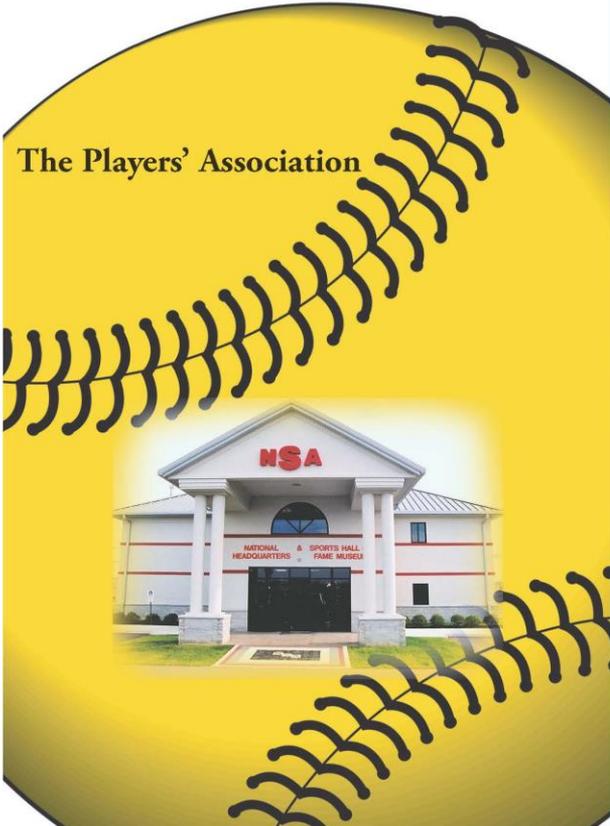




## Official Softball Rule Book

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The Players' Association



2015

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## NSA RULE BOOK STAFF

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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.

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

# ***NSA – The Players Association***

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# *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.

#### **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**

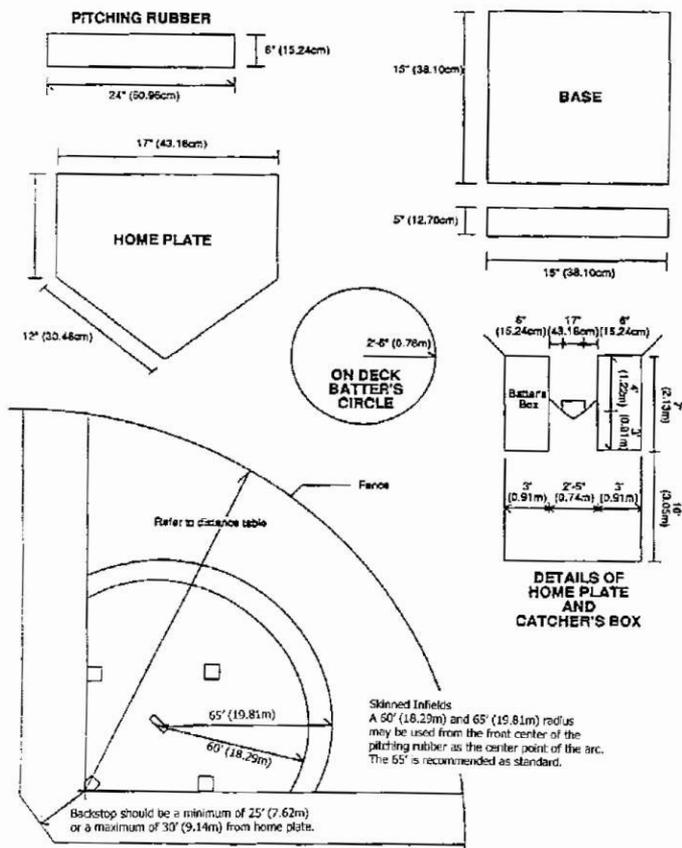
A term indicating that the ball is in play and an offensive player may be put out.

### **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 Non-Approved Bat Company list. 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.

- 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 fourteen (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.*

**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. 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) 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 anytime 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 Section 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 used 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 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 division's 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.

### **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

## **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 umpires 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 fair ground 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.

### **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**

- 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 of the on deck circles without interfering with 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 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.

- d) 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.
- 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

*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.*

- a) 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.*
- 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/she 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.*  
**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.

## **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 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 competed. 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 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:

- 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 batters' person.
  - e) 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.*
- f) 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.*

- a) 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 NEXT PAGE**), 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.*

**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 batter's 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 PENALITES**

- 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 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.*  
**EXCEPTION:** *Official embroidered NSA undergarments.*
- b) Black trousers with belt loops (Slow-pitch).
- c) Heather grey trousers with belt loops (Fastpitch).

**NOTE:** *Trousers do not include jeans, sweatpants, jogging pants, or other pants or slacks that **would not** be considered dress trousers.*

- d) 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.*
- 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 w/official NSA logo.  
h) Black half sleeve jacket w/official NSA logo.  
i) Black shoes. Black official (umpire) shoes bearing the white logo, trademark or manufacturers name is legal. NO WALKING BOOTS OR CASTS PERMITTED.  
j) White mock with official NSA logo or plain white regular turtleneck.  
k) Black rain gear (top and bottom).  
l) Black cap w/official NSA Logo.  
m) Black ball bag w/official NSA logo. Ball bag must be worn on the hip or slightly to the rear of hip.  
n) 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.  
o) 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:*

- Whether a batted ball was fair or foul.
- Whether a baserunner was safe or out.
- 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 anytime. 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 used 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.

- a) 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.
- b) 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.

- 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 an approved head protector, a 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 September 1<sup>st</sup> to August 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 31<sup>st</sup> 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 2014, they CANNOT be put on a 14u roster for the 2015 sanction year that begins September 1<sup>st</sup>, 2014.

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 play, certificates of team insurance must be presented to either the League or Tournament Director. Teams are not required to purchase NSA Team Insurance, but the team insurance purchased must be equal to or greater than the team insurance offered by the National Softball Association.

# **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 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  |
|                   | Ten     | (10) runs after Five (5) innings  |
| b) Lower Division | Twenty  | (20) runs after Three (3) innings |
|                   | Fifteen | (15) runs after Four (4) innings  |
|                   | Ten     | (10) runs after Five (5) innings  |

**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

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

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

## SECTION 11 HOME RUN LIMITS

- Upper Division – Three (3) home runs plus the one up home run rule
- Lower Division – One (1) home run. The first home run over the limit will be an out. For any subsequent home runs, the progressive home run rule will be in effect.

**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 I 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 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 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 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 teams roster is a bonafide 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 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.**

# **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.**

## **2015 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)**

**Rude American Bat Company**

**Wilson Sporting Goods  
(DeMarini)**



**Insurance Coverage provided by:**

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Bridgeview, IL 60455-0495  
800-318-7709**

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**Programs Include:**

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**Apply on line today at  
[www.PlayNSA.com](http://www.PlayNSA.com) – select Insurance**



# 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
- Probation List
- Suspension List

[www.PlayNSA.com](http://www.PlayNSA.com)

Click on Players for both full list

[www.nsafastpitchworldseries.com](http://www.nsafastpitchworldseries.com)

## **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.