

# 2014 NSA Rulebook

## Fastpitch Section



# 2014

## NSA RULE BOOK STAFF

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

# National Softball Association

## ***FASTPITCH & MODIFIED***

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

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

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

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

## **RULE 1 DEFINITIONS**

### **SECTION 1 ALTERED BAT**

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

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

### **SECTION 2 APPEAL PLAY**

A play in which an umpire cannot make a decision until requested by a manager, coach, or player. **The appeal must be made before the next legal or illegal pitch. Any dead ball appeal as a game ending play must be made before the umpires have left the field.** The appealed play does not change the type of out that is being appealed.

### **SECTION 3 APPROVED BAT**

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

### **SECTION 4 BALL ROTATION**

A pitcher will have a choice of balls at the start of each half inning, with the exception that if both balls do not get put into play in the first half of the first inning; the pitcher in the bottom of the first inning must pitch the unused ball. Thereafter, every third out, the ball in play must be returned to the eight-foot

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

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

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

#### **SECTION 6 BASERUNNER**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The batting order is the official lineup of offensive players listing the order in which team members must come to bat. A lineup card must include each player's name, number, and defensive position. Extra Players (EP) and Designated Hitters (DH) must also be included. **In all tournaments during POOL PLAY ONLY, it is OPTIONAL to bat the entire team roster, resulting in NO FIXED NUMBER OF EP'S. However, should one or more players get injured, ill or otherwise unable to continue the game. All pertinent rules governing normal use of the EP rule as described in Rule 4 Sec 2 are in effect.**

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

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

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

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

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

### **SECTION 13 BUNT**

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

### **SECTION 14 BUNT ATTEMPT**

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

### **SECTION 15 CATCH**

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

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

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

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

### **SECTION 17 CHARGED CONFERENCE**

A charged conference takes place when:

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

### **SECTION 18 COACH**

A member of the team at bat who takes his/her place in the coach's box to direct his/her players in running the bases. Two coaches are allowed, one positioned at 1st base and one positioned at 3rd base. One coach can have in his/her possession, a scorebook and an indicator that shall be used for scorekeeping purposes only. A defensive coach or manager must remain in the

dugout at their normal position. If the manager or coach does not comply after a warning from the umpire, he/she will be ejected from the game.

#### **SECTION 19 CROW HOP**

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

#### **SECTION 20 DEAD BALL**

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

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

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

#### **SECTION 22 DELIVERY**

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

#### **SECTION 23 FAIR BALL**

A fair ball is a batted ball that:

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

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

#### **SECTION 24 FLAGRANT PLAYER OBSTRUCTION**

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

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

#### **SECTION 25 FORCE OUT**

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

#### **SECTION 26 FOUL BALL**

A foul ball is a batted ball that:

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

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

### **SECTION 27 FOUL TIP**

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

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

### **SECTION 28 ILLEGAL BAT**

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

### **SECTION 29 ILLEGAL PITCH**

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

### **SECTION 30 ILLEGAL PLAYER**

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

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

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

### **SECTION 31 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 or altered bat.

### **SECTION 32 ILLEGALLY CAUGHT BALL**

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

### **SECTION 33 INELIGIBLE PLAYER**

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

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

Examples of an ineligible player but not limited to are:

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

### **SECTION 34 IN JEOPARDY**

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

### **SECTION 35      INFIELD FLY**

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

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

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

### **SECTION 36      INNING**

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

### **SECTION 37      INTERFERENCE**

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

### **SECTION 38      LEAP**

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

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

### **SECTION 39      LEGAL TOUCH**

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

### **SECTION 40      LEGALLY CAUGHT BALL**

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

### **SECTION 41      NON - APPROVED BAT**

A non - approved bat is one that has not been placed on the NSA Approved Bat List or that has been removed from the Approved Bat List. Entering the batters box with or using a non-approved bat carries an ejection penalty of both the batter and manager.

### **SECTION 42      OBSTRUCTION**

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

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

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

#### **SECTION 43      OVERSLIDE**

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

#### **SECTION 44      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 45      PASSED BALL**

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

#### **SECTION 46      PIVOT FOOT**

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

#### **SECTION 47      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 48      SACRIFICE**

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

#### **SECTION 49      SQUEEZE**

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

#### **SECTION 50      STEALING (STOLEN BASE/DOUBLE STEAL)**

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

#### **SECTION 51      STRIKE ZONE**

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

#### **SECTION 52      THREE (3) FOOT LINE**

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

### **SECTION 53 TIE BREAKER/EXTRA INNINGS**

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

### **SECTION 54 TIME**

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

### **SECTION 55 TURN AT BAT**

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

### **SECTION 56 WILD PITCH**

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

## **RULE 2 THE PLAYING FIELD**

### **SECTION 1**

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

### **SECTION 2**

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

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

- a) Distances from home plate to 2<sup>nd</sup> base:  
65' bases - 91'11"  
60' bases - 84'10"  
55' bases - 77'9"  
50' bases - 70'8 1/2"



### **SECTION 3**

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

### **SECTION 4**

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

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

### **SECTION 5**

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

## **RULE 3 EQUIPMENT**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## **SECTION 1**

The official bat shall be listed on the NSA approved bat list (all bats appearing on the NSA APPROVED BAT LIST are approved for ALL divisions of NSA play. The Official bat shall be of one piece or interchangeable barrel construction and can be made of wood (hardwood) or other materials approved by the NSA; or formed from a block of wood consisting of two or more pieces of wood bonded together with an adhesive, in such a way, that the grain direction of all pieces is essentially parallel to the length of the bat. When the interchangeable barrel bat is joined together properly, the two piece bat must meet all NSA official bat requirements. Below is a list of additional requirements for all approved NSA BATS:

- a) The bat shall not be more than 34 inches in length and no more than 38 ounces in weight and shall meet the NSA bat standards and also be listed on the NSA Approved Bat List. (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) The bat shall be listed on the NSA Approved Bat List. In the case of well used bats, sufficient markings must remain to make the bat identifiable as an NSA Approved bat. (Bat name and/or model number should suffice for this purpose.
- e) The bat may be made of metal or other materials approved by the NSA and may be angular; however, the NSA must approve any material before it is used in sanctioned events.
- f) All exposed surfaces of the bat must be smooth and free of burrs, pins, rivets, DEEP DENTS OR DANGEROUS DENTS, fractures/cracks of any type, sharp edges or any type of exterior fastener that would present a safety hazard.

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

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



- h) A one piece rubber grip and knob combination is legal.
- i) Metal or other approved material bats must have a knob on the handle and welded or mechanically fastened.
- j) All bats must have a safety knob of a minimum of ¼ inch protruding at a 90-degree angle from the handle. The ¼ inch is measured from the outer edge of the knob 90 degrees to the outside layer of wrapping. The knob portion of the bat may be taped as long as the bat does not exceed 34 inches in length; however, the umpire may request tape to be removed from both the handle and knob, if there is any question concerning the bat being altered or illegal. After determining the bat legal, the player may tape the bat back to his/her preference, providing the bat meets the requirements set forth by Rule 3, Sec. 1 (a-1).
- 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-1) after installation to be considered legal. ***STINGERS ARE APPROVED FOR NSA PLAY PROVIDED THEY ARE PROPERLY INSTALLED.***
- l) Shall be rounded, and shall be smooth. Shall not be more than 2 1/4 inches in diameter at its largest part. A tolerance of 1/16 inch is permitted, to allow for expansion on the round bat.

**NOTE:** *Sec. 1 (a-1) Any bat that does not comply with these guidelines or that is not listed on the Official NSA approved bat list (REFER TO: [playnsa.com](http://playnsa.com) for approved bat list) must be removed from the game,*

penalties (if any) administered, and the bat may no longer be used in any NSA Sanctioned Play.

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

## **SECTION 2**

The official softball shall be a raised-seamed, concealed-stitched or flat-surfaced ball. The center of the ball may be made of either long fiber kapok, or mixture of cork and rubber, and/or machine wound with a fine twisted yarn and covered with latex or rubber cement, or it may be made of other materials approved by the NSA. The cover of the ball shall be optic yellow, tanned horsehide, cowhide or any other materials approved by the NSA, cemented to the ball by application of cement to the underside of the cover and sewn with black waxed cotton or black linen thread to form a black stitched softball. The solid core ball must be stamped with THE official NSA logo that contains the maximum C.O.R. and compression standards. The ball MAY NOT bear any other logos except for the NSA official logo unless otherwise approved by the Executive Director or the Executive Vice President of the NSA. MAXIMUM C.O.R. shall be .47. Maximum Compression for NSA softballs is 400 pounds. **EXCEPTION:** *The NSA approves a .52 C.O.R. 275 pound compression ball.*

**Beginning 1/1/15 the .52 c.o.r. 275lb compression softball will be mandatory for all NSA Play.**

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

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

## **SECTION 3**

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

## **SECTION 4**

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

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

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

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

## **SECTION 5**

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

## **SECTION 6 UNIFORM**

All players on a team shall wear uniforms alike in color and style.

**NOTE:** *If a team is not in compliance with the uniform rule, the opposing team, if in total uniform, has the choice of being the home or visiting team. If both teams are in compliance or if both teams are not in compliance, a flip of a coin will determine the home and visiting team. Non-compliance of the uniform rule must be brought to the attention of the home plate umpire before the first pitch of the game. Once the game starts, there is no penalty.*

- a) Ball caps or visors must be alike and must be worn properly. Caps or visors are not mandatory but when worn by one or more players must be identical and must be a team cap or visor. Hard plastic visors, bandanas, handkerchiefs and the like are not approved headgear.
- b) ***In the umpires judgment:*** No player may wear any object on their person, that would be a distraction, or wear any object that may be dangerous to the player's person or any other player involved in the contest. *Examples are but not limited to: Glitter or sparkles; looped ear rings, necklaces that could create a hazard, pitchers with a helmet that creates a glare.*
- c) 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 exposed areas.
- d) Players may wear scrunchies or tie-ups if worn in good taste and not worn in a derogatory fashion. Scrunchies may not be worn in a fashion to hide or prohibit the viewing of the player's number.
- e) Distinguishable numbers must be worn and visible on all uniforms and be a minimum of six (6) inches in height. No players on the same team may wear identical numbers. If this occurs, the umpire must ensure that this is corrected immediately.

**EXAMPLE:** *# 7 and # 07 are distinguishable numbers and ARE NOT considered identical.*

- f) **THE NATIONAL SOFTBALL ASSOCIATION STRONGLY RECOMMENDS THAT ANY TYPE OF JEWELRY NOT BE WORN IN ANY NSA PLAY.**
- g) Casts, (plaster, metal, or other hard substances) or other items judged dangerous by the umpire may not be worn during the game by any coach coaching the bases or by any player.
- h) Coaches in wheelchairs MAY be on the field of play during live ball situations. NSA Recommends, though not mandatory, that coaches who choose to coach on the field who are in wheelchairs would pad exposed metal that potentially may be dangerous to other participants.

**EXCEPTION:** *In some cases a protective device may be attached to an approved head protector, with prior approval by the local NSA Director.*

**NOTE:** *Play prior to detection of jewelry is not affected by violation of the jewelry rule. Violation of the jewelry rule is not grounds for protests.*

**\*NOTE:** *Prosthesis may be worn; however, any metal that is part of a brace or support must be covered by ½" soft foam or soft material and taped. Casts are prohibited.*

**\*\*NOTE:** *Prior to the start of the game, the manager/coach shall be responsible for verifying to the Umpire-in-Chief that all his/her players are equipped and in compliance with the Official NSA Rule Book.*

### **SECTION 7**

A batting helmet bearing the NOCSAE stamp is mandatory for each batter, on-deck batter, player, any runner, and youth coach in the coach's box. The batting helmet worn by each of these individuals must have extended earflaps that cover both ears and temples. For all youth Fast Pitch play: The helmet must have a properly attached face guard and the face guard must bear the NOCSAE stamp to be approved. If a pitcher wears a batting helmet while pitching, the outer covering must have a non-glare surface. Plastic visors are prohibited for players, coaches and managers. The batting helmet must be worn properly at all times.

**EXCEPTION:** *In the adult program, one or two earflaps are acceptable.*

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

- a) When an umpire detects a runner (including the batter/runner) deliberately removing his/her batting helmet during playing action, a dead ball will be declared immediately. The violator is declared out with all runners returning to the last base touched at the time of the infraction. Preceding runners, scoring before the removal of the helmet, will score and are not required to return to the last base occupied.

### **SECTION 8 PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT**

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

**The National Softball Association HIGHLY RECOMMENDS to the parents and coaches of ALL players (especially pitchers, 3<sup>rd</sup> & 1<sup>st</sup> basemen) to have their children and players wearing not only protective equipment, but wearing PROTECTIVE FACE MASKS during all live ball play!** All players are permitted to wear any approved protective equipment including catcher's equipment, batter's helmet, and soccer-style shin guards. If used, the equipment must not be detached. Detached equipment can be an obstruction. Repeated acts could be grounds for ejection. For all additional Equipment that is approved for NSA play, refer to [www.playnsa.com](http://www.playnsa.com)

## **RULE 4 PLAYERS & SUBSTITUTION**

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

*responsible for insuring that the non-player be in compliance with the batting helmet rule or age rule.*

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

### **SECTION 1**

A team shall consist of a minimum of nine (9) players and a maximum of twelve (12) players if the two (2) optional Extra Player (EP) and the Designated Hitter (DH) are used. Teams can play a maximum of nine (9) players on defense.

*EXCEPTION: IN POOL PLAY ONLY* – teams will be allowed to start with 8 players with the 9<sup>th</sup> spot in the batting order being an out. If the 9<sup>th</sup> player shows up, he/she can be immediately inserted into the 9<sup>th</sup> spot in the batting order.

Players of the team in the field may be stationed anywhere on fair territory, except the catcher, who must be in the catcher's box, and the pitcher who must be in a legal pitching position at the start of each pitch. No part of the defensive player's foot (except catcher) may be outside the foul lines, from the time when the pitcher steps on the pitching rubber or until the pitch is released.

A team must have the required number of players present in the team area to start or continue a game. Players listed in the starting line-up and not available at game time may be substituted for and re-entered later. Official line-up cards are to be completed and submitted to the official scorekeeper or the umpire at the start of each game. The line-up shall contain the first and last name, position, and uniform number of each player. The DH should be listed in the proper batting order with DH as the player's position. The player being DH'd for should be listed as "defensive player" in the designated substitute box at the bottom of the card and should be the first name listed.

*NOTE: If a wrong number is on the line-up card, correct it and continue playing ball with no penalty.*

- 1) All available substitutes should be listed in the designated place by last name, first name and uniform number.
- 2) Eligible roster members may be added to the available substitute list any time during the game.

### **SECTION 2 DESIGNATED HITTER (DH) AND EXTRA PLAYER (EP)**

- a) The designated hitter (DH) may play defense at anytime during the game. This would eliminate the Designated Hitter (DH) for the remainder of the game.
  - 1) A Designated Hitter (DH) may be used for any player in the line-up.
  - 2) The Designated Hitter (DH) must be made known prior to the start of the game, and his/her name and number indicated on the line-up sheet or score sheet.
  - 3) The player listed as (DH) must remain in the same position in the batting order for the entire game.
  - 4) The (DH) may be substituted for at any time, if the substitute is a pinch runner or pinch hitter other than the player being hit for, she must be a player who has not yet been in the game. The substitute then becomes the (DH).
- b) The Extra Player (EP) can play defense. Coaches have the option of using two (2) EP's.



An EP(s) is optional, but if one is used, it must be made known prior to the start of game and be listed on the line-up sheet or score sheet.

- 1) If the EP(s) is used, he/she must be used the entire game.
- 2) The EP(s) must remain in the same position in the batting order for the entire game.
- 3) If an EP(s) is used, all players (10 or 11) must bat and any nine (9) can play defense. Defensive positions can be changed, but the batting order must remain the same.
- 4) The EP(s) may be substituted for at any time, either by a pinch runner or a pinch hitter who then becomes the EP. The substitute may be a player who has not yet been in the game.

**EXCEPTION:** In all tournaments during POOL PLAY ONLY, it is OPTIONAL to bat the entire team roster, resulting in NO FIXED NUMBER OF EP'S. However, should one or more players get injured, ill or otherwise unable to continue the game. All pertinent rules governing normal use of the EP rule as described in Rule 4 Sec 2 & 4 are in effect.

### **SECTION 3**

Any of the starting and substitute players may be withdrawn from the game and re-entered once. (This includes the EP(s) and/or DH, provided that the players occupy the original position in the batting order whenever in the game).

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

- a) Violation of the re-entry rule results in the use of an illegal player. Refer to Rule 4, Sec 7.
- b) Violation of the re-entry is handled as an appeal that can be made ANYTIME during the game.

### **SECTION 4**

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

- a) Nine (9) Players, Ten (10) if one DH only or one EP only is used, Eleven (11) players if two EP's or one EP and one DH are used, Twelve (12) players if the two EP's and the DH is used. If a team starts the game with the EP(s), the team must finish the game with the EP(s) or be penalized as follows: if the EP(s) or any other player is removed with the exception of the Designated Hitter (DH), injured or ejected from the game with no substitute to replace the player, the vacated spot automatically becomes an out each time the vacant spot comes to bat or anytime a runner is removed from the base with no legal substitution. Neither the (DH) nor the player being DH'd for may be used to replace the injured (EP). A team playing with nine (9) players and no available substitute may finish the game with eight (8) players if an injury occurs with the vacant spot being an out as described in Rule 4 Sec 4 (b). However, the team must start the game with the minimum of nine (9) players.
- b) When a team is left with a vacant spot in the lineup because of a player as described in Sec. 4 (b), the opposing team may not, with two outs, intentionally or unintentionally walk the previous batter in order to get the "AUTOMATIC OUT" created by the vacant spot in the batting order. This would also include catcher obstruction to the previous batter or the previous batter being hit by a legal or illegally pitched ball. If the previous batter is walked or hit by a legal or illegally pitched ball, the vacant spot is skipped, the "AUTOMATIC OUT" is waived, and the next

batter is the player whose name follows the vacant spot in the batting order. This only applies when there are two (2) outs.

**NOTE:** *If a team has a vacant spot and a substitute arrives or the original player can play again, he/she must be inserted immediately into the vacant spot.*

## **SECTION 5**

A player shall be officially in the game when she is announced by the manager or team representative and entered on the official score sheet or enters the batter's box "unannounced". A pitch does not need to be thrown for the player to be officially in the game. The following regulations govern the substitution of players:

**PENALTY:** Immediate ejection of the manager from the game whenever the infraction is discovered. The unreported sub shall remain in the game and all activity will be official.

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

a) **A player substituted for a 2<sup>nd</sup> time in the game, shall not participate in the game except as a coach or courtesy runner. All players, starters and substitutes may re-enter one time.**

- 1) When a batter takes his/her place in the batter's box.
- 2) When a fielder takes the place of the fielder for which he/she is substituting.
- 3) When a runner replaces the player on the base he/she is holding.
- 4) When a pitcher takes his/her place on the pitcher's plate.

**\*NOTE:** *Re-entry is considered a substitution and if an illegal re-entry occurs, this constitutes an illegal player. The use of an illegal player is handled as a protest which can be made at any time while the player is in the game. A player will not violate the illegal player provision until he/she enters the game and one (1) pitch is thrown. An illegal player violation results in the immediate ejection of the illegal player and in youth play the coach is also ejected.*

## **SECTION 6 COURTESY RUNNER**

The player in the batting order where the last out was recorded or any player not currently in the game may replace the current (the player physically playing the position when the 3<sup>rd</sup> out was recorded) pitcher or catcher as a courtesy runner at any time. The pitcher or catcher will remain in the game and the courtesy runner will retain all substitution rights (if the courtesy runner has substitution rights). A player can be used only once per inning as a courtesy runner. Should the player that made the last recorded out be on base for any reason or is the pitcher or catcher, or batting or has already been a courtesy runner in that inning, the new courtesy runner would be determined by going back previous outs to the next allowable courtesy runner or to any player not currently in the game. If in the first inning a courtesy runner is used for either the pitcher or the catcher (who are listed in the line up when the line ups are turned in) and there are no outs recorded, the courtesy runner will be the player furthest removed from the pitcher or catcher needing the courtesy runner or any player not currently in the game.

**PENALTY:** Using the wrong courtesy runner is the ejection of the head coach. *The pitcher or catcher may be used as a courtesy runner and a player with no substitution privileges may also be a courtesy runner as long as the pitcher has not been ejected. The pitcher or catcher may return to run for themselves if the courtesy runner is due up to bat.*

## **SECTION 7 ILLEGAL PLAYER**

The use of an illegal player is handled as an appeal that can be made at any time while the player is in the game. A player will not violate the illegal player provision until he/she enters the game and one (1) pitch is thrown. Any action before one pitch is thrown is correctable. An illegal player violation results in the immediate ejection of the illegal player and his/her coach. In Youth Play, an unreported substitute is not a violation of the Illegal Player Rule, however the coach shall be ejected if Rule 4, Sec. 5 (a) is met. In addition, the following penalties will apply:

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

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

**\*NOTE:** *The penalty for using an ineligible player is a forfeit of any/all games played or in progress. Violation of an illegal player constitutes the immediate ejection of both the illegal player and his/her coach.*

**\*\*NOTE:** *Re-entry is considered a substitution and if an illegal re-entry occurs, this constitutes an illegal player. The use of an illegal player is handled as a protest which can be made at any time while the player is in the game. A player will not violate the illegal player provision until he/she enters the game and one (1) pitch is thrown.*

## **SECTION 8 DIVISIONS OF PLAY**

**NOTE:** *The National Softball Association has divisions of play for men and women and a Coed Division for both to compete in jointly. The Men's Division is designed for men 16 years of age and older. The Women's Division is designed for women 16 years of age and older. The player must already be 16 to compete in the Adult Division. Males may not compete in the female division and females may not compete in the male division in any program. This also applies to the Youth Program.*

**\*NOTE:** *The Tournament Director or the Tournament UIC may declare a higher-class player(s) ineligible without having a team protest.*

**\*\*NOTE:** *NSA Youth Fast pitch (10 & Under through 18 & Under) has an "A" and "B" Divisions which are determined by skill levels. Other NSA Fast pitch Divisions are 23 & Under and Adult.*

**\*\*\*NOTE:** *The 23 & Under teams are considered adult teams. The 23 & Under division will play by the adult rules including the age eligibility rule. The youth sanction year is 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 31st during the CURRENT SANCTIONING SEASON will be the age group the player is eligible for during the ENTIRE sanction year. All players must meet the age requirements to be put on a current year's roster.*

**EXAMPLE:** *If a player turns 15 years old on December 31<sup>st</sup> of 2013, they CANNOT be put on a 14u roster for the 2014 sanction year that begins September 1<sup>st</sup>, 2013.*

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

- a) All players must play in one age group only.
- b) A player cannot play in two (2) age divisions in one tournament.
- c) A player may play up one age group but not down in an age group.  
**EXCEPTION:** *A player who turns 11, 13, or 15 years of age in the current year, may move up two (2) divisions and may play in the 14, 16, or the 18 & Under age divisions, respectively.*
- d) Proof of age must be verified by one of the following: government issued I.D. and/or birth certificate copies. Proof of age must accompany the player at all times.
- e) Teams may have no more than twenty five (25) players on their roster.
- f) Adult Division softball (male & female) players are eligible for Adult Division play once they have reached their sixteenth (16th) birthday.

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

#### **SECTION 9 INSURANCE PROCEDURES**

At all levels of Youth Fastpitch play certificates of team insurance must be presented to either the League or Tournament Director.

**NOTE:** *Teams do not need to purchase NSA team insurance, but any insurance purchased must be equal to or greater than the team insurance offered by the National Softball Association.*

**\*NOTE:** *Adult division teams, including the 23 & Under teams, must provide certificates of adult insurance if purchasing insurance.*

#### **SECTION 10 COMMUNICABLE DISEASE PROCEDURES**

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

**\*NOTE:** *A reasonable amount of time will be determined by the home plate umpire and will be no less than five minutes.*

## **NSA INSURANCE PROGRAM**

### **No Team, 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.

## **RULE 5 THE GAME**

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

**NOTE:** At all levels of youth play, certificates of team insurance must be presented to either the League or Tournament Director. Teams do not need to purchase NSA team insurance, but any insurance purchased must be equal to or greater than the team insurance offered by the National Softball Association. 23 & Under teams that purchase insurance must purchase adult insurance.

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

**\*\*NOTE:** It is the option of the Tournament Director to either use or not use an official scorekeeper. If an official scorekeeper is not used, the home team will be the official scorer and it is the obligation of the visiting team to verify the score at the end of each half inning.

### **SECTION 1**

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

## **SECTION 2**

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

## **SECTION 3**

A regulation game shall consist of seven (7) innings.

- a) A full seven (7) innings need not be played if the home team (the team second at bat) scores more runs in six innings or before the third out of the seventh inning.

**EXCEPTION:** *The NSA will use the 12, 10 and 8 run rule in all tournament play. If one team is 12, 10 or 8 runs ahead after 3, 4 or 5 innings, or after 2½, 3½ or 4½ innings, if the home team is ahead by 12, 10 or 8 or more runs respectively, the team with the 12, 10 or 8 run lead shall be the winner.*

- b) A game that is tied at the end of seven innings will use the tie-breaking rule. This would involve the last batter of the previous inning whose turn at bat had been completed, assuming a position on second base. This would be done at the beginning of each half inning until, at the conclusion of a full inning a winner is determined. A game that is tied at the end of the time limit must complete the full inning if the time elapses during any part of an inning.

**NOTE:** *The NSA recommends a one hour and thirty minute (1:30) time limit in NIT, State, Regional, and World Series Tournaments (in youth play only). In the Adult Fastpitch & Modified Program, a one hour and forty-five minute (1:45) time limit is recommended. No new inning (top of the inning) will start after the allotted time limit has expired. Once an inning begins, that inning must be completed unless the home team is ahead when the time expires. The visiting teams one half inning must be completed.*

- c) The umpire is empowered to call a game at any time because of darkness, rain, fire, panic, or other causes which place the patrons or players in peril.
- d) These provisions do not apply to any acts on the part of the players or spectators, which might call for the forfeiture of the game. The umpire may forfeit the game if attacked physically by any team member or spectator.
- e) The umpire shall forfeit a game in favor of a team not at fault in the following cases:
- 1) If a team fails to appear on the field, or being on the field, refuses to begin a game at the time the team is scheduled to play, or within a time set for forfeitures (grace period) by the organization in which the team is playing.
  - 2) If after the game has started, one team refuses to continue play unless the game has been suspended or terminated by the umpire.
  - 3) If after the umpire has suspended the game, one side fails to resume playing within two minutes after the umpire has called "play ball".
  - 4) If a team uses tactics to delay or to hasten the game.
  - 5) If after being warned by the umpire, any one of the rules is willfully violated.

- 6) If the order for the removal of a player, coach, or manager from the game is not obeyed within one minute.
  - 7) If because of the ejection of a player by the umpire, a team can no longer field nine (9) defensive players or for any other reason can no longer field eight (8) defensive players.
  - 8) The score of a forfeited game will be 7-0 to the winning team.
- f) During all tournament play (Qualifying, NIT, State, Regional and World Series) in the event of rain or any other cause which interrupts a game, the game must be resumed at the exact point where it was stopped, unless the teams mutually agree to accept the existing score as the final score.
- NOTE:** *Players listed in the line-ups and not available at game time may be substituted.*
- g) In the event that a tournament cannot be completed, an official game may be called after 5 innings of play or 4 ½ innings of play if the home team is ahead.
  - h) Original lineups may be changed when the game is replayed.

#### **SECTION 4**

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

#### **SECTION 5**

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

- a) The batter being put out before LEGALLY touching first base.
- b) A baserunner being forced out due to the batter becoming a baserunner.
- c) A baserunner leaving the base before a pitched ball to home plate leaves the pitchers hand.
- d) An appeal play at first base on the batter/runner for the third out of the inning.

#### **SECTION 6**

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

#### **SECTION 7**

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

#### **SECTION 8**

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

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

#### **SECTION 9**

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

- a) Teams must PRINT a copy of the Official NSA ONLINE ROSTER (complete & correct), OBTAIN SIGNATURES of participants (and

Parents or guardian if Youth) to turn in at ALL NSA sanctioned tournaments prior to their scheduled start or they will not be allowed to participate.

**EXCEPTION:** See Youth Tryout Rosters

**NOTE:** For ALL Youth Roster information refer to Rule 4, Section 8 and Article XIV Sec 8 (a-h) of the Official NSA Bylaws.

### **SECTION 10**

- a) Refer to Article XIV Sec 9 (a-d) of the Official NSA Bylaws for Youth team try-out rosters.
- b) Refer to Article XVI Section 7 regarding information for Youth Fast Pitch Fall Tournaments and World Series Qualifiers.

### **SECTION 11**

Players and fans are prohibited from broadcasting excessive external electronic amplified sound or music through speakers during the game. **EFFECT:** *1<sup>st</sup> Warning is to the coach. 2<sup>nd</sup> Warning the coach is ejected. 3<sup>rd</sup> Warning is a forfeit.*

## **RULE 6 PITCHING REGULATIONS**

### **SECTION 1**

Before starting the delivery (pitch), the pitcher shall comply with the following:

- a) The pitcher shall take a position with both feet on the ground and in contact with the pitching plate. The hands shall be separated with the ball being held in either the glove or pitching hand.
- b) While in this position, the pitcher shall take, or simulate taking, a signal from the catcher.
- c) The pitcher shall bring the hands together or touch them together for no more than ten seconds.
- d) The pitcher shall not be considered in the pitching position, unless the catcher is in position to receive the pitch.
- e) The pitcher may not take the pitching position on or near the pitching plate without having the ball in his/her possession.

### **SECTION 2**

The pitch starts when the hands are separated or the pitcher makes any motion that is part of his/her wind-up. The hands may only be separated one (1) time per pitch. In the act of delivering the ball, the pitcher shall not take more than one step which must be forward, toward the batter, and simultaneous with the delivery of the ball to the batter.

**NOTE:** *It is not a step if the pitcher slides his/her foot across the pitching rubber, provided contact is maintained with the pitching rubber.*

### **SECTION 3**

After taking the signal, the pitcher may not step backward with the non-pivot foot.

**EXCEPTION:** *Men may step backward but this step must be taken simultaneously with or prior to starting the pitch.*

### **SECTION 4**

The pivot foot must remain in contact with the pitcher's plate or ground until the non-pivot foot (front foot) touches the ground. There is no restriction on position or movement of the free foot except that if a step is taken forward with



the free foot, the step must be taken within or partially within the 24" length of the pitching plate. **Women and Youth Girls may not step backwards.**

**EXCEPTION: For Men only:** *There is no restriction on position or movement of the free foot except that if a step is taken backwards or forwards with the free foot, the step must be taken within or partially within the 24" length of the pitching plate.*

**\*NOTE:** *It is not considered a step, if the pitcher slides their foot on the pitching plate, provided contact with the pitching plate is maintained.*

**\*\*NOTE:** *Such techniques as the "crow hop" and "leap" are illegal.*

### **SECTIONS**

A legal delivery is one in which the ball is delivered to the batter with an underhand motion.

- a) The follow through of the hand and wrist and the release of the ball must be forward past the straight line of the body.
- b) The hand must be below the hip, and the wrist must not be farther from the body than the elbow.
- c) When a forward step is taken toward the batter, the pitch is completed.
- d) When the pitch is released, the catcher must be within the outside lines of the catcher's box.
- e) The catcher must return the ball directly to the pitcher after each pitch except after a strike out, putout made by the catcher, or a play on a baserunner.
- f) Once the ball has been returned to the pitcher, the pitcher has ten (10) seconds to receive the signal from the catcher.

**PENALTY:** (e & f above) a ball is awarded the batter.

### **SECTION 6**

A pitcher may use any wind-up desired providing:

- a) There is no motion made to pitch without immediately delivering the ball to the batter.
- b) A rocker action is not used in which, after having the ball in both hands in the pitching position, the pitcher removes one hand from the ball, takes a backward and forward swing and returns the ball to both hands in front of the body.
- c) No wind-up is used in which there is a stop or reversal of the forward motion.
- d) There is no more than one revolution of the arm in the windmill pitch. The pitching arm may be dropped to the side and to the rear before starting the windmill motion. The ball does not have to be released the first time past the hip.
- e) The pitcher makes no continuous wind-up after taking the forward step, which is simultaneous with the release of the ball.

### **SECTION 7**

While in the pitching position, the pitcher may not deliberately drop, roll or bounce the ball in order to prevent the batter from striking it.

### **SECTION 8**

During the game, the pitcher may not use tape or other substances on the ball, pitching hand or fingers; nor shall any player apply any foreign substance to the ball. With the umpire's approval, powdered resin may be used to dry the hand. The wearing of any item on the pitching hand, wrist, or arm that may be distracting to the batter will not be allowed.

**PENALTY:** Any infraction of Sec. 1 through Sec. 8 constitutes an illegal pitch. A ball is awarded to the batter and all base runners advance one base without liability to be put out; Runners may advance beyond the awarded base but do so with liability to be put out. If the illegal pitch is hit and all runners including the batter-runner, advance one base, the play stands. If all baserunners including the batter-runner do not advance at least one base, the offensive coach has the option of taking the result of the play or the result of the pitch. Failure of players to hear the call shall not void the call.

#### **SECTION 9**

The umpire will declare no pitch when:

- a) A pitcher pitches during the suspension of play.
- b) A runner is declared out for leaving the base before the ball leaves the pitcher's hand.
- c) The pitcher pitches before a base runner has retouched the base occupied after a foul ball and the ball is dead.

**PENALTY:** The ball is dead and all subsequent action on that pitch is canceled.

#### **SECTION 10**

Umpire will declare an illegal pitch when:

- a) A fielder, other than the catcher, is outside the playing field (foul territory) once the pitcher steps on the pitching plate and prior to the pitch being released.

**NOTE:** *Foul line considered fair territory.*

**EFFECT:** *The ball is dead, batter is awarded a ball, and all subsequent action on that pitch is canceled.*

#### **SECTION 11**

At the beginning of each half inning or when a pitcher relieves another, not more than one (1) minute may be used to deliver not more than five (5) pitches to the catcher or other teammate. Play shall be suspended during this time. Each pitcher during an inning may only warm up one (1) time per inning.

**PENALTY:** A pitcher will be penalized by awarding a ball to the batter for each pitch in excess of five (5).

**NOTE:** *Under the discretion of the home plate umpire, the pitcher may be authorized more pitches due to inclement weather, injury, or other circumstances.*

#### **SECTION 12**

If the ball slips from the pitcher's hand during the wind-up or during the backswing, a ball shall be called on the batter, and the ball remains in play and runners may advance at their own risk.

#### **SECTION 13**

After assuming the pitching position, the pitcher may not throw to a base while a foot is in contact with the pitching plate.

**PENALTY:** An illegal pitch is declared.

**NOTE:** *An illegal pitch will be declared if any fielder takes a position in the batter's line of vision or, with deliberate unsportsmanlike intent, acts in a manner to otherwise distract the batter. A pitch does not have to be delivered or released.*

#### **SECTION 14**

No player, manager, or coach shall call "TIME", or employ any other word or phrase, or commit any act while the ball is alive and in play for the obvious purpose of trying to make the pitcher commit an illegal pitch.

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

### **SECTION 15**

There shall be only one charged conference between the manager and other team representative from the dugout with each and every pitcher in an inning. The second charged conference shall result in the removal of the pitcher from the pitching position for the remainder of the game. If the pitcher is removed from the pitching position as the result of a second charged conference, the pitcher can remain in the game in any other position excluding the pitching position for the remainder of the game.

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

**NOTE:** *A starting or substitute pitcher must pitch to a batter until the batter reaches a base or is put out.*

**\*NOTE:** *The rules for a charged conference do not change in extra innings.*

### **SECTION 16**

Each pitcher (starter or substitute) must pitch until the first batter facing him/her has completed his/her turn at bat, the side has been retired or he/she has been removed from the game, unless the pitcher sustains an injury or illness which in the judgment of the home plate umpire, incapacitates the pitcher from pitching. A pitcher removed from the game by rule or ejection is not subject to this rule (Rule 4 Sec 5b) Any other player may be removed from the game at any time.

## **NSA MODIFIED SOFTBALL**

### **RULE 6 PITCHING RULES**

#### **SECTION 1**

Before starting the delivery (pitch), the pitcher shall comply with the following:

- a) He/she shall take a position with his/her pivot foot on the pitcher's rubber and the non-pivot foot also on the pitching rubber. Both feet must be on the ground. The hands shall be separated. The ball can be in the glove or pitching hand.
- b) While in this position the pitcher shall take the signal from the catcher.
- c) The pitcher shall then hold the ball in both hands for not less than one (1) second and not more than ten (10) seconds before releasing the ball.
- d) The pitcher shall not be considered in the pitching position, unless the catcher is in position to receive the pitch.
- e) The pitcher may not take the pitching position on or near the pitcher's plate without having the ball in his/her possession.

## **SECTION 2**

The pitch starts when one hand is taken off the ball or the pitcher makes any motion that is part of his/her windup.

- a) In the act of delivering the ball, the pitcher shall not take more than one step which must be forward, toward the batter, and simultaneous with the delivery of the ball to the batter.

**NOTE:** *It is not a step if the pitcher slides his/her foot across the pitching rubber, provided contact is maintained with the pitching rubber.*

- b) Major Division only: The only restriction on the pitch is that the elbow must remain locked until the release of the pitch. The windmill pitch is not allowed in any division.

## **SECTION 3**

A legal delivery shall be a ball that is delivered to the batter with an underhand motion.

- a) No windmill or sidearm type of delivery.
- b) The pitcher must release the ball on the first forward swing of the pitching arm past the hip.
- c) The ball must not be outside the pitcher's wrist at the top of the backswing and during the complete forward delivery.
- d) The elbow and wrist must be locked throughout the entire delivery.  
**PENALTY:** Rule 6, Sec. 1 - 3. The penalty for an illegal pitch is the same as Rule 6, Sec. 8. Penalty, in the Fastpitch Pitching Rule.
- e) If the ball slips from the pitcher's hand during his wind-up or during the back swing, a ball shall be called on the batter. The ball will remain in play and runners may advance at their own risk.

**NOTE:** *ALL OTHER MODIFIED PITCHING RULES WILL BE THE SAME AS THE FASTPITCH RULES.*

# **RULE 7 BATTING**

## **SECTION 1**

The batter shall take his/her position within the lines of the batter's box.

- a) The batter shall not have his/her entire foot touching the ground completely outside the lines of the batter's box or touching home plate when the ball is hit.
- b) The batter shall not step directly across in front of the catcher to the other side of the batter's box while the pitcher is in position to pitch.  
**EFFECT:** *Sec. 1 (a-b) The ball is dead, the batter is out, baserunners may not advance.*
- c) The batter shall not enter the batter's box with an illegal bat.  
**EFFECT:** *The batter is out, the ball is dead and the baserunners may not advance.*
- d) The batter shall not enter the batter's box with an altered bat or non approved bat.  
**EFFECT:** *The ball is dead, the batter is out, and without warning is ejected from the game (in youth play the coach is also ejected). Baserunners may not advance.*
- e) The batter must take his/her position within ten (10) seconds after the umpire has called "play ball". He/she must have both feet within the

lines of the box before the start of the pitch. He/she may touch the line, but no part of his/her foot may be outside of the lines prior to the pitch.

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

## **SECTION 2**

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

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

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

## **SECTION 3**

No baserunner shall be removed from the base he/she is occupying to bat in her proper place. He/she merely misses her turn at bat with no penalty. The batter following him/her in the order becomes the legal batter. **EXCEPTION:** *The courtesy runner can be replaced by the pitcher/catcher to run for themselves in order for the courtesy runner to bat in her/his spot in the line – up. This does not eliminate the option for the coach to skip the courtesy runners turn at bat.*

#### **SECTION 4**

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

#### **SECTION 5**

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

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

#### **SECTION 6**

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

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

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

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

#### **SECTION 7 THE UMPIRE CALLS A STRIKE:**

- a) For each legally pitched ball entering the strike zone before touching the ground and at which the batter does not swing.
- b) For each pitched ball swung at and missed by the batter. This includes a ball that is swung at but hit the ground first.
- c) For each foul tip held by the catcher. The batter is out if it is the 3<sup>rd</sup> strike.
- d) For each foul ball not legally caught. This does not include a 3<sup>rd</sup> strike.
- e) For each pitched ball swung at and missed which touches any part of the batter.
- f) When any part of the batter's person is hit with his/her own batted ball.
- g) When a pitched ball hits the batter while the ball is in the strike zone.

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

#### **SECTION 8**

The umpire calls a ball:

- a) For each pitch that does not enter the strike zone, hits the ground or touches home plate, or is not swung at by the batter.
- b) For each illegally pitched ball.
- c) When a pitch hits the batter outside of the strike zone. The batter is awarded first base. This would include a ball that hits the ground and then hits the batter.
- d) When the catcher fails to return the ball directly to the pitcher as required in Rule 6. Sec. 5 (e).
- e) When the pitcher fails to pitch within ten (10) seconds.
- f) For each excessive warm-up pitch. (See Rule 6, Sec. 11.)
- g) When the pitcher attempts a quick return pitch, he/she shall be given a warning.

#### **SECTION 9**

A fair ball is a legally batted ball which:

- a) Settles or is touched on fair ground between home plate and 1<sup>st</sup> base or home plate and 3<sup>rd</sup> base.
- b) Bounds past 1<sup>st</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> base on or over fair ground.

- c) Touches 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, or 3<sup>rd</sup> base.
- d) While on or over fair ground, touches the person or clothing of an umpire or player.
- e) First falls on fair ground beyond 1<sup>st</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> base. A fair fly ball must be judged according to the relative position of the ball and the foul line, regardless of whether the fielder is on fair or foul ground at the time he/she touches the ball.
- f) Hits home plate and remains in fair territory.  
**EFFECT:** *Rule 7 Sec 9 (a-f). The ball is in play and baserunners are entitled to advance any number of bases with liability to be put out. The batter becomes a baserunner unless the infield fly rule applies.*
- g) While on or over fair ground, the ball lands behind a fence or in the stands beyond the outfield fence. This is a home run.
- h) Hits a foul pole on the fly. If the ball hits the pole above the fence level, it shall be a home run.

**SECTION 10 A FOUL BALL IS A LEGALLY BATTED BALL WHICH:**

- a) Settles on foul ground between home plate and 1<sup>st</sup> base or between home plate and 3<sup>rd</sup> base.
- b) Bounds past 1<sup>st</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> base on or over foul ground.
- c) First touches on foul ground beyond 1<sup>st</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> base.
- d) While on or over foul ground touches the person or clothing of an umpire or player, or the ball is blocked.  
**EFFECT:** *Rule 7, Sec. 8 (a-d) The ball is dead. A strike is called on the batter for each foul ball, including the third strike. Baserunners must return to their bases without liability to be put out. Baserunner may not advance on a third strike foul ball, including a legally caught foul ball, however all runners may advance on any other legally caught foul ball.*

**SECTION 11 THE BATTER IS OUT**

- a) When the 3rd strike is struck at and missed including if the ball touches any part of the batter's person.
- b) When a batter appears in the batter's box with or is discovered using an altered, Senior, non-approved or an illegal bat prior to hitting the ball, the batter is also ejected from the game for using an altered, Senior or non-approved bat. For using a Senior Bat, the player is also suspended one (1) year on the spot with no right to an appeal.
- c) When a fly ball is legally caught. A fielder may be touching or leaning on the fence when making a catch as long as the fielder has possession of the ball before falling to the ground or over the fence. The vertical plane from ground to the top of the fence forms the dead ball line.
- d) Immediately when he/she hits an infield fly and the umpire has declared "Infield Fly". Refer to Rule 1, Sec. 35.
- e) If a fielder intentionally drops or lets drop a fair fly ball, including a line drive, and an attempted bunt which can be caught by an infielder with ordinary effort with 1st, 1st & 2nd, 1st & 3rd or 1st, 2nd & 3rd bases occupied with less than two (2) outs.  
**EFFECT:** *The ball is dead, the batter is out, and base runners must return to the last base touched at the time of the pitch. This does not apply to an infield fly. The dropped ball remains alive on an infield fly.*

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

- f) If a preceding runner, in the umpire's judgment, intentionally interferes with a fielder who is attempting to catch a thrown ball, or is attempting to throw a ball in an attempt to complete a play; the preceding runner and the batter are both declared out.
- g) Any batter-runner who carries the bat during a live ball and legally reaches or touches 1st base while still holding the bat, will be declared out. Should this be the 3rd out of the inning, no preceding runner shall score.  
**EFFECT:** *If less than two (2) outs, a delayed ball signal will be given and the ball will remain alive.*
- h) When the batter attempts a bunt on the 3rd strike and bunts the ball foul.
- i) On a legally caught 3rd strike foul ball or foul tip.  
**NOTE:** *If, with less than two (2) outs and 1st base is unoccupied or with two (2) outs, the batter is not out unless the 3rd strike is caught. If the ball is not caught, the batter is eligible to reach 1st base before being tagged out or thrown out. Runners occupying any other base(s) may also advance with liability to be put out.*  
**\*NOTE:** *Any foul tip that is caught is a strike and the ball is in play.*
- j) When hit by his/her own-batted ball, in fair territory, outside the batters box.

**k) The batter is out, ball is dead:**

- 1) **Hinder the catcher from catching or throwing the ball by stepping out of the batter's box.**
- 2) **Intentionally hinder the catcher while standing within the batter's box.**
- 1) **Intentionally interfere with a thrown ball in or out of the batter's box.**
- 2) **Interfere with a play at home plate.**

**EFFECT:** *The ball is dead, the batter is out, and each runner must return to the last base that, in the judgment of the umpire, was touched at the time of the interference.*

**EXCEPTION:** *If no play is being made and the batter accidentally interferes with the catcher's return throw to the pitcher and a runner(s) advances safely, the umpire should call time and return the runner(s) to the base occupied at the time of the accidental interference.*

**\*EXCEPTION:** *If the batter interferes with a play at the plate with less than two (2) outs, the baserunner is out.*

- l) When the batter swings and makes contact with the ball and the batters foot is entirely out of the batter's box or touching home plate.

**SECTION 12 THE BATTER OR BASERUNNER IS NOT OUT:**

The batter or baserunner is not out:

- a) If a fielder making a play on him/her uses an illegal glove.  
**EFFECT:** *If an illegal glove is involved in a play; a delayed dead ball signal will be signaled and 3 bases awarded to the batter unless the batter gains 4 bases or the ball is deflected by the illegal glove and goes over the fence. The Coach in both instances has the option to take the result of the play. If illegal glove is spotted prior to a play, the umpire shall remove the glove and resume play.*
- b) If a fielder commits Flagrant Player Obstruction.  
**PENALTY:** *Immediate ejection of the defensive player.*



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

- a) The on-deck batter is the offensive player whose name follows the name of the batter in the batting order.
- b) The on-deck batter shall take a position within the lines of either on-deck circle without blocking the view of any manager or coach.
- c) The on-deck batter may loosen up with two official softball bats, an official warm up bat, or the player may use the Power Wrap, Worth WBS, H & B BW3, swing sock or any other official warm up bat or product that has been approved by the NSA National Headquarters. Nothing else may be attached such as a Pyro Flite Bat Warmer donut, fan, etc. when loosening up. The Pyro Flite Bat Warmer is legal to warm the bat with. See [www.playnsa.com](http://www.playnsa.com) for approved equipment.
- d) The on-deck batter may leave the on-deck circle when he becomes the batter or to direct baserunners advancing from 3rd to home plate.
- e) When the on-deck batter interferes with the defensive player's opportunity to make a play on a runner, the runner closest to home plate at the time of the interference is declared out.
- f) The provision of Rule 7, Sec. 3 shall apply to the on-deck batter.

## **RULE 8 BASERUNNING**

### **SECTION 1**

The baserunner must touch the bases in legal order (I.E. 1<sup>ST</sup>, 2<sup>ND</sup>, 3<sup>RD</sup> home plate)

The baserunner must touch the bases in legal order (i.e. 1st, 2nd, 3rd and Home Plate).

- a) When a baserunner must return to a base while the ball is in play, he/she must touch the bases in reverse order.  
**EFFECT:** *The ball is in play and baserunners must return with liability to be put out.*
- b) When a baserunner acquires the right to a base by touching it before being put out, he/she may hold the base until he has legally touched the next base in order or is forced to vacate it for a succeeding runner.
- c) When a runner dislodges a base from its proper position, neither he/she nor the succeeding runners in the same series of plays are compelled to follow a base unreasonably out of position. The ball is in play and runners may advance with liability of being put out.
- d) A baserunner may not run the bases in reverse order, either to confuse the fielders or to make a travesty of the game.  
**EFFECT:** *The ball is dead and the runner is out.*
- e) Two baserunners may not occupy the same base simultaneously.  
**EFFECT:** *The runner who first legally occupied the base is entitled to it. The other runner may be put out by being touched with the ball.*
- f) Failure of a preceding runner to touch a base or to leave a base legally on a caught fly ball and who is declared out does not affect the status of a succeeding runner who touches the bases in proper order. However, if the preceding runner were to be called out for the 3rd out of the inning, no succeeding runner may score a run.
- g) No runner may return to touch a missed base or one left illegally after a following runner has scored.

- h) When the ball is dead, no runner may return to touch a missed base, a base he/she has left after he/she has left illegally, even after the ball becomes alive. However, when a dead ball occurs, a runner may return to a missed base if he/she is required to by the umpire in the awarding or determination of bases. The runner is not liable to be put out for missing a base beyond the base he/she is required to by the umpire in the awarding or determination of the bases. The runner is not liable to be put out for missing a base beyond the base he is required to return to.
- i) No runner may return to touch a missed base or one left illegally once he/she enters his/her dugout or bench area.
- j) When the umpire has called four (4) balls, baserunners do not advance unless forced or successful in an attempt to steal.
- k) Bases left too soon on a caught fly ball must be retouched before advancing to awarded bases. Awarded bases must also be touched in proper order.

## **SECTION 2**

The batter becomes a batter-baserunner:

- a) As soon as he/she hits the ball.
- b) When the umpire has called four balls, baserunners do not advance unless forced or successful in an attempt to steal.
- c) When a legal or illegal pitched ball hits the batter's person or clothing, provided the batter does not strike at the ball. This includes a ball that hits the ground and then hits the batter.  
***EXCEPTION:*** *If the batter makes no effort to avoid being hit, or if the umpire calls the pitched ball a strike, the hitting of the batter is disregarded and the ball is dead. The pitch will be called a strike or ball depending on the location of the pitch. Unless ball four (4) is called on the batter forcing runners to advance, all runners must return to the base occupied at the time of the pitch.*
- d) When with less than two (2) outs and 1<sup>st</sup> base unoccupied a dropped 3<sup>rd</sup> strike occurs the batter may attempt to advance to 1<sup>st</sup> base. The batter becomes a batter/baserunner when the third strike touches the ground before being caught.
- e) When with two (2) outs and a dropped 3<sup>rd</sup> strike occurs, the batter may attempt to advance to 1<sup>st</sup> base. The batter becomes a batter/baserunner when the 3<sup>rd</sup> strike touches the ground before being caught.
- f) When the catcher or any other fielder obstructs or hinders the batter from striking at or hitting a pitched ball:
  - 1) The umpire shall signal, "Delayed dead ball".
  - 2) The offensive team manager has the option of taking the base awarded the batter for catcher obstruction, or he may take the result of the play.
  - 3) If the batter reaches 1<sup>st</sup> base safely and all other runners advance at least one (1) base on the batted ball, catcher obstruction is canceled and no other options are given.
- g) When a fair ball strikes the umpire or baserunner on fair ground:
  - 1) If the ball hits the umpire or baserunner after passing an infielder other than the pitcher or touches an infielder including the pitcher, the ball is in play.

- 2) If the ball hits the umpire or baserunner before passing an infielder, the ball is dead and the batter is entitled to 1<sup>st</sup> base without liability of being put out. Runners not forced by the batter-runner must return.

### **SECTION 3**

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

- a) When, after the pitcher releases the ball, the runner attempts to advance to the next base without the aid of a base hit, put out, or a fielding (including batter) error (stealing base).
  - 1) A batter runner who has received a base on balls can attempt to steal second base.
- b) When the ball is thrown into fair territory or foul territory and is not blocked.
- c) When the ball is batted into fair territory and is not blocked.
- d) When a legally caught fly ball is first touched.
- e) If a fair ball strikes an umpire or a runner after passing an infielder other than the pitcher or having been touched by an infielder including the pitcher, the ball shall be in play.

### **SECTION 4**

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

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

### **SECTION 5**

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

- a) When forced to vacate a base because the batter was awarded a base on balls.
- b) When a fielder obstructs a baserunner from making a base 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 signal a delayed dead ball.*

- 1) If a play is being made on the obstructed runner or if the batter-runner is obstructed before reaching 1st base, the ball is dead and all runners advance without liability to be put out to the bases they would have reached, in the umpire's judgment, if there had been no obstruction.

**EXCEPTION:** *A baserunner obstructed in a run down shall be awarded the lead base at the time of obstruction. Any preceding runners forced to advance by the award of base for obstruction shall advance without liability to be put out.*

- 2) If no play is being made on the obstructed runner at the time of obstruction, the play shall proceed until the play is completed. The umpire shall call "time" and impose such penalties, if any, as in his judgment, will nullify the act of obstruction.

- 3) If a fielder without the ball fakes a tag, the umpire may award the obstructed runner, and each other runner affected by the obstruction, the bases they would have reached, had there been no obstruction.

**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 catcher 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 three (3) bases awarded to the batter unless the batter gains four(4) bases or the ball is deflected by the illegal glove and goes over the fence. The Coach in both scenarios has the option to take the result of the play. If illegal glove is spotted prior to a play, the umpire shall remove the glove and resume play.*

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

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

**EFFECT:** *Awarded bases shall be determined by the position of the baserunner(s) at the time of the infraction. All base runners will be allowed to advance one (1) base on a pitched ball that goes directly out of play.*

**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.*

- 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, or hits any person or object not engaged in the game, goes into the players’ benches, including bats lying near 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. 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 an infielder makes a wild throw on the first play after a pitch, the award of the bases 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) bases awarded

shall be governed by the position of each runner and the last base he/she had touched at the time the throw was made. If two runners are between the same base, 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 enters the dead ball area or becomes 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 purpose of an overthrow award.
- f) When a fair ball bounds or rolls into a stand, over, under, or through a fence, or 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) The ball becomes dead when a live ball is unintentionally carried by a fielder from playable territory into a dead ball area. All baserunners are awarded one (1) base from the last base touched at the time the fielder enters the 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.*
- h) When any pitched ball goes directly out of play (through, over, under fence/backstop).  
**EFFECT:** *The ball is dead and all runners advance one (1) base from the time of the pitch.*  
**NOTE:** *On ball four (4) the batter/runner is awarded 1<sup>st</sup> base only.*

## **SECTION 6**

A baserunner must return to his/her base:

- a) When a foul ball is illegally caught and so declared by the umpire.  
b) When the umpire declares an illegally batted ball.  
c) When a batter or baserunner is called out for interference, other baserunners shall return to the last base touched at the time of the interference.  
d) When a pitched ball that is swung at and missed touches any part of the batter's person.  
e) When a foul ball is not caught.  
**EFFECT:** *The ball is dead, and baserunners must return to base, except when forced by the batter becoming a baserunner. Baserunners need not touch the intervening bases in returning but must return promptly. Runners must be allowed sufficient time to return.*

## **SECTION 7**

Batter-baserunner is out:

- a) When after a fair ball is hit, he/she is legally touched with the ball before he/she touches 1st base.

- b) When after a fair ball is hit, the ball is held by a fielder touching 1st base with any part of his/her person, before the batter-baserunner touches 1st base.
- c) When after a fly ball is hit, a fielder catches the ball before the ball touches the ground or any object other than a fielder.
- d) When after a fair ball is hit or a base on balls is awarded, he/she fails to advance to 1st base and enters his/her team area.  
**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 1st base; however, he/she may run outside the three (3) foot line to avoid a fielder attempting to field a batted ball.
- f) When he/she interferes with a fielder attempting to field a batted ball or interferes (intentionally) with a thrown ball. If the interference, in the judgment of the umpire, is an obvious attempt to prevent a double play, the baserunner closest to home plate, shall be called out.
- g) When a batter-runner interferes with a play at home plate, in an attempt to prevent an obvious out at home plate, the runner is also out.
- h) When he/she moves back toward home plate to avoid or delay a tag by a fielder.  
**EFFECT:** *Rule 8, Sec. 7. (e-h), the ball is dead and the batter-runner is out. Other baserunners must return to the last base legally touched at the time of the illegal action.*
- i) When a fielder contacts or catches a batted or thrown ball with an illegal glove. Or with his/her cap, glove or any part of his/her uniform while detached from its proper place.  
**NOTE:** *The umpire(s) will give the “delayed dead ball” signal.*  
**EFFECT:** *If an illegal glove is involved in a play, a delayed dead ball signal will be given and three (3) bases awarded to the batter unless the batter gains four(4) bases or the ball is deflected by the illegal glove and goes over the fence. The Coach in both scenarios has the option to take the result of the play. If illegal glove is spotted prior to a play, the umpire shall remove the glove and resume play.*  
**EFFECT:** *For a player making a play with his/her cap, detached glove or uniform, a runner shall be entitled to three (3) bases if a batted ball or two (2) bases if a thrown ball. In either case, runners may advance further, at their own risk. If an illegal catch was made of a fair ball; that, in the judgment of the umpire, would have cleared the outfield fence in flight, a home run shall be awarded. The umpire will signal a delayed dead ball.*
- j) Any batter-runner who carries the bat and legally reaches or touches first base, while still holding the bat, during a live ball situation (including a homerun), will be declared out. Should this be the 3<sup>rd</sup> out of an inning, no preceding runner shall score.  
**EFFECT:** *If less than two (2) outs, a delayed ball signal will be given and the ball will remain alive.*

## **SECTION 8**

The baserunner is out:

- a) When in running to any base, he/she runs more than 3 feet from a direct line between that base and the next base, in regular or reverse order, to avoid being touched by the ball in the hands of a fielder. When a play, such as a rundown is made on a runner who has "rounded" a base, and that runner is outside a direct line between bases, the runner establishes his/her baseline as a direct line between him/her and the next base in regular or reverse order.
- b) If, while the ball is in play, he/she is legally touched with the ball in the hands of a fielder while not in contact with a base.
- c) When, on a force out, a fielder tags him/her with the ball or tags the base.
- d) If the baserunner fails to return to touch the base he/she previously occupied when play is resumed after suspension of play.
- e) If a baserunner physically passes a preceding runner before that runner has been put out.
- f) When anyone, other than another baserunner, physically assists a baserunner while the ball is in play.
- g) When the baserunner leaves his/her base to advance to another base before a caught fly ball has been touched by a fielder, or when a runner is positioned behind and not in contact with a base in order to achieve a running start on any fly ball. Provided the ball is returned to a fielder and legally held on that base or a fielder legally touches the baserunner before he/she returns to his/her base.
- h) When the baserunner fails to touch the intervening base or bases in regular or reverse order and the ball is in play and legally held on that base or the baserunner is legally touched while off the base he/she missed.
- i) When the batter-runner legally overruns 1<sup>st</sup> base, attempts to run to 2<sup>nd</sup> base, and is legally touched while off the base.
- j) In running or sliding for home plate, he/she fails to touch home plate and makes no attempt to return to the base, when a fielder holds the ball in his/her hands while touching home plate and appeals to the umpire for a decision.

**EFFECT:** *Rule 8, Sec. 8. (g - j), These are appeal plays and the 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 inside the 16' circle. Any manager, coach, or player may then make an appeal by announcing to the umpire, which runner is being appealed, which base has been missed, or which base has been left too soon. Any player in the game may also make an appeal while the ball is still alive and before the ball becomes dead by tagging the runner or the base being appealed with the ball.*

- k) When the baserunner interferes with a fielder attempting to field a batted ball or intentionally interferes with a thrown ball. If this interference, in the judgment of the umpire, is an obvious attempt to prevent a double play and occurs before the baserunner is put out, the immediate succeeding runner shall also be called out.

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

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

- t) When a defensive player has the ball and is waiting for the runner and the runner remains on his/her feet and deliberately, with great force, crashes into the defensive player, the runner is declared out. The ball is dead and all other runners must return to the last base touched at the time of the collision, unless Rule 8, Sec. 8 (j) or Rule 8, Sec. 8 (s) applies.
- PENALTY:** If the act is determined to be flagrant, the offender is ejected from the game.
- u) When the baserunner(s) fails to keep contact with their base until a legally pitched ball leaves the pitcher's hand. The ball is dead, "NO PITCH" is declared and the baserunner(s) is declared out.
  - v) When he/she abandons a base, does not attempt to advance to the next base, and "LEAVES THE FIELD OF PLAY", the baserunner shall be called out immediately "UPON LEAVING THE FIELD OF PLAY".
  - w) If hit by an infield fly when not in contact with the base, the ball is dead, and the runner and the batter are both declared out. Other runners must return to the base occupied, without liability to be put out, at the time of the pitch.
  - x) Look Back Rule: When a runner is legitimately off a base after a pitch, or as a result of a batter completing a turn at bat, with the batter/runner being out or reaching first base, and while the pitcher has the ball within the sixteen (16) foot circle, the runner may stop once, but then must immediately attempt to advance to the next base or return to the last base touched. Failure to immediately return non-stop to the base or proceed non-stop to the next base will result in the runner being declared out.



**EXCEPTION:** *The runner is not out if a play is made by the pitcher (a fake throw is considered a play).*

**NOTE:** *When a walk or a dropped third strike occurs in which the batter is entitled to run, it is treated the same as a batted ball, if the pitcher has possession of the ball in the sixteen (16) foot circle. The batter-runner may continue past first base and is entitled to run toward second base as long as he/she does not stop at first base. If he/she stops after rounding first base, then that runner must comply with Rule 8, Section 8 (x).*

- y) When prior to a pitch being made to the next batter, it is discovered that the previous batter used an altered, illegal or a non-approved bat.

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

- z) ***1<sup>st</sup> base double base – At facilities that use the white and orange double bag at 1<sup>st</sup> base, the following rules will be implemented. If the first play is at 1<sup>st</sup> base, either from the infield or outfield, a batter/runner will be called out for touching the inside base. If the play is elsewhere, the inside base may be tagged in a continuation or possible continuation toward 2<sup>nd</sup> base. The 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.***

## **SECTION 9**

Baserunner is not out:

- a) When a baserunner runs behind or in front of a fielder and outside the baseline in order to avoid interfering with a fielder who is attempting to field the ball in the baseline.
- b) When a baserunner does not run a direct line to the base, providing the fielder in the direct line does not have the ball in his/her possession.
- c) When more than one fielder attempts to field a batted ball and the baserunner comes into contact with the one who, in the umpire's judgment, was not entitled to field the ball.
- d) When a baserunner is hit with a fair-batted ball that has passed through an infielder, excluding the pitcher.
- e) When a baserunner is touched with a ball not securely held by a fielder.
- f) When the defensive team does not request the umpire's decision on an appeal play until after the next pitch.
- g) When a batter-runner overruns 1st base after touching it and makes no attempt to advance to the next base.

- h) When the baserunner is not given sufficient time to return to a base, he/she shall not be called out for being off the base before the pitcher pitches the ball. The umpire shall call no pitch.
- i) When a runner, who has legally started to advance, cannot be stopped by the pitcher receiving the ball while on the pitching plate nor by stepping on the pitching plate with the ball in his/her possession.
- j) When a baserunner holds his/her base until a fly ball touches a fielder, and then attempts to advance.
- k) When the runner is in contact with the base, and is hit by a batted fly or ground ball in fair territory (unless he/she intentionally interferes with the ball), the baserunner is not out and the ball is dead.  
**EFFECT:** *Ball is dead, and all runners advance one base if forced.*
- a) 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).
- b) 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.
- c) When the baserunner is hit by a fair-batted ball after it touches any fielder, including the pitcher.

## RULE 9 DEAD BALL/BALL IN PLAY

### SECTION 1

The ball is dead and not in play:

- a) When the ball is batted illegally.
- b) When a batter steps from one side of the box to the other when the pitcher is ready to pitch.
- c) When a ball is pitched illegally.  
**EXCEPTION:** *Delayed dead ball, see Rule 6, Sec. 8 Penalty for illegal pitches.*
- d) When the umpire declares “No Pitch”.
- e) When a pitched ball touches any part of the batter's person or clothing, whether or not the ball is struck at.
- f) When a foul ball is not caught.
- g) When a baserunner fails to keep in contact with their base until the pitched ball leaves the pitcher's hand.
- h) When the offensive team causes interference.
- i) When the ball is outside the playing limits of the playing field. A ball is considered "out of play" when it touches the ground, person on the ground or object outside the playing area.
- j) If an accident to a runner prevents him/her from proceeding to a base which he is awarded, a substitute runner shall be permitted for the injured player.
- k) In case of interference with the batter or fielder.
- l) When the umpire calls time.
- m) When the umpire calls time and an appeal play follows, the ball remains dead throughout the appeal.
- n) When any part of the batter's person is hit by his/her own batted ball while he/she is in the batter's box.

- o) When a runner runs the bases in reverse order.
- p) When a play is being made on an obstructed runner, or if the batter-runner is obstructed before he/she reaches 1st base.
- q) When a blocked ball is declared.
- r) When the batter enters the batter's box with or uses an illegal or an altered bat.
- s) When a caught fair ball, including a line drive, which can be handled by any infielder with ordinary effort, is intentionally dropped with less than two (2) outs and with runners on 1<sup>st</sup>, 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> or 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> bases.
- t) When a fielder carries a live ball into dead ball territory.
- u) When the batter is hit by his/her own batted ball in fair territory outside the batter's box.
- v) When a fair ball, prior to passing a fielder, strikes an umpire or baserunner on fair ground.

## **SECTION 2**

The ball is in play:

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

Once the umpire has called "time" however, the ball will continue to be dead during a subsequent appeal play.

- v) When, in the judgment of the umpire, a coach touches or physically helps a runner; or when a coach near 3rd base, runs in the direction of home plate on or near the baseline, while the fielder is attempting to make a play, and thereby draws a throw to home plate.

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

## **RULE 10 UMPIRES**

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

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

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

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

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

### **SECTION 2 PLATE UMPIRE**

- a) Shall take a position behind the catcher and have full responsibility for the proper conduct of the game.
- b) Shall call all balls and strikes.
- c) Shall be in agreement and in cooperation with the base umpire(s) call on plays, fair or foul balls, legally or illegally caught balls.

- d) Shall determine and declare whether a batted ball touches the person or clothing of the batter, and also whether a fly ball is an infield fly.
- e) Shall render decisions on the bases when required by the instruction in the Umpire's Manual.
- f) Shall determine when a game is forfeited.

**SECTION 3 BASE UMPIRE**

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

**SECTION 4 CHANGING OF UMPIRES**

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

**SECTION 5 UMPIRE'S JUDGMENT**

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

**SECTION 6 SUSPENSION OF PLAY**

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

**SECTION 7 VIOLATIONS AND DUTIES**

- a) Players, coaches, managers, or other team members shall not make disparaging or insulting remarks to or about opposing players, officials, or spectators, or commit other acts that could be considered unsportsmanlike conduct.
- b) There shall be no more than two (2) coaches for each team to give words of assistance and direction to the members of the team while at bat. One coach shall be stationed near 1st base and the other near 3rd base. They must remain in the coach's box.

- c) The penalty for violations by a player is prompt removal of the offender from the game and grounds. For the first violation, the coach or manager may be warned. For the second offense, the player is removed from the game. The offender shall go directly to the dressing room (if available), for the remainder of the game, or leave the grounds. Failure to do so will warrant a forfeiture of the game.
- d) Any player or coach who leaves his/her respective position on the field, including the dugout, to argue balls and strikes or to argue whether a batter stepped on or over home plate, will be ejected.

## **SECTION 8 PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT**

- a) Umpires who work fast-pitch softball (especially the home plate umpire) should wear a chest protector and shin guards. Male umpires must wear an approved protective cup. It is mandatory for the home plate umpire to wear a facemask (with a throat protector). It is **STRONGLY RECOMMENDED** that the mask be a black mask with black or natural pads. Hockey style masks are considered approved umpire equipment. The Hockey mask must be plain black and be free of ANY decorations other than the manufacturer's logo(s).  
**NOTE:** *An official NSA umpire cap must be worn under any mask at all times and must remain on the head when the mask is removed. There is NO RESTRICTION as to which official umpire cap must be worn (some state association may have stricter guidelines) by the plate or base umpire, however, AN OFFICIAL UMPIRE CAP sold by the NSA National Headquarters must be worn at all times.*

## **SECTION 9**

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

- 1) 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:** *The embroidered official NSA mock turtleneck.*
- 2) Black trousers with belt loops (Slowpitch)
- 3) 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.*
- 4) Black shorts with belt loops  
**NOTE:** *Black shorts, with belt loops, may be worn at all levels of NSA sanctioned play.*  
**EXCEPTION: Fastpitch Softball.** *It is up to the discretion of the Tournament Director to allow umpires to wear shorts or trousers during all Post Season play. It is recommended that umpires, in cooperation with the league/tournament Umpire-In-Chief, coordinate their uniforms to look alike, i.e. one Umpire wears shorts, both wear shorts. This is the same for trousers. When shorts are worn, solid white crew socks must be worn. Footie's are not acceptable as part of the NSA OFFICIAL UNIFORM.*
- 5) Black Belt
- 6) 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.

- 7) Black jacket with official NSA logo
- 8) Black half sleeve jacket w/official NSA logo
- 9) Black shoes  
**NOTE:** *Black official (umpire) shoes bearing the white logo, trademark or manufacturers name is legal.*
- 10) White mock with official NSA logo or plain white regular turtleneck
- 11) Black rain gear (top and bottom)
- 12) Black cap with official NSA Logo
- 13) Black ball bag with official NSA logo  
**NOTE:** *Ball bag must be worn on the hip or slightly to the rear of hip.*  
**\*\*NOTE:** *Any umpire apparel (hat, jacket, etc) that is issued to an umpire for being assigned to a special event (NIT, World Series, etc) may NOT be worn after the conclusion of said special event as a part of the official NSA Umpire uniform.*  
**\*\*\*NOTE:** *The following item sold by NSA that bears the official NSA logo is mandatory wear and to be purchased from the NSA National Headquarters. NSA Official Jacket, NSA Official Shorts, NSA Official Half Sleeve Jacket, NSA Official Cap, NSA Official Shirt, 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)*

## RULE 11 PROTESTS

### SECTION 1

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

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

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

### SECTION 2

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

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

### SECTION 3

Protests may involve the interpretation of a rule.

#### **SECTION 4**

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

**EXCEPTION:** *Player eligibility.*

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

**NOTE:** *On appeal plays, the appeal must be made before the next pitch, legal or illegal, or before the defensive team has left the field. This would mean when the pitcher and all infielders have left fair territory on the way to the bench or dugout area.*

- c) A protest fee of seventy-five dollars (\$75.00) cash will be paid in all qualifying and Post season tournaments sanctioned by the NSA. If protesting player eligibility, the fee is \$75.00 cash per player. Bat protests are \$200.00 per bat. Ball protests will be \$75.00 per ball.
- d) In all tournament play, a protest for player eligibility must be filed before the final out is made if the visiting team wins or the final run is scored if the home team wins during the game being protested.
- e) During tournament play, any protest must be resolved before play continues.

**NOTE:** *The Tournament Director/Coordinator or Tournament UIC may require a copy of the birth certificate or picture ID at anytime.*

**NOTE:** *THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION MAY BE USED AS A GUIDELINE TO ASSIST LOCAL LEAGUES AND ASSOCIATIONS IN DETERMINING PROTEST PROCEDURES.*

#### **SECTION 5**

The official protest must be filed within a reasonable time:

- a) Within forty-eight (48) hours after the scheduled time of the contest is generally considered a reasonable amount of time in league play.
- b) A protest fee of seventy-five dollars (\$75.00) cash will be paid in all qualifying and post season tournaments sanctioned by the NSA.
- c) In tournament play, a protest (player eligibility) must be filed before the end of the game being protested. **EXCEPTION: In the event a Bat compression test machine is on site, a bat protests are \$75 per bat.**

#### **SECTION 6**

The formal written protest should contain the following information:

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

#### **SECTION 7**

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

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



- c) When protest for eligibility is allowed, the team shall forfeit the game played to the offended team.

## **ADULT MEN'S FAST PITCH RULES**

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

### **RULE 1 DEFINITIONS**

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

A batting helmet bearing the NOCASE stamp is mandatory for each batter and baserunner. If a pitcher wears a helmet, it must have a non-glare surface. Helmets will have an extended earflap on one or both sides. If the helmet has only one flap it must cover the ear on the side facing the pitcher.

### **RULE 2 THE PLAYING FIELD**

#### **SECTION 2**

- a) The minimum fence distance will be 225 ft
- b) The maximum fence distance will be 250 ft
- c) The base distance will be 60 ft
- d) The pitching distance will be 46 ft

### **RULE 3 EQUIPMENT**

#### **SECTION 7**

A batting helmet bearing the NOCASE stamp is mandatory for each batter and baserunner. If a pitcher wears a helmet, it must have a non-glare surface. Helmets will have an extended earflap on one or both sides. If the helmet has only one flap it must cover the ear on the side facing the pitcher.

#### **SECTION 8 PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT**

It is highly recommended, but not mandatory that the catcher wear an approved head protector, protective mask with a throat protector, body protector, shin guards and a protective cup. All protective equipment must conform to industry standards. All players are permitted to wear any approval protective equipment and if used, the equipment must not be detached. All catchers are **REQUIRED** to wear a face mask.

## **RULE 4 PLAYERS & SUBSTITUTIONS**

### **SECTION 2 DESIGNATED HITTER (DH)**

- a) The designated hitter (DH) may go in and play defense. Once the (DH) enters the game in a defensive position that will eliminate the role of the designated hitter (DH) for the remainder of the game.

**EFFECT:** *When the designated hitter (DH) enters the game on defense, the player on defense he was hitting for is removed for the remainder of the game.*

### **SECTION 8 DIVISIONS OF PLAY**

For Players who have reached their 16<sup>th</sup> birthday to compete in adult fast pitch events.

- a) Major  
b) Class A  
c) Class B  
d) Class C

## **RULE 5 THE GAME**

*The NSA highly recommends that teams purchase team insurance for liability and medical coverage, but it is not mandatory to participate in NSA events.*

### **SECTION 9**

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

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

**EXCEPTION:** *See Youth Tryout Rosters*

## **RULE 6 PITCHING REGULATIONS**

### **SECTION 1**

The pitcher shall take a position with both feet on the ground with at least one foot in contact with the pitching plate. The hands shall be separated with the ball being held in either the glove or pitching hand.

### **SECTION 4**

The pivot foot initially in contact with the pitching plate and the non-pivot or free foot once lifted must not come in contact with the ground, as described in the definition of the crow hop, before the release of the ball. There is no restriction on movement or position of the feet, except that if a step is taken

forward or backward, the step and feet must be within or partially within the 24 inch lane width of the pitching plate extended.

## **EIGHT & UNDER FASTPITCH RULES**

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

### **RULE 1 SECTION 35**

The infield fly rule is not in effect. The ball remains alive with all runner(s) in jeopardy of being put out or advancing.

### **RULE 1 SECTION 45**

A baserunner who advances one (1) base on a passed ball is considered to have stolen that base. In the 8 & Under Division, a baserunner may not steal home, but are liable to be put out if they are off the base.

### **RULE 2 SECTION 2**

The base distance in the 8 & Under Division will be 60 feet.

### **RULE 2 SECTION 2**

The pitching distance in the 8 & Under Division will be 35 feet.

### **RULE 3 SECTION 2(a)**

Girls in the 8 & Under Division will use the 11 inch softball.

### **RULE 7 SECTION 11 (1st NOTE)**

In the 8 & Under Division, the batter is declared out no matter whether the third strike is caught or not.

### **RULE 8 SECTION 3 (a-g)**

Base stealing is allowed in the 8 & Under Division under the following guidelines:

- a) Runners starting at 1<sup>st</sup> base or 2<sup>nd</sup> base are entitled to steal one base only per pitch with liability to be put out.  
**NOTE:** *Runner(s) are not allowed to advance more than one base per pitch even in the event of an overthrow at any base.*
- b) Runner starting at 3<sup>rd</sup> base may not steal home, but are liable to be put out if they are off the base.
- c) A runner(s) attempting to advance beyond the one base they are entitled to steal may be put out while between bases or in contact with a base to which he/she are not entitled to.
- d) After all play ceases and the ball becomes dead, if a runner(s) occupies a base beyond the one he/she was entitled to steal, the

runner(s) will be returned to the correct base without liability to be put out.

- e) A batter/runner who has received a base on balls can attempt to steal second base.
- f) Awarded bases will apply to all runners. This would include an overthrow into dead ball territory.
- g) Runner can only score on:
  - 1) A batted ball.
  - 2) A base on balls.
  - 3) A hit batter with the bases loaded.
  - 4) An awarded base when the ball goes out of play.
  - 5) An illegal pitch.
  - 6) When a play is made on him/her.

## **EIGHT & UNDER COACH PITCH**

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

## **RULE 2 THE PLAYING FIELD**

### **SECTION 4**

The base distance will be 60 feet.

- a) Thirty (30) foot slash marks will be made on the first and third base lines. The defensive team cannot cross those lines until the ball is hit.

## **RULE 3 EQUIPMENT**

### **SECTION 1**

The official bat should be made of one piece of wood (hardwood), metal, or other materials approved by the NSA, or formed from a block of wood consisting of two or more pieces of wood bonded together with an adhesive, in such a way, that the grain direction of all pieces is essentially parallel to the length of the bat. Below is a list of additional requirements:

- a) The bat shall not be more than 34 inches in length and no more than 38 ounces in weight. The bat shall have a safety grip of cork, tape (not smooth plastic type), or combination material.
- b) The grip shall not be less than 10 inches long and shall not extend more than 15 inches from the small end of the bat.
- c) The bat shall be marked "OFFICIAL SOFTBALL" by the manufacturer.  
**NOTE:** *If the words "OFFICIAL SOFTBALL" cannot be read due to normal wear, the bat shall be declared legal, if it is legal in all other aspects.*

- d) The bat may be made of composite, metal and a bat may be angular; however, the NSA must approve any material, before it is used in sanctioned events.
- e) All exposed surfaces of the bat must be smooth and free of burrs, pins, and rivets, **DEEP DENTS OR DANGEROUS DENTS, fractures of any type**, sharp edges or any type of exterior fastener that would present a safety hazard.  
**EXCEPTION:** *At the umpires discretion slightly dented bats may be considered legal.*
- f) Unless the bat is made of one-piece construction with the barrel end closed, it should have a rubber or plastic insert in the barrel.
- g) A one-piece rubber grip and knob combination is illegal.
- h) All bats must have a knob on the handle and welded or mechanically fastened.
- i) All bats must have a safety knob of a minimum of ¼ inch protruding at a 90-degree angle from the handle. The knob portion of the bat may be taped as long as the bat does not exceed 34 inches in length; however, the umpire may request tape to be removed from both the handle and knob if there is any question concerning the bat being altered or illegal. After determining the bat legal, the player may tape the bat back to his/her preference, providing the bat meets the requirements set forth by Rule 3, Sec. 1 (a-1).
- j) A flare or cone grip may be attached from the factory or a factory flare or cone may be attached to the bat by the player, but the flare or cone must be installed properly to the bat. The flare or cone must be taped or covered by an approved bat grip and the bat must meet all requirements of Rule 3, Sec. 1 (a-1) after installation to be considered legal.
- k) Shall be rounded, smooth, and not be more than 2 ¼ inches in diameter at its largest part. A tolerance of 1/16 inch is permitted, to allow for expansion on the round bat.  
**NOTE:** *Sec. 1 a-1. Any bat that does not comply with these guidelines must be removed from the game, and the bat may no longer be used in any NSA Sanctioned Play.*  
**\*NOTE:** *The BPF of 1.20 does not apply to eight & under bats.*

## **SECTION 2**

The official softball shall be a smooth-seamed, concealed stitched or flat-surfaced ball. The center of the ball may be made of either long fiber kapok or mixture of cork and rubber, and/or machine wound with a fine twisted yarn and covered with latex or rubber cement. Or it may be made of other materials approved by the NSA. The cover of the ball shall be optic yellow, tanned horsehide, cowhide or any other materials approved by the NSA, cemented to the ball by application of cement to the underside of the cover and sewn with black waxed cotton or black linen thread to form a black stitched softball. The solid core ball must be stamped with THE official NSA logo which contains the maximum C.O.R. and compression standards. The ball MAY NOT bear any other logos except for the NSA official logo unless otherwise approved by the Executive Director or the Executive Vice President of the NSA. MAXIMUM C.O.R. is .44 or .40. Maximum Compression for NSA softballs is 400 pounds or 525 pounds. Directors have the option as to which compression and which C.O.R. are to be used.

## **SECTION 7**

Batters and baserunners must wear NOCSAE approved helmets and the face guard must be NOCSAE approved.

## **SECTION 8**

*No jewelry is allowed.* Medical ID bracelets are allowed. For further information pertaining to the Jewelry Rule refer to the Fast Pitch Section of the Official NSA Rule Book. Rule 3 Sec 6 (f).

# **RULE 4 PLAYERS & SUBSTITUTIONS**

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

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

## **SECTION 1**

A team may play with an Optional tenth (10<sup>th</sup>) player on defense. This Optional player must be positioned in the outfield and must stay a minimum of ten (10) feet outside of the baseline (umpires judgment) until the ball is hit.

- a) If the Optional tenth (10<sup>th</sup>) player is used, that team has only one (1) optional EP for their use. If a team decides not to use the Optional (10<sup>th</sup>) player; letters a, b and c below apply.
- b) If the Optional tenth (10<sup>th</sup>) player is used, the team must complete the game with the Optional tenth (10<sup>th</sup>) spot in the line-up. If an Optional tenth (10<sup>th</sup>) player gets hurt or becomes ill, this must be brought to the attention of the opposing team and the umpires. If no substitute is available:

**PENALTY:** Failure for the optional tenth (10<sup>th</sup>) player to bat is an automatic out each time that vacant spot in the line-up comes to bat.

Should the ill or injured batter be able to return to the line-up, the batter will resume their correct position in the batting order when returning to the game.

- c) A team shall consist of nine (9) players and a maximum of eleven (11) players if two optional Extra Players (EP's) are used.
- d) A team must have a minimum of nine (9) players to start a game but can finish with eight (8) if one is injured or becomes ill.
- e) All other rules concerning players should be the same as girl's fast pitch rules with the exception of using a DH.

## RULE 5 THE GAME

### SECTION 1

Addition to Part One (1) of the Official Playing Rules:

- a) An Offensive coach will pitch to his/her team.
- b) The game shall be six (6) innings or 1 hour time limit. When the time limit is up, the teams must finish the inning unless the home team is ahead when the top half of the inning is over.
- c) All defensive players must play by position. Outfielders must be a minimum of ten (10) feet outside of the baseline (umpires judgment) until the ball is hit.
- d) One defensive coach is allowed on the field behind the outfield. He/she should give instructions before the ball is hit. After the ball is pitched, the defensive coach on or off the field, cannot physically touch any player.  
**PENALTY:** Runners will advance one (1) base after play has stopped.
- e) Nine (9) batters are the maximum number of batters that may bat per half inning or until the defense gets three (3) outs whichever comes first. The batting order shall be a revolving batting order consisting of nine (9) ten (10) , or eleven (11) batters  
**EXAMPLE:** *Nine (9) batters if there are only nine (9) players present at game time. Ten (10) batters if one (1) EP is used or if the Optional tenth (10<sup>th</sup>) player is used. Eleven (11) batters if both Optional EP's are used or if the Optional tenth (10<sup>th</sup>) player and one (1) EP are used.*
- f) The batter will be allowed five (5) pitches or three (3) strikes whichever comes first. **NO BASE ON BALLS will be awarded.** If the batter hasn't hit the ball fairly after five (5) pitches, the batter is out.  
**EXCEPTION:** *The at bat cannot be completed on a foul ball.*
- g) The Offensive team will be allowed three (3) coaches as follows: one first base coach, one third base coach, and one coach serving as the pitcher. The pitcher will pitch from a thirty-five (35) foot pitching rubber.
- h) No bunting will be allowed.  
**PENALTY:** A strike will be called on the batter.
- i) Hit batters are not allowed to advance to first base.
- j) The run rule will be seventeen (17) runs after four (4) innings and ten (10) runs after five (5) innings of play.
- k) An injured player may re-enter the game but must return to the same position in the batting order.
- l) If a batted ball hits the Coach/Pitcher (not the player in the circle), the ball is dead; there is no charged pitch and the play is repeated.

## RULE 6 PITCHING

### SECTION 1

Addition to the General Playing Rules:

- a) The player playing the position of pitcher shall keep both feet within the sixteen (16) foot diameter pitching circle until the ball is hit.
- b) The defensive coach may move the pitcher behind 2<sup>nd</sup> base for safety reasons, and must be a minimum of ten (10) feet behind 2<sup>nd</sup> base.

**NOTE:** *Violation of the above rule will result in the offensive team having the option of taking the result of the play or declaring no play.*

- c) If the batted ball hits the adult pitcher the ball is dead. An adult pitcher must make an effort to keep from being hit by the batted ball.  
**PENALTY:** If no effort is made in the judgment of the umpire, the batter is called out. First offense draws a warning or ejection, based on severity. Second offense draws an automatic ejection.
- d) The catcher may be positioned anywhere from the catcher's box to the screen.
- e) Catchers must wear a NOCSAE approved mask until the ball is hit, then it may be removed to field the ball.

## **RULE 7 BATTING**

### **SECTION 1**

Addition to the General Playing Rules:

- a) No play shall be declared if a batter hits the ball with one or both feet outside the batter's box. If the pitch is the fifth pitch, the batter will be declared out.
- b) For safety reasons, coaches will caution players about throwing/slinging the bat. Each player will receive one warning from the umpire for throwing/slinging the bat. On the second offense, the player will be called out.
- c) Each team must let all players bat according to the batting order. If a player is sick, hurt, or refuses to bat, this must be brought to the attention of the other coach, umpire, and the scorekeeper.
- d) Failure to bat constitutes a team out. The individual batter will resume their correct position in the batting order when returning to the game.
- e) There will be NO infield fly rule.

## **RULE 8 BASERUNNING**

### **SECTION 1**

Addition to the General Playing Rules:

- a) Baserunners must be in contact with the base until a legally pitched ball reaches home plate.
- b) Baserunners shall be entitled to the base they are going to plus one when the ball is over-thrown into a dead ball area.
- c) When the defensive team stops the progress of the lead runner, the umpire will call "time out" and play will be stopped. When the ball is in possession of a defensive player within the 16' circle, any runners between bases must immediately advance to the next base, and one base only, or return to the last base touched. If the runner fails to return or advance immediately, the umpire will call "time out" and play will be stopped. Baserunners do not have to be on base to establish stopping of progress. (This will be in the umpire's judgment.)

Any coach touching a baserunner(s) while the ball is in play will result in the touched runner(s) being called out. All other runners may advance at their own risk.



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