the glove or pitching hand.
- While in this position, the pitcher shall take, or simulate taking, a signal from the catcher.
- The pitcher shall bring the hands together or touch them together for no more than ten seconds.
- The pitcher shall not be considered in the pitching position, unless the catcher is in position to receive the pitch.
- The pitcher may not take the pitching position on or near the pitching plate without having the ball in his/her possession.

## **SECTION 2**

The pitch starts when the hands are separated or the pitcher makes any motion that is part of his/her wind-up. The hands may only be separated one (1) time per pitch. In the act of delivering the ball, the pitcher shall not take more than one step which must be forward, toward the batter, and simultaneous with the delivery of the ball to the batter.

**NOTE:** *It is not a step if the pitcher slides his/her foot across the pitching rubber, provided contact is maintained with the pitching rubber.*

## **SECTION 3**

After taking the signal, the pitcher may not step backward with the non-pivot foot.

**EXCEPTION:** *Men may step backward but this step must be taken simultaneously with or prior to starting the pitch.*

## **SECTION 4**

The pivot foot must remain in contact with the pitcher's plate or ground until the non-pivot foot (front foot) touches the ground. There is no restriction on position or movement of the free foot except that if a step is taken forward with the free foot, the step must be taken within or partially within the 24" length of the pitching plate. **Women and Youth Girls may not step backwards.**

**EXCEPTION: For Men only:** *There is no restriction on position or movement of the free foot except that if a step is taken backwards or forwards with the free foot, the step must be taken within or partially within the 24" length of the pitching plate.*

**\*NOTE:** *It is not considered a step, if the pitcher slides their foot on the pitching plate, provided contact with the pitching plate is maintained.*

**\*\*NOTE:** *Such techniques as the "crow hop" and "leap" are illegal.*

## **SECTION 5**

A legal delivery is one in which the ball is delivered to the batter with an underhand motion.

- a) The follow through of the hand and wrist and the release of the ball must be forward past the straight line of the body.
- b) The hand must be below the hip, and the wrist must not be farther from the body than the elbow.
- c) When a forward step is taken toward the batter, the pitch is completed.
- d) When the pitch is released, the catcher must be within the outside lines of the catcher's box.
- e) The catcher must return the ball directly to the pitcher after each pitch except after a strike out, putout made by the catcher, or a play on a baserunner.
- f) Once the ball has been returned to the pitcher, the pitcher has ten (10) seconds to receive the signal from the catcher.

**PENALTY:** (e & f above) a ball is awarded the batter.

## **SECTION 6**

A pitcher may use any wind-up desired providing:

- a) There is no motion made to pitch without immediately delivering the ball to the batter.
- b) A rocker action is not used in which, after having the ball in both hands in the pitching position, the pitcher removes one hand from the ball, takes a backward and forward swing and returns the ball to both hands in front of the body.

- c) No wind-up is used in which there is a stop or reversal of the forward motion.
- d) There is no more than one revolution of the arm in the windmill pitch. The pitching arm may be dropped to the side and to the rear before starting the windmill motion. The ball does not have to be released the first time past the hip.
- e) The pitcher makes no continuous wind-up after taking the forward step, which is simultaneous with the release of the ball.

#### **SECTION 7**

While in the pitching position, the pitcher may not deliberately drop, roll or bounce the ball in order to prevent the batter from striking it.

#### **SECTION 8**

During the game, the pitcher may not use tape or other substances on the ball, pitching hand or fingers; nor shall any player apply any foreign substance to the ball. With the umpire's approval, powdered resin may be used to dry the hand. The wearing of any item on the pitching hand, wrist, or arm that may be distracting to the batter will not be allowed.

**PENALTY:** Any infraction of Sec. 1 through Sec. 8 constitutes an illegal pitch. A ball is awarded to the batter and all base runners advance one base without liability to be put out; Runners may advance beyond the awarded base but do so with liability to be put out. If the illegal pitch is hit and all runners including the batter-runner, advance one base, the play stands. If all baserunners including the batter-runner do not advance at least one base, the offensive coach has the option of taking the result of the play or the result of the pitch. Failure of players to hear the call shall not void the call.

#### **SECTION 9**

The umpire will declare no pitch when:

- a) A pitcher pitches during the suspension of play.
- b) A runner is declared out for leaving the base before the ball leaves the pitchers hand.
- c) The pitcher pitches before a base runner has retouched the base occupied after a foul ball and the ball is dead.

**PENALTY:** The ball is dead and all subsequent action on that pitch is canceled.

#### **SECTION 10**

Umpire will declare an illegal pitch when:

- a) A fielder, other than the catcher, is outside the playing field (foul territory) once the pitcher steps on the pitching plate and prior to the pitch being released.

**NOTE:** Foul line considered fair territory.

**EFFECT:** The ball is dead, batter is awarded a ball, and all subsequent action on that pitch is canceled.

#### **SECTION 11**

At the beginning of each half inning or when a pitcher relieves another, not more than one (1) minute may be used to deliver not more than five (5) pitches to the catcher or other teammate. Play shall be suspended during this time. Each pitcher during an inning may only warm up one (1) time per inning.

**PENALTY:** A pitcher will be penalized by awarding a ball to the batter for each pitch in excess of five (5).

**NOTE:** Under the discretion of the home plate umpire, the pitcher may be

*authorized more pitches due to inclement weather, injury, or other circumstances.*

#### **SECTION 12**

If the ball slips from the pitcher's hand during the wind-up or during the backswing, a ball shall be called on the batter, and the ball remains in play and runners may advance at their own risk.

#### **SECTION 13**

After assuming the pitching position, the pitcher may not throw to a base while a foot is in contact with the pitching plate.

**PENALTY:** An illegal pitch is declared.

**NOTE:** *An illegal pitch will be declared if any fielder takes a position in the batter's line of vision or, with deliberate unsportsmanlike intent, acts in a manner to otherwise distract the batter. A pitch does not have to be delivered or released.*

#### **SECTION 14**

No player, manager, or coach shall call "TIME", or employ any other word or phrase, or commit any act while the ball is alive and in play for the obvious purpose of trying to make the pitcher commit an illegal pitch.

**PENALTY:** No pitch will be declared and a warning issued to the offending team. A repeat of this type act shall result in the offender being removed from the game.

#### **SECTION 15**

There shall be only one charged conference between the manager and other team representative from the dugout with each and every pitcher in an inning. The second charged conference shall result in the removal of the pitcher from the pitching position for the remainder of the game. If the pitcher is removed from the pitching position as the result of a second charged conference, the pitcher can remain in the game in any other position excluding the pitching position for the remainder of the game.

**EXCEPTION:** *It is not a charged conference when the manager or team representative enters the field of play and removes the pitcher from the pitching position. The player may return to the pitching position.*

**NOTE:** *A starting or substitute pitcher must pitch to a batter until the batter reaches a base or is put out.*

**\*NOTE:** *The rules for a charged conference do not change in extra innings.*

#### **SECTION 16**

Each pitcher (starter or substitute) must pitch until the first batter facing him/her has completed his/her turn at bat, the side has been retired or he/she has been removed from the game, unless the pitcher sustains an injury or illness which in the judgment of the home plate umpire, incapacitates the pitcher from pitching. A pitcher removed from the game by rule or ejection is not subject to this rule (Rule 4 Sec 7b) Any other player may be removed from the game at any time.

## **RULE 7 BATTING**

#### **SECTION 1**

The batter shall take his/her position within the lines of the batter's box.

a) The batter shall not have his/her entire foot touching the ground

completely outside the lines of the batter's box or touching home plate when the ball is hit.

- b) The batter shall not step directly across in front of the catcher to the other side of the batter's box while the pitcher is in position to pitch.  
**EFFECT:** *Sec. 1 (a-b) The ball is dead, the batter is out, baserunners may not advance.*
- c) The batter shall not enter the batter's box with an illegal bat.  
**EFFECT:** *The batter is out, the ball is dead and the baserunners may not advance.*
- d) The batter shall not enter the batter's box with an altered bat or non-approved bat.  
**EFFECT:** *The ball is dead, the batter is out, and without warning is ejected from the game (in youth play the coach is also ejected). Baserunners may not advance.*
- e) The batter must take his/her position within ten (10) seconds after the umpire has called "play ball". He/she must have both feet within the lines of the box before the start of the pitch. He/she may touch the line, but no part of his/her foot may be outside of the lines prior to the pitch.  
**EFFECT:** *The ball is dead. The umpire will call a strike on the batter and will also issue a warning to the batter to take his/her position or risk being called out. If the batter refuses to take his/her position after the warning, he/she will be called out. The warning will be given to a batter only one time per game. Any repeated violation during the game by the player will result in an out being called. This rule is intended to help speed up the play of the game. Umpires, while using good judgment in enforcement of this rule, must prohibit the batter from delaying the game by taking excessive or unnecessary amount of time entering the batter's box.*

## **SECTION 2**

Each player of the side at bat shall become a batter in the order in which his name appears on the score sheet. The batting order of each team must be on the score sheet and delivered by the manager or captain to the home plate umpire. The batting order must be followed throughout the entire game unless there is a substitution. When this occurs, the substitute must take the place of the player he/she is replacing in the batting order. The first batter in each inning shall be the batter whose name follows that of the last player who completed a turn at bat in the preceding inning.

**EFFECT:** *Batting out of order is an appeal play that may be made by the defensive team only.*

- a) If the error is discovered while the incorrect batter is at bat, the correct batter takes his place and legally assumes any balls and strikes.
- b) If the error is discovered after the incorrect batter has batted and before the next pitch to the following batter, the player who should have batted is out. Any advance or score made because of a batted ball by the improper batter's advance to first base on a hit, an error, or a base on balls shall be nullified. The next batter is the player whose name follows that of the player called out for failing to bat. Any out(s) that have been made prior to discovering the infraction remain an out(s).
- c) If the error is discovered after the first pitch to the next batter, the turn at bat of the incorrect batter is legal, all runs scored and bases run are legal

and the next batter shall be the one whose name follows that of the incorrect batter. No one is called out for failure to bat. Players who have not batted and who have not been called out have lost their turn at bat until reached again in the regular order.

### **SECTION 3**

No baserunner shall be removed from the base he/she is occupying to bat in her proper place. He/she merely misses her turn at bat with no penalty. The batter following him/her in the order becomes the legal batter. **EXCEPTION:** *The courtesy runner can be replaced by the pitcher/catcher to run for themselves in order for the courtesy runner to bat in her/his spot in the line – up. This does not eliminate the option for the coach to skip the courtesy runners turn at bat.*

### **SECTION 4**

When the third out of the inning is made before the batter has completed his/her turn at bat, he/she shall be the first batter in the next inning and shall have the ball and strike count on him/her canceled.

### **SECTION 5**

Members of the team at bat shall not interfere either physically or vocally with a player attempting to field either a fair or foul ball. This includes a base coach.

**EFFECT:** *The ball is dead, the batter is out and baserunners may not advance.*

### **SECTION 6**

The batter shall not hit a fair ball a second time with the bat in fair territory.

**EFFECT:** *The ball is dead, the batter is out and baserunners may not advance.*

**EXCEPTION:** *If the batter is standing in the batter's box and contact is made while the bat is in the batter's hands, it is a foul ball even if the ball is hit a second time over fair territory.*

**NOTE:** *If the batter drops the bat and the ball rolls against the bat in fair territory and, in the umpire's judgment, there was no intention to interfere with the course of the ball, the batter is not out and the ball is alive and in play.*

### **SECTION 7 THE UMPIRE CALLS A STRIKE:**

- a) For each legally pitched ball entering the strike zone before touching the ground and at which the batter does not swing.
- b) For each pitched ball swung at and missed by the batter. This includes a ball that is swung at but hit the ground first.
- c) For each foul tip held by the catcher. The batter is out if it is the 3<sup>rd</sup> strike.
- d) For each foul ball not legally caught. This does not include a 3<sup>rd</sup> strike.
- e) For each pitched ball swung at and missed which touches any part of the batter.
- f) When any part of the batter's person is hit with his/her own batted ball.
- g) When a pitched ball hits the batter while the ball is in the strike zone.

**EFFECT:** *Sec. 7 (d-g) The ball is dead and baserunners must return to their bases without liability to be put out.*

### **SECTION 8**

The umpire calls a ball:

- a) For each pitch that does not enter the strike zone, hits the ground or touches home plate, or is not swung at by the batter.
- b) For each illegally pitched ball.
- c) When a pitch hits the batter outside of the strike zone. The batter is

*Diamond*

**NSA**

**Official Slowpitch  
and Fastpitch  
NSA Licensed  
Softballs**



SlowPitch



12BKYS 52 275



11BKYS 52 275



12BKYP 52 275



11BKYP 52 275

**Sold through fine team dealers.  
[diamond-sports.com](http://diamond-sports.com)**

awarded first base. This would include a ball that hits the ground and then hits the batter.

- d) When the catcher fails to return the ball directly to the pitcher as required in Rule 6, Sec. 5 (e).
- e) When the pitcher fails to pitch within ten (10) seconds.
- f) For each excessive warm-up pitch. (See Rule 6, Sec. 11.)
- g) When the pitcher attempts a quick return pitch, he/she shall be given a warning.

### **SECTION 9**

A fair ball is a legally batted ball which:

- a) Settles or is touched on fair ground between home plate and 1<sup>st</sup> base or home plate and 3<sup>rd</sup> base.
- b) Bounds past 1<sup>st</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> base on or over fair ground.
- c) Touches 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, or 3<sup>rd</sup> base.
- d) While on or over fair ground, touches the person or clothing of an umpire or player.
- e) First falls on fair ground beyond 1<sup>st</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> base. A fair fly ball must be judged according to the relative position of the ball and the foul line, regardless of whether the fielder is on fair or foul ground at the time he/she touches the ball.
- f) Hits home plate and remains in fair territory.

**EFFECT:** Rule 7 Sec 9 (a-f). *The ball is in play and baserunners are entitled to advance any number of bases with liability to be put out. The batter becomes a baserunner unless the infield fly rule applies.*

- g) While on or over fair ground, the ball lands behind a fence or in the stands beyond the outfield fence. This is a home run.
- h) Hits a foul pole on the fly. If the ball hits the pole above the fence level, it shall be a home run.

### **SECTION 10 A FOUL BALL IS A LEGALLY BATTED BALL WHICH:**

- a) Settles on foul ground between home plate and 1<sup>st</sup> base or between home plate and 3<sup>rd</sup> base.
- b) Bounds past 1<sup>st</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> base on or over foul ground.
- c) First touches on foul ground beyond 1<sup>st</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> base.
- d) While on or over foul ground touches the person or clothing of an umpire or player, or the ball is blocked.

**EFFECT:** Rule 7, Sec. 8 (a-d) *The ball is dead. A strike is called on the batter for each foul ball, including the third strike. Baserunners must return to their bases without liability to be put out. Baserunner may not advance on a third strike foul ball, including a legally caught foul ball, however all runners may advance on any other legally caught foul ball.*

### **SECTION 11 THE BATTER IS OUT**

- a) When the 3<sup>rd</sup> strike is struck at and missed including if the ball touches any part of the batter's person.
- b) When a batter appears in the batter's box with or is discovered using an altered, Senior, non-approved or an illegal bat prior to hitting the ball, the batter is also ejected from the game for using an altered, Senior or non-approved bat. For using a Senior Bat, the player is also suspended one (1) year on the spot with no right to an appeal.
- c) When a fly ball is legally caught. A fielder may be touching or leaning on the fence when making a catch as long as the fielder has possession of the

ball before falling to the ground or over the fence. The vertical plane from ground to the top of the fence forms the dead ball line.

d) Immediately when he/she hits an infield fly and the umpire has declared "Infield Fly". Refer to Rule 1, Sec. 36.

e) If a fielder intentionally drops or lets drop a fair fly ball, including a line drive, and an attempted bunt which can be caught by an infielder with ordinary effort with 1st, 1st & 2nd, 1st & 3rd or 1st, 2nd & 3rd bases occupied with less than two (2) outs.

**EFFECT:** *The ball is dead, the batter is out, and base runners must return to the last base touched at the time of the pitch. This does not apply to an infield fly. The dropped ball remains alive on an infield fly.*

**NOTE:** *A trapped ball shall not be considered as having been intentionally dropped.*

f) If a preceding runner, in the umpire's judgment, intentionally interferes with a fielder who is attempting to catch a thrown ball, or is attempting to throw a ball in an attempt to complete a play; the preceding runner and the batter are both declared out.

g) Any batter-runner who carries the bat during a live ball and legally reaches or touches 1st base while still holding the bat, will be declared out.

Should this be the 3rd out of the inning, no preceding runner shall score.

**EFFECT:** *If less than two (2) outs, a delayed ball signal will be given and the ball will remain alive.*

h) When the batter attempts a bunt on the 3rd strike and bunts the ball foul.

i) On a legally caught 3rd strike foul ball or foul tip.

**NOTE:** *If, with less than two (2) outs and 1st base is unoccupied or with two (2) outs, the batter is not out unless the 3rd strike is caught. If the ball is not caught, the batter is eligible to reach 1st base before being tagged out or thrown out. Runners occupying any other base(s) may also advance with liability to be put out.*

**\*NOTE:** *Any foul tip that is caught is a strike and the ball is in play.*

j) When hit by his/her own-batted ball, in fair territory, outside the batters box.

k) The batter is out, ball is dead:

1) Hinder the catcher from catching or throwing the ball by stepping out of the batter's box.

2) Intentionally hinder the catcher while standing within the batter's box.

3) Intentionally interfere with a thrown ball in or out of the batter's box.

4) Interfere with a play at home plate.

**EFFECT:** *The ball is dead, the batter is out, and each runner must return to the last base that, in the judgment of the umpire, was touched at the time of the interference.*

**EXCEPTION:** *If no play is being made and the batter accidentally interferes with the catcher's return throw to the pitcher and a runner(s) advances safely, the umpire should call time and return the runner(s) to the base occupied at the time of the accidental interference.*

**\*EXCEPTION:** *If the batter interferes with a play at the plate with less than two (2) outs, the baserunner is out.*

l) When the batter swings and makes contact with the ball and the batters foot is entirely out of the batter's box or touching home plate.

## **SECTION 12 THE BATTER OR BASERUNNER IS NOT OUT:**

The batter or baserunner is not out:

- a) If a fielder making a play on him/her uses an illegal glove.  
**EFFECT:** *If an illegal glove is involved in a play; a delayed dead ball signal will be signaled and 3 bases awarded to the batter unless the batter gains 4 bases or the ball is deflected by the illegal glove and goes over the fence. The Coach in both instances has the option to take the result of the play. If illegal glove is spotted prior to a play, the umpire shall remove the glove and resume play.*
- b) If a fielder commits Flagrant Player Obstruction.  
**PENALTY:** Immediate ejection of the defensive player.

## **SECTION 13 ON-DECK BATTER**

- a) The on-deck batter is the offensive player whose name follows the name of the batter in the batting order.
- b) The on-deck batter shall take a position within the lines of either on-deck circle without blocking the view of any manager or coach.
- c) The on-deck batter may loosen up with two official softball bats, an official warm up bat, or the player may use the Power Wrap, Worth WBS, H & B BW3, swing sock or any other official warm up bat or product that has been approved by the NSA National Headquarters. Nothing else may be attached such as a Pyro Flite Bat Warmer donut, fan, etc. when loosening up. The Pyro Flite Bat Warmer is legal to warm the bat with. See [www.playnsa.com](http://www.playnsa.com) for approved equipment.
- d) The on-deck batter may leave the on-deck circle when he becomes the batter or to direct baserunners advancing from 3rd to home plate.
- e) When the on-deck batter interferes with the defensive player's opportunity to make a play on a runner, the runner closest to home plate at the time of the interference is declared out.
- f) The provision of Rule 7, Sec. 3 shall apply to the on-deck batter.

# **RULE 8 BASERUNNING**

## **SECTION 1**

The baserunner must touch the bases in legal order (i.e. 1<sup>ST</sup>, 2<sup>ND</sup>, 3<sup>RD</sup> home plate)

The baserunner must touch the bases in legal order (i.e. 1st, 2nd, 3rd and Home Plate).

- a) When a baserunner must return to a base while the ball is in play, he/she must touch the bases in reverse order.  
**EFFECT:** *The ball is in play and baserunners must return with liability to be put out.*
- b) When a baserunner acquires the right to a base by touching it before being put out, he/she may hold the base until he has legally touched the next base in order or is forced to vacate it for a succeeding runner.
- c) When a runner dislodges a base from its proper position, neither he/she nor the succeeding runners in the same series of plays are compelled to follow a base unreasonably out of position. The ball is in play and runners may advance with liability of being put out.

- d) A baserunner may not run the bases in reverse order, either to confuse the fielders or to make a travesty of the game.  
**EFFECT:** *The ball is dead and the runner is out.*
- e) Two baserunners may not occupy the same base simultaneously.  
**EFFECT:** *The runner who first legally occupied the base is entitled to it. The other runner may be put out by being touched with the ball.*
- f) Failure of a preceding runner to touch a base or to leave a base legally on a caught fly ball and who is declared out does not affect the status of a succeeding runner who touches the bases in proper order. However, if the preceding runner were to be called out for the 3rd out of the inning, no succeeding runner may score a run.
- g) No runner may return to touch a missed base or one left illegally after a following runner has scored.
- h) When the ball is dead, no runner may return to touch a missed base, a base he/she has left after he/she has left illegally, even after the ball becomes alive. However, when a dead ball occurs, a runner may return to a missed base if he/she is required to by the umpire in the awarding or determination of bases. The runner is not liable to be put out for missing a base beyond the base he/she is required to by the umpire in the awarding or determination of the bases. The runner is not liable to be put out for missing a base beyond the base he is required to return to.
- i) No runner may return to touch a missed base or one left illegally once he/she enters his/her dugout or bench area.
- j) When the umpire has called four (4) balls, baserunners do not advance unless forced or successful in an attempt to steal.
- k) Bases left too soon on a caught fly ball must be retouched before advancing to awarded bases. Awarded bases must also be touched in proper order.

## **SECTION 2**

The batter becomes a batter-baserunner:

- a) As soon as he/she hits the ball.
- b) When the umpire has called four balls, baserunners do not advance unless forced or successful in an attempt to steal.
- c) When a legal or illegal pitched ball hits the batter's person or clothing, provided the batter does not strike at the ball. This includes a ball that hits the ground and then hits the batter.  
**EXCEPTION:** *If the umpire calls the pitched ball a strike, the hitting of the batter is disregarded and the ball is dead. The pitch will be called a strike or ball depending on the location of the pitch. Unless ball four (4) is called on the batter forcing runners to advance, all runners must return to the base occupied at the time of the pitch.*
- d) When with less than two (2) outs and 1<sup>st</sup> base unoccupied a dropped 3<sup>rd</sup> strike occurs the batter may attempt to advance to 1<sup>st</sup> base. The batter becomes a batter/baserunner when the third strike touches the ground before being caught.
- e) When with two (2) outs and a dropped 3<sup>rd</sup> strike occurs, the batter may attempt to advance to 1<sup>st</sup> base. The batter becomes a batter/baserunner when the 3<sup>rd</sup> strike touches the ground before being caught.

- f) When the catcher or any other fielder obstructs or hinders the batter from striking at or hitting a pitched ball:
  - 1) The umpire shall signal, "Delayed dead ball".
  - 2) The offensive team manager has the option of taking the base awarded the batter for catcher obstruction, or he may take the result of the play.
  - 3) If the batter reaches 1<sup>st</sup> base safely and all other runners advance at least one (1) base on the batted ball, catcher obstruction is canceled and no other options are given.
- g) When a fair ball strikes the umpire or baserunner on fair ground:
  - 1) If the ball hits the umpire or baserunner after passing an infielder other than the pitcher or touches an infielder including the pitcher, the ball is in play.
  - 2) If the ball hits the umpire or baserunner before passing an infielder, the ball is dead and the batter is entitled to 1<sup>st</sup> base without liability of being put out. Runners not forced by the batter-runner must return.

### **SECTION 3**

Baserunners are entitled to advance with liability to be put out:

- a) When, after the pitcher releases the ball, the runner attempts to advance to the next base without the aid of a base hit, put out, or a fielding (including batter) error (stealing base).
  - 1) A batter runner who has received a base on balls can attempt to steal second base.
- b) When the ball is thrown into fair territory or foul territory and is not blocked.
- c) When the ball is batted into fair territory and is not blocked.
- d) When a legally caught fly ball is first touched.
- e) If a fair ball strikes an umpire or a runner after passing an infielder other than the pitcher or having been touched by an infielder including the pitcher, the ball shall be in play.

### **SECTION 4**

A player forfeits his/her exemption from liability to be put out:

- a) If, while the ball is in play, he/she fails to touch the base he/she is entitled to before attempting to make the next base. If the runner put out is the batter-runner at 1st base, or any other runner forced to advance because of the batter-runner at 1st base or any other runner forced to advance because of the batter-runner, this is a force out.
- b) If after over running 1st base, the batter-runner attempts to continue to the next base.
- c) If after dislodging the base, the batter-runner attempts to continue to the next base.

### **SECTION 5**

Baserunners are entitled to advance without liability to be put out:

- a) When forced to vacate a base because the batter was awarded a base on balls, the ball is dead.
 

**EXCEPTION:** *Open, the ball remains alive.*
- b) When a fielder obstructs a baserunner from making a base, (including a run-down) unless the fielder is trying to field a batted ball or has the ball ready for a tag.

**EFFECT:** *When obstruction occurs, the umpire shall call “OBSTRUCTION” and give a delayed dead ball signal for obstruction.*

**NOTE:** *Failure of the umpire to call Obstruction DOES NOT negate the Obstruction.*

- 1) If the obstructed runner is put out prior to reaching the base they would have reached had there not been obstruction, a dead ball is called and the obstructed runner and each runner affected by the obstruction shall be awarded the base(s) in the umpire’s judgment, the runner(s) would have reached had there not been obstruction. An obstructed runner cannot be called out between the bases where they were obstructed

**EXCEPTIONS:**

- a) When an obstructed runner safely obtains or returns to the base that he/she would have been awarded in the umpires judgment had there been no obstruction, and there is a subsequent play on another runner, the obstructed runner no longer has protection by the umpire between the bases in which the obstruction occurred and may be put out.
  - b) When properly appealed for missing or leaving a base early on a fly ball.
  - c) When the runner interferes with the defense.
  - d) When the runner physically passes another runner
  - e) When the batter flies out for the 3<sup>rd</sup> out.
  - f) When the batter is obstructed between 2 bases and he/she flies out.
- 2) If no play is being made on the obstructed runner at the time of obstruction, the play shall proceed until the play is completed. The umpire shall call “time” and impose such penalties, if any, as in his judgment, will nullify the act of obstruction.
  - 3) If a fielder without the ball fakes a tag, the umpire may award the obstructed runner and each other runner affected by the obstruction, the bases they would have reached had there been no obstruction.
  - 4) If the obstructed runner is put out after obtaining the base he/she would have reached in the umpires judgment had there not been obstruction, the obstructed runner shall be called out and the ball shall remain alive.
  - 5) When a runner while advancing or returning to a base is obstructed, the obstructed runner and all other runners affected by the obstruction will be awarded the base(s) which he/she would have reached in the umpires’ judgment had obstruction not occurred.

**NOTE:** *In the case of a “fake tag”, the fielder will be automatically ejected from the game.*

- c) When forced to vacate a base because the batter was awarded a base for catchers obstruction.
- d) When a fielder contacts or catches a batted or thrown ball with an illegal glove or with his/her cap, glove or any part of his/her uniform while detached from its proper place.

**NOTE:** *The umpire(s) will give the “delayed dead ball” signal.*

**EFFECT:** *If an illegal glove is involved in a play; a delayed dead ball signal will be given and 3 bases awarded to the batter unless the batter gains 4 bases or the ball is deflected by the illegal glove and goes over the*

*fence. The Coach in both scenarios has the option to take the result of the play. If illegal glove is spotted prior to a play, the umpire shall remove the glove and resume play.*

**EFFECT:** *For a player making a play with his/her cap, detached glove or uniform, a runner shall be entitled to three (3) bases if a batted ball or two (2) bases if a thrown ball. In either case, runners may advance further, at their own risk. If an illegal catch was made of a fair ball; that, in the judgment of the umpire, would have cleared the outfield fence in flight, a home run shall be awarded. The umpire will signal a delayed dead ball.*

- e) When the ball is in play and is overthrown (beyond the boundary lines) or is blocked.

**EFFECT:** *Awarded bases shall be determined by the position of the baserunner(s) at the time of the infraction. All base runners will be allowed to advance one (1) base on a pitched ball that goes directly out of play.*

**EFFECT:** *For offensive equipment or an offensive player causing a blocked ball, the player closest to home plate is declared out, and all other runners must return to the last base touched when the ball becomes blocked.*

- 1) The ball is dead. In all cases where a thrown ball goes into the spectators' seats, goes over, through or under any fence surrounding the playing field hits any person or object not engaged in the game, including bats lying near benches, goes into the players benches, whether the ball rebounds onto the playing field or not, or remains in the meshes of any wire screen, each and every baserunner shall be awarded two (2) bases.
  - 2) When the first throw is made by an infielder, two (2) bases shall be awarded. The award shall be governed by the position of each runner at the time the pitch was made; however, if all runners, including the batter-runner, have advanced at least one (1) base when the infielder makes the wild throw on the first play after a pitch, the award shall be governed by the position of the runners when the wild throw was made.
  - 3) When a throw is made by an outfielder or is the result of any succeeding play or attempted play, the two (2) base award shall be governed by the position of each runner and the last base he/she has touched at the time the throw was made. If two runners are between the same bases, the award is based on the position of the lead runner.
  - 4) When a fielder loses possession of the ball such as on an attempted tag and the ball enters a dead ball area or becomes blocked, all runners are awarded one (1) base from the last base touched at the time the ball entered the dead ball area or became blocked. If a runner touches the next base and returns to his/her original base, the original base he/she left is considered the "last base touched" for the purposes of an over throw award.
- f) When a ball bounds or rolls into a stand, over, under, or through a fence; bounds out of play unintentionally off a defensive player or other obstruction marking the boundaries of the playing field.

**EFFECT:** *The ball is dead and all baserunners are awarded two (2) bases from the time of the pitch.*

- g) When a live ball is unintentionally carried by a fielder from playable territory into a dead ball area, the ball becomes dead immediately. All baserunners are awarded one base from the last base touched at the time the fielder enters dead ball territory. If, in the judgment of the umpire, a fielder intentionally carries a live ball into dead ball territory, the ball becomes dead and all baserunners are awarded two (2) bases from the last base touched at the time he/she entered the dead ball area.

**NOTE:** *A fielder carrying a live ball into the dugout or team area to tag a player is considered to have intentionally carried it there. A dead ball line is considered in play.*

#### **SECTION 6**

A baserunner must return to his/her base:

- a) When a foul ball is illegally caught and so declared by the umpire.
- b) When the umpire declares an illegally batted ball.
- c) When a batter or baserunner is called out for interference, other baserunners shall return to the last base touched at the time of the interference.
- d) When a pitched ball that is swung at and missed touches any part of the batter's person.
- e) When a foul ball is not caught.
- f) Umpires Interference shall be called when the player, umpire or any part of the umpire's clothing interferes with catchers attempt to throw out a runner stealing or during a "pick-off" play.

**EFFECT:** *The ball is dead, and baserunners must return to base, except when forced by the batter becoming a baserunner. Baserunners need not touch the intervening bases in returning but must return promptly. Runners must be allowed sufficient time to return.*

**EFFECT:** *The umpire signals delayed dead ball at the time of the interference. If the runner is declared out, the play stands and the ball remains alive. If the runner is declared safe, time shall be called, all runners must return to the last base occupied at the time of the pitch. The pitched ball shall remain whatever the umpire declared the pitch (ball or strike) and the count shall reflect the pitch as called.*

**NOTE:** *It is not umpire interference on a wild pitch or a passed ball.*

#### **SECTION 7**

Batter-baserunner is out:

- a) When after a fair ball is hit, he/she is legally touched with the ball before he/she touches 1st base.
- b) When after a fair ball is hit, the ball is held by a fielder touching 1st base with any part of his/her person, before the batter-baserunner touches 1st base.
- c) When after a fly ball is hit, a fielder catches the ball before the ball touches the ground or any object other than a fielder.
- d) When after a fair ball is hit or a base on balls is awarded, he/she fails to advance to 1st base and enters his/her team area.
- e) When he/she runs outside the three (3) foot line and, in the judgment of the umpire, interferes with the fielder taking the throw at 1st base;

**EFFECT:** *Rule 8, Sec. 7 (a-d). The ball is in play and the batter-runner is out.*

however, he/she may run outside the three (3) foot line to avoid a fielder attempting to field a batted ball.

- f) When he/she interferes with a fielder attempting to field a batted ball or interferes (intentionally) with a thrown ball. If the interference, in the judgment of the umpire, is an obvious attempt to prevent a double play, the baserunner closest to home plate, shall be called out.
- g) When a batter-runner interferes with a play at home plate, in an attempt to prevent an obvious out at home plate, the runner is also out.
- h) When he/she moves back toward home plate to avoid or delay a tag by a fielder.

**EFFECT:** *Rule 8, Sec. 7. (e-h), the ball is dead and the batter-runner is out. Other baserunners must return to the last base legally touched at the time of the illegal action.*

- i) When a fielder contacts or catches a batted or thrown ball with an illegal glove. Or with his/her cap, glove or any part of his/her uniform while detached from its proper place.

**NOTE:** *The umpire(s) will give the "delayed dead ball" signal.*

**EFFECT:** *If an illegal glove is involved in a play, a delayed dead ball signal will be given and three (3) bases awarded to the batter unless the batter gains four(4) bases or the ball is deflected by the illegal glove and goes over the fence. The Coach in both scenarios has the option to take the result of the play. If illegal glove is spotted prior to a play, the umpire shall remove the glove and resume play.*

**EFFECT:** *For a player making a play with his/her cap, detached glove or uniform, a runner shall be entitled to three (3) bases if a batted ball or two (2) bases if a thrown ball. In either case, runners may advance further, at their own risk. If an illegal catch was made of a fair ball; that, in the judgment of the umpire, would have cleared the outfield fence in flight, a home run shall be awarded. The umpire will signal a delayed dead ball.*

- j) Any batter-runner who carries the bat and legally reaches or touches first base, while still holding the bat, during a live ball situation (including a homerun), will be declared out. Should this be the 3<sup>rd</sup> out of an inning, no preceding runner shall score.

**EFFECT:** *If less than two (2) outs, a delayed ball signal will be given and the ball will remain alive.*

## **SECTION 8**

The baserunner is out:

- a) When in running to any base, he/she runs more than 3 feet from a direct line between that base and the next base, in regular or reverse order, to avoid being touched by the ball in the hands of a fielder. When a play, such as a rundown is made on a runner who has "rounded" a base, and that runner is outside a direct line between bases, the runner establishes his/her baseline as a direct line between him/her and the next base in regular or reverse order.
- b) If, while the ball is in play, he/she is legally touched with the ball in the hands of a fielder while not in contact with a base.
- c) When, on a force out, a fielder tags him/her with the ball or tags the base.
- d) If the baserunner fails to return to touch the base he/she previously occupied when play is resumed after suspension of play.

- e) If a baserunner physically passes a preceding runner before that runner has been put out.
- f) When anyone, other than another baserunner, physically assists a baserunner while the ball is in play.
- g) When the baserunner leaves his/her base to advance to another base before a caught fly ball has been touched by a fielder, or when a runner is positioned behind and not in contact with a base in order to achieve a running start on any fly ball. Provided the ball is returned to a fielder and legally held on that base or a fielder legally touches the baserunner before he/she returns to his/her base.
- h) When the baserunner fails to touch the intervening base or bases in regular or reverse order and the ball is in play and legally held on that base or the baserunner is legally touched while off the base he/she missed.
- i) When the batter-runner legally overruns 1<sup>st</sup> base, attempts to run to 2<sup>nd</sup> base, and is legally touched while off the base.
- j) In running or sliding for home plate, he/she fails to touch home plate and makes no attempt to return to the base, when a fielder holds the ball in his/her hands while touching home plate and appeals to the umpire for a decision.

**EFFECT:** *Rule 8, Sec. 8. (g - j), These are appeal plays and the offensive team loses the privilege of putting the baserunner out if the appeal is not made before the next legal or illegal pitch. If an appeal is made after the ball is dead and before the next pitch is made, the ball remains dead and runners may not advance. Any manager, coach, or player may then make an appeal by announcing to the umpire, which runner is being appealed, which base has been missed, or which base has been left too soon. Any player in the game may also make an appeal while the ball is still alive and before the ball becomes dead by tagging the runner or the base being appealed with the ball.*

- k) When the baserunner interferes with a fielder attempting to field a batted ball or intentionally interferes with a thrown ball. If this interference, in the judgment of the umpire, is an obvious attempt to prevent a double play and occurs before the baserunner is put out, the immediate succeeding runner shall also be called out.
- l) When a baserunner is struck with a fair-batted ball in fair territory while off base and before it passes an infielder, excluding the pitcher.
- m) When a runner intentionally kicks a ball that an infielder has missed.
- n) When, with a baserunner on 3rd base, the batter interferes with a play being made at home plate with less than two (2) outs.
- o) When the coach near 3rd base runs in the direction of home plate on or near the baseline while a fielder is attempting to make a play on a batted or thrown ball, and thereby draws a throw to home plate. The baserunner nearest to 3rd base shall be declared out.
- p) When one or more members of the offensive team stand or collect at or around a base which a baserunner is advancing, thereby confusing the fielders and adding to the difficulty of making the play. This includes the bat boy/girl or any other person authorized to sit on the team's bench.
- q) When any baserunner runs the bases in reverse order to confuse the defensive team or to make a travesty of the game. This includes the

batter-runner moving backwards towards home plate to avoid or delay a tag.

- r) If a coach intentionally interferes with a thrown ball.
- s) When a runner, after being declared out or after scoring, interferes with a defensive player's opportunity to make a play on another runner. The runner closest to home plate at the time of the interference shall also be called out.

**EFFECT:** *Rule 8, Sec. 8. (k-s). The ball is dead, and the baserunner is out. Other runners must return to the last base legally touched at the time of the illegal action.*

- t) When a defensive player has the ball and is waiting for the runner and the runner remains on his/her feet and deliberately, with great force, crashes into the defensive player, the runner is declared out. The ball is dead and all other runners must return to the last base touched at the time of the collision, unless Rule 8, Sec. 8 (j) or Rule 8, Sec. 8 (s) applies.

**PENALTY:** If the act is determined to be flagrant, the offender is ejected from the game.

- u) When the baserunner(s) fails to keep contact with their base until a legally pitched ball leaves the pitcher's hand. The ball is dead, "NO PITCH" is declared and the baserunner(s) is declared out.
- v) When he/she abandons a base, does not attempt to advance to the next base, and "LEAVES THE FIELD OF PLAY", the baserunner shall be called out immediately "UPON LEAVING THE FIELD OF PLAY".
- w) If hit by an infield fly when not in contact with the base, the ball is dead, and the runner and the batter are both declared out. Other runners must return to the base occupied, without liability to be put out, at the time of the pitch.
- x) Look Back Rule: When a runner is legitimately off a base after a pitch, or as a result of a batter completing a turn at bat, with the batter/runner being out or reaching first base, and while the pitcher has the ball within the sixteen (16) foot circle, the runner may stop once, but then must immediately attempt to advance to the next base or return to the last base touched. Failure to immediately return non-stop to the base or proceed non-stop to the next base will result in the runner being declared out.

**EXCEPTION:** *The runner is not out if a play is made by the pitcher (a fake throw is considered a play).*

**NOTE:** *When a walk or a dropped third strike occurs in which the batter is entitled to run, it is treated the same as a batted ball, if the pitcher has possession of the ball in the sixteen (16) foot circle. The batter-runner may continue past first base and is entitled to run toward second base as long as he/she does not stop at first base. If he/she stops after rounding first base, then that runner must comply with Rule 8, Section 8 (x).*

- y) When prior to a pitch being made to the next batter, it is discovered that the previous batter used an altered, illegal or a non-approved bat.  
**PENALTY:** The baserunner is declared out. If the bat was altered or non-approved, the player and the coach are ejected from the game. Any out(s) made on the play shall remain an out(s). All other baserunner(s) must return to the last base legally touched at the time of the illegal action.
- z) *1<sup>st</sup> base double base – At facilities that use the white and orange double bag at 1<sup>st</sup> base, the following rules will be implemented. If the first play is*

at 1<sup>st</sup> base, either from the infield or outfield, a batter/runner will be called out for touching the inside base. If the play is elsewhere, the inside base may be tagged in a continuation or possible continuation toward 2<sup>nd</sup> base. **The defensive player may use the orange bag on a dropped third strike. In this situation, the batter/runner is required to touch the white bag if the orange bag is occupied by the defense.** \*NOTE: Once the batter – baserunner becomes a baserunner, the double base becomes one bag.

## **SECTION 9**

Baserunner is not out:

- a) When a baserunner runs behind or in front of a fielder and outside the baseline in order to avoid interfering with a fielder who is attempting to field the ball in the baseline.
- b) When a baserunner does not run a direct line to the base, providing the fielder in the direct line does not have the ball in his/her possession.
- c) When more than one fielder attempts to field a batted ball and the baserunner comes into contact with the one who, in the umpire's judgment, was not entitled to field the ball.
- d) When a baserunner is hit with a fair-batted ball that has passed through an infielder, excluding the pitcher.
- e) When a baserunner is touched with a ball not securely held by a fielder.
- f) When the defensive team does not request the umpire's decision on an appeal play until after the next pitch.
- g) When a batter-runner overruns 1st base after touching it and makes no attempt to advance to the next base.
- h) When the baserunner is not given sufficient time to return to a base, he/she shall not be called out for being off the base before the pitcher pitches the ball. The umpire shall call no pitch.
- i) When a runner, who has legally started to advance, cannot be stopped by the pitcher receiving the ball while on the pitching plate nor by stepping on the pitching plate with the ball in his/her possession.
- j) When a baserunner holds his/her base until a fly ball touches a fielder, and then attempts to advance.
- k) When the runner is in contact with the base, and is hit by a batted fly or ground ball in fair territory (unless he/she intentionally interferes with the ball), the baserunner is not out and the ball is dead.  
**EFFECT:** *Ball is dead, and all runners advance one base if forced.*
- m) When a baserunner slides into a base and dislodges it from its proper place, the base is considered to have followed the runner. See Rule 8, Sec.1 (c) and Rule 8. Sec. 4 (c).
- n) When a fielder makes a play on a batter or baserunner while using an illegal glove. See Rule 7, Sec. 12 for option given to the manager of the offensive team.
- o) When the baserunner is hit by a fair-batted ball after it touches any fielder, including the pitcher.

# RULE 9 DEAD BALL/BALL IN PLAY

## SECTION 1

The ball is dead and not in play:

- a) When the ball is batted illegally.
- b) When a batter steps from one side of the box to the other when the pitcher is ready to pitch.
- c) When a ball is pitched illegally.  
**EXCEPTION:** *Delayed dead ball, see Rule 6, Sec. 8 Penalty for illegal pitches.*
- d) When the umpire declares "No Pitch".
- e) When a pitched ball touches any part of the batter's person or clothing, whether or not the ball is struck at.
- f) When a foul ball is not caught.
- g) When a baserunner fails to keep in contact with their base until the pitched ball leaves the pitcher's hand.
- h) When the offensive team causes interference.
- i) When the ball is outside the playing limits of the playing field. A ball is considered "out of play" when it touches the ground, person on the ground or object outside the playing area.
- j) If an accident to a runner prevents him/her from proceeding to a base which he is awarded, a substitute runner shall be permitted for the injured player.
- k) In case of interference with the batter or fielder.
- l) When the umpire calls time.
- m) When the umpire calls time and an appeal play follows, the ball remains dead throughout the appeal.
- n) When any part of the batter's person is hit by his/her own batted ball while he/she is in the batter's box.
- o) When a runner runs the bases in reverse order.
- p) When a play is being made on an obstructed runner, or if the batter-runner is obstructed before he/she reaches 1st base.
- q) When a blocked ball is declared.
- r) When the batter enters the batter's box with or uses an illegal or an altered bat.
- s) When a caught fair ball, including a line drive, which can be handled by any infielder with ordinary effort, is intentionally dropped with less than two (2) outs and with runners on 1<sup>st</sup>, 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> or 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> bases.
- t) When a fielder carries a live ball into dead ball territory.
- u) When the batter is hit by his/her own batted ball in fair territory outside the batter's box.
- v) When a fair ball, prior to passing a fielder, strikes an umpire or baserunner on fair ground.

## SECTION 2

The ball is in play:

- a) At the start of each half inning, when the pitcher has the ball in his/her pitching position and the umpire has called "Play Ball".
- b) When the infield fly rule is enforced.

- c) When a thrown ball goes past a fielder and remains in playable territory.
  - d) When a fair ball strikes an umpire or baserunner on fair ground after passing or touching an infielder.
  - e) When a fair ball strikes an umpire on foul ground.
  - f) When the baserunners have reached the bases that they are entitled, when the fielder illegally fields a batted or thrown ball.
  - g) When a baserunner is called out for passing a preceding runner.
  - h) When no play is being made on an obstructed runner, the ball shall remain alive until the play is over.
  - i) When the batter legally hits a fair ball.
  - j) When a baserunner must return in reverse order while the ball is already in play.
  - k) When a baserunner acquires the right to a base by touching it before being put out.
  - l) When a base is dislodged while runners are running the bases.
  - m) When a runner runs out of the base line in regular or reverse order to avoid a tag by a fielder.
  - n) When a runner is forced or tagged out.
  - o) When the umpire calls the baserunner out for failure to return and touch the base, when play is resumed after a suspension of play.
  - p) When a live ball strikes a groundskeeper, photographer, policeman, etc. assigned to the game.
  - q) When a thrown ball strikes an offensive player.
  - r) If the batter drops the bat and the ball rolls against the bat in fair territory, and in the judgment of the umpire, there was no intention to interfere with the course of the ball. The batter is not out and the ball is alive and in play.
  - s) When a thrown ball strikes an umpire.
  - t) When a thrown ball strikes a base coach.
  - u) As long as there is a play as a result of the hit by the batter. This would include an immediate live ball appeal before the umpire has called "time". Once the umpire has called "time" however, the ball will continue to be dead during a subsequent appeal play.
  - v) When, in the judgment of the umpire, a coach touches or physically helps a runner; or when a coach near 3rd base, runs in the direction of home plate on or near the baseline, while the fielder is attempting to make a play, and thereby draws a throw to home plate.
- EFFECT:** *A delayed dead ball signal will be given and play shall continue. The assisted runner shall be ruled out and all other subsequent play will be ruled upon accordingly.*

## **RULE 10 UMPIRES**

**NOTE:** *Failure of umpires to adhere to Rule 10 shall not be grounds for protest. These are guidelines for the umpires.*

### **SECTION 1 POWERS AND DUTIES**

The umpires are the representatives of the league or organization for the particular game that they have been assigned. They are authorized and required to enforce the rules contained in this book. The umpires have the power to order a player, coach, captain, or manager to do or refrain from doing any act

that is necessary to enforce any of these rules and to inflict any penalties prescribed. The plate umpire shall have the authority to rule on any situation not specifically covered in these rules.

**NOTE:** *An umpire shall not be a member of either team (i.e. player, coach, officer scorekeeper or sponsor).*

- a) The umpire should inspect the playing field, equipment, and clarify all ground rules to both teams and coaches prior to the start of the game.
- b) Each umpire shall have the power to make decisions on violations committed anytime during playing time or suspension of play until the game is over.
- c) No umpire has the authority to set aside or question decisions made by another umpire within the limits of his/her respective duties.
- d) An umpire may consult with his/her partners at any time; however, the final decision shall rest with the umpire whose authority it is to make the decision, and who requested the opinion of other umpires.
- e) The plate and base umpire shall have equal authority to:
  - 1) Call a runner out for leaving a base too soon.
  - 2) Call "time" for suspension of play.
  - 3) Remove a player, coach, manager or other team member from the game for violation of the rules.
- f) Unless appealed to, the umpire shall not call a player out for having failed to touch a base, leaving a base too soon on a caught fly ball, batting out of order or making an attempt to go to 2<sup>nd</sup> base after reaching 1st base as provided in these rules.

### **SECTION 2 PLATE UMPIRE**

- a) Shall take a position behind the catcher and have full responsibility for the proper conduct of the game.
- b) Shall call all balls and strikes.
- c) Shall be in agreement and in cooperation with the base umpire(s) call on plays, fair or foul balls, legally or illegally caught balls.
- d) Shall determine and declare whether a batted ball touches the person or clothing of the batter, and also whether a fly ball is an infield fly.
- e) Shall render decisions on the bases when required by the instruction in the Umpire's Manual.
- f) Shall determine when a game is forfeited.

### **SECTION 3 BASE UMPIRE**

- a) Shall take a position(s) on the playing field as outlined in the Umpire's Manual.
- b) Shall assist the plate umpire in every way to enforce the rules of the game.
- c) Can call an infield fly.
- d) Can call an illegal pitch.

### **SECTION 4 CHANGING OF UMPIRES**

- a) Umpires cannot be changed during a game unless injury or illness incapacitates an umpire, or for other un-foreseen circumstances.

### **SECTION 5 UMPIRE'S JUDGMENT**

There shall be no appeal of any decision of any umpire on the grounds that he/she was not correct in his/her decision that a batted ball was fair or foul, a baserunner was safe or out, a pitched ball was a ball or strike or any other play involving accuracy of judgment. Any argument is grounds for a player, coach,

or manager to be ejected from the game. No decision of an umpire shall be reversed except when he/she is convinced it is in violation of a rule. If the manager, captain, or either team does not seek reversal of a decision based solely on a point of rules, the umpire whose decision is in question shall, if in doubt, confer with his associates before taking any action. But under no circumstances shall any player or person, other than the manager or captain of either team, have any legal right to protest any decision and seek its reversal on a claim that it is in conflict with these rules. Under no circumstances shall any umpire seek to reverse a decision made by his associates, nor shall any umpire criticize or interfere with the duties of his associates unless asked to do so.

#### **SECTION 6      SUSPENSION OF PLAY**

- a) An umpire may suspend play when, in his judgment, conditions justify such action.
- b) Play shall be suspended when the plate umpire leaves his/her position to brush the plate or to perform other duties not directly related with the calling of a play.
- c) The umpire shall suspend play whenever the batter or pitcher steps out of position for a legitimate reason.
- d) The umpire shall not call "time" after the pitcher has started his/her pitching motion or while any play is in progress. "Time" shall not be called until all action in progress, by either team, has been completed.

#### **SECTION 7      VIOLATIONS AND DUTIES**

- a) Players, coaches, managers, or other team members shall not make disparaging or insulting remarks to or about opposing players, officials, or spectators, or commit other acts that could be considered unsportsmanlike conduct.
- b) There shall be no more than two (2) coaches for each team to give words of assistance and direction to the members of the team while at bat. One coach shall be stationed near 1st base and the other near 3rd base. They must remain in the coach's box.
- c) The penalty for violations by a player is prompt removal of the offender from the game and grounds. For the first violation, the coach or manager may be warned. For the second offense, the player is removed from the game. The offender shall go directly to the dressing room (if available), for the remainder of the game, or leave the grounds. Failure to do so will warrant a forfeiture of the game.
- d) Any player or coach who leaves his/her respective position on the field, including the dugout, to argue balls and strikes or to argue whether a batter stepped on or over home plate, will be ejected.

#### **SECTION 8      PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT**

- a) Umpires who work fast-pitch softball (especially the home plate umpire) should wear a chest protector and shin guards. Male umpires must wear an approved protective cup. It is mandatory for the home plate umpire to wear a facemask (with a throat protector). It is **STRONGLY RECOMMENDED** that the mask be a black mask with black or natural pads. Hockey style masks are considered approved umpire equipment. The Hockey mask must be plain black and be free of ANY decorations other than the manufacturer's logo(s).

**NOTE:** *An official NSA umpire cap must be worn under any mask at all times and must remain on the head when the mask is removed.*

*There is NO RESTRICTION as to which official umpire cap must be worn (some state association may have stricter guidelines) by the plate or base umpire, however, AN OFFICIAL UMPIRE CAP sold by the NSA National Headquarters must be worn at all times.*

## **SECTION 9**

All NSA umpires must be registered and have a valid registration number, prior to taking the field. All NSA Umpires must wear an Official NSA umpiring uniform consisting of the following:

- a) Official **White or Black** NSA logoed umpire shirt.  
**NOTE:** *Any clothing worn under the official umpire shirt must be plain white with no writing or graphics of any kind and be the matching color of the umpire shirt.*  
**EXCEPTION:** *The embroidered official NSA undergarments.*
- b) Charcoal or Heather Grey trousers with belt loops (SP & FP).  
**NOTE:** *Trousers do not include jeans, sweatpants, jogging pants, or other pants or slacks that **would not** be considered dress trousers.*
- c) Black shorts with belt loops with official NSA Logo.  
**NOTE:** *Black shorts, with belt loops, may be worn at all levels of NSA sanctioned play.*  
**EXCEPTION: Fastpitch Softball.** *It is up to the discretion of the Tournament Director to allow umpires to wear shorts or trousers during all Post Season play. It is recommended that umpires, in cooperation with the league/tournament Umpire-In-Chief, coordinate their uniforms to look alike, i.e. one Umpire wears shorts, both wear shorts. This is the same for trousers. When shorts are worn, solid white crew socks must be worn. Footie's are not acceptable as part of the NSA OFFICIAL UNIFORM.*
- e) Black Belt
- f) Black socks with trousers and white crew socks or white or black socks that cover the ankle with black shorts. Partners sock color MUST match if shorts are worn.
- g) Black jacket with official NSA logo
- h) Black half sleeve jacket w/official NSA logo
- i) Black shoes  
**NOTE:** *Black official (umpire) shoes bearing the white logo, trademark or manufacturers name is legal.*
- j) White mock with official NSA logo or plain white regular turtleneck
- k) Black rain gear (top and bottom)
- l) Black cap with official NSA Logo
- m) Black ball bag with official NSA logo  
**NOTE:** *Ball bag must be worn on the hip or slightly to the rear of hip. **The ball bag is not required to be worn during Hit Your Own Ball tournaments.***  
**\*\*NOTE:** *Any umpire apparel (hat, jacket, etc) that is issued to an umpire for being assigned to a special event (NIT, World Series, etc) may NOT be worn after the conclusion of said special event as a part of the official NSA Umpire uniform.*  
**\*\*\*NOTE:** *The following item sold by NSA that bears the official NSA logo is mandatory wear and to be purchased from the NSA National Headquarters. NSA Official Jacket, NSA Official Shorts, NSA Official Half Sleeve Jacket, NSA Official Cap, NSA Official Shirt,*

## **RULE 11 PROTESTS**

### **SECTION 1**

Protests shall not be allowed or considered if they are based solely upon a decision involving judgment on the part of any umpire.

**NOTE:** *Examples of a protest which will not be considered are:*

- a) *Whether a batted ball was fair or foul.*
- b) *Whether a baserunner was safe or out.*
- c) *Whether a pitched ball was a ball or strike.*
- d) *Whether a runner did or did not touch a base.*
- e) *Whether a runner left his/her base too soon on a caught fly ball.*
- f) *Whether a fly ball was or was not legally caught.*
- g) *Whether it was or was not an infield fly.*
- h) *Whether there was or was not interference.*
- i) *Whether the field is fit to continue or resume play.*
- j) *Whether there is sufficient light to continue play.*
- k) *Any other matter involving only the accuracy of the umpire's judgment.*

### **SECTION 2**

Protests shall be received and considered concerning matters of the following type:

- a) Misinterpretation of a playing rule.
- b) Failure of an umpire to apply the correct rule.
- c) Failure to impose the correct penalty for a violation.

### **SECTION 3**

Protests may involve the interpretation of a rule.

### **SECTION 4**

The notification of protest must be made immediately before the next pitch.

**EXCEPTION:** *Player eligibility.*

- a) The manager of the protesting team shall immediately notify the plate umpire that the game is being played under protest. The plate umpire shall in turn notify the scorekeeper and the opposing manager.
- b) It is the umpire's responsibility to record the surrounding conditions to aid in the correct determination of the issue. (i.e. inning, outs, name of batter, runners on base, etc.)

**NOTE:** *On appeal plays, the appeal must be made before the next pitch, legal or illegal, or before the defensive team has left the field. This would mean when the pitcher and all infielders have left fair territory on the way to the bench or dugout area.*

- c) A protest fee of seventy-five dollars (\$75.00) cash will be paid in all qualifying and Post season tournaments sanctioned by the NSA. If protesting player eligibility, the fee is \$75.00 cash per player. Bat protests are \$200.00 per bat. Ball protests will be \$75.00 per ball.
- d) In all tournament play, a protest for player eligibility must be filed before the final out is made if the visiting team wins or the final run is scored if the home team wins during the game being protested.

- e) During tournament play, any protest must be resolved before play continues.

**NOTE:** *The Tournament Director/Coordinator or Tournament UIC may require a copy of the birth certificate or picture ID at any time.*

**NOTE:** *THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION MAY BE USED AS A GUIDELINE TO ASSIST LOCAL LEAGUES AND ASSOCIATIONS IN DETERMINING PROTEST PROCEDURES.*

### **SECTION 5**

The official protest must be filed within a reasonable time:

- a) Within forty-eight (48) hours after the scheduled time of the contest is generally considered a reasonable amount of time in league play.
- b) A protest fee of seventy-five dollars (\$75.00) cash will be paid in all qualifying and post season tournaments sanctioned by the NSA.
- c) In tournament play, a protest (player eligibility) must be filed before the end of the game being protested. **EXCEPTION:** In the event a Bat compression test machine is on site, bat protests are \$75 per bat.

### **SECTION 6**

The formal written protest should contain the following information:

- a) The date, time, and place of the game.
- b) The names of the umpires and scorekeepers.
- c) The Rule and Section of the Official Rule Book, or local rules under which the protest is based.
- d) The decision and conditions surrounding the making of the decision.
- e) All essential facts involved in the matter protested.

### **SECTION 7**

The decision made on a protested game must result in one of the following:

- a) The protest is found invalid and the game stands as played.
- b) When a protest is allowed for misinterpretation of a playing rule, the game is replayed from the point at which the incorrect decision was made with the decision corrected.
- c) When protest for eligibility is allowed, the team shall forfeit the game played to the offended team.

## **EIGHT & UNDER FASTPITCH RULES**

*Any rules not covered or found in this section will be covered or found in the Fast Pitch Section of the current edition of the Official NSA Rulebook.*

### 1) **RULE 1 SECTION 35**

The infield fly rule is not in effect. The ball remains alive with all runner(s) in jeopardy of being put out or advancing.

### 2) **RULE 1 SECTION 45**

A baserunner who advances one (1) base on a passed ball is considered to have stolen that base. In the 8 U Under division, a baserunner may not steal home, but are liable to be put out if they are off base.

### 3) **RULE 2 SECTION 2**

The base distance in the 8 & Under Division will be 60 feet.

- 4) **RULE 2 SECTIUON 2**  
The pitching distance in the 8 & Under Division will be 35 feet.
- 5) **RULE 3 SECTION 2(a)**  
Girls in the 8 & Under Division will use the 11 inch softball.
- 6) **RULE 7 SECTION 11 (1<sup>st</sup> NOTE)**  
In the 8 & Under Division, the batter is declared out no matter whether the third strike is caught or not.
- 7) **RULE 8 SECTION 3 (a-g)**  
Base stealing is allowed in the 8 & Under Division under the following guidelines:
- a) Runners starting at 1<sup>st</sup> base or 2<sup>nd</sup> base are entitled to steal one base only per pitch with liability to be put out.  
**NOTE:** *Runner(s) are not allowed to advance more than one base per pitch even in the event of an overthrow at any base.*
  - b) Runner starting at 3<sup>rd</sup> base may not steal home, but are liable to be put out if they are off the base.
  - c) A runner(s) attempting to advance beyond the one base they are entitled to steal may be put out while between bases or in contact with a base to which he/she are not entitled to.
  - d) After all play ceases and the ball becomes dead, if a runner(s) occupies a base beyond the one he/she was entitled to steal, the runner(s) will be returned to the correct base without liability to be put out.
  - e) A batter/runner who has received a base on balls can attempt to steal second base.
  - f) Awarded bases will apply to all runners. This would include an overthrow into dead ball territory.
  - g) Runner can only score on:
    - 1) A batted ball.
    - 2) A base on balls.
    - 3) A hit batter with the bases loaded.
    - 4) An awarded base when the ball goes out of play.
    - 5) An illegal pitch.
    - 6) When a play is made on him/her.

# EIGHT & UNDER COACH PITCH

*Any softball rules not covered or found in this section will be covered or found in Part I of the current edition of the Official NSA Rulebook.*

## RULE 2 THE PLAYING FIELD

### SECTION 4

The base distance will be 60 feet.

- a) Thirty (30) foot slash marks will be made on the first and third base lines. The defensive team cannot cross those lines until the ball is hit.

## RULE 3 EQUIPMENT

### SECTION 1

The official bat should be made of one piece of wood (hardwood), metal, or other materials approved by the NSA, or formed from a block of wood consisting of two or more pieces of wood bonded together with an adhesive, in such a way, that the grain direction of all pieces is essentially parallel to the length of the bat. Below is a list of additional requirements:

- a) The bat shall not be more than 34 inches in length and no more than 38 ounces in weight. The bat shall have a safety grip of cork, tape (not smooth plastic type), or combination material.
- b) The grip shall not be less than 10 inches long and shall not extend more than 15 inches from the small end of the bat.
- c) The bat shall be marked "OFFICIAL SOFTBALL" by the manufacturer.  
**NOTE:** *If the words "OFFICIAL SOFTBALL" cannot be read due to normal wear, the bat shall be declared legal, if it is legal in all other aspects.*
- d) The bat may be made of composite, metal and a bat may be angular; however, the NSA must approve any material, before it is used in sanctioned events.
- e) All exposed surfaces of the bat must be smooth and free of burrs, pins, and rivets, **DEEP DENTS OR DANGEROUS DENTS, fractures of any type**, sharp edges or any type of exterior fastener that would present a safety hazard.  
**EXCEPTION:** *At the umpires discretion slightly dented bats may be considered legal.*
- f) Unless the bat is made of one-piece construction with the barrel end closed, it should have a rubber or plastic insert in the barrel.
- g) A one-piece rubber grip and knob combination is illegal.
- h) All bats must have a knob on the handle and welded or mechanically fastened.
- i) All bats must have a safety knob of a minimum of ¼ inch protruding at a 90-degree angle from the handle. The knob portion of the bat may be taped as long as the bat does not exceed 34 inches in length; however, the umpire may request tape to be removed from both the handle and knob if there is any question concerning the bat being altered or illegal. After

determining the bat legal, the player may tape the bat back to his/her preference, providing the bat meets the requirements set forth by Rule 3, Sec. 1 (a-m).

- j) A flare or cone grip may be attached from the factory or a factory flare or cone may be attached to the bat by the player, but the flare or cone must be installed properly to the bat. The flare or cone must be taped or covered by an approved bat grip and the bat must meet all requirements of Rule 3, Sec. 1 (a-m) after installation to be considered legal.
- k) Shall be rounded, smooth, and not be more than  $2\frac{1}{4}$  inches in diameter at its largest part. A tolerance of  $\frac{1}{16}$  inch is permitted, to allow for expansion on the round bat.

**NOTE:** *Sec. 1 a-m. Any bat that does not comply with these guidelines must be removed from the game, and the bat may no longer be used in any NSA Sanctioned Play.*

**\*NOTE:** *The BPF of 1.20 does not apply to eight & under bats.*

## **SECTION 2**

The official softball shall be a smooth-seamed, concealed stitched or flat-surfaced ball. The center of the ball may be made of either long fiber kapok or mixture of cork and rubber, and/or machine wound with a fine twisted yarn and covered with latex or rubber cement. Or it may be made of other materials approved by the NSA. The cover of the ball shall be optic yellow, tanned horsehide, cowhide or any other materials approved by the NSA, cemented to the ball by application of cement to the underside of the cover and sewn with black waxed cotton or black linen thread to form a black stitched softball. The solid core ball must be stamped with THE official NSA logo which contains the maximum C.O.R. and compression standards. The ball MAY NOT bear any other logos except for the NSA official logo unless otherwise approved by the Executive Director or the Executive Vice President of the NSA. Maximum Compression for NSA softballs is 275 pounds for the .52 C.O.R. softball with no tolerance.

## **SECTION 7**

Batters and baserunners must wear NOCSAE approved helmets and the face guard must be NOCSAE approved.

## **SECTION 8**

*No jewelry is allowed.* Medical ID bracelets are allowed. For further information pertaining to the Jewelry Rule refer to the Fast Pitch Section of the Official NSA Rule Book. Rule 3 Sec 6 (f).

# **RULE 4 PLAYERS & SUBSTITUTIONS**

*Any non-player who is not yet considered an adult, may not be between the fences or boundaries that are considered the playing field without a NOCSAE approved helmet with a NOCSAE approved face mask properly attached. Any youth division bat boys/bat girls who are the teams official bat boy/bat girl or who are team members serving as bat boy/bat girl must wear a NOCSAE approved helmet with a NOCSAE approved face mask properly attached. The coach/manager or player representing the team is responsible for insuring that the non-player be in compliance with the batting helmet rule or age rule.*

**PENALTY:** The player, non-player, bat boy or bat girl will put the helmet on or be removed from the playing area.

## SECTION 1

A team may play with an Optional tenth (10<sup>th</sup>) player on defense. This Optional player must be positioned in the outfield and must stay a minimum of ten (10) feet outside of the baseline (umpires judgment) until the ball is hit.

- a) If the Optional tenth (10<sup>th</sup>) player is used, that team has only one (1) optional EP for their use. If a team decides not to use the Optional (10<sup>th</sup>) player; letters a, b and c below apply.
- b) If the Optional tenth (10<sup>th</sup>) player is used, the team must complete the game with the Optional tenth (10<sup>th</sup>) spot in the line-up. If an Optional tenth (10<sup>th</sup>) player gets hurt or becomes ill, this must be brought to the attention of the opposing team and the umpires. If no substitute is available:

**PENALTY:** Failure for the optional tenth (10<sup>th</sup>) player to bat is an automatic out each time that vacant spot in the line-up comes to bat.

Should the ill or injured batter be able to return to the line-up, the batter will resume their correct position in the batting order when returning to the game.

- c) A team shall consist of nine (9) players and a maximum of eleven (11) players if two optional Extra Players (EP's) are used.
- d) A team must have a minimum of nine (9) players to start a game but can finish with eight (8) if one is injured or becomes ill.
- e) All other rules concerning players should be the same as girl's fast pitch rules with the exception of using a **Twin Players**.

# RULE 5 THE GAME

## SECTION 1

Addition to Part One (1) of the Official Playing Rules:

- a) An Offensive coach will pitch to his/her team.
- b) The game shall be six (6) innings or 1 hour time limit. When the time limit is up, the teams must finish the inning unless the home team is ahead when the top half of the inning is over.
- c) All defensive players must play by position. Outfielders must be a minimum of ten (10) feet outside of the baseline (umpires judgment) until the ball is hit.
- d) One defensive coach is allowed on the field behind the outfield. He/she should give instructions before the ball is hit. After the ball is pitched, the defensive coach on or off the field, cannot physically touch any player.  
**PENALTY:** Runners will advance one (1) base after play has stopped.
- e) **Each half inning will end when the defense records three (3) outs or the offense scores five (5) runs, whichever comes first.** The batting order shall be a revolving batting order consisting of nine (9) ten (10) , or eleven (11) batters

**EXAMPLE:** *Nine (9) batters if there are only nine (9) players present at game time. Ten (10) batters if one (1) EP is used or if the Optional tenth (10<sup>th</sup>) player is used. Eleven (11) batters if both Optional EP's are used or if the Optional tenth (10<sup>th</sup>) player and one (1) EP are used.*

- f) The batter will be allowed five (5) pitches or three (3) strikes whichever comes first. NO BASE ON BALLS will be awarded. If the batter hasn't hit the ball fairly after five (5) pitches, the batter is out.  
**EXCEPTION:** *The at bat cannot be completed on a foul ball.*
- g) The Offensive team will be allowed three (3) coaches as follows: one first base coach, one third base coach, and one coach serving as the pitcher. The pitcher will pitch from a thirty-five (35) foot pitching rubber.
- h) No bunting will be allowed.  
**PENALTY:** A strike will be called on the batter.
- i) Hit batters are not allowed to advance to first base.
- j) The run rule will be seventeen (17) runs after four (4) innings and ten (10) runs after five (5) innings of play.
- k) An injured player may re-enter the game but must return to the same position in the batting order.
- l) If a batted ball hits the Coach/Pitcher (not the player in the circle), the ball is dead; there is no charged pitch and the play is repeated.

## RULE 6 PITCHING

### SECTION 1

Addition to the General Playing Rules:

- a) The player playing the position of pitcher shall keep **one or both feet** within the sixteen (16) foot diameter pitching circle until the ball is hit.
- b) The defensive coach may move the pitcher behind 2<sup>nd</sup> base for safety reasons, and must be a minimum of ten (10) feet behind 2<sup>nd</sup> base.  
**NOTE:** *Violation of the above rule will result in the offensive team having the option of taking the result of the play or declaring no play.*
- c) If the batted ball hits the adult pitcher the ball is dead. An adult pitcher must make an effort to keep from being hit by the batted ball.  
**PENALTY:** If no effort is made in the judgment of the umpire, the batter is called out. First offense draws a warning or ejection, based on severity. Second offense draws an automatic ejection.
- d) The catcher may be positioned anywhere from the catcher's box to the screen.
- e) Catchers must wear a NOCSAE approved mask until the ball is hit, then it may be removed to field the ball.

## RULE 7 BATTING

### SECTION 1

Addition to the General Playing Rules:

- a) No play 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.
- b) For safety reasons, coaches will caution players about throwing/sliding the bat. Each player will receive one warning from the umpire for throwing/sliding the bat. On the second offense, the player will be called out.

- c) 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.
- d) Failure to bat constitutes a team out. The individual batter will resume their correct position in the batting order when returning to the game.
- e) There will be NO infield fly rule.

## **RULE 8 BASERUNNING**

### **SECTION 1**

Addition to the General Playing Rules:

- a) Baserunners must be in contact with the base until a legally pitched ball reaches home plate.
- b) Baserunners shall be entitled to the base they are going to plus one when the ball is over-thrown into a dead ball area.
- c) When the defensive team stops the progress of the lead runner, the umpire will call "time out" and play will be stopped. When the ball is in possession of a defensive player within the 16' circle, any runners between bases must immediately advance to the next base, and one base only, or return to the last base touched. If the runner fails to return or advance immediately, the umpire will call "time out" and play will be stopped. Baserunners do not have to be on base to establish stopping of progress. (This will be in the umpire's judgment.)
- d) Any coach touching a baserunner(s) while the ball is in play will result in the touched runner(s) being called out. All other runners may advance at their own risk.

## **RULE 10 MACHINE PITCH**

### **SECTION 1 COACH PITCH / MACHINE PITCH**

- a) Seven (7) run limit per inning per team.
- b) Three (3) outs per inning.
- c) Batters shall get six (6) pitches, or three (3) strikes, if the sixth (6<sup>th</sup>) pitch is a foul ball, the batter shall receive an additional pitch or pitches until the ball is hit fair or the batter's turn at bat is completed.
- d) Coach pitch only: No designated hitter (DH) allowed.
- e) No intentional walks allowed.
- f) Coach pitch only: Courtesy runner will be allowed for the catcher. The runner must be a player not in the lineup unless all players are in the lineup, then the last offensive player who has just finished his/her turn at bat and has been put out (and if available has not become a runner) shall be used as the courtesy. If there is no player put out at bat available, use last completed at bat via a runner put out at a base, or that has scored if no runner put out at a base. If none of above available, use the player on lineup furthest from coming up to bat.
- g) No infield fly rule.
- h) 1) Batters may not bunt or half-swing the pitch.

**PENALTY:** Ball is declared a foul ball and counts as a pitch.

- 2) Batters may not indicate a “fake bunt” then pull back and swing.

**PENALTY:** A strike will be called and if the third (3<sup>rd</sup>) strike the batter will be declared out.

- i) Each team on defense will field ten (10) players consisting of the regular six (6) infielders (1B, 2B, SS, 3B, catcher and pitcher) and four (4) outfielders who must stay in the outfield until the ball is hit.  
**PENALTY:** Violation of this rule will result of giving the offensive coach the option of batting over or taking the result of the play.  
**NOTE:** Teams may start the game and play with nine (9) players, however they must play with all infielders including the pitcher. If a team drops below nine (9) players, the game will be forfeited.
- j) Play will be stopped and “Time” will be called, when an infielder has control of the ball. Umpire will award bases based on where the runner(s) are at when “Time” was called. Any runner(s) that pass the halfway point in the base path will continue to the next base that is unoccupied. Any other runner(s) not to the halfway point on the base path will be back to the previous base.
- k) Teams shall have an adult pitch to the batters or load the pitching machine.
- l) If the batted ball hits the adult pitcher, the ball becomes dead. An adult pitcher must make an effort to keep from being hit by the batted ball (umpire’s judgment), and if no effort is made, the batter shall be declared out.  
**NOTE:** The youth pitcher must wear a helmet and stand on either side of the adult pitcher.
- m) Any coach assisting a base runner(s) by physically touching that runner while the ball is in play will result in the runner(s) being declared out. Other runner(s) may advance at their own risk.
- n) Each team will bat all players that are present at game time. Any player(s) arriving after the beginning of the game will assume the last position in the batting order. If a player is sick, hurt or refuses to bat, this should be brought to the attention to the opposing coach, scorekeeper and umpire. Failure to bat constitutes a team out.  
**EXCEPTION:** In post season play only, the coaches have the option to play ten (10) players or the entire lineup.  
**NOTE:** Teams have free substitution for defensive player(s) who are currently in the lineup. If the player is not listed in the lineup, then normal substitution rules will be applied.
- o) Any player(s) listed in the starting lineup and has been removed for a substitute may re-enter the game one (1) time.  
**NOTE:** This rule applies to starters only. Player(s) must return to their original position in the batter order. Substitute is ineligible to play for the remainder of the game.
- p) If a player is hurt or injured after the ball is batted, the offensive team may advance only one (1) base. Time is then called to attend the injured player.  
**NOTE:** An injured player may re-enter the game, but must return to the same position in the batting order.

- q) In the coaches and machine divisions the catcher must take a position within the catcher's box in order to receive each pitch.
- r) Pitching Machine Only: Machine may be adjusted at the start of each inning. Machine may be readjusted if hit by a batted ball or moved by the adult pitcher. If machine needs to be readjusted, the tournament director must approve.
- s) Games that end in a tie will then be required to use the international tie breaking system to determine the winner of that game.
- t) One (1) time out per inning per team will be allowed and last one (1) minute each. Time out as a result of an injury shall be an official time out and will not count against the team's number of allotted time outs.
- u) One (1) coach is allowed behind the baseline but not within field of play to provide instructions.
- v) Offensive team will be allowed three (3) coaches on the field and should be positioned as follows: one (1) first base coach; one (1) third base coach; and one (1) coach serving as the pitcher for their team.
- w) Baserunner(s) may not leave their base until the ball is hit.  
**WARNING: if the umpire notices baserunners to be leaving early the team will receive a warning then if it continues the penalty will be in effect.**  
**PENALTY: Runner(s) will be called out for leaving the base early.**  
**NOTE: If the ball is hit, the play will continue and penalty will be enforced after the play is completed.**
- x) Appeal plays may be made once time has been called and the play has come to a complete stop. Only the head coach can make the appeal and must inform the umpire on what is being appealed and where.  
**NOTE: If the appeal process is done illegally, then the appeal will be denied and the play stands.**  
**NOTE: IN THE BASEBALL PLAYERS ASSOCIATION BASEBALL PROGRAM, THE INTENT OF THE 8 AND UNDER DIVISION IS TO "INSTRUCT" AND LET THE YOUNG BALLPLAYERS LEARN THE GAME. THIS SHOULD BE KEPT IN MIND BY PARENTS, COACHES AND THE PLAYERS. EXCESSIVE ARGUING AND PROBLEMS NOT IN KEEPING WITH THIS PHILOSOPHY WILL NOT BE TOLERATED.**

# **ADULT MEN'S FAST PITCH RULES**

*Any rules not covered or found in this section will be covered or found in the Fast Pitch Section of the current edition of the Official NSA Rulebook.*

## **RULE 1 DEFINITIONS**

### **SECTION 10 BATTING HELMET**

A batting helmet bearing the NOCASE stamp is mandatory for each batter and baserunner. If a pitcher wears a helmet, it must have a non-glare surface. Helmets will have an extended earflap on one or both sides. If the helmet has only one flap it must cover the ear on the side facing the pitcher.

## **RULE 2 THE PLAYING FIELD**

### **SECTION 2**

- a) The minimum fence distance will be 225 ft
- b) The maximum fence distance will be 250 ft
- c) The base distance will be 60 ft
- d) The pitching distance will be 46 ft

## **RULE 3 EQUIPMENT**

### **SECTION 7**

A batting helmet bearing the NOCASE stamp is mandatory for each batter and baserunner. If a pitcher wears a helmet, it must have a non-glare surface. Helmets will have an extended earflap on one or both sides. If the helmet has only one flap it must cover the ear on the side facing the pitcher.

### **SECTION 8 PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT**

It is highly recommended, but not mandatory that the catcher wear an approved head protector, protective mask with a throat protector, body protector, shin guards and a protective cup. All protective equipment must conform to industry standards. All players are permitted to wear any approval protective equipment and if used, the equipment must not be detached. All catchers are **REQUIRED** to wear a face mask.

## **RULE 4 PLAYERS & SUBSTITUTIONS**

### **SECTION 2 DESIGNATED HITTER (DH)**

- a) The designated hitter (DH) may go in and play defense. Once the (DH) enters the game in a defensive position that will eliminate the role of the designated hitter (DH) for the remainder of the game.

**EFFECT:** *When the designated hitter (DH) enters the game on defense, the player on defense he was hitting for is removed for the remainder of the game.*

## **SECTION 8 DIVISIONS OF PLAY**

For Players who have reached their 16<sup>th</sup> birthday to compete in adult fast pitch events.

- a) Major
- b) Class A
- c) Class B
- d) Class C

## **RULE 5 THE GAME**

*The NSA highly recommends that teams purchase team insurance for liability and medical coverage, but it is not mandatory to participate in NSA events.*

### **SECTION 9**

Teams must have registered and entered their roster online with all information correct and complete or the player(s) and/or team(s) will be considered ineligible to participate in any National Softball Association sanctioned Tournaments, including Qualifiers, NIT's or Post Season Tournaments.

- a) Teams must PRINT a copy of the Official NSA ONLINE ROSTER (complete & correct), OBTAIN SIGNATURES of participants (and Parents or guardian if Youth) to turn in at ALL NSA sanctioned tournaments prior to their scheduled start or they will not be allowed to participate.

**EXCEPTION:** *See Youth Tryout Rosters*

## **RULE 6 PITCHING REGULATIONS**

### **SECTION 1**

The pitcher shall take a position with both feet on the ground with at least one foot in contact with the pitching plate. The hands shall be separated with the ball being held in either the glove or pitching hand.

### **SECTION 4**

The pivot foot initially in contact with the pitching plate and the non-pivot or free foot once lifted must not come in contact with the ground, as described in the definition of the crow hop, before the release of the ball. There is no restriction on movement or position of the feet, except that if a step is taken forward or backward, the step and feet must be within or partially within the 24 inch lane width of the pitching plate extended.

# NSA MODIFIED SOFTBALL

## RULE 6 PITCHING RULES

### SECTION 1

Before starting the delivery (pitch), the pitcher shall comply with the following:

- a) He/she shall take a position with his/her pivot foot on the pitcher's rubber and the non-pivot foot also on the pitching rubber. Both feet must be on the ground. The hands shall be separated. The ball can be in the glove or pitching hand.
- b) While in this position the pitcher shall take the signal from the catcher.
- c) The pitcher shall then hold the ball in both hands for not less than one (1) second and not more than ten (10) seconds before releasing the ball.
- d) The pitcher shall not be considered in the pitching position, unless the catcher is in position to receive the pitch.
- e) The pitcher may not take the pitching position on or near the pitcher's plate without having the ball in his/her possession.

### SECTION 2

The pitch starts when one hand is taken off the ball or the pitcher makes any motion that is part of his/her windup.

- a) In the act of delivering the ball, the pitcher shall not take more than one step which must be forward, toward the batter, and simultaneous with the delivery of the ball to the batter.

**NOTE:** *It is not a step if the pitcher slides his/her foot across the pitching rubber, provided contact is maintained with the pitching rubber.*

- b) Major Division only: The only restriction on the pitch is that the elbow must remain locked until the release of the pitch. The windmill pitch is not allowed in any division.

### SECTION 3

A legal delivery shall be a ball that is delivered to the batter with an underhand motion.

- a) No windmill or sidearm type of delivery.
- b) The pitcher must release the ball on the first forward swing of the pitching arm past the hip.
- c) The ball must not be outside the pitcher's wrist at the top of the backswing and during the complete forward delivery.
- d) The elbow and wrist must be locked throughout the entire delivery.

**PENALTY:** Rule 6, Sec. 1 - 3. The penalty for an illegal pitch is the same as Rule 6, Sec. 8. Penalty, in the Fastpitch Pitching Rule.

- e) If the ball slips from the pitcher's hand during his wind-up or during the back swing, a ball shall be called on the batter. The ball will remain in play and runners may advance at their own risk.

**NOTE:** ALL OTHER MODIFIED PITCHING RULES WILL BE THE SAME AS THE FASTPITCH RULES.

# **NSA BYLAWS**

**NSA Bylaws are now located on the PlayNSA website ([www.PlayNSA.com](http://www.PlayNSA.com)) under Quick Links – NSA Rulebook**

**NSA Bylaws are split into Adult Slow Pitch and Youth Fast Pitch to make it easier for you to find what pertains to your program.**

## **2016 NSA APPROVED BAT COMPANIES**

All bat companies listed below are approved bat companies for the 2015 season provided that the bat bears the NSA 2012 logo (see below). Senior Bats do not have to bear the NSA 2012 logo however, No Senior Bat will be approved for play unless the Senior Bat is manufactured from one of the bat companies listed as an approved NSA Bat Company.



**Anderson Bat Company**

**Boombah, Inc.**

**BPS Diamond Sports, Inc.  
(Combat Sports)**

**Clearview Systems, Inc.  
(Rip-It Sporting Goods)**

**Easton Sports, Inc.**

**Hillerich & Bradsby Company  
(Louisville Slugger)**

**Miken Sports**

**Mizuno USA**

**Monsta Athletics**

**Rawlings Sporting Goods Company Inc.  
(Worth Sports)**

**Wilson Sporting Goods  
(DeMarini)**



**Insurance Coverage provided by:**

**Westpoint Insurance Group  
P. O. Box 1495  
Bridgeview, IL 60455-0495  
800-318-7709**

**Purchase your coverage today**

**Programs Include:**

**General Liability Insurance Plan  
Accident Medical Insurance Plan**

**Apply on line today at  
[www.PlayNSA.com](http://www.PlayNSA.com) – select Insurance**



## **2016 NSA APPROVED BALL COMPANIES**

|                         |                     |
|-------------------------|---------------------|
| <b>A D STARR</b>        | <b>800-487-2448</b> |
| <b>ANACONDA (TRUMP)</b> | <b>800-234-2775</b> |
| <b>BADEN</b>            | <b>800-442-1271</b> |
| <b>DECKER</b>           | <b>800-431-5128</b> |
| <b>DIAMOND</b>          | <b>800-366-2999</b> |
| <b>DUDLEY</b>           | <b>800-772-5346</b> |
| <b>WORTH/deBEER</b>     | <b>800-282-9637</b> |

# When your family is protected, we all win.

At Nationwide®, our number one goal is being there for our members. That's why we have your back when it comes to protecting what's most important, like:



The car you drive your athletes in to every practice



The RV you use for that weekend tournament

Join us as we team up with National Softball Association to promote youth safety, especially the importance of concussion awareness and teen driving.



To learn more about a special discount for National Softball Association members and to get information about youth safety, visit [nationwide.com/NationalSoftballAssociation](http://nationwide.com/NationalSoftballAssociation) or call **1-888-231-3614**.

Nationwide Insurance has made a financial contribution to this organization in return for the opportunity to market products and services to its members or customers. Products underwritten by Nationwide Mutual Insurance Company and Affiliated Companies. Home Office: Columbus, OH 43215. Subject to underwriting guidelines, review, and approval. Products and discounts not available to all persons in all states. Nationwide and the Nationwide N and Eagle are service marks of Nationwide Mutual Insurance Company. © 2015 Nationwide AFR-0256A01 (11/15)



# Where to Find Important Information

- Elite Restricted List  
Restricted Player List  
Restricted Watch List  
Reclassified Teams List  
  
NSA Super World Information and locations  
[www.nsasuperworld.com](http://www.nsasuperworld.com)
  
- Girls Fast Pitch World Series Web Pages  
[www.nsafastpitchworldseries.com](http://www.nsafastpitchworldseries.com)
  
- Probation List
- Suspension List  
  
[www.PlayNSA.com](http://www.PlayNSA.com)  
  
Click on Players for both full list

## **HALL OF FAME NOMINATION CRITERIA**

The National Softball Association/Baseball Players Association Sports Hall of Fame welcomes qualified candidates for induction. The eligible categories and minimum number of years involved may be totally with the NSA, BPA or a combination of both.

Categories and Eligibility:

PLAYER – 7 YEARS

DIRECTOR OR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR – 10 YEARS

UMPIRE – 10 YEARS

MANAGER – 10 YEARS

PARK – 10 YEARS

MERITORIOUS – 10 YEARS

If you have a candidate(s) for the NSA-BPA Sports Hall of Fame and you do not hold one of the following titles and you do not know who to contact, please contact the NSA/BPA National Office for assistance at 859-887-4114.

A candidate(s) may only be nominated by a Zone VP, Zone/Regional UIC, Hall of Fame Committee Member, or a NSA/BPA Board of Director. Each eligible individual may nominate no more than one (1) candidate, per category, per year.



**DECKER.**



There  
are  
**SHARKS**  
in the  
water

**DECKER //  
SOFTBALL //**

DECKER SPORTS  
1104 2ND AVE.  
COUNCIL BLUFFS, IA 51501  
712 352 1581 / OFFICE  
800 431 5128 / TOLL FREE  
[www.deckersports.com](http://www.deckersports.com)



# CHATTANOOGA THANKS

NSA for their years of excellent leadership within youth softball!

[ChattanoogaSports.com](http://ChattanoogaSports.com) & [ChattanoogaFun.com](http://ChattanoogaFun.com)



CHATTANOOGA  
SPORTS COMMITTEE



Chattanooga Convention &  
Visitors Bureau