



# 2025 GIRLS SOFTBALL RULES AND REGULATIONS



# **PONY**™

## **Protect Our Nation's Youth**

### **GIRLS SOFTBALL AGES 3-23**



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**COLT**™



**PALOMINO**™



**THOROGBRED**™



**CHAMPIONS**™

**Girls Softball  
Rule Changes for 2025**

**Regular Season Play:**

**Page 21  
Rule 3 Sec. 12**

**Electronic Devices  
Amended to allow electronic devices for manager and coaches**





# 2025 Rules and Regulations for PONY GIRLS SOFTBALL

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## GRAND SLAM, NO-HIT, PERFECT GAME AWARDS

Free award certificates for players who hit a Grand Slam, or who pitch a No-Hit game, or a Perfect Game, may be obtained from PONY Girls Softball without charge, when the appropriate information is provided.

Send a postcard or letter indicating:

1. Type of award (No-Hit, Grand Slam, Perfect Game).
2. Player's name and team.
3. Opposing team name.
4. Name of league or tournament level in which game occurred.
5. Name of field where game was played.
6. City and state where game was played.
7. Date game was played.

Sign the form, indicate your title or position in the league, and address and mail it to:

**PONY Girls Softball**  
P.O. Box 225  
Washington, PA 15301-0225

In order to preserve the integrity of the awards, blank certificates will not be issued.

**PONY Baseball and Softball heart and soul is the volunteer field directors that make up our staff across the globe. From entry level field directors that may oversee single tournaments, to higher level directors that may cover sections, regions all the way up to running our zones across the globe, we could not function without them.**

**If you are an individual that is ready to volunteer your time to a worthy cause of helping with youth baseball and youth girls softball at a level above your local league, please contact PONY International Headquarters where we will put you in touch with the volunteer field directors in your area. You can help with the advancement of PONY and our mission of *Protecting Our Nation's Youth*.**

**PONY International Headquarters – 724-225-1060 – [info@pony.org](mailto:info@pony.org)**

# 2025 - PONY GIRLS SOFTBALL

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## COMMUNICABLE DISEASE PROCEDURES

While risk of one athlete infecting another with HIV/AIDS during competition is close to non-existent, there is a remote risk that other blood borne infectious diseases can be transmitted. For example, Hepatitis B can be present in blood as well as in other body fluids. Procedures for reducing the potential for transmission of these infectious agents should include, but not be limited to, the following:

1. The bleeding must be stopped, the open wound covered and if there is an excessive amount of blood on the uniform it must be changed before the athlete may participate.
2. Routine use of gloves or other precautions to prevent skin and mucous-membrane exposure when contact with blood or other body fluids is anticipated.
3. Immediately wash hands and other skin surfaces if contaminated (in contact) with blood or other body fluids. Wash hands immediately after removing gloves.
4. Clean all contaminated surfaces and equipment with an appropriate disinfectant before competition resumes.
5. Practice proper disposal procedures to prevent injuries caused by needles, scalpels and other sharp instruments or devices.
6. Although saliva has not been implicated in HIV transmission, to minimize the need for emergency mouth-to-mouth resuscitation, mouthpieces, resuscitation bags, or other ventilation devices should be available for use.
7. Athletic trainers/coaches with bleeding or oozing skin conditions should refrain from all direct athletic care until the condition resolves.
8. Contaminated towels should be properly disposed of/disinfected.
9. Follow acceptable guidelines in the immediate control of bleeding and when handling bloody dressings, mouth guards and other articles containing body fluids.

<u>RULE DEFINITION</u>		<u>RULE</u>	<u>SECTION</u>	<u>ARTICLE</u>	
<b>ALTERED BAT</b>		1	1		
Bat Specifications		3	1		
Batter is out		8	1	d	
<b>APPEAL PLAY</b>		1	2		
	POE	1			
After time out		9	8	i	
	SP	9	8	i	(4)
Batting out of order		8	2	b - c	(1 - 4)
May not return		9	1	g - i	
Runner		9	8	f - i	
<b>ASSISTS</b> (a-d)		13	2	b	(5)
<b>AUTOMATIC OUT</b>	SP	4	4	b	(1)
<b>BALL</b>					
Called by umpire		8	7	a - f	
Fair ball		1	21	a - f	
Foul ball		1	27	a - f	
Intentionally carried		9	5	j	(2)
Official		3	3		
Unintentionally carried		9	5	j	(1)
<b>BALL IN PLAY (LIVE BALL)</b>		10	2	a - ab	
		10	3		
<b>BASE LINE</b>		1	4		
<b>BASE ON BALLS</b>		1	3		
		9	2	c	
<b>BASE PATH</b>		1	4		
Runner not out		9	9		
Runner out		9	8		
<b>BASERUNNER</b>		1	5		
<b>BASES</b>		3	6		
Dimensions		3	6		
Running in legal order		9	1		
<b>BASE UMPIRE</b>		11	1		
		11	3		
<b>BAT</b>		3	1		
Hitting ball second time		8	5		
"		8	9	f	
Illegal		1	31		

"		3	1	n
	S	6	a	2
Warm-up		3	2	
<b>BATTED BALL</b>		1	6	
<b>BATTER</b>				
Automatic Out		4	4	b
Becomes a batter-runner		9	2	
Chopping down on ball	SP	1	15	
"	SP	8	11	l
Enters batters box with an illegal/ altered bat		8	1	c - d
"		8	11	b - c
"		10	1	w - x
Hindering the catcher		8	1	b
"		8	3	
Hit by pitch		8	6	e - g
"	SP	8	7	c
"	FP	9	2	f
"		10	1	d,o
Hitting a fair ball with the bat a second time				
"	POE	19		
"		8	5	
"		8	9	f
Intentional walk		9	2	c
Not taking position in 20 seconds		8	1	e
On-deck batter		8	13	
Out		8	11	
Stepping across home plate while pitcher is in pitching position		8	1	b
Stepping out of batter's box	POE	10	1	b
"		5		
"		8	1	a-b
"		8	3	
"		8	11	d-e
Third strike dropped by catcher	FP	9	2	b
When third out is made at bat		8	2	d
<b>BATTER'S BOX</b>	POE	6		
		1	7	
Dimensions		2	4	c
Violation		8	1	
<b>BATTER - BASERUNNER</b>		1	8	
		9	2	
Accident prevents running to awarded base		10	1	h

Batter - baserunner is out		9	7		
Going directly to first base		9	7	f	
Moving back to home		9	7	j	
Overrunning first base		9	8	h	NOTE
Running outside three- foot line		9	7	g	
<b>BATTER'S ON - DECK CIRCLE</b>		2	4	b	
<b>BATTING ORDER</b>		1	9		
For designated hitter	FP	8	14		
Out of order		8	2		
<b>BLOCKED BALL</b>		1	10		
Offensive equipment on field		9	5	g	
<b>BLOOD RULE</b>		ii			
<b>BOX SCORE</b>		13	2		
<b>BUNT</b>	POE	8			
	FP	1	11		
With two strikes on batter	FP	8	11	k	
	SP	8	11	l	
<b>CAPS</b>		3	11	a	
<b>CASTS</b>		3	11	e	
<b>CATCH</b>		1	12		
<b>CATCH AND CARRY</b>	POE	17 & 20			
Intentionally carried out of play		9	5	j	(2)
Unintentionally carried out of play		9	5	j	(1)
<b>CATCHER'S BOX</b>	POE	7			
		1	13		
Dimensions		2	4	d	
	SP	7	3	d	
	FP	7	3	d	
<b>CATCHER'S OBSTRUCTION</b>		9	2	d	
<b>CHANGE OF UMPIRES</b>		11	5		
<b>CHARGED CONFERENCES</b>	POE	10			
Defensive		1	14	a	
	FP	7	11		
	SP	7	10		

Offensive		1	14	b	
		5	10		
<b>CHOPPED BALL</b>		1	15		
	SP	8	11	l	
<b>CLEATS</b>		3	8		
<b>COACH</b>		1	16		
Assists runner		9	8	m	
Interferes with throw		9	8	n, q	
Removal from game		11	9	b	
<b>COACHES BOX</b>		2	4	e	
<b>CONDITION OF FIELD</b>		5	2		
<b>COURTESY RUNNER</b>	POE	11			
	FP	9	10		
<b>CRASH</b>	POE	23			
		9	8	s	
<b>CROW HOP</b>	FP	7	4	f	
<b>DEAD BALL</b>		1	17		
		10	1		
	SP	10	3		
Intentionally carrying into dead ball area		9	5	i, j	
<b>DEFENSIVE TEAM</b>		1	18		
Defensive team distracts batter	FP	7	7	NOTE (1)	
	SP	7	8	NOTE (1)	
Throwing glove at ball		9	5	f	
<b>DELAYED DEAD BALL</b>	POE	12			
Catcher obstruction		9	2	d	(1 - 3)
Detached equipment hitting ball		9	5	f	
Illegal pitch	FP	7	1 - 7, 9		
"	SP	7	1 - 8		
Obstruction		9	5	b	
Plate umpire interference		9	6	d	
"	PSP	6	b	10	
<b>DESIGNATED PLAYER/FLEX</b>		4	s	a	
<b>DETACHED EQUIPMENT</b>		9	5	f	

<b>DIAMOND DIMENSIONS</b>		2	1 - 4		
<b>DISLODGED BASE</b>		1	19		
Following a base		9	1	c	
Not out if off dislodged base		9	9	l	
Runner attempts to continue		9	4	c	
<b>DOUBLE BASE</b>		3	6	a	
<b>DOUBLE, GROUND RULE</b>		9	5	i	
<b>DOUBLE PLAY</b>		1	20		
<b>DROPPED BALL DURING WIND UP</b>	FP	7	12		
	SP	7	9	d	
<b>DROPPED THIRD STRIKE</b>	FP	9	2	b	
		8	11	a	
<b>DUGOUT CONDUCT</b>	POE	14			
<b>EJECTION FROM GAME</b>		5	3	f	(6 - 7)
Altered bat		8	1	d	
		8	11	b	
Crash		9	8	s	NOTE
Second offense		11	9		EFFECT
		5	10		
Violation of rules		11	1	j	(3)
<b>EQUIPMENT LEFT ON FIELD</b>	POE	15			
		3	10		
<b>EQUIPMENT</b>		3	1 - 12		
<b>ERROR</b>		13	2	b	(6)
<b>EXTRA PLAYER</b>		4	6	b	
<b>FAIR BALL</b>		1	21		
<b>FAIR TERRITORY</b>		1	22		
<b>FAKE TAG</b>	POE	16			
		1	23		
		9	5	b	(3)

<b>FIELDER</b>		1	24	
<b>FITNESS OF GROUND</b>		5	2	
<b>FLY BALL</b>		1	25	
Carried into dead ball area		9	5	j
<b>FORCE OUT</b>	POE	18		
		1	26	
		9	8	c
<b>FOREIGN SUBSTANCE ON</b>	FP	7	6	
<b>PITCHING HAND</b>	SP	7	6	
<b>FORFEITED GAME</b>		5	3	f
Record		13	9	
Score of		5	5	c
<b>FOUL BALL</b>		1	27	
<b>FOUL TIP</b>		1	28	
		8	6	c
<b>GAME CALLED</b>		5	3	a
<b>GLOVES</b>		3	7	
Illegal glove usage		9	9	m
Specifications		3	7	
<b>GROUND RULES</b>		2	2	
Discussion with umpires		11	1	e
<b>GROUND RULE DOUBLE</b>		9	5	i
<b>HEADBANDS</b>		3	11	a
<b>HEADWEAR</b>		3	11	a
<b>HEIGHT OF PITCH</b>	SP	7	3	c
<b>HELMET</b>		1	29	
Defensive, Usage, Cracked, Broken				
Altered, Offensive		3	11	d
<b>HOME PLATE</b>		3	4	
<b>HOME RUN</b>		9	5	h

<b>HOME TEAM</b>		1	31	
<b>ILLEGAL BAT</b>	POE	3 & 4		
		1	31	
Spec of bat		3	1	
<b>ILLEGALLY BATTED BALL</b>		1	32	
Batter is out		8	11	c
Runner must return		9	6	b
<b>ILLEGAL BATTER</b>		4	5	a
<b>ILLEGALLY CAUGHT BALL</b>		1	33	
Detached equipment		9	5	f
Illegal glove		9	9	m
<b>ILLEGAL PITCH</b>				
	FP	7	"1 - 7,9"	
	SP	7	"1 - 6,8"	
<b>ILLEGAL PITCHER</b>				
Excessive speed	SP	7	3	a
Removed from position		4	3	
<b>ILLEGAL PLAYER</b>		1	34	
<b>ILLEGAL RE-ENTRY</b>		4	3	
<b>INCOMPLETE GAME</b>		5	3	g
<b>INELIGIBLE PLAYER</b>		1	35	
<b>IN FLIGHT</b>		1	36	
<b>IN JEOPARDY</b>		1	37	
<b>INFIELD</b>		1	38	
<b>INFIELD FLY</b>		1	39	
		8	11	g
Not called	S	6	a	7
	P	6	b	3
	P	6	c	2
	P	6	d	16

<b>INJURED PLAYER</b> (See Blood Rule Front Cover)		10	1	h	
Re-entry		4	3		
<b>INNING</b>		1	40		
Regulation game		5	3		
<b>INSULTING REMARKS TOWARD PLAYERS OR UMPIRES</b>		11	9	a	
<b>INTENTIONALLY DROPPED FLY BALL</b>	POE	21			
		8	11	h	
<b>INTENTIONAL WALK</b>	POE	22			
	FP	9	2	c	NOTE EFFECT
	SP	9	2	c	
<b>INTERFERENCE</b>	POE	23			
		1	41		
Aiding a runner		9	8	m	
At home plate		9	8	n,r	
		10	1	p	
Ball hitting umpire		9	2	e	
		10	1	f	(3)
By base coach		9	8	m,n,q	
		10	1	f	(2)
By batter		8	1	b	
		8	3		
		10	1	f	(1)
By on deck batter		8	13	e	
		10	1	f	(2)
By catcher		8	3		
By plate umpire	FP	9	6	d	
	FP	10	1	q	
By runner		9	8	j,k,l,p,r	
		10	1	f	(3) (6)
Crash by runner		9	8	s	
Offensive equipment on field		9	5	g	
By pinto pitcher	P	6	b	21	
Runners return		9	6	c	
		9	8	j - k	
While fielding foul ball		8	4		
While at bat		8	3		
<b>ITB</b>		5	8		

<b>JEWELRY</b>		3	11	f
Medical alert bracelets/necklaces		3	11	f
<b>LEAVE GAME (RE-ENTRY)</b>		4	3	
Substitutes		4	5	
<b>LEGAL DELIVERY OR PITCH</b>	FP	7	2-3	
	SP	7	2-3	
	P	6	b	21
<b>LEGALLY CAUGHT BALL (CATCH)</b>		1	43	
<b>LEGAL TOUCH</b>		1	42	
<b>LIGHTNING SAFETY</b>		5	2	a
<b>LINE DRIVE</b>		1	44	
<b>LOOK BACK RULE</b>	POE	24		
		9	8	t
<b>“LOSS, CREDITED TO PITCHER”</b>		13	6	
<b>MACHINE PITCH</b>		6	d	1-18
<b>MASKS AND THROAT PROTECTORS</b>				
Umpires		11	1	c
Catchers		3	9	a
	FP	7	13	
Face mask		3	11	d
<b>MAXIMUM AND MINIMUM ARC</b>	SP	7	3	c
<b>MITTS</b>		3	7	
Multi - Colored Gloves		3	7	
<b>NO PITCH</b>	FP	7	10	
	SP	7	9	
	P	6	b	21
<b>OBSTRUCTION</b>	POE	26		
		1	45	
		9	5	b
Catcher obstruction		9	2	d
<b>OFFENSIVE TEAM</b>		1	46	

<b>OFFICIAL BALL</b>		3	3	
<b>OFFICIAL SCOREKEEPER</b>		13	1	
<b>ON DECK BATTER</b>		8	13	
Warm up bats		3	2	
<b>ON DECK CIRCLE</b>		2	4	b
Violation		8	13	e
<b>OUTFIELD</b>		1	47	
<b>OVERRUN FIRST BASE</b>	POE	27		
		9	8	h
		9	9	g
<b>OVERSLIDE</b>		1	48	
		9	8	i
<b>OVERTHROW</b>	POE	28		
		1	49	
		9	5	g
From pitching plate		9	5	c
<b>PASSED BALL</b>		1	50	
	FP	9	5	c
<b>PINTO PLAYING RULES</b>		6	b, c, d	
<b>PITCH (FAST PITCH)</b>	POE	29		
Delivered with catcher out of catchers box		7	3	d
		7	7	
Illegal		7	1-9	
No pitch declared		7	10	
Returned by catcher		7	3	e
Slips from pitcher's hand		7	12	
Warm up pitches allowed		7	8	
<b>PITCH (SLOW PITCH)</b>				
Delivered with catcher out of catchers box		7	3	d
Height of pitch		7	3	c
Illegal		7	1-8	
No pitch declared		7	9	
Quick return pitch		7	8	
Slips from pitcher's hand		7	9	d
Warm up pitches allowed		7	7	

<b>PITCH BEGINS</b>	FP	7	2	
	SP	7	2	
<b>PITCHER (FAST PITCH)</b>	POE	29		
Credited with loss		13	6	
Credited with win		13	5	
Defensive conference		1	14	a
		7	11	
Deliberately dropped or rolled ball		7	5	
Fails to pitch ball within allotted time		7	3	f
Foreign substance on ball		7	6	
Illegal pitch penalty		7	1-7,9	
		8	7	b
Legal delivery		7	3	a-f
Playing runners back to base from eight foot circle		9	8	t
Position of feet		7	1	
Step during delivery		7	2	
Removal after conference with manager		7	11	
Starting pitcher		1	56	
Re-enter		4	3	
Tape on finger		7	6	
Uniform	POE	30		
		3	11	
Warm up pitches allowed between innings		7	8	
<b>PITCHER (SLOW PITCH)</b>				
Credited with loss		13	6	
Credited with win		13	5	
Defensive conference		1	14	a
		7	10	
Deliberately dropped or rolled ball		7	5	
Fails to pitch ball within allotted time		7	3	f
Foreign substance on ball		7	6	
Illegal pitch penalty		7	1-6,8	
Legal delivery		7	3	a
Position of feet		7	1	
Step during delivery		7	2	
Removal after conference with manager		7	10	
Starting pitcher		1	56	
Re-enter		4	3	
Tape on finger		7	6	
Uniform	POE	30		
		3	11	
Warm up pitches allowed between innings		7	7	

<b>PITCHER'S PLATE</b>		2	4	f	
Contact at delivery	FP	7	2	b	
	FP	7	4	f	
	SP	7	2		
Eight foot circle	FP	2	4	f	
Pitcher throws while in contact with	FP	7	9		
<b>PITCHER'S SIGNALS</b>	POE	29			
	FP	7	1	b	
<b>PITCHING DISTANCES</b>		2	3		
<b>PITCHING POSITION</b>	FP	7	1	a-c	
	SP	7	1	a-c	
<b>PIVOT FOOT</b>		1	51		
<b>PLATE UMPIRE</b>		11	2		
<b>PLAY BALL</b>		1	52		
Failure to resume play		5	3	f	(2)
<b>PLAY MADE BY UNANNOUNCED SUBSTITUTE</b>		4	5	a-b	
<b>PLAYERS</b>		4			
Minimum number to play		4	4	a-b	
Officially entering the game		4	5		
Positions		4	2		
Removed from game		4	5	c - d	
Shorthanded rule	POE	34			
		4	1	a-b	
<b>PLAYING FIELD</b>		2			
Fitness for play		5	2		
<b>PROTESTS</b>	POE	31			
		12			
Correcting errors		12	2		
Decisions		12	7		
Examples		12	1		
Information needed		12	6		
Notification of intent		12	4		
Time limit		12	5		
Types		12	2		
<b>QUICK RETURN PITCH</b>		1	53		
	SP	7	8		

<b>RE-ENTER GAME</b>		4	3		
<b>RE-ENTRY, PENALTY FOR ILLEGAL</b>		4	3		
<b>REFUSING TO PLAY</b>		5	3	f	(2)
<b>REGULATION GAME</b>		5	3		
<b>REMOVAL FROM GAME</b>		5	3	f	(6-7)
Batting using altered bat		8	1	d	
		8	11	b	
Manager or coach		5	10		
Re-entry		4	3		
Substitute not announced		4	5		
Second offense		11	9		EFFECT
Violation of rules		11	1	j	(3)
<b>RESIN</b>	FP	7	6		
	SP	7	6		
<b>RETURN OF PITCH TO PITCHER</b>	FP	7	3	e	
	SP	7	3	e	
<b>REVERSAL OF UMPIRE'S DECISION</b>		11	6	b	
<b>ROSTERS (FEMALE ONLY)</b>		4	1	c	
<b>RUN AHEAD RULE</b>		5	4		
<b>RUNNER</b>		1	54		
Abandons base		9	8	v	
Assisted by anyone		9	8	m	
Award of bases on overthrow of ball					
Out of play		9	1	l	
	FP	9	5	c	
		9	5	g	
Base stealing	FP	9	3	a	
	SP	9	6	h	
Bases touched in legal order		9	1		
Coach draws throw to home		9	8	n	
Comes into contact with fielder attempting to field ball		9	8	j	
Comes into contact with fielder not entitled to field the ball		9	9	c	
Courtesy runner	FP	9	10		
Deliberate contact with a fielder					

with the ball		9	8	s	
Enters team area		9	8	v	
Entitled to advance with liability to be put out		9	3		
Entitled to advance without liability to be put out		9	5		
Fails to keep contact with base until pitched ball reaches home plate	SP	9	8	u	
Fails to keep contact with base until the ball leaves the pitcher's hand	FP	9	8	t	
Fails to return to base or proceed to next base when ball is in eight foot circle	FP	9	8	t	(1)
Hit by batted ball	POE	23			
		9	8	k, l	
Illegal glove		9	9	m	
Illegal pitch	FP	7	7		EFFECT
	FP	9	5	e	
	SP	7	1-8	EFFECT	
Illegal runner		4	5		
Intentionally kicking ball		9	8	l	
Interferes with play after being declared out		9	8	r	
Interferes with play before being declared out		9	8	j	
Leading off	FP	9	8	t	
	SP	9	8	u	
Leaving base after returning		9	8	t	(2)
Leaving base on an appeal		9	8	f-i	
Leaving base to soon		9	1	f, h, k	
Misses home plate		9	8	i	
Must return to base		9	6		
Not out		9	9		
Obstructed		9	5	b	
Offensive team collecting to confuse the defense		9	8	o	
Out		9	8		
Overruns first base and attempts to go to second		9	8	h	
Passes another runner		9	8	e	
Running the bases in reverse order		9	1	d	
Running out of baseline		9	8	a	
Running start		9	8	w	
Struck by fair ball while off base	POE	23			
		9	8	k	
Struck by fair ball while on base	POE	23			
		9	9	k	
Two occupying a base at same time		9	1	e	

<b>RUNS BATTED IN</b>		13	4	
<b>RUNS NOT SCORED</b>		5	7	
		9	1	f
Force out		5	7	a-b
<b>RUNS SCORED</b>	POE	32		
		5	6	
<b>SACRIFICE FLY</b>		1	55	
<b>SCOREKEEPER'S SUMMARY</b>		13	7	
<b>SCORING</b>		13	1-9	
Base hit		13	3	
Box score		13	2	
Charged with loss		13	6	
Credited with win		13	5	
Forfeited games		13	9	
Official scorer		13	1	
Run scored		5	6	
		13	4	
Stolen bases	FP	13	8	
<b>SHOES</b>	POE	33		
		3	8	
<b>SHORT HANDED TEAMS</b>	POE	34		
		4	4	
<b>SINGLE UMPIRE</b>		11	4	
Shetland	S	6	a	1-17
<b>SOFTBALL</b>		3	3	
<b>SPECTATORS, ABUSIVE LANGUAGE</b>		11	9	a
Attack umpire		5	3	e
<b>SPEED OF PITCH</b>	SP	7	3	a
<b>SPIKES</b>		3	8	
<b>STARTING LINEUP</b>		4	1	
Number of players	FP	4	1	a,c
	SP	4	1	b-c
Positions	FP	4	2	a

Re-entry	SP	4	2	b	
		4	3		
<b>STARTING PITCHER</b>		1	56		
<b>STEALING</b>	POE	35			
		1	57		
	SP	9	6	h	
	FP	9	8	t	
	SP	9	8	u	
Leaving bases after returning	FP	9	8	t	(2)
Scoring		13	8		
When ball leaves pitcher's hand	FP	9	3	a	
Baserunner out	FP	9	8	t	
<b>STEP TAKEN BY PITCHER</b>	FP	7	2	a	
	SP	7	2		
<b>STEPPING OUT OF BATTER'S BOX</b>	POE	5			
		8	1		
		8	3		
		8	11	d-e	
		10	1	b	
<b>STRIKE</b>		8	6		
Ball hitting batter on third strike		8	11	a	
Dropped third strike	FP	9	2	b	
<b>STRIKE ZONE</b>		1	58		
<b>SUBSTITUTE</b>	POE	36			
Courtesy runner	POE	11			
		9	10		
No substitute available	FP	4	4	a	
<b>PENALTY</b>	SP	4	4	b	
<b>PENALTY</b>		5	3	f	
Notify umpire		4	5	a	
Officially in game		4	5		
Re-entry		4	3		
<b>SUBSTITUTE RUNNER</b>					
Automatic out		4	4	b	(2)
Injury to runner		4	3	NOTE	
<b>SUSPENSION OF PLAY</b>		5	3	f	

Shetland	S	11 6	8 a	1-17
<b>TAPE ON PITCHING HAND</b>	FP	7	6	
	SP	7	6	
<b>TEAM</b>		4	1	
Refusing to play		5	3	f (1-3)
To continue playing		4	4	
Delay or hasten game		5	3	f (4)
Home team		5	1	
To start game	FP	4	4	a
	SP	4	4	b
<b>THREE-FOOT LINE</b>				
Dimensions		2	4	a
Violation		9	7	g
<b>THROAT PROTECTORS</b>		3	9	a
Umpires		11	1	c
<b>THROWING TO A BASE WHILE FOOT IN CONTACT WITH PITCHING PLATE</b>	FP	7	9	
<b>THROWING GLOVE AT BALL</b>		9	5	f
<b>TIE GAME</b>	POE	37		
Regulation tie		5	3	d
Non-regulation		5	3	g
Score		5	5	b
<b>TIME</b>		1	59	
By umpire		11	8	
Player, manager, coach	FP	7	10	c
	SP	7	9	e
<b>TIME LIMIT RULE</b>	S	6	a	10
	P	6	b	1
		6	c	1
		6	d	14
<b>TRAPPED BALL</b>		8	11	h
<b>TRIPLE PLAY</b>		1	60	
<b>TURN AT BAT</b>		1	61	

<b>UMPIRES</b>		11	1-9	
Equipment / uniform		11	1	c
Interference		9	2	e
Interference plate umpire		9	6	d
	FP	10	1	q
Judgment		11	6	
Reversal of decision		11	6	a-b
<b>UNIFORMS</b>				
For players		3	11	
For umpires		11	1	c
Numbers on uniforms		3	11	c
<b>VIOLATIONS</b>		11	9	a-b
<b>WALK (BASE ON BALLS)</b>		1	3	
		9	2	c
<b>WARM-UP BATS</b>		3	2	
<b>WARM--UP PITCHES FOR RELIEF PITCHER</b>				
	FP	7	8	
	SP	7	7	
<b>WILD PITCH</b>		1	62	
	FP	9	5	c
<b>WIN CREDITED TO PITCHER</b>		13	5	
<b>WIND-UP</b>				
	FP	7	4	a-f
	SP	7	4	a-f
<b>WINNING TEAM</b>		5	5	
<b>WRISTBANDS ON PITCHER</b>				
	FP	7	6	
	SP	7	6	

## THE PURPOSE

The softball leagues for girls, under PONY Baseball, Inc. administration, play under slow pitch or fast pitch softball rules and are designed to provide an organized recreation activity for girls. The softball leagues will enable softball organizations, where desired, to provide companion leagues for girls under a single community organization.

The purpose of the program shall be to implant in the youth of the community ideals of good sportsmanship, honesty, loyalty, courage, and reverence, so that they may be finer, stronger, and happier young people who will grow to be good, clean, healthy adults. This objective is to be reached by providing supervised, fun, safe, competitive athletic games. The league officials shall always bear in mind that the attainment of exceptional athletic skill or the winning of games is secondary and that the molding of future citizens is of prime importance.

PONY Girls Softball does not limit participation in its leagues based on disability. All leagues are required to comply with this policy and failure to do so shall be grounds for revocation of or refusal to renew a league's annual membership.

- a. A request for reasonable modification to PONY Baseball/Softball Rules by an individual with a disability, or their representative, shall be accepted by any employee of PONY Headquarters and any PONY Official with responsibility for organizing or supervising PONY games. PONY shall allow such a modification unless the modification would fundamentally alter an essential aspect of PONY's Baseball/Softball program. If an official believes that a proposed modification would fundamentally alter an essential aspect of PONY's Baseball/Softball program, the official should consult the PONY ADA Coordinator. The ADA Coordinator will, after an appropriate individualized inquiry that includes consideration of the player's specific circumstances and the purpose of the rule, policy, or practice at issue, decide whether to allow the modification. Written notice shall be provided to the requestor of the modification within four (4) business days of the request. Although PONY will respond appropriately and in a reasonable amount of time to a request of for reasonable modification regardless of when it is received, it is highly recommended that players and their families provide notice of such a request in league registration materials prior to the start of the season and in tournament registration materials prior to the start of a tournament.
- b. PONY Baseball/Softball Rules do not limit players' rights to sign language interpreters, or to other auxiliary aids, during regular season and tournament games. Rules limiting persons allowed in team dugouts shall not apply to sign language interpreters. In situations where PONY's Baseball/Softball Rules allow coaches to be in areas other than the dugout, a sign language interpreter shall be allowed to accompany coaches in order to provide communication to a player. Any concerns with the selection of sign language interpreters or the location of such interpreters during games shall be addressed to the PONY ADA Coordinator. Although PONY will respond appropriately and in a reasonable amount of time to a request for a qualified sign language interpreter or other auxiliary aid regardless of when it is received, it is highly recommended that players and their families provide notice of such a request in league registration materials prior to the start of the season and in tournament registration materials prior to the start of a tournament.

PONY also operates youth baseball programs league age three through 23. For information and baseball rule books, contact PONY Baseball and Softball Headquarters.

### **LEAGUES/TEAMS**

Girls Softball leagues/teams may be operated as Foal League, for players of league age 4 and under, Shetland League, for players of league age 6 and under, Pinto League, for players of league age 8 and under; Mustang League, for players of league age 10 and under; Bronco League, for players of league age 12 and under; Pony League, for players of league age 14 and under; Colt League, for players of league age 16 and under; Palomino League, for players of league age 18 and under and Thoroughbred League, for players of league age 23 and under.

### **MEMBERSHIP**

Leagues/teams may become affiliated with PONY Girls Softball by filing a Membership Application form with PONY Girls Softball, P.O. Box 225, Washington, Pennsylvania 15301. Memberships are to be completed online at the PONY website, [www.pony.org](http://www.pony.org).

A check for the membership fee as indicated on the on-line application form is to be sent with the completed form. The form is then processed at PONY and copies sent to the proper Field Director. A box of supplies is then mailed to the league/team, including current rule books and other items.

All mail from PONY will be directed to the league contact unless the league indicates otherwise on the Membership Application form.

For administrative purposes, PONY is divided into nine zones: North, South, East, West, Asia-Pacific, Caribbean, European, Mexico and Canada. Zones are divided into Regions, Regions into Sections, Sections into Districts and Districts into Areas and Field Directors are appointed for each. These volunteers, and the staff of PONY Girls Softball, will assist you in whatever way they can, and will supervise tournament play.

Primary responsibility for the operation of your league, however, lies with the volunteers in your community. The PONY staff and the volunteer Field Directors can offer advice and suggestions based on their combined experience over many years, but neither can operate your league for you.

PONY can offer a pattern of league operation what time and experience have proven can be effectively used to operate a league for the young people of your community. The successful operation of your league will remain largely dependent upon the interest and dedication of the volunteers in your community.



**PONY'S OFFICIAL  
TEAM TRAVEL  
PARTNER**  
[pony.hotelplanner.com](http://pony.hotelplanner.com)



GAME	DIVISION	BASES	PITCHING	RECOMMENDED FENCES	
				Minimum	Maximum
<b>SLOW PITCH</b>	Girls 4-under & 6-under	55' (16.76m)	40' (12.19m)	150' (45.72m)	175' (53.34m)
	Girls 8-under	55' (16.76m)	40' (12.19m)	150' (45.72m)	175' (53.34m)
	Girls 10-under	60' (18.29m)	40' (12.19m)	150' (45.72m)	175' (53.34m)
	Girls 12-under	65' (19.81m)	46' (14.02m)	175' (53.34m)	200' (60.96m)
	Girls 14-under	65' (19.81m)	50' (15.24m)	175' (53.34m)	200' (60.96m)
	Girls 16-under	65' (19.81m)	50' (15.24m)	175' (53.34m)	200' (60.96m)
	Girls 18-under	65' (19.81m)	50' (15.24m)	175' (53.34m)	200' (60.96m)
	Girls 23-under	65' (19.81m)	50' (15.24m)	175' (53.34m)	200' (60.96m)
<b>FAST PITCH</b>	Girls 6-under	55' (16.76m)	40' (12.19m)	150' (45.72m)	175' (53.34m)
	Girls 8-under	55' (16.76m)	40' (12.19m)	150' (45.72m)	175' (53.34m)
	Girls 8-u Player Pitch	55' (16.76m)	30' (9.14m)	150' (45.72m)	175' (53.34m)
	Girls 10-under	60' (18.29m)	35' (10.67m)	150' (45.72m)	175' (53.34m)
	Girls 12-under	60' (18.29m)	40' (12.19m)	175' (53.34m)	200' (60.96m)
	Girls 14-under	60' (18.29m)	43' (13.11m)	175' (53.34m)	200' (60.96m)
	Girls 16-under	60' (18.29m)	43' (13.11m)	175' (53.34m)	200' (60.96m)
	Girls 23-under	60' (18.29m)	43' (13.11m)	175' (53.34m)	200' (60.96m)

### LEAGUE REGULATION 1 - LEAGUES

- Section 1** The league shall be the smallest unit of organization.
- More than one league in the same age bracket, or in different age brackets may be operated by the same set of officers or sponsoring organization with the approval of the Zone Director.
- Section 2** The leagues must apply annually, prior to May 1 (June 1 for Colt (16U), Palomino (18U) and Thorobred (23U) or prior to playing first league game whichever comes first for a "Membership Certificate" to avoid a late fee.
- Extension of the date for filing the Membership Application form may be granted upon written request to the Zone Director.
- Section 3** The Membership Certificate is issued annually to each league by the Zone Director, subject to the following conditions:
- The Zone Director shall have the authority to withdraw or refuse membership for just cause and shall give written notice to the League officers as indicated on the Membership Application form. The league has the right of appeal to PONY Headquarters.
  - The Membership Certificate expires at the conclusion of play of the season for which it was granted (August 31) and membership is subject to renewal and re-examination the following year.
- Section 4** All leagues are required to determine that accident insurance coverage is provided for the players, coaches, managers, official scorekeepers, and volunteer umpires in their league with a policy provided by the league, similar to that available through PONY Girls Softball, or a policy provided by parents or other source.

- a. Accidents and injuries can occur while participating in softball games. To protect our members, all leagues and teams must purchase accident insurance coverage and show proof by registration for the players, managers, coaches, officials, scorekeepers, volunteers, and umpires in their league with a policy provided by the league, similar to that available through PONY Baseball and Softball.
- b. All affiliated leagues and teams must purchase league liability insurance with minimum limits of one million dollars, on an occurrence policy basis and naming PONY Baseball/Softball Inc. as an additional insured. The liability policy must also include participant legal liability coverage of one million dollars. Such coverage is available through PONY Baseball and Softball.

### **LEAGUE REGULATION 2 – TEAMS**

**Section 1** Each team shall consist of not more than 18 nor less than 12 players. The names of these players shall be listed with the league’s player agent. A league can consist of any number of teams.

**Section 2** A player’s age as of December 31 determines the age in which the player is eligible to play following year.

***NOTE: League age 3 is the minimum age for players in PONY Girls Softball.***

### **LEAGUE REGULATION 3 - LEGAL PLAYERS**

**Section 1** League age of players in the...

- a. Foal League, players of league age 4 and under, born after Dec. 31.
- b. Shetland League, players of league age 6 and under, born after Dec. 31.
- c. Pinto League, players of league age 8 and under, born after Dec. 31.
- d. Mustang League, players of league age 10 and under, born after Dec. 31.
- e. Bronco League, players of league age 12 and under, born after Dec. 31.
- f. Pony League, players of league age 14 and under, born after Dec. 31.
- g. Colt League, players of league age 16 and under, born after Dec. 31.
- h. Palomino League, 18 and under, born after Dec. 31.
- i. Thoroughbred League, 23 and under, born after Dec. 31.

**Section 2** Dates of birth of candidates shall be certified by birth certificates, hospital certificates, baptismal certificates, drivers’ licenses or equivalent religious or legal documents which should be presented to a league officer prior to the league’s first regularly scheduled game.

- a. Documents presented as proof of date of birth must be legible and must bear the legible signature of an authorized official of the issuing agency.
- b. Notarized statements from parents are not acceptable.

**Section 3** League officials are given the option of prohibiting the players from participating on teams in other non-scholastic programs.

Players shall not participate with more than one PONY Baseball and/or Softball organization league at the same time.

## LEAGUE REGULATION 4 – BOUNDARIES

- Section 1** Use of league boundaries for a Zone is at the Zone Director’s discretion. League boundaries if used shall be determined by the league officers.
- Section 2** A map clearly indicating the current boundaries of the league shall be sent to the Zone Director and shall be replaced upon request.
- Unless specifically stated otherwise the center of the street shall be considered the actual dividing line when streets are used as boundaries.
  - Maps must indicate specific boundaries such as streets, railroad tracks, rivers, or school districts, postal zones, municipal limits or similarly specified areas.
    - A definition of boundaries such as “five-mile radius” is not acceptable.
- Section 3** The Zone Director, based upon the recommendations of the Field Directors concerned, reserves the right to adjust boundaries in the event of overlapping of territorial requests or because of inequitable conditions.
- Section 4** Though boundaries are not specifically restricted by population or area, both should be considered when boundaries are approved.
- Section 5** Boundaries for Foal (4U), Shetland (6U), Pinto (8U), Mustang (10U), Bronco (12U), Pony (14U), Colt (16U), Palomino (18U) and Thorobred (23U) leagues sponsored by the same group need not be identical, nor need they coincide with those of baseball leagues affiliated with PONY Baseball.

## LEAGUE REGULATION 5 - SELECTION OF PLAYERS

- Section 1** Selection of players shall be in accordance with provisions set forth in the Player Selection plan adopted by the league.
- Section 2** It is expected that each legal player candidate will be given an opportunity to try out for a league team.
- Section 3** The selection of players for league teams shall be under the direction of a player agent selected by the league, whose duty it shall be to seek, in so far as is legal and practical, to maintain a balance of strength among the teams of the league.
- Section 4** Zone Directors may establish rules that determine whether a team is eligible for tournament play under League or Travel/Select.

## LEAGUE REGULATION 6 – SCHEDULE

- Section 1** Scheduling and rescheduling of league games shall be the responsibility of the league officers or their appointed representative, who should not schedule less than 12 regular season games for each team.
- Leagues of the same age bracket, operated by the same set of officers, sponsors, or leagues from adjacent areas, may play an interlocking schedule.
- Section 2** League schedules should not require a team to play more than two games in one day.

- Section 3** The latest starting time of league games should be:
- Foal (4U), Shetland (6U), Pinto (8U) and Mustang (10U) Leagues: 7:30 p.m. with no inning to start after 9:00 p.m.
  - Bronco (12U) League: 8:30 p.m. with no inning to start after 10:00 p.m.
  - Pony (14U) League: 9:30 p.m. with no inning to start after 11:00 p.m.
  - Colt (16U), Palomino (18U), Thoroughbred (23U) Leagues: 10:30 p.m. with no inning to start after 12 midnight.

#### **LEAGUE REGULATION 7 – UMPIRES**

- Section 1** There shall be at least one staff umpire working each game.
- Staff umpires are those designated by league officials.
  - Umpires other than staff umpires must be agreed upon, preferably in writing, by opposing managers.

#### **LEAGUE REGULATION 8 – SCOREKEEPERS**

- Section 1** It is recommended one person, or series of persons, be designated as league scorekeepers.
- Scorekeepers designated by the league shall keep the official scorebook at all league games.
  - Team and individual batting, hitting, and fielding statistics shall be compiled at such points during the season and at the conclusion of the season as requested by league officials.
- Section 2** The scorekeeper shall record at bats, hits, runs, errors, strikeouts, bases on balls, innings charged to each pitcher and time required to play each game.
- It is recommended that in order to be considered the winning pitcher, a pitcher should retire at least nine batters and leave with a lead that stands up for the remainder of the game.

#### **LEAGUE REGULATION 9 – SPONSORS**

- Section 1** Teams or leagues are to be sponsored only by those organizations, firms, or companies whose activities or products are not detrimental to the welfare of youth.

#### **LEAGUE REGULATION 10 - MANAGERS AND COACHES**

- Section 1** A manager for each team shall be appointed by the league officers.
- The manager shall be responsible for the training of the team, direction, and supervision of the team at games and at any time the team is practicing or traveling as a unit.
  - It shall be the responsibility of the manager to ensure that the manager, coaches, and players remain within the dugout or bench during the playing of all games.
  - It shall be the responsibility of the manager to ensure that the manager, coaches and/or players do not use tobacco, alcohol, or illegal drugs in any form in the dugout or on the benches or the playing field.

- d. The manager shall be responsible to the league for all equipment all uniforms issued to the team, and for collection and return of such equipment and uniforms to the league at the conclusion of the season.

**Section 2** Not more than three coaches may be appointed by the league officers (to assist the team manager in fulfillment of those duties assigned to the manager). It is recommended that at least one of the managing or coaching personnel be a female. (A total of four coaches.)

**Section 3** A manager or coach, if properly uniformed as directed by the league, may coach from either the first or third base coaching box or in both coaching boxes. Only players in uniform may be used as the other base coach, or as base coaches, if a manager or coach is not used. Players shall wear a helmet when they are occupying either the first or third base coach's box.

- a. A base coach may not switch coaching boxes during an inning.
- b. Umpires will not permit more than one offensive time out in each half inning.

### CHAMPIONS LEAGUE™

PONY Baseball and Softball™ is proud to offer membership in the **CHAMPIONS LEAGUE™**. It is one of the newest leagues in the PONY family, designed for children with special needs. It was unanimously adopted by the PONY Baseball and Softball International Board of Directors on October 13, 2009.

While many of our leagues have had some type of **CHAMPIONS LEAGUE™** for years, PONY has officially organized this opportunity for children with special needs. PONY has developed and finalized plans for the language and procedures necessary to create these leagues on an international level.

**REGISTRATION:** Registration for the **CHAMPIONS LEAGUE™** can only be done on-line at [www.pony.org](http://www.pony.org). Click on the registration tab and follow the registration instructions. If you need assistance, please call PONY at 724-225-1060.

**REGISTRATION COST:** There is no charge to register your **CHAMPIONS LEAGUE™** Program regardless of how many Champions League™ teams are in the organization.

**WHAT CAN YOU DO TO HELP?** PONY is developing a long-range plan for the language and procedures necessary to sustain the **CHAMPIONS LEAGUE™** on an international level, but we need your help. Does your community have a **CHAMPIONS LEAGUE™** already? If so, help us enhance the rules and guidelines by forwarding your information to [info@pony.org](mailto:info@pony.org). **Protect Our Nation's Youth™** represents all children and young adults regardless of ability.

**HOW CAN I LEARN MORE?** For more information on the **CHAMPIONS LEAGUE™** contact your local PONY Field Director or contact PONY International Headquarters at 724.225.1060 (M-F 8AM-5PM EST) or by email at [info@pony.org](mailto:info@pony.org).

# PONY GIRLS SOFTBALL PLAYING RULES

## RULE 1. DEFINITIONS

- Sec. 1 ALTERED BAT.** Altered bats are bats which are modified in any way from manufacturer's specifications. Normal wear and grip replacement accepted. Players will not use any altered bat. Umpires and/or Directors are authorized to remove any bat from play.
- Sec. 2 APPEAL PLAY.** An appeal play is a play in which an umpire cannot make a decision until requested by a manager, coach, or player. The appeal must be made before the next legal or illegal pitch, or before the defensive team has left the field. The defensive team has left the field when the pitcher and all infielders have clearly left their normal fielding positions and have left fair territory on their way to the bench or dugout area.
- Sec. 3 BASE ON BALLS.** A base on balls permits a batter to gain first base without liability to be put out and is awarded to a batter by the umpire when four pitches are judged to be balls. (SP ONLY) If the pitcher desires to walk a batter intentionally, she may do so by notifying, the plate umpire who shall award the batter first base. (Rule 9, Sec. 2c)
- Sec. 4 BASE PATH.** A base path is an imaginary line three feet (0.91 m) on either side of a direct line between the bases.
- Sec. 5 BASERUNNER.** A baserunner is a player of the team at bat who has finished her turn at bat, reached first base, and has not yet been put out or scored.
- Sec. 6 BATTED BALL.** A batted ball is any pitched ball that hits the bat or is hit by the bat and lands either in fair or foul territory. No intention to hit the ball is necessary.
- Sec. 7 BATTER'S BOX.** The batter's box is the area to which the batter is restricted while in position with the intention of helping her team to obtain runs. The lines are considered as being within the batter's box. Prior to the pitch, the batter must have both feet entirely within the lines of the batter's box.
- Sec. 8 BATTER-RUNNER.** A batter-runner is a player who has finished her turn at bat but has not yet been put out or touched first base.
- Sec. 9 BATTING ORDER** The batting order is the official listing of offensive players in the order in which members of that team must come to bat. When the lineup card is submitted, it shall also include each player's position and uniform number.
- Sec. 10 BLOCKED BALL.** A blocked ball is a batted or thrown 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 official playing area.

***EFFECT:** The ball is dead. For offensive equipment causing a blocked ball (and interference), the player being played on is out. If no apparent play is obvious, no one is called out, but all runners must return to the last base touched at the time of the dead ball declaration. See Rule 9, Section 5c and Section 5g for enforcement.*

- Sec. 11 BUNT.** (FP ONLY) A bunt is a legally tapped ball not swung at, but intentionally met with the bat and tapped slowly within the infield.
- Sec. 12 CATCH.** A catch is a legally caught ball which occurs when the fielder catches a batted or thrown ball with her hands or glove. If the ball is merely held in the fielder's arms or prevented from dropping to the ground by some part of the fielder's body or clothing, the catch is not completed until the ball is in the grasp of the fielder's hands or glove. It is not a catch if a fielder, immediately after 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 hold the ball long enough to prove she has complete control of the ball or that her release of the ball is voluntary and intentional. If a player drops the ball after reaching into her glove to remove the ball or while in the act of throwing the ball, it is a valid catch.
- Sec. 13 CATCHER'S BOX.** The catcher's box is that area within which the catcher must stand while and until:
- (FP ONLY) The pitch is released. The lines are to be considered within the catcher's box.
  - (SP ONLY) The pitched ball is batted or reaches the catcher's box. The lines are to be considered within the catcher's box, AND ALL PARTS OF THE CATCHER'S BODY AND/OR EQUIPMENT MUST BE WITHIN THE CATCHER'S BOX UNTIL THE PITCHED BALL IS BATTED OR REACHES THE CATCHER'S BOX. The catcher is considered to be within the catcher's box unless she or any of her equipment touches the ground outside the catcher's box.  
FP Rule 7, Sec. 7. SP Rule 7, Sec. 3d.

**NOTE:** For catcher's box dimensions see Rule 2, Sec. 4d.

**Sec. 14 CAUGHT BALL.**

- A legal caught ball occurs when a fielder catches a batted or thrown ball, provided it is not caught in the fielder's hat, cap, mask, protector, pocket, or other part of her uniform. It must be caught and firmly held with a hand or hands.
- An illegally caught ball occurs when a fielder catches a batted or thrown ball with her cap, mask, glove, or any part of her uniform that is detached from its proper place.

**Sec. 15 CHARGED CONFERENCE.** A charged conference takes place when:

- (Defensive Conference) The defensive team requests a suspension of play for any reason.
  - A representative (not in the field) of the defensive team enters the playing field to talk to any defensive player, or
  - A defensive player approaches the dugout and receives instructions. FP refers to Rule 7, Sec. 11; SP refers to Rule 7, Sec. 10.
  - It is not a charged conference if pitcher is removed from the pitching position.
- (Offensive Conference) The offensive team request a suspension of play to allow the manager, coach, or player to confer with the batter or baserunner. Refer to Rule 5, Section 10.

**Sec. 16 CHOPPED BALL.** (SP ONLY) A chopped hit ball is one at which the batter strikes downward with a chopping motion.

*EFFECT: Batter is declared out and the ball is dead. Refer to Rule 8. Sec. 11-I.*

**Sec. 17 COACH.** A coach is a member of the team at bat who takes his or her place within the coach's box on the field to direct the players of his or her team in running the bases. Two coaches are allowed. Coaches can have in his or her possession in the coach's box a scorebook, pen or pencil, and an indicator, which shall be used for scorekeeping or record keeping purposes only.

**Sec. 18 DEAD BALL.** The ball is not in play and is not considered in play again until the pitcher has the ball in her possession, is within eight feet (2.44 m) of the pitcher's plate and the plate umpire has called "play ball." A dead ball line is considered in play. Refer to Rule 1, Section 53 for "Play Ball."

**Sec. 19 DEFENSIVE TEAM.** The defensive team is the team in the field.

**Sec. 20 DISLODGED BASE.** A dislodged base is a base removed from its proper position.

**Sec. 21 DOUBLE PLAY.** A double play is a play by the defense resulting in two offensive players being legally put out as a result of continuous action.

**Sec. 22 FAIR BALL.** A fair ball is a batted ball that:

- Settles or is touched in fair territory between home and first base or between home and third base.
- Bounds past first or third base over fair territory.
- While on or over fair territory, touches the person, attached equipment or clothing of a player or an umpire.
- Touches first, second or third base.
- First falls or is first touched on or over fair territory beyond first, second or third base.
- 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 the foul line, including the foul pole, and not as to whether the fielder is on fair or foul territory at the time, 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.*

**Sec. 23 FAIR TERRITORY.** Fair territory is that part of the playing field within and including the first and third base foul lines from home base to the bottom of the extreme playing field fence and perpendicularly upward. Home plate is in fair territory.

**Sec. 24 FAKE TAG.** A form of obstruction which impedes the progress of a runner. The runner does not have to stop or slide, only slow down, to be considered a fake tag.

*NOTE: Under Rule 9, Sec. 5b (3), a player may be removed from the game for a fake tag infraction.*

**Sec. 25 FIELDER.** A fielder is any player of the defensive team in the field.

**Sec. 26 FLY BALL.** A fly ball is any ball batted into the air.

**Sec. 27 FORCE-OUT.** A force-out is an out which can be made only when a baserunner loses the right to the base she is occupying because the batter becomes a batter-baserunner, and before the batter-baserunner or a succeeding baserunner has been put out.

***NOTE:** If the forced runner, after touching the next base, retreats for any reason toward the base she had last occupied, the force play is reinstated, and she can again be put out if the defense tags the base to which she is forced.*

**Sec. 28 FOUL BALL.** A foul ball is a batted ball that:

- Settles in foul territory between home and first base, or between home and third base.
- Bounds past first or third base over foul territory.
- While in or over foul territory, touches the person, attached equipment, or clothing of a player or an umpire, or any object foreign to the natural ground.
- First falls or is first touched over foul territory beyond first or third base.
- Touches the batter while the ball is within the batter's box.
- Rebounds up from the ground or home plate immediately and hits the bat a second time while the batter is in the batter's box.

***NOTE:** A foul fly shall be judged according to the relative position of the ball and the foul line, including the foul pole, and not as to whether the fielder is on foul or fair territory at the time, she touches the ball.*

**Sec. 29 FOUL TIP.** A batted ball that goes sharply and directly from the bat to the catcher's glove/mitt or hand is legally caught by the catcher.

***NOTE:** It is not a foul tip unless caught; and any foul tip that is caught, is a strike. In fast pitch the ball is in play. In slow pitch the ball is dead. It is not a catch if it is a rebound, unless the ball first touched the catcher's hand or glove.*

**Sec. 30 HELMET.** A form of protective headwear that must be approved by the National Operating Committee on Standard Athletic Equipment (NOCSAE). See Rule 3 Sec. 9 for additional information.

**Sec. 31 HOME TEAM.** The home team is the team on whose grounds the game is played. If the game is played on neutral ground, the home team shall be designated by the league officers, mutual agreement or by a flip of a coin.

**Sec. 32 ILLEGAL BAT.** An illegal bat is one that does not meet the requirements of Rule 3 Section 1.

**Sec. 33 ILLEGALLY BATTED BALL.** An illegally batted ball occurs when:

- A batter's entire foot is completely out of the box on the ground when she hits a ball fair or foul.
- Any part of the batter's foot is touching home plate when she hits the ball.
- The batter hits the ball with an illegal bat.

- Sec. 34 ILLEGAL PLAYER.** An illegal player is one who is **not legally** a member of the league/team because the player does not meet the requirements as to age and/or residence.
- Sec. 35 INELIGIBLE PLAYER.** An ineligible player is one who is **legally** a member of the league/team, but who is ineligible to play in a particular game or games because of the limitations set forth in these Rules & Regulations, or as the result of a previous rule.
- Sec. 36 IN FLIGHT.** In flight describes any batted, thrown or pitched ball which has not yet touched the ground or some object other than a fielder.
- Sec. 37 IN JEOPARDY.** In jeopardy is a term indicating that the ball is in play and an offensive player may be put out.
- Sec. 38 INFIELD.** The infield is that portion of the field in fair territory which includes areas normally covered by infielders.
- Sec. 39 INFIELD FLY.** An infield fly is a fair fly ball (not including a line drive or an attempted bunt) which can be caught by an infielder with ordinary effort when first and second or first, second and third bases are occupied, before two are out. The pitcher, catcher and any outfielder who positions herself in the infield on the play shall be considered infielders for the purposes of this rule.

***NOTE:** When it seems apparent that a batted ball will be an infield fly, the umpire shall immediately declare "INFIELD FLY - THE BATTER IS OUT" for the benefit of the runners. If the ball is near the foul lines, the umpire 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 retouched and advance after the ball is touched, the same as on any fly ball. If the hit becomes a foul ball, it is treated the same as any foul ball.

If a declared infield fly is allowed to fall untouched to the ground and bounces foul before passing first or third base, it is a foul ball. If a declared infield fly falls untouched to the ground outside the foul lines and bounces fair before passing first or third base, it is an infield fly.

- Sec. 40 INITIAL PLAY ON A FAIR BATTED BALL.** When the fielder has a reasonable chance to catch or gain control of the ball that no other fielder (except the pitcher) has touched. The fielder is still considered to be making an initial play if she fails to gain control of the batted ball and is within a step and a reach (in any direction) of the ball.
- Sec. 41 INNING.** An inning is that portion of a game within which the teams alternate on offense and defense and in which there are three outs for each team. A new inning begins IMMEDIATELY after the final out of the previous inning.
- Sec. 42 INTERFERENCE.** Interference is the act of an offensive player or team member which impedes or confuses a defensive player attempting to execute a play.

- Sec. 43 LEGAL TOUCH.** A legal touch occurs when a runner or batter-baserunner who is not touching a base is touched by the ball while the ball is securely held in a fielder's hand. The ball is not considered as having been 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 runner to be touched with the hand or glove which holds the ball.
- Sec. 44 LINE DRIVE.** A line drive is a fly ball that is batted sharply and directly into the playing field.
- Sec. 45 OBSTRUCTION.** Obstruction is the act of:
- A defensive player or team member which hinders or prevents a batter from striking or hitting a pitched ball.
  - A fielder, while not in possession of the ball, or in the act of fielding a batted ball, which impedes the progress of a baserunner who is legally running bases.
- Sec. 46 OFFENSIVE TEAM.** The offensive team is the team at bat.
- Sec. 47 OUTFIELD.** The outfield is that portion of the field which is outside the diamond formed by the baselines, or the area not normally covered by an infielder and within the foul lines beyond first and third bases and boundaries of the grounds.
- Sec. 48 OVERSLIDE.** An over slide is the act of an offensive player when, as a baserunner, she over slides a base she is attempting to reach. It is usually caused when her momentum causes her to lose contact with the base which then causes her to be in jeopardy. The batter-baserunner may over slide first base without being in jeopardy.
- Sec. 49 OVERTHROW.** An overthrow is a play in which a ball is thrown from one fielder to another to retire a runner and which goes into foul territory or goes beyond the boundary lines of the playing field (dead ball territory). Should the overthrow be ruled a blocked ball (Rule 1, Section 10) the ball is dead.
- Sec. 50 PASSED BALL.** (FP ONLY) A passed ball is a legally delivered ball that should have been held or controlled by the catcher with ordinary effort.
- PIVOT FOOT.** (FP ONLY) the pivot foot may remain in contact with or may push off and drag away from the pitching plate prior to the front foot touching the ground,
- (SP ONLY) The pivot foot is that foot which the pitcher must keep in constant contact with the pitcher's plate until the ball is released.
- Sec. 51 PLAY BALL.** "Play ball" is the term used by the plate umpire to indicate that the play shall begin or be resumed when the pitcher has the ball in her possession and is within eight feet (2.44 m) of the pitcher's plate. All defensive players, except the catcher who must be in her box, must be anywhere in fair ground to put the ball in play.
- NOTE:** (FP ONLY) See Rule 7, Section 7 for penalty.
- Sec. 52 QUICK PITCH.** A quick return pitch is one made by the pitcher with the obvious attempt to catch the batter off balance. This would be before the batter takes her

desired position in the batter's box or while she is still off balance as a result of the previous pitch.

**Sec. 53 RUNNER** The term "runner" means "batter-runner or baserunner."

**Sec. 54 SACRIFICE FLY.** A sacrifice fly is scored when, the batter scores a runner with a fly ball which is caught.

**Sec. 55 SLIDE: LEGAL, ILLEGAL.**

**LEGAL SLIDE:** May be either feet first or headfirst. If a runner slides foot first, at least one leg and buttock shall be on the ground. If a runner slides, the runner shall be within reach of the base with either hand or a foot when the slide is completed.

**ILLEGAL SLIDE:** A slide is illegal if:

- a. The runner uses a rolling pin or cross-body slide into the fielder.
- b. The runner's raised leg is higher than the fielder's knee when the fielder is in a standing position.
- c. The runner goes beyond the base and makes contact with or alters the play of the fielder.
- d. The runner slashes or kicks the fielder with either leg.
- e. The runner tries to injure the fielder.

**Sec. 56 STARTING PITCHER.** The player listed as a pitcher on the lineup card or official scorebook.

**Sec. 57 STEALING. (FP ONLY)** Stealing is the act of a baserunner attempting to advance during a pitch to the batter.

**Sec. 58 STRIKE ZONE. (FP ONLY)** The strike zone is that space over any part of home plate between the batter's arm pits and the top of her knees when the batter assumes a natural batting stance.

(SP ONLY) The strike zone is that space over any part of home plate between the batter's highest shoulder and her knees when the batter assumes a natural batting stance.

**Sec. 59 TIME.** "Time" is the term used by the umpire to order the suspension of play.

**Sec. 60 TRIPLE PLAY.** A triple play is a continuous action play by the defense in which three offensive players are put out.

**Sec. 61 TURN AT BAT.** A turn at bat begins when a player first enters the batter's box and continues until she is put out or becomes a baserunner.

**Sec. 62 WILD PITCH. (FP ONLY)** A wild pitch is a legally delivered ball so high, so low, or so wide of the plate that the catcher cannot, or does not, stop and control it with ordinary effort.

## RULE 2. THE PLAYING FIELD

- Sec. 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. (Refer to RECOMMENDED FENCE DISTANCE Chart)

### Fast Pitch and Slow Pitch

### Recommended Fence Distances

	Minimum	Maximum
Girls 4-under & 6-under	150 ft. (45.72 m)	175 ft. (53.34 m)
Girls 8-under	150 ft. (45.72 m)	175 ft. (53.34 m)
Girls 10-under	150 ft. (45.72 m)	175 ft. (53.34 m)
Girls 12-under	175 ft. (53.34 m)	200 ft. (60.96 m)
Girls 14-under	175 ft. (53.34 m)	200 ft. (60.96 m)
Girls 16-under	175 ft. (53.34 m)	200 ft. (60.96 m)
Girls 18-under	175 ft. (53.34 m)	200 ft. (60.96 m)
Girls 23-under	175 ft. (53.34 m)	200 ft. (60.96 m)

- Sec. 2 GROUND 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.** Any obstruction on fair ground less than the prescribed fence distances from home plate (as outlined in Section 1 of this rule) should be clearly marked for the umpire's information.

- Sec. 3 THE OFFICIAL DIAMOND SHALL HAVE BASE LINES AS FOLLOWS:**

Fast Pitch	Distances	Slow Pitch	Distances
Girls 6-under	55 ft. (16.76 m)	Girls 4-under & 6-under	55ft. (16.76 m)
Girls 8-under	55 ft. (16.76 m)	Girls 8-under	55ft. (16.76 m)
Girls 10-under	60ft. (18.29 m)	Girls 10-under	60ft. (18.29 m)
Girls 12-under	60ft. (18.29 m)	Girls 12-under	65ft. (19.81 m)
Girls 14-under	60ft. (18.29 m)	Girls 14-under	65ft. (19.81 m)
Girls 16-under	60ft. (18.29 m)	Girls 16-under	65ft. (19.81 m)
Girls 18-under	60ft. (18.29 m)	Girls 18-under	65ft. (19.81 m)
Girls 23-under	60ft. (18.29 m)	Girls 23-under	65ft. (19.81 m)

### THE OFFICIAL DIAMOND SHALL HAVE PITCHING DISTANCES AS FOLLOWS:

Fast Pitch	Distances	Slow Pitch	Distances
Girls 6-under	40ft. (12.19 m)	Girls 4-under & 6-under	40ft. (12.19 m)
Girls 8-under	40ft. (12.19 m)	Girls 8-under	40ft. (12.19 m)
Girls 8-U player pitch	30ft (9.14m)		
Girls 10-under	35ft. (10.67 m)	Girls 10-under	40ft. (12.19 m)
Girls 12-under	40ft. (12.19 m)	Girls 12-under	46ft. (14.02 m)
Girls 14-under	43ft. (13.11 m)	Girls 14-under	50ft. (15.24 m)
Girls 16-under	43ft. (13.11 m)	Girls 16-under	50ft. (15.24 m)
Girls 18-under	43ft. (13.11 m)	Girls 18-under	50ft. (15.24 m)
Girls 23-under	43ft. (13.11 m)	Girls 23-under	50ft. (15.24 m)

- a. When the pitching rubber or base distance is found to be incorrect the game shall be stopped, and the pitching rubber and/or bases set to the required distances.

**Sec. 4 FOR THE LAYOUT OF THE DIAMOND, REFER TO DRAWING SHOWING OFFICIAL DIMENSIONS OF SOFTBALL DIAMOND. THIS SECTION IS AN EXAMPLE FOR LAYING OUT A DIAMOND WITH 60 FOOT BASES AND A 46 FOOT PITCHING DISTANCE.** To determine the position of home plate, draw a line in the direction it is desired to lay the diamond. Drive a stake at the corner of home plate nearest the catcher. Fasten a cord to this stake and tie knots or otherwise mark the cord at 46 feet (14.02 m), 60 feet (18.29m), 84 feet 10 1/4 inches (25.86m) and at 120 feet (36.58m). Place the cord (without stretching) along the direction line and place a stake at the 46-foot (14.02m) marker—this will be the front line at the middle of the pitcher’s plate. Along the same line, drive a stake at the 84 foot 10 1/4-inch (25.68m) marker. This will be the center of second base. For the 65-foot base distance, this line will be 91 feet 11 inches (28.07m).

Place the 120-foot (36.58m) marker at the center of second base and, taking hold of the cord at the 60-foot (18.29m) marker, walk to the right of the direction line until the cord is taut and drive a stake at the 60 foot (18.29m) marker. This will be the outside corner of first base and the cord will now form the lines to first and second bases. Again, holding the cord at the 60-foot (18.29m) marker, walk across the field and in like manner, mark the outside corner of third base. Home plate, first and third bases are wholly inside the diamond.

To check the diamond, place the home plate end of the cord at the first base stake and the 120-foot (36.58m) marker at third base. The 60-foot (18.29m) marker should now check at home plate and second base.

Check all distances with a steel tape whenever possible

- a. **THE THREE FOOT (0.91m) LINE** is drawn parallel to and three feet (0.91m) from the baseline starting at a point halfway between home plate and first base.
- b. **THE BATTER’S ON-DECK CIRCLE** is a five-foot (1.52m) circle 2 1/2-foot (0.76m) radius placed adjacent to the end of player’s bench or dugout area closest to home plate. The on-deck batter shall take a position within the lines of the on-deck circle nearest her bench, or an area determined by the umpire.
- c. **THE BATTER’S BOX**, one on each side of home plate, shall measure three feet (0.91 m) by seven feet (2.13m). The inside lines of the batter’s box shall be six inches (15.24cm) from home plate. The front line of the box shall be four feet (1.22m) in front of a line drawn through the center of home plate. The lines are considered as being within the batter’s box.
- d. **THE CATCHER’S BOX** shall be 10 feet (3.05m) in length from the rear outside corners of the batter’s boxes and shall be eight feet five inches (2.57m) wide.
- e. **THE COACH’S BOX IS BEHIND A LINE 15 feet (4.57m) LONG DRAWN OUTSIDE THE DIAMOND.** The line is parallel to and eight feet (2.44m) from the first and third baselines, extended from the bases toward home plate.
- f. **THE PITCHER’S PLATE** shall be permanently attached to the ground at distances indicated in Rule 2, Sec. 3. (FP ONLY) There shall be a 16-foot (4.88m) circle drawn from the pitcher’s plate, eight feet (2.44m) in radius. The lines drawn around the pitcher’s plate are considered inside the circle.

### RULE 3. EQUIPMENT

**Sec. 1 THE OFFICIAL BAT.** The bat shall be a smooth cylinder with a knob. Only bats that pass through a 2-1/4-inch (5.7150 cm) diameter bat ring are legal. Each bat shall be no more than 2-1/4 inches (5.7150 cm) in diameter at its thickest part, no more than 34 inches (86.360 cm) in length, and not exceed 38 ounces (1077.30 g) in weight. There shall be no devices, attachments, or wrappings that cause the handle to become flush with the knob. All bats shall meet the USA/ASA bat performance standard. Laser etching, other than on the barrel is permissible.

- a. All bats must bear the USA/ASA approved certification mark and must not be listed on an USA/ASA Banned Bat list unless it bears the USA/ASA approved recertification mark; or
- b. Must be included on a list of approved bat models published by USA/ASA; or
- c. Must be in the sole opinion and discretion of the umpire, have been manufactured prior to 2000 and, if tested, would comply with the USA/ASA bat performance standards then in effect.
- d. Safety grip or cork, tape (no smooth plastic tape) or composition material may not exceed two layers of tape and must be a continuous spiral. Any resin or pine tar is permissible on this part of the bat. Tape must be at least 10 inches long and not more than 15 inches.
- e. The bat's knob may be solid or hollowed out to house an embedded metric sensor. If a sensor is used, it shall
  - (1) Not affect performance
  - (2) Be secured by a locking mechanism and a back-up mechanism to keep it in place.
  - (3) Have a distinguishing "offline" mode to prevent data from being accessed during a game.

**Sec. 2 WARM-UP BATS.** No more than two official softball bats may be used by the on-deck batter in the on-deck circle. The WARM-UP BAT should meet the following requirements to be approved: a) stamped with one-fourth inch letters WB on either end of the bat or marked in 1" letters the words "Warm-Up Bat Only" on the barrel end of the bat; b) a minimum weight of 48 ounces ( 1360.0.g); c) a minimum barrel diameter of 2-1/2 inches (6.0 cm); d) have a safety grip of at least 10 inches (25.0 cm) and no more than 15 inches (40.0 cm) extended from the knob; and/or e) be of one-piece construction or a one-piece permanently assembled bat approved by the Equipment Standards Committee.

**NOTE:** Refer to Rule 8, Sec. 13c

**Sec. 3 THE OFFICIAL SOFTBALL.**

- a. Shall be a regular, smooth-seamed, concealed stitched or raised seamed ball.
- b. Shall have a center core made of either No. 1 quality, long fiber kapok, a mixture of cork and rubber, a polyurethane mixture or other materials approved by PONY.
- c. May be hand or machine wound, with a fine quality twisted yarn, and covered with latex or rubber cement.
- d. Shall have a cover cemented to the ball by application of cement to the underside of the cover, and sewn with waxed thread of cotton or linen, or shall

- have a molded cover bonded to the core with an authentic facsimile of stitching as approved by PONY.
- e. Shall have a cover of chrome tanned top grain horsehide or cowhide; synthetic material; or made of other materials approved by PONY.
  - f. The 12-inch (30.0 cm) ball shall be between 11-7/8 inches (30.0 cm) and 12-1/8 inches (31.0 cm) in circumference and shall weigh between 6-1/4 ounces (180.0 g) and 7 ounces (200.0 g). The smooth-seam style shall not have less than 88 stitches in each cover, sewn by the two-needle method, or with an authentic facsimile of stitching as approved by PONY.
  - g. The 11-inch (27.0 cm) ball shall be between 10-7/8 inches (27.0 cm) and 11-1/8 inches (28.0 cm) in circumference and shall weight between 5-7/8 ounces (165.0 g) and 6-1/8 ounces (175 g). The smooth-seam style shall not have less than 88 stitches in each cover, sewn by the two-needle method, or with an authentic facsimile of stitching as approved by PONY.
  - h. Both leather and synthetic covered softballs bearing the emblem of PONY Girls Softball are manufactured to specifications by several companies and are the softballs recommended for league play and required in tournament play. The white or optic yellow softball may be used.
  - i. The white-stitched twelve-inch ball and optic yellow with a maximum ball compression of 375 lbs. and a maximum COR of .47 shall be used in all PONY Fast Pitch for 12-Under, 14-Under, 16-Under and 18-Under.
  - j. The white-stitched eleven-inch ball and optic yellow with a maximum ball compression of 375 lbs. and a maximum COR of .47 shall be used in all PONY Fast Pitch for 8-Under and 10-Under, and Slow Pitch program.
  - k. The dynamic stiffness of softballs do not exceed 7,500 lbs./inch when tested under current proposed ASTM tests methods.

**Sec. 4 THE HOME PLATE SHALL BE MADE OF RUBBER OR OTHER SUITABLE MATERIALS.** It shall be a five-sided figure, 17 inches (43.18cm) wide across the edge facing the pitcher. The sides shall be parallel to the inside lines of the batter's box and shall be eight and one-half inches (21.59cm) long. The sides of the point facing the catcher shall be 12 inches (30.48cm) long.

**Sec. 5 THE PITCHER'S PLATE** shall be of wood or rubber, 24 inches (60.96 cm) long and six inches (15.24 cm) wide. The top of the plate shall be level with the ground. The front line of the plate shall be the prescribed pitching distances from the outside corner of home plate. (Refer to PITCHING DISTANCES Chart in Rule 2, Section 3.)

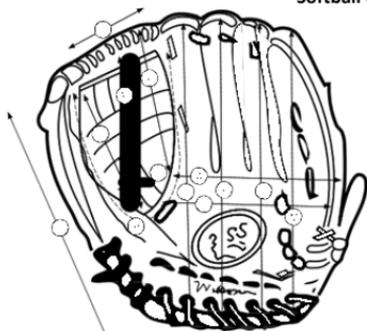
**Sec. 6 THE BASES. OTHER THAN HOME PLATE, SHALL BE 15 INCHES (38.10cm) SQUARE, MADE OF CANVAS OR OTHER SUITABLE MATERIALS, AND NOT MORE THAN FIVE INCHES (12.70cm) IN THICKNESS.** The bases should be securely fastened in position.

- a. The double base shall be used at first base. This base is 15 by 30 inches, made of canvas or other suitable material half the base is white (secured in fair territory) and half is orange (secured in foul territory). It should not be more than five inches (12.70cm) in thickness.

**NOTE:** *The following rules apply to the double base:*

- (1) A batted ball hitting or bounding over the white portion is declared fair, and a batted ball hitting or bounding over the orange portion is declared foul.
- (2) Whenever a play is being made on the batter-runner, the defense must use the white portion and the batter-runner the orange portion. The batter-runner is out when there is a play being made at first base and the batter-runner touches only the white portion, providing the defense appeals prior to the batter-runner returning to first base. Once the batter-runner returns to the white or orange portion no appeal can be made.
- (3) On any force attempt from the foul side of first base, or an errant throw pulling the defense into foul ground, the defense and the batter-runner can use either the white or orange portion.
- (4) This includes overthrows.
- (5) On extra base hits or balls hit to the outfield when there is no play being made at the double base, the batter-runner may touch the white or orange portion. Should the batter-runner return, the runner may return to the white or orange portion.
- (6) When tagging up on fly ball, the white or orange portion may be used.
- (7) (FP ONLY) on an attempted pick-off play, the runner may return to the white or orange portion.

#### Softball Glove Specifications



(A) Palm width	8 in.
(B) Palm width	8 1/2 in.
(C) Top opening of web	5 in.
(D) Bottom opening of web	4 1/2 in.
(E) Web top to bottom	7 1/4 in.
(F) First finger crotch seam	7 1/2 in.
(G) Thumb crotch seam	7 1/2 in.
(H) Crotch seam	17 1/4 in.
(I) Thumb top to bottom edge	9 1/4 in.
(J) First finger top to bottom edge	14 in.
(K) Second finger top to bottom edge	13 1/4 in.
(L) Third finger top to bottom edge	12 1/4 in.
(M) Fourth finger to bottom edge	11 in.

**Sec. 7 A GLOVE OR MITT MAY BE WORN BY ANY PLAYER.** No top lacing, webbing or other device between the thumb and body of the glove or mitt shall be more than five inches (12.70cm) in length. Gloves with white, grey circles or optic yellow on the outside, giving the appearance of a ball, are illegal for all players. Pitcher's glove/or sleeve cannot match color of balls. Multicolored gloves are acceptable for all other players.

**Sec. 8 SHOES MUST BE WORN BY ALL PLAYERS. A SHOE SHALL BE CONSIDERED OFFICIAL IF IT IS MADE WITH EITHER CANVAS OR LEATHER UPPERS OR SIMILAR MATERIALS.** Metal cleat shoes, plastic or hard polyurethane spikes similar to metal cleat shoes are allowed in all play in Pony (14U) and above. Alteration of metal cleats, such as

sharpening, which might make them dangerous to participants, is specifically prohibited. Rubber soled or rubber cleat shoes are permitted in all levels of play.

**PENALTY:** *Use of metal spikes in Shetland (6U) – Bronco (12U) – ejection with no warning.*

**Sec. 9 HELMETS, MASKS, BODY PROTECTORS, AND SHIN GUARDS.**

- a. Catchers must wear a protective helmet and a protective mask with throat protector that is part of or attached to the mask, the catcher's helmet and mask combination shall meet the NOCSAE standard and have full ear protection (dual ear flaps).

**NOTE:** *The catcher's head, face, and throat protection may be a one-piece design or a multi-piece design.*

- b. Body protectors are mandatory for catchers in Fast Pitch, and Slow Pitch.
- c. Fast Pitch catchers must wear shin guards. It is recommended that Slow Pitch catchers wear shin guards.

**Sec. 10 NO EQUIPMENT SHALL BE LEFT LYING ON THE FIELD, EITHER IN FAIR OR FOUL TERRITORY.** (See Rule 9, Section 5g-Play 4) All non-player equipment, including but not limited to chairs, stools buckets, etc. shall be entirely in dead ball territory.

**Sec. 11 UNIFORM.** All players on a team should wear uniforms alike in color, trim and style. Uniforms required in tournament play include a shirt, pants, or shorts and shall be worn by all players. No tank tops with less than 1 1/2-inch-wide shoulder strap. Players shall wear/utilize uniforms/equipment properly as designed by the manufacturer.

The manager and coaches when not in softball uniform are requested to dress appropriately recognizing that the attention should be on the players and not the adults. If shorts are worn, they must be "walking shorts" or shorts designed for softball competition. Managers and coaches must wear closed toe shoes when on the field. Open toe shoes such as sandals and flip flops are not permitted.

All questions regarding uniforms must be addressed immediately upon player(s) entering game. Otherwise, the uniform(s) will be acceptable for that game.

A pitcher shall not wear any item on the pitching hand, wrist, arm or thigh, which may be distracting to the batter.

**NOTE:** *In tournament play, players may wear their individual league uniform.*

- a. **HEADWEAR.** Ball caps, visors, and headbands are optional for players. If worn, they can be mixed, but must be worn properly. If one type or more than one type is worn, they all must be same in color. Handkerchiefs do not qualify as headbands and cannot be worn, either around the head or around the neck.

**NOTE:** *Plastic visors are not allowed as headwear.*

- b. PANTS. Players may wear long or short pants or a combination of and must be same in color.
- c. NUMBERS. An Arabic number of contrasting color, at least six inches (15. 24 cm) high, must be worn on the back of all uniform shirts. (Number 3 and 03 are examples of legal numbers.) Players without numbers will not be permitted to play. If duplicate numbers exist, one will not be permitted to play in the game.
- d. HELMETS. All fast and slow pitch offensive players must wear batting helmets with double ear flaps, and protective facemask/guard that have been approved by the National Operating Committee on Standard for Athletic Equipment (NOCSAE). *PENALTY:* Failure to wear the batting helmet when ordered to do so by the umpire shall cause said player to be declared out immediately. The ball remains alive. Batting helmets that are broken, cracked, dented, or that have been illegally altered are prohibited from use.

**NOTE:** *Calling a runner out for removing a helmet does not remove force play situations. Umpires should use discretion as to the intent of the rule concerning player safety.*

- e. CASTS. Plaster or other hard substance in their final form may not be worn during the game. Any exposed metal may be considered legal if covered by soft material and taped.
- f. JEWELRY. All exposed jewelry such as stud-earrings, piercings, non-metal bracelets, necklaces, hair beads and metal hair bands are legal. This includes medical alert bracelets and necklaces. Hoop earrings and metal bracelets are not allowed.

Other than asking a player to remove an illegal piece of jewelry there will be no penalty unless the player refuses to do so then that player will be restricted to the dugout for the remainder of the game.

**Sec. 12 COMMUNICATION DEVICES.** Players may not use cell phones, pagers, or any other types of communications devices wearable or handheld cannot be used on the field of play with the exception of medical devices. The field of play includes bullpens, dugouts coaches' boxes and other such areas where the coaches, players and umpires have access.

## RULE 4. PLAYERS & SUBSTITUTES

### Sec. 1 TEAM SHALL CONSIST OF:

- a. Fast Pitch - 9 players
  - (1) If a team has only eight players present, a game may begin, but an automatic out will be recorded each and every time the batting rotation reaches the 9<sup>th</sup> position in the batting order.
  - (2) If for any reason other than ejection, after play has begun, a team does not have an eligible substitute for a player who is withdrawn from the line-up, the team may continue to play with eight players, but an automatic out shall be recorded each time the player who was withdrawn and not replaced in the line-up would have appeared in the batting rotation.  
For teams using Extra Player (EP) see Rule 4 Sec. 6e for playing shorthanded
- b. Slow Pitch – 10 players
  - (1) If a team has only eight players present, a game may begin, but an automatic out will be recorded each and every time the batting rotation reaches the 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> position in the batting order.
  - (2) If for any reason, other than ejection, after play has begun, a team does not have an eligible substitute for a player who is withdrawn from the line-up, the team may continue to play with eight players, but an automatic out shall be recorded each time the player or players who was withdrawn and not replaced in the line-up would have appeared in the batting rotation.

NOTE: Eligible Players not available at game time may be substituted for and re-entered under the Re-Entry Rule.

- c. Rosters shall include only female players.
- d. Bat boys (male or female), mascots (human or animal) shall not be permitted on the field or bench.

### Sec. 2 PLAYERS- POSITIONS; SHALL BE DESIGNATED AS FOLLOWS:

- a. Fast Pitch: Pitcher, catcher, first baseman, second baseman, third baseman, shortstop, left fielder, center fielder, and right fielder.
- b. Slow Pitch: Same as Fast Pitch in paragraph “a” above, plus a “short fielder.”

*NOTE: Players of the team in the field may be stationed anywhere in 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. When a pitch is delivered without all defensive players in fair territory, an illegal pitch shall be declared.*

### Sec. 3 SUBSTITUTING/RE-ENTRY.

**A player is officially in the game when reported to the plate umpire.**

- a. A player who is not listed as an eligible substitute on the line-up card shall not be prohibited from playing.
- b. A substitute may replace a player, including the pitcher, when the ball is dead or time has been called. The manager, coach or player shall report, only at the time of the change, to the plate umpire by stating name and shirt number of the player being replaced followed by the name and shirt number of:
  - (1) the player entering the game for the first time

- (2) the player re-entering.
- (3) the player entering the game as a courtesy runner.

**NOTE:** Any pitcher is required to pitch until the first batter facing her has completed her turn at bat or the side has been retired.

**NOTE:** A pitcher may be removed from the pitching position and move to a different defensive position or become an EP, once per inning provided doing so does not violate any other rules.

- c. Any player may be withdrawn from the game and re-entered once, provided such player occupies the same batting position whenever in the line-up. A violation results in an illegal substitution. A substitute who is withdrawn may re-enter.
- d. A substitute shall not enter the contest unreported.
- e. In any instance in which a team does not have an eligible substitute for a player who becomes ill or is injured, the player last removed from the line-up by the manager, coach or player who is otherwise eligible to play, shall be used as a substitute.

**Note:** Player removed from the game cannot return.

- f. Blood Rule. (Refer to page ii) A player, coach, or umpire who is bleeding or who has blood on their uniform shall be prohibited from participating further in the game until appropriate treatment can be administered. If medical care or treatment is administered in a reasonable length of time, the individual will not have to leave the game. The length of the time that is reasonable is left to the umpire's judgment.
  - (1) Stop the game and immediately call a coach, trainer, or other authorized person to the injured player and allow treatment.
  - (2) Apply the rules of the game regarding substitution, and re-entry if necessary.

**Sec. 4 SUBSTITUTES/UNREPORTED SUBSTITUTES/INELIGIBLE PLAYERS.** A substitute may take the place of a player whose name is in her team's batting order. The following regulations govern the substitution of players:

- a. All substitutions must be reported to the plate umpire.
- b. The plate umpire is responsible for reporting line-up changes to the opposing teams.
- c. Any player may be removed from the game during any dead ball.

#### UNREPORTED SUBSTITUTES

When an unreported substitute, who is otherwise eligible to enter the game, is brought to the attention of the plate umpire, she shall be entered officially into the game. Team warning for first violation. Second violation coach is removed from the game.

**INELIGIBLE OFFENSIVE PLAYER:** If an ineligible offensive player is discovered in the game, the following rules apply:

- a. If the ineligible player is discovered while at bat:
  - (1) An eligible player assumes the count.
  - (2) Any advance of base-runners is legal.
- b. If the ineligible player is discovered after completing her turn at bat and prior to the next pitch:
  - (1) The ineligible player is called out.
  - (2) Any recorded outs stand.
  - (3) Any advance by base-runners is nullified.
- c. If the ineligible player is discovered after completing her turn at bat and after a pitch is thrown to the next batter:
  - (1) All play stands.
  - (2) If the ineligible player is on base, an eligible player must take her position or an out will be declared.

*NOTE: In all cases, the ineligible player and manager are removed from the game.*

**INELIGIBLE DEFENSIVE PLAYER:** If an ineligible defensive player is discovered in the game, the following rules apply:

- a. If the ineligible player handles a batted ball:
  - (1) If discovered prior to the next pitch, the offense can either take the result of the play or all play is nullified, and the batter assumes the same count as prior to the last pitch.
  - (2) If discovered after a pitch is thrown to the next batter, all play stands.
- b. If the ineligible player handles a non-batted ball:
  - (1) If discovered prior to the next pitch, the offense can either take the result of the play or all play is nullified, and the batter assumes the same count as prior to the last pitch.
- c. If the ineligible player does not handle the ball:
  - (1) All play stands.

*NOTE: In all cases, the ineligible player and manager are removed from the game.*

**Sec. 5 Teams cannot use the Designated Player/Flex Player (DP/Flex) and Extra Player (EP) in the same game.** This must be known prior to the Start of the game and clearly indicated on the line-up card.

**Designated Player/Flex Player (DP/Flex)**

- a. A designated player (DP) may be used for any player provided it is made known prior to the start of the game and the player's name is indicated on the lineup as one of the nine hitters in the batting order.
- b. The name of the player for whom the DP is batting (Flex Player) will be placed in the tenth position in the lineup.
- c. The starting player listed as the DP must remain in the same position in the batting order for the entire game. The DP and DP's substitute, or the substitute's replacement, may never play offense at the same time.

- d. The DP may be substituted for at any time, either by a pinch-hitter, pinch-runner, or the Flex Player. If the starting DP is replaced on offense by the Flex Player, the DP will leave the game. If replaced by a substitute, the DP position remains in the lineup. A starting DP may re-enter one time, as long as the DP returns to the original position in the batting order.
  - (1) If replaced by the Flex Player, this reduces the number of players from ten to nine. If the DP does not re-enter, the game may legally end with nine players.
  - (2) If the DP re-enters and the Flex Player was batting in the DP's spot, the Flex Player can return to the number ten position and play defense only or leave the game.
- e. The DP may play defense at any position. Should the DP play defense for a player other than the one for whom the DP is batting (Flex Player), that player will continue to bat but not play defense and is not considered to have left the game. The DP may play defense for the Flex Player and the Flex Player is considered to have left the game, reducing the number of players from ten to nine. The Flex Player may re-enter the game under the re-entry rule.
- f. The person being batted for (Flex Player) may be substituted for at any time, either by a legal substitute for the DP for whom the Flex Player is playing defense. The Flex Player may re-enter the game under the re-entry rule either in the number ten position or in the DP's position in the batting order.
  - (1) If returning to the number ten position, the Flex Player will play defense only; there will be only nine players in the batting order.
  - (2) If the Flex Player returns to the DP's position, the Flex Player will play offense and defense; there will be only nine players in the batting order.
- g. Placing the Flex Player into one of the first nine positions for someone other than the original DP or the original DP's substitute is considered an ineligible player. The ineligible player shall be removed from the game. The Flex Player replacing the DP is not considered a substitution for the Flex Player. The DP, who has left the game, may re-enter the game under the re-entry rule.

**Extra Player (Fast Pitch & Slow Pitch)**

- a. Any team may use one (1) or (2) Extra Players (EP) per game and it must be made known prior to the start of the game and properly indicated in the lineup. The use of an EP without listing on the lineup is an illegal player.
- b. The EP must remain in the same position in the batting order for the entire game.
- c. The EP may play defense at any time without her status being affected. She may go in and out of the defensive lineup as often as needed as long as her position in the official batting order is not altered.
- d. The EP may be substituted for at any time with the substitute becoming the new EP. The substitute must be a player who has not been in the game.
- e. Penalty for EP not remaining in game: If a team begins play with 1 or 2 EP(s) listed on the lineup they can play shorthanded down to 8 players, taking an out for each player when their time at bat comes up. At no time can a team play with less than 8 players.

## **RULE 5. THE GAME**

**Sec. 1 THE CHOICE OF THE FIRST OR LAST BAT IN THE INNING SHALL BE DECIDED BY A TOSS OF A COIN, UNLESS OTHERWISE STATED IN THE RULES OF THE ORGANIZATION UNDER WHICH THE SCHEDULE OF GAMES IS BEING PLAYED.**

**Sec. 2 THE FITNESS OF THE GROUND FOR A GAME SHALL BE DECIDED SOLELY BY THE PLATE UMPIRE.**

### **LIGHTNING RULE**

- a. Guidelines for Lightning Safety - once a game is stopped for lightning, it cannot be resumed until 30 minutes after last cloud to ground lightning strike.
- b. Before game is resumed, pitchers will be given ten (10) warm up pitches.

**Sec. 3 A REGULATION GAME SHALL CONSIST OF SEVEN INNINGS, SIX INNINGS IN SHETLAND, PINTO AND MUSTANG LEAGUES.**

- a. A full seven (six in Foal (4U), Shetland (6U), Pinto (8U) and Mustang (10U) innings need not be played if the team second at bat scores more runs in six (five in Foal (4U), Shetland (6U), Pinto (8U) and Mustang (10U) innings or before the third out in the last of the seventh (sixth in Foal (4U), Shetland (6U), Pinto (8U) and Mustang (10U) inning.
- b. A game that is tied at the end of the seven (six in Foal (4U), Shetland (6U), Pinto (8U) and Mustang (10U) innings shall be continued by playing additional innings; or until one side has scored more runs than the other at the end of a complete inning; or until the team second at bat has scored more runs in their half of the inning before the third out is made.
- c. A game called by the umpire shall be regulation if five or more (four or more in Foal (4U), Shetland (6U), Pinto (8U) and Mustang (10U) complete innings have been played or if the team second at bat has scored more runs in four or more innings than the other team has scored in five or more (four or more in Foal (4U), Shetland (6U), Pinto (8U) and Mustang (10U) innings. The umpire is empowered to call a game at any time because of darkness, rain, fire, panic or other causes which places the patrons or players in peril. For games called prior to five (four in Foal (4U), Shetland (6U), Pinto (8U) and Mustang (10U) complete innings, see Section 3g. (See Section 4 for reference to Run Rules.)

A regulation tie game shall be declared if the score is equal when the game is called at the end of five (four in Foal (4U), Shetland (6U), Pinto (8U) and Mustang (10U)) or more complete innings or if the team second at bat has equaled the score of the first team at bat in the incomplete inning.

- d. These provisions do not apply to any acts on the part of players or spectators which might call for forfeiture of the game.
- e. A forfeited game shall be decided by the umpire in favor of the 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 for which it is scheduled or assigned at the time scheduled or within a time set for forfeitures by the organization in which the team is playing.

- (2) If after the game has begun, one side refuses to continue to play, unless the game has been suspended or terminated by the umpire.
  - (3) If, after play has been suspended by the umpire, one side fails to resume playing within two minutes after the umpire has called "play ball."
  - (4) If a team employs tactics noticeably designed to delay or to hasten the game.
  - (5) If, after warning by the umpire, any one of the rules of the game is willfully violated.
  - (6) If the order for the removal of a player to the dugout is not obeyed within one minute.
  - (7) If, because of the removal of the players from the game by the umpire or for any cause, there are less than eight (Fast Pitch) or eight (Slow Pitch), on either team.
  - (8) The umpire may forfeit the game if attacked physically by any team member or spectator.
- f. Games that are not considered regulation or regulation tie games, shall be resumed at the exact point where they were stopped.

**Sec. 4 THE WINNER OF THE GAME SHALL BE THE TEAM THAT SCORES THE MOST RUNS IN A REGULATION GAME.**

- a. The score of a called regulation game shall be the score at the end of the last complete inning, unless the team, second at bat has scored more runs than the first team at bat in the incomplete inning. In this case, the score shall be that of the incomplete inning.
- b. The score of a regulation tie game shall be the tie score when the game was terminated.
- c. The score of a forfeited game shall be 7-0 in favor of the team not at fault.

**Sec. 2 ONE RUN SHALL BE SCORED EACH TIME A BASERUNNER LEGALLY TOUCHES FIRST, SECOND, THIRD BASES AND HOME PLATE BEFORE THE THIRD OUT OF THE INNING.**

**Sec. 3 A RUN SHALL NOT BE SCORED IF THE THIRD OUT OF THE INNING IS A RESULT OF:**

- a. The batter-runner being put out before legally touching first base.
- b. A baserunner being forced out due to the batter becoming a batter-runner.
- c. A runner being put out by a tag or live ball appeal prior to the preceding runner touching home plate.
- d. A preceding runner is declared out on an appeal play.

**Sec. 4 NO SUCCEEDING RUNNER SHALL SCORE A RUN WHEN A PRECEDING RUNNER HAS BEEN DECLARED THE THIRD OUT OF AN INNING.**

**Sec. 5 A BASERUNNER SHALL NOT SCORE A RUN AHEAD OF THE BASERUNNER PRECEDING HER IN THE BATTING ORDER, IF THE PRECEDING RUNNER HAS NOT BEEN PUT OUT.**

**Sec. 6 THERE SHALL BE ONLY ONE CHARGED CONFERENCE BETWEEN THE MANAGER, COACH OR PLAYER AND THE BATTER OR BASERUNNER IN AN INNING.** Umpires shall not PERMIT any such conferences in excess of one in an inning.

**PENALTY:** *Ejection of manager or coach who insists on another charged conference.*

**Sec. 7 RUN RULE.**

- a. If a team is leading its opponent by at least 12 runs after three innings, or 10 runs after four innings, or 8 runs after five or more equal innings have been played or after four- and one-half innings.

**Sec. 8 INTERNATIONAL TIE BREAKER (ITB).** Progressive – in case of a tie game at the completion of the 6<sup>th</sup> inning Foal (4u), Shetland (6U), Pinto (8U) and Mustang (10U) or 7<sup>th</sup> inning (and all older age groups), or at the completion of time limit, ITB shall be declared, and the following procedures put in place: 1<sup>st</sup> inning of ITB: The last player at bat from the previous inning goes to 2<sup>nd</sup> base. The batter who is due to start the inning comes up to bat with no count, no outs. Play progresses as normal. If still tied at the completion of the 1<sup>st</sup> inning of ITB, and every tied inning, thereafter, move on to a new inning as follows: The last player at bat from the previous inning goes to 2<sup>nd</sup> base, the player who precedes that player in the lineup goes to 3<sup>rd</sup> base. The batter who is due to start the inning comes up to bat with no count. For scoring, see Rule 13 Sec. 10.

**NOTE:** *If a team is in the tiebreaker and the absent player is the one who should begin the half inning at second base, do not declare an out. Instead, place on second base the player whose name precedes the absent player's name in the lineup.*

## RULE 6.

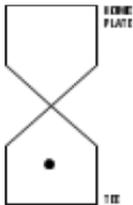
### A. FOAL (4U) & SHETLAND (6U) RULES

- (1) The playing field specifications: pitching distance is 40 feet; bases are 55 feet; a line 10 feet in front of first and third base will be drawn perpendicular to the foul line; a 10-foot arc will be drawn from the point of home plate between the foul lines. Except for the pitcher and catcher, no player can be closer than 45 feet from home plate until the ball is hit. A ball must travel on or beyond the arc to be a fair ball.
- (2) Each batter will hit off a tee located tip to tip to home plate. The umpire will be responsible for the bat and tee. Bats marked T-Ball or T-bat as well as Softball bats are legal.

**Note: Bats marked T-Ball are not allowed when using 11" regulation softball.**

- a. The box dimension will be 8 feet long by 3 feet wide.

**NOTE:** T-placement. When T is used place T "tip-to-tip" to Home Plate.



- (3) The batter will position herself in the batter's box and may address the ball as the umpire holds the ball on the tee. The umpire will ask the batter if she is ready, and if so, the umpire will remove his/her hand from the ball and gives the signal to play ball. If the batter addresses the ball after this, a strike is called, and the ball is dead.
- (4) Contact, even partially, must be made with the ball. This will be a judgment call by the umpire. All balls hit foul or swung at and missed, even if the tee alone is hit will be a strike. After two strikes there will be an unlimited number of foul balls allowed, until one is hit fair or there is a strikeout by missing the ball or hitting the tee alone.
- (5) The pitcher will take a position on the rubber remaining in contact with the rubber until the ball is hit. If the pitcher does not remain in contact with the rubber, there will be no penalty, if the batter and all runners advance at least one base without being put out. If an out is made on the batter or base runners before there is an advance of one base, then the ball is dead, and the batter and all base runners will advance one base from the base they occupied at the time of the infraction. There are no intentional walks.
- (6) Base runners are not allowed to steal. They cannot leave the base until the ball is hit.
- (7) There is no infield fly rule.
- (8) When the ball is in the possession of an infielder and in the judgment of the umpire all play has ceased, time shall be called by the umpire.
- (9) One-hour time limit, six innings, 5 runs per half. The game consists of 5 runs per half inning. If a team is ahead by 11 runs after four innings or 6 runs after five innings the game is over. If the game is tied at the end of six innings or at the end of full inning in which the time limit has expired; the run limit will be lifted. ITB will be used.
- (10) Each team is allowed four members on the coaching staff, manager and three coaches. On offense two of the staff can coach first and third bases. On defense no

staff is allowed on the field while the ball is live. Only the coaching staff and players are allowed in the dugout.

- (11) Team conference at change of 1/2 innings are not allowed (Delay of Game).

**EFFECT:** 1st infraction warning to manager, if in the judgment of the umpire infraction continues, the 2nd infraction will result in the ejection of the manager or one coach per infraction.

- (12) Teams use 10 players on defense. They must have 8 players to start or continue.
- (13) No bunting, chopping down on the ball or soft swings allowed. Batter is declared out.
- (14) DP/Flex is not allowed.
- (15) All other slow pitch rules apply.
- (16) Catchers must wear catching equipment for slow pitch catchers.

**B. PINTO (8U) RULES – Coach Pitch**

- (1) One-hour time limit, six innings, 5 runs per half. The game consists of 5 runs per half inning. If a team is ahead by 11 runs after four innings or 6 runs after five innings the game is over. If the game is tied at the end of six innings or at the end of full inning in which the time limit has expired; the run limit will be lifted. ITB will be used.
- (2) Each batter is allowed four pitches. Umpires will call swinging strikes only and three strikes will be an out. The fourth pitch unless hit fair or foul will be an out.
- (3) The infield fly rule is not in effect.
- (4) Bases will be 55 feet.
- (5) No defensive player except for the pitcher who must be parallel to and 3 feet from either side of the pitching rubber and the catcher who must be within the confines of the catcher's box can be closer than 45 feet from home plate. When in the umpire's judgment these are not in effect prior to the pitch, no pitch will be called. There should be lines at first and third base but if not then it will be the umpire's judgment.
- (6) Only the players and coaching staff whose names appear on the affidavit will be allowed in the dugout. Pinto teams may have up to four on the coaching staff: manager, and three coaches. The coach pitcher must be one of the four on the coaching staff.
- (7) All other current PONY Girls Softball rules are in effect.
- (8) Catchers must wear equipment defined for fast pitch catchers.
- (9) If the coach pitcher is hit with a batted ball, no pitch will be called.
- (10) Each team will provide their own pitching coach. The coach pitcher must be listed as a coach. The pitching distance is 40 feet. The ball must be delivered to the batter in a safe manner, and no arch required. Pitched ball is dead when it hits the ground. Batter cannot hit a ball that first touches the ground.
- (11) Team conference at change of 1/2 innings are not allowed (Delay of Game).

**EFFECT:** 1st infraction warning to manager, if in the judgment of the umpire infraction continues, the 2nd infraction will result in the ejection of the manager or one coach per infraction.

- (12) No stealing.

- (13) No dropped third strike.
- (14) No bunting, chopping down on the ball or soft swings allowed. Batter is declared out.
- (15) DP/Flex is not allowed.
- (16) The removal and reporting of the coach pitcher is subject to all PONY Girls Softball Rules and Regulations.
- (17) The player in the pitching position must remain in contact with the extension of the pitching rubber until the ball reaches home plate. Failure to remain in contact will result in a delayed dead ball. If all runners advance (1) base and the batter reaches first base safely there is no penalty. If an out is made on the batter or base runners before there is an advance of one base, then the ball is dead, and the batter and all base runners will advance one base from the base they occupied at the time of the infraction.
- (18) Teams will play 10 players on defense. Teams must have 8 players to start or continue.
- (19) When the ball is in the possession of an infielder and in the judgment of the umpire all play has ceased, time shall be called by the umpire. Teams may use the 8' circle but play will stop when time is called. Look back rule will not be used.
- (20) Coach Pitcher must have 1 foot on the rubber at time of release and both feet must be within the 24" width of the rubber. Penalty: Immediate Dead Ball and no pitch. Pitcher is warned and repeat violation results in removal from pitching position.

The coach pitcher cannot communicate with their players at any time while on offense. Also, cannot communicate with the other coaches while the ball is live but can on a dead ball. If they do so, one warning will be given and if it occurs again during the game the pitcher will be removed from the pitching position for the remainder of the game. Coach Pitcher may call time to talk to other coaches. Time out is charged as the one (1) offensive conference allowed per half inning. After the ball is hit fair, the coach pitcher must clear to the opposite side of the field that the ball is hit or move forward or back in order not to interfere. When the coach pitcher interferes with an offensive player then the play stands. When the coach pitcher interferes unintentionally with a defensive player then the umpire has the option to call a base runner out, if intentional then the runner will be called out.

### C. PINTO (8U) RULES - Player Pitch

- (1) The Game
  - a. Ninety-minute time limit. No new inning after 90 minutes. Inning will be completed once started.
  - b. Six innings.
    1. 5 runs per half inning, all innings.
    2. PONY mercy rule is in effect.
  - c. Pitching distance will be 30'
  - d. Base distance will be 55'
  - e. Ball used is 10" R.I.F. (softie)
  - f. Extra Player (EP) is allowed.
  - g. International Tie Breaker (ITB) will be used if time allows at the end of regulation.

- (2) The Infield Fly rule is not in effect.
- (3) No defensive player except for the pitcher may be closer than 30 feet from home plate when the play begins.
- (4) Bunting is allowed.
- (5) Base stealing is not allowed.
- (6) Runners may advance base(s) only when:
  - a. The ball is put in play by the:
    1. Batter hitting the ball
    2. Batter “walking” on ball 4, and runners are forced to move to the next base.
    3. Batter being struck by the ball, and runners are forced to move to the next base.
      - a. One base advancement on a walk or hit by pitch for the batter/runner and all runners forced to the next base by the play.
      - b. Upon an illegal pitch, they are awarded the next base by the umpire.
- (7) No dropped third strike rule – batter is out on 3<sup>rd</sup> strike.
- (8) Intentional walks are allowed.  
 Note: Maximum of three (3) intentional walks per inning. The coach, pitcher or catcher of the defensive team may request an intentional walk before or during the plate appearance. The batter must be in the batter’s box, the ball is dead, and no pitch needs to be thrown.
- (9) Teams may play 10 players on defense. Teams must have 8 players to start game or continue game.
- (10) DP/Flex is not allowed.
- (11) Catchers must wear equipment designed for fast pitch catchers.
- (12) Look back rule will not be used.
- (13) All other PONY Girls Softball rules are in effect.

**D. PINTO (8U) RULES – Machine Pitch**

- (1) Pitching machine will be set no less than 30 MPH and no faster than 35 MPH.
- (2) Speed and height placement will be set before the game by directors and umpires. Once set the machine can only be changed if the umpire and directors determine that the machine is no longer throwing strikes.
- (3) During the course of the game if the umpire sees pitches consistently out of the strike zone he will call “no pitch” and have the machine reset to the proper speed and height.
- (4) Each team will play with 10 girls on the field. Each team will be able to use the EP player.
- (5) DP/Flex is not allowed.
- (6) There will be a pitching circle drawn around the pitching rubber. The circle will be drawn 8 feet from the mid-point of the pitching rubber.
- (7) The ball must be returned to the player pitcher who will have both feet within the circle to stop the play. This will be used like the look back rule in Fast Pitch play.
- (8) Bunting is allowed and if you bunt foul on your third strike then it will be an out.
- (9) There will be 5 pitches to each batter or 3 strikes, whichever comes first. There are unlimited fouls unless you are bunting on the 3<sup>rd</sup> strike or the 5<sup>th</sup> pitch. There are no walks.

- (10) If a hit ball strikes the pitching machine, the umpire will call “dead ball” and award the batter first base. The other runners, if there are any, will move forward a base only if they are forced to by the batter-runner being awarded first base.
- (11) Base runners may steal a base. They may steal only one base at a time and may not steal home. They may not leave the base until the ball has left the pitching machine. If they leave the base early, it will result in the base runner being called out. If the catcher throws the ball to try to get the runner out and overthrows the fielder, the runner may not advance another base.
- (12) On a hit ball that is fielded and thrown to try to get a batter-runner or any other runner out, an overthrow into foul territory is treated as a live ball. That means they can run and must be stopped by the defensive team. The runners may run at their own risk of being put out on the play.
- (13) Pitching machines will be operated by the batting team’s coach. This coach must not do any coaching except to show the child the ball and that he is getting ready to put the ball in the machine.
- (14) Each game will be one hour long. Run rules are 5 runs per inning or 3 outs. Games are 6 innings in length.
- (15) If due to wet weather or machine malfunction and the pitching machine cannot be used, then a coach shall pitch. All of the other PONY fast pitch rules will apply.
- (16) Infield fly rule is not in effect.
- (17) No drops third strike.
- (18) Intentional walks are allowed.

Note: Maximum of three (3) intentional walks per inning. The coach, pitcher or catcher of the defensive team may request an intentional walk before or during the plate appearance. The batter must be in the batter’s box, the ball is dead, and no pitch needs to be thrown.

## RULE 7. PITCHING REGULATIONS (Fast Pitch)

**Sec. 1 PRELIMINARIES.** Before starting the delivery (pitch), the pitcher shall comply with the following:

- a. She shall take a position with her pivot foot on the pitcher's plate and non-pivot foot on or behind the pitcher's plate. Both feet must be on the ground within the 24-inch length of the pitcher's plate. Her shoulders shall be in line with first and third bases. The hands shall be separated. The ball can be in the glove or pitching hand.
- b. While in the position described above, she shall hold the ball in both hands for not less than one second and not more than 10 seconds before releasing the ball.
- c. The pitcher shall not be considered in pitching position unless the catcher is in position to receive the pitch.
- d. The pitcher may not take the pitching position on or near the pitcher's plate without having the ball in her possession.

**Sec. 2 THE PITCH** starts when one hand is taken off the ball or the pitcher makes any motion that is part of the wind-up after the hands have been brought together.

- a. Once the hands are brought together, 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:** Toward the batter is interpreted as within the 24-inch length of the pitcher's plate.*

- b. The pivot foot may remain in contact with or may push off and drag way from the pitching plate prior to the front foot touching the ground.
- c. The pitcher may now have both feet off the ground at the same time as long as both feet remain within the 24-inch width of the pitching plate and the pitcher does not replant the pivot foot.
- d. Pushing off or replanting of the pivot foot from a place other than the pitcher's plate is illegal.

***NOTE:** It is not a step if the pitcher slides her foot across the pitcher's plate, provided contact is maintained with the pitcher's plate.*

**Sec. 3 A LEGAL DELIVERY SHALL BE A BALL WHICH IS DELIVERED TO THE BATTER WITH AN UNDERHANDED MOTION.**

- a. The release of the ball and follow through of the hand and wrist must be forward, past the straight line of the body.
- b. The hand shall be below the hip, and the wrist not farther from the body than the elbow.
- c. The pitch is completed with a step toward the batter.
- d. The catcher must be within the lines of the catcher's box when the pitch is released.

- e. The pitcher has 20 seconds to release the next pitch after receiving the ball from the catcher.
- f. Quick Pitch is an illegal pitch.

**Sec. 4 THE PITCHER MAY USE ANY WINDUP DESIRED, PROVIDING:**

- a. She does not make any motion to pitch without immediately delivering the ball to the batter.
- b. She does not use a rocker action in which, after having the ball in both hands in the pitching position, she 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. She does not use a windup in which there is a stop or reversal of the forward motion.
- d. She does not make two revolutions of the arm in the windmill pitch. A pitcher may drop her arm to the side and to the rear before starting the windmill motion.
- e. She does not continue to wind up after taking the forward step, which is simultaneous with the release of the ball.

**Sec. 5 THE PITCHER SHALL NOT DELIBERATELY DROP, ROLL OR BOUNCE THE BALL WHILE IN THE PITCHING POSITION IN ORDER TO PREVENT THE BATTER FROM STRIKING IT.**

A pitch out for the purpose of intentionally walking a batter is not considered an illegal pitch. (Refer to note following Rule 9, Sec. 2c).

**Sec. 6 THE PITCHER SHALL NOT, AT ANY TIME DURING THE GAME, BE ALLOWED TO USE TAPE OR ANY OTHER FOREIGN SUBSTANCES UPON THE BALL, THE PITCHING HAND OR FINGERS NOR SHALL ANY OTHER PLAYER APPLY A FOREIGN SUBSTANCE TO THE BALL.**

Under the supervision and control of the umpire, powdered resin may be used to dry the hands. Applying resin into the glove and then placing the ball in the glove is an illegal act. Resin must be kept on the ground behind the pitcher's plate. A pitcher who licks her fingers must wipe the fingers off before bringing them in contact with the ball. Dirt is not a foreign substance. A pitcher shall not wear any item on the pitching hand, wrist, forearm, elbow, or thighs, which may, in the umpire's judgment, be distracting to the batter. Batting gloves may not be worn on the pitching hand.

***EFFECT:** An illegal pitch shall be called on the first offense. If any defensive player continues to place foreign substance on the ball, the player shall be ejected from the game.*

**Sec. 7 THE PITCHER SHALL NOT DELIVER A PITCH** unless all defensive players, except the catcher who must be in the catcher's box, are positioned in fair territory.

***EFFECT:** Any infraction of Rule 7-1-7-7. The penalty for an illegal pitch is a ball awarded to the batter. If the batter hits the ball and reaches first base on the batted ball, the illegal pitch is nullified. All action as a result of the batted ball stands.*

***EXCEPTION:** The manager has the option to take the result of the play, or illegal pitch.*

***EXCEPTION:** If the pitcher completes the delivery of the ball to the batter; and, if the batter hits the ball and reaches first base safely; and if all baserunners advance at*

least one base on the action resulting from the batted ball, the play stands and the illegal pitch is nullified.

**NOTE:** It is an illegal pitch if a fielder takes up a position in the batter's line of vision or, with deliberate unsportsmanlike intent, act in a manner to distract the batter. A pitch does not have to be released. The offending player shall be ejected from the game and an illegal pitch shall be declared.

**NOTE:** An illegal pitch shall be called immediately when it becomes illegal. If called by the plate umpire, it shall be called in a voice so that the catcher and the batter will hear it. The plate umpire will also give the delayed dead ball signal. If called by the base umpire, it shall be called so that the nearest fielder shall hear it. The base umpire shall also give the delayed dead ball signal.

**Sec. 8 AT THE BEGINNING OF EACH HALF INNING OR WHEN A PITCHER RELIEVES ANOTHER, NOT MORE THAN ONE MINUTE MAY BE USED TO DELIVER NOT MORE THAN FIVE PITCHES TO THE CATCHER, OTHER TEAMMATE OR COACH.** Play shall be suspended during this time. For excessive warm-up pitches, a pitcher shall be penalized by awarding a ball to the batter for each pitch in excess of five.

Teams that repeatedly take more than one minute to be ready to play, the manager will be warned and if the team continues to delay play the umpire may eject the manager for the remainder of the game.

**Sec. 9 THE PITCHER SHALL NOT THROW TO A BASE DURING A LIVE BALL WHILE HER FOOT IS IN CONTACT WITH THE PITCHER'S PLATE AFTER SHE HAS TAKEN THE PITCHING POSITION.**

**EFFECT:** Sec. 9: Illegal pitch, the ball is dead, a ball is called on the batter and all runners advance one base. If the throw from the pitcher's plate is during a live ball appeal play, the appeal is cancelled. Illegal pitch for fielder positioning themselves in a place to block a runner's ability to see the release of the ball by the pitcher.

**NOTE:** The pitcher can remove herself from the pitching position by stepping backwards off the pitcher's plate. Stepping forward or sideways constitutes an illegal pitch. It is an illegal pitch if a fielder takes up a position in the batter's line of vision or, with deliberate unsportsmanlike intent, act in a manner to distract the batter. A pitch does not have to be released.

**Sec. 10 NO PITCH SHALL BE DECLARED WHEN:**

- The pitcher pitches during the suspension of play.
- The runner is called out for leaving the base prior to the pitcher releasing the pitch.
- The pitcher pitches before a baserunner has retouched her base after a foul ball has been declared and the ball is dead.

**EFFECT:** Sec. 1 10a-d: The ball is dead and all subsequent action on that pitch is cancelled.

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

***EFFECT:** Sec. 10d: No pitch shall be declared, and a warning issued to the offending team. A repeat of this type act by the team warned shall result in the offender being removed from the game.*

- Sec. 11 THERE SHALL BE ONLY THREE CONFERENCES BETWEEN THE MANAGER, COACH OR PLAYER FROM THE DUGOUT WITH ANY DEFENSIVE PLAYER(S) IN A REGULATION GAME.** Once the game enters ITB, the defense gets one charged conference per inning. Unused charged conferences do not carry over. It is not a charged conference if pitcher is removed from the pitching position.

***NOTE:** The fourth, and each additional charge conference in a regulation game, or for any charged conference in excess of one per inning in an extra inning game, shall result in the removal of the pitcher from the pitching position for the remainder of the game. The removed pitcher can play another position on the defense but cannot pitch again.*

- Sec. 12 IF THE BALL SLIPS FROM THE PITCHER'S HAND DURING HER WINDUP OR DURING THE BACK SWING, A BALL IS DECLARED ON THE BATTER, THE BALL WILL BE IN PLAY, AND THE RUNNERS MAY ADVANCE AT THEIR OWN RISK.**

- Sec. 13 ANY PLAYER** serving as a catcher to warm up a pitcher shall wear a mask, helmet and throat protector whether the pitcher is warming up from the pitching rubber, in the bullpen or elsewhere.

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## RULE 7. PITCHING REGULATIONS (Slow Pitch)

- Sec. 1 THE PITCHER SHALL TAKE A POSITION WITH BOTH FEET FIRMLY ON THE GROUND AND WITH ONE OR BOTH FEET IN CONTACT WITH, BUT NOT OFF THE SIDE OF, THE PITCHER'S PLATE.** While the pivot foot is in contact with the pitcher's plate and throughout the delivery, both the pivot and non-pivot foot must be within the length of the pitcher's plate when on the ground and on the pitcher's plate.
- Preliminary to pitching, the pitcher must come to a full and complete stop, with the ball in front of the body. The front of the body must face the batter.
  - This position must be maintained at least one second and not more than 10 seconds before starting the delivery.
  - The pitcher shall not be considered in pitching position unless the catcher is in position to receive the pitch.

**NOTE:** *To indicate to the pitcher that she may not start the pitch, the umpire should raise one hand with the palm facing the pitcher. "NO PITCH" shall be declared if the pitcher pitches while the umpire has his hand in said position.*

- Sec. 2 THE PITCH** starts when the pitcher makes any motion that is part of her windup after the required pause. Prior to the required pause, any windup may be used. The pivot foot must remain in contact with the pitcher's plate until the pitched ball leaves the hand. If a step is taken, it can be forward or BACKWARD, provided the pivot foot is in contact with the pitching plate when the ball is released, and the step is within the 24 inches (60.96 cm) of the pitcher's plate and simultaneous with the release of the ball.

- Sec. 3 A LEGAL DELIVERY SHALL BE A BALL WHICH IS DELIVERED TO THE BATTER WITH AN UNDERHANDED MOTION.**

- The pitch shall be released at a moderate speed. The speed is left entirely up to the umpire. The umpire shall warn the pitcher who delivers a pitch with excessive speed. If the pitcher repeats such an act after being warned, she shall be removed from the pitcher's position for the remainder of the game.
- The hand shall be below the hip.
- The ball must be delivered with a perceptible arc and reach a height of at least six feet (1.83 m) from the ground while not exceeding a maximum height of 12 feet (3.66m) from the ground.
- The catcher must be within the lines of the catcher's box until the pitched ball is batted or reaches the catcher's box.
- The catcher shall return the ball directly to the pitcher after each pitch.

**EFFECT:** *Sec. 3e: An additional "ball" is awarded to the batter.*

- The pitcher has 20 seconds to release the next pitch after receiving the ball from the catcher.

- Sec. 4 THE PITCHER MAY USE ANY WINDUP DESIRED, PROVIDING:**
- She does not make any motion to pitch without immediately delivering the ball to the batter.
  - Her windup is a continuous motion.
  - She does not use a windup in which there is a stop or reversal of the pitching motion.
  - She delivers the ball toward home plate on the first forward swing of the pitching arm past the hip.
  - She does not continue to wind up after she releases the ball.
  - She does not pitch the ball behind her back or between her legs.
- Sec. 5 THE PITCHER SHALL NOT DELIBERATELY DROP, ROLL OR BOUNCE THE BALL WHILE IN THE PITCHING POSITION IN ORDER TO PREVENT THE BATTER FROM STRIKING IT.**
- Sec. 6 THE PITCHER SHALL NOT, AT ANY TIME DURING THE GAME, BE ALLOWED TO USE ANY FOREIGN SUBSTANCES UPON THE BALL, THE PITCHING HAND OR FINGERS, NOR SHALL ANY OTHER PLAYER APPLY A FOREIGN SUBSTANCE TO THE BALL.** Under the supervision and control of the umpire, powdered resin and dirt may be used to dry the hands.
- Sec. 7 THE STARTING PITCHER IS ALLOWED TWO WARM-UP PITCHES TO START THE GAME. NO WARM-UP PITCHES IN CONSECUTIVE INNINGS. A NEW PITCHER IS ALLOWED TWO WARM-UP PITCHES, OTHERWISE READY TO PLAY.** Play shall be suspended during this time. For excessive warm-up pitches, a pitcher shall be penalized by awarding a ball to the batter for each pitch in excess of two.
- Sec. 8 THE PITCHER SHALL NOT ATTEMPT A QUICK RETURN OF THE BALL BEFORE THE BATTER HAS TAKEN HER POSITION OR IS OFF BALANCE AS A RESULT OF A PREVIOUS PITCH.**

**NOTE:** *It is an illegal pitch if a fielder takes up a position in the batter's line of vision or, with deliberate unsportsmanlike intent, act in a manner to distract the batter. A pitch does not have to be released. The offending player shall be ejected from the game and an illegal pitch shall be declared.*

**EFFECT:** *Sec. 1-8: Any infraction of Sections 1-8 is an illegal pitch. A ball shall be called on the batter. Baserunners are not advanced.*

**EXCEPTION:** *If a batter strikes at any illegal pitch, it shall be a strike and there shall be no penalty for such an illegal pitch. The ball shall remain in play if hit by the batter. If an illegal pitch is called during an appeal play, the appeal is cancelled.*

**NOTE:** *An illegal pitch shall be called immediately when it becomes illegal. If called by the plate umpire, it shall be called in a voice so that the catcher and the batter will hear it. The plate umpire will also give the delayed dead ball signal. If called by the base umpire, it shall be called so that the nearest fielder shall hear it. The base umpire shall also give the delayed dead ball signal. Failure of players to hear the call shall not void the call.*

**Sec. 9 Sec. 9. NO PITCH SHALL BE DECLARED WHEN:**

- a. The pitcher pitches during the suspension of play.
- b. The runner is called out for leaving the base before the pitched ball reaches home plate.
- c. The pitcher pitches before the baserunner has retouched her base after a foul ball has been declared and the ball is dead.
- d. The ball slips from the pitcher's hand during her windup or during the backswing.

***EFFECT:*** Sec. 9a-d: *The ball is dead and all subsequent action on that pitch is cancelled.*

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

***EFFECT:*** Sec. 9c: *No pitch shall be declared, and a warning issued to the offending team. A repeat of this type act by the team warned shall result in the offender being removed from the game.*

**Sec. 10 DEFENSIVE CONFERENCES – THERE SHALL BE ONLY THREE CHARGED CONFERENCES BETWEEN THE MANAGER, COACH OR PLAYER FROM THE DUGOUT WITH ANY DEFENSIVE PLAYER(S) IN A REGULATION GAME.** For every inning beyond regulation, there shall be one charged conference per inning between the manager, coach or player from the dugout with any defensive player(s). It is not a charged conference if pitcher is removed from the pitching position.

***NOTE:*** *The fourth, and each additional, charged conference in a regulation game, or for any charged conference in excess of one per inning in an extra inning game, shall result in the removal of the pitcher from the pitching position for the remainder of the game. The removed pitcher can play another position on defense but cannot pitch again.*

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## RULE 8. BATTING

### Sec. 1 THE BATTER SHALL TAKE HER POSITION WITHIN THE LINES OF THE BATTER'S BOX.

After getting set in the batter's box the batter must keep at least one foot in the batter's box while taking signals from the coach.

**EXCEPTION:** *The batter can leave the box when she hits a fair or foul ball, check swings, forced out by a play at the plate, forced out by a pitch if the pitcher leaves the eight-foot pitchers circle, or the catcher leaves the catcher's box.*

**EFFECT:** *If the batter leaves the batter's box illegally and does not return to the box, after a warning, the umpire will call a strike on the batter.*

- The batter shall not have her entire foot touching the ground completely outside the lines of the batter's box or touching home plate when the ball is hit.
- The batter shall not step directly across in front of the catcher to the other batter's box while the pitcher is in position, ready to pitch.
- The batter shall not enter the batter's box with an illegal bat.
- The batter must take her position within 20 seconds after the pitcher has received the ball in preparation to pitch and/or the umpire has called "play ball".

**EFFECT:** *Sec. 1e: The ball is dead. A strike shall be called on the batter for each 20 seconds the batter's box is not occupied after the umpire has called, "play ball."*

- The batter must have both feet completely within the lines of the batter's box prior to the start of the pitch. She may touch the lines, but no part of her foot may be outside of the lines prior to the pitch.

### Sec. 2 EACH PLAYER OF THE SIDE AT BAT SHALL BECOME A BATTER IN THE ORDER IN WHICH HER NAME APPEARS ON THE LINE-UP CARD.

- The batting order of each team must be on the line-up card and must be delivered before the game by the manager or captain to the plate umpire.
- The batting order delivered to the umpire must be followed throughout the game unless a player is substituted. When this occurs, the substitute must take the place of the removed player 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:** *Sec. 2b-c: Batting out of order is an appeal play which may be made by the manager, player, or coach of the defensive team only. The defensive team forfeits its right to appeal batting out of order when all infielders (including the pitcher) have left their normal positions (crossed the foul line).*

- (1) If the error is discovered while the incorrect batter is at bat, the correct batter may take her place and legally assume any balls and strikes. Any runs scored or bases run while the incorrect batter was at bat shall be legal.

- (2) If the error is discovered after the incorrect batter has completed her turn at bat and before there has been a pitch to another batter, the player who should have batted is out. Any advance or score made because of a ball batted by the improper batter or because of the improper batter's advance to first base on a hit, an error, a base on balls or a hit batter shall be nullified. Any out that is made prior to discovering this infraction, remains an out. The next batter is the player whose name follows that of the player called out for failing to bat.
  - (3) 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 in order 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.
  - (4) No baserunner shall be removed from the base she is occupying. (Except the batter-baserunner who has been taken off the base by the umpire as in (2) above to bat in her proper place.) She merely misses her turn at bat with no penalty. The batter following her in the batting order becomes the eligible batter.
- d. When the third out in an inning is made before the batter has completed her turn at bat, she shall be the first batter in the next inning, and the ball and strike count on her shall be canceled.

**Sec. 3 THE BATTER SHALL NOT HINDER THE CATCHER FROM FIELDING OR THROWING THE BALL BY STEPPING OUT OF THE BATTER'S BOX OR INTENTIONALLY HINDER THE CATCHER WHILE STANDING WITHIN THE BATTER'S BOX.**

*EFFECT:* Sec. 3: The ball is dead, the batter is out, and baserunners must return to the last base that, in the judgment of the umpire, was touched at the time of the interference.

**Sec. 4 MEMBERS OF THE TEAM AT BAT SHALL NOT INTERFERE WITH A PLAYER ATTEMPTING TO FIELD A FOUL FLY BALL.**

*EFFECT:* Sec. 4: The ball is dead, the batter is out, and baserunners must return to the base legally held at the time of the pitch.

**Sec. 5 THE BATTER SHALL NOT HIT A FAIR BALL with THE BAT A SECOND TIME IN FAIR TERRITORY.**

*EFFECT:* Sec. 5: The ball is dead, the batter is out, and baserunners may not advance. Refer to: Rule 8 Sec. 9f

**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.

**Sec. 6 A STRIKE IS CALLED BY THE UMPIRE:**

- a. (FP ONLY) For each legally pitched ball entering the strike zone before touching the ground and at which the batter does not swing.

**EFFECT:** *Sec. 6a: (FP ONLY) the ball is in play and the baserunners may advance with liability to be put out.*

(SP ONLY) For each legally pitched ball entering the strike zone before touching the ground and at which the batter does not swing. It is not a strike if the pitched ball touches home plate and is not swung at. Any pitched ball that hits the ground or plate cannot be legally swung at by the batter.

**EFFECT:** *Sec. 6a: (SP ONLY) The ball is dead.*

- b. For each legally pitched ball struck at and missed by the batter.

**EFFECT:** *Sec. 6b: (FP ONLY) the ball is in play and the baserunners may advance with liability to be put out.*

**EFFECT:** *Sec. 6b: (SP ONLY) The ball is dead.*

- c. For each foul tip held by the catcher.

**EFFECT:** *Sec. 6c: (FP ONLY) the ball is in play and baserunners may advance with liability to be put out. The batter is out if it is the third strike.*

**EFFECT:** *Sec. 6c: (SP ONLY) The batter is out if it is the third strike the ball is dead on any strike.*

- d. For each foul ball not legally caught on the fly when the batter has less than two strikes. Also reference Rule 8 - Section (9) F-2.
- e. For each pitched ball struck at and missed which touches any part of the batter.
- f. When any part of the batter's person is hit with her own batted ball when she is in the batter's box and she has less than two strikes.
- g. When a delivered ball by the pitcher hits the batter while the ball is in the strike zone.

**EFFECT:** *Sec. 6d-g: The ball is dead, and baserunners must return to their bases without liability to be put out.*

**Sec. 7 A BALL IS CALLED BY THE UMPIRE:**

- a. For each legally pitched ball which does not enter the strike zone, touches the ground before reaching home plate, or touches home plate and at which the batter does not swing. (SP ONLY) Any pitched ball that hits the ground or plate cannot be legally swung at by the batter.

**EFFECT:** *Sec. 7a: (FP ONLY) the ball is in play and baserunners are entitled to advance with liability to be put out.*

**EFFECT:** *Sec. 7a: (SP ONLY) The ball is dead. Baserunners may not advance.*

- b. For each illegally pitched ball.

**EFFECT:** *The ball is dead, and baserunners are entitled to advance one base without liability to be put out.*

*(SP ONLY) For each illegally pitched ball.*

**EFFECT: Sec. 7b: (SP ONLY)** *The ball is dead. Baserunners may not advance.*

**EXCEPTION:** *If the batter swings at the illegal pitch, the illegal pitch is ignored.*

- c. (SP ONLY) When a delivered ball by the pitcher hits the batter outside of the strike zone.
- d. When the catcher fails to return the ball directly to the pitcher as required in Rule 7, Section 3e.
- e. When the pitcher fails to pitch the ball within 20 seconds.
- f. For each excessive warm-up pitch.

**EFFECT: Sec. 7c-f:** *The ball is dead. Baserunners may not advance.*

**Sec. 8 A FAIR BALL IS A LEGALLY BATTED BALL WHICH:**

- a. Settles or is touched on fair territory between home and first base or between home and third base.
- b. Bounds past first or third base in or over fair territory.
- c. While in or over fair territory, touches the person, attached equipment or clothing of a player or an umpire.
- d. Touches first, second or third base.
- e. First falls or is first touched in or over fair territory beyond first, second or third base.

**EFFECT: Sec. 8a-e:** *The ball is in play and baserunners are entitled to advance any number of bases with liability be put out. The batter becomes a baserunner unless the infield fly rule applies.*

- f. While over fair territory, passes out of the playing field beyond the outfield fence.

**NOTE:** *If the ball hits the foul line pole above the fence level, it shall be a home run.*

**Sec. 9 A FOUL BALL IS A LEGALLY BATTED BALL WHICH:**

- a. Settles on foul territory between home and first base, or between home and third base.
- b. Bounds past first or third base on or over foul territory.
- c. While in or over foul territory, touches the person, attached equipment, or clothing of a player or umpire or any object foreign to the natural ground.
- d. First falls or is first touched over foul territory beyond first or third base.
- e. Touches the batter while the ball is within the batter's box.

- f. Rebounds up from the ground or home plate immediately and hits the bat a second time while the batter is in the batter's box.

**EFFECT:** *Sec. 9a-f:*

- (1) The ball is dead unless it is a legally caught foul fly. If a foul fly is caught, the batter is out. If ball is caught runner(s) may advance with liability to be put out.
- (2) A strike is called on the batter unless she already has two strikes.
- (3) Baserunners must return to their bases without liability to be put out, unless a foul fly is caught. In this case, the baserunner may advance with liability to be put out after the ball has been touched.

**Sec. 10 A FOUL TIP IS A BATTED BALL THAT GOES SHARPLY AND DIRECTLY FROM THE BAT TO THE CATCHER'S GLOVE/MITT OR HANDS AND IS LEGALLY CAUGHT BY THE CATCHER.**

**NOTE:** *It is not a foul tip unless caught and any foul tip that is caught is a strike. In fast pitch, the ball is in play. In slow pitch, the ball is dead.*

**EFFECT:** *Sec. 10: (FP ONLY) A strike is called; the ball remains in play and baserunners may advance with liability to be put out.*

**EFFECT:** *Sec. 10: (SP ONLY) A strike is called; the ball is dead.*

**Sec. 11 THE BATTER IS OUT:**

- a. When the third strike is struck at, missed and 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 bat. The batter is also ejected from the game.
- c. When the batter enters the batter's box with an illegal bat or is discovered using an illegal bat.
- d. When a batter's entire foot is completely out of the box on the ground when she hits a ball fair or foul.
- e. When any part of the batter's foot is touching home plate when she hits the ball.
- f. When a fly ball is legally caught.
- g. Immediately when she hits an infield fly, as declared by the umpire, with runners on first and second or on first, second and third with less than two outs. This is called the INFIELD FLY RULE.

**REFER TO RULE 1, SECTION 39.**

- h. If a fielder intentionally drops a fair fly ball, including a line drive (FP or SP) or a bunt (FP ONLY), which can be caught by an infielder with ordinary effort with first, first and second, first and third or first, second and third bases occupied with less than two outs.

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

- i. If a preceding runner who is not yet out, in the umpire's judgment, intentionally interferes with a fielder who is attempting to catch a thrown ball or throw a ball in an attempt to complete the play. The runner shall also be called out and interference called.
- j. (FP ONLY) When a called or swinging third strike is caught by the catcher.
- k. (FP ONLY) When she bunts foul after the second strike. If the ball is caught in the air, it remains alive and in play.
- l. (SP ONLY) When she bunts or chops the ball downward.

**Sec. 12 THE BATTER OR BASERUNNER IS NOT OUT IF A FIELDER MAKING A PLAY ON HER USES AN ILLEGAL GLOVE.** The manager of the offended team has the option of having the batter bat again and assuming the ball and strike count she had prior to the pitch she hit or taking the result of the play.

**Sec. 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 the on-deck circle nearest her bench, or an area determined by the umpire.
- c. The on-deck batter may loosen up with no more than two official softball bats, an approved warm-up bat, or a combination of the two — not to exceed two. Warm-up attachments may be used. All warm-up bats and attachments shall meet the ASA equipment standards.

**NOTE:** Refer to Rule 3, Sec. 2

- d. The on-deck batter may leave the on-deck circle:
  - (1) When she becomes the batter.
  - (2) To direct baserunners advancing from third to home plate.
  - (3) When avoiding interference with a defensive player.
- 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 shall be declared out.

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## RULE 9. BASERUNNING

### Sec. 1 THE BASERUNNERS MUST TOUCH BASES IN LEGAL ORDER (i.e. FIRST, SECOND, THIRD AND HOME PLATE).

- a. When a baserunner must return to bases while the ball is in play, she must touch the bases in reverse order.

**EFFECT:** *Sec. 1a: The ball is in play and base runners 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, she is entitled to hold the base until she has legally touched the next base in order or is forced to vacate it for a succeeding baserunner.
- c. When a baserunner dislodges a base from its proper position, neither she nor the succeeding runners in the same series of plays are compelled to follow a base unreasonably out of position.

**EFFECT:** *Sec. 1b-c: The ball is in play and baserunners may advance with liability to be put out.*

- d. A baserunner shall not run bases in reverse order either to confuse the fielders or to make a travesty of the game.

**EFFECT:** *Sec. 1d: The ball is dead, and the baserunner is out.*

- e. Two baserunners may not occupy the same base simultaneously.

**EFFECT:** *Sec. 1e: The runner who first legally occupied the base shall be entitled to it. The other baserunner may be put out by being touched with the ball.*

- f. Failure of PRECEDING runner to touch a base or to leave a base too soon on a caught fly ball and who is declared out does not affect the status of a SUCCEEDING baserunner who touches bases in proper order. However, if the failure to touch a base in regular order or to leave a base too soon on a caught fly ball is the third out of the inning, NO SUCCEEDING runner may score a run. Succeeding runner may be safe in the case of an appeal play.

*REFER TO RULE 5, SECTION 8.*

- g. No runner may return to touch a missed base or one she had left illegally after a following runner has scored.
- h. No runner may return to touch a missed base or a base left too soon if she had advanced, touched, and remains on a base beyond the missed base or the base left too soon, when the ball becomes dead.
- i. No runner may return to touch a missed base or one she had left illegally once she enters her team dugout or bench area.
- j. When a walk is issued, all runners must touch all bases in legal order.

- k. Bases left too soon on a caught fly ball must be retouched prior to advancing to awarded bases.
- l. Awarded bases must also be touched in proper order.

**Sec. 2 THE BATTER BECOMES A BATTER-BASERUNNER:**

- a. As soon as she hits a fair ball.
- b. (FP ONLY) When the catcher fails to catch the third strike before the ball touches the ground when there are less than two outs and first base is unoccupied or anytime there are two outs. This is called the dropped third strike rule.

**EFFECT:** Sec. 2a-b: The ball is in play and the batter becomes a batter-baserunner with liability to be put out.

- c. When four balls have been called by the umpire.

**EFFECT:** Sec. 2c: (FP ONLY) The ball is in play unless it has been blocked. The batter is entitled to one base without liability to be out.

- d. When batter is intentionally walked.

**NOTE:** Maximum of three (3) intentional walks per inning. The coach, pitcher or catcher of the defensive team may request an intentional walk before or during the plate appearance. The batter must be in the batter's box, the ball is dead and no pitch needs to be throw.

- e. When the catcher obstructs, or any other fielder interferes with or prevents her from striking at a pitched ball.

- (1) The umpire shall give a "delayed dead ball signal."
- (2) If all runners including the batter-runner do not advance at least one base, the manager of the batting team has the option to take the result of the play, or have the obstruction enforced by awarding the batter first base and advancing all other runners only if forced.
- (3) If the batter hits the ball and reaches first base safely, and if all other runners have advanced at least one base on the batted ball, catcher obstruction is cancelled. All actions as a result of the batted ball stand. No option is given.

- f. When a fair ball strikes the person or clothing of the umpire or a baserunner on fair ground.

**EFFECT:** Sec. 2e: If the ball hits the umpire or baserunner (a) after touching an infielder, the ball is in play; (b) after passing an infielder other than the pitcher, the ball is in play; or (c) before passing an infielder without being touched, the ball is dead. If the baserunner is hit, she is out, and the batter is entitled to first base without liability to be put out. Baserunners not forced by the batter-baserunner must return to the base they had reached prior to the interference. When a baserunner is hit with a fair batted ball that has passed an infielder, excluding the pitcher, and in the judgment of the umpire no other fielder HAS A CHANCE TO MAKE AN OUT.

- g. (FP ONLY) When a pitched ball, not struck at or not called a strike, touches any part of the batter's person or clothing while she is in the batter's box. It does not matter if the ball strikes the ground before hitting her. The batter's hands are not part of the bat.

**EFFECT:** *Sec. 2f: The ball is dead, and the batter is entitled to one base without liability to be put out.*

**Sec. 3 BASERUNNERS ARE ENTITLED TO ADVANCE WITH LIABILITY TO BE PUT OUT:**

- (FP ONLY) On the pitcher's delivery, when the ball leaves the pitcher's hand.
- When the ball is thrown into fair or foul territory and is not blocked.
- When the ball is batted into fair territory and is not blocked.
- When a legally caught fly ball is first touched.
- If a fair ball strikes the umpire or a baserunner after having passed an infielder, other than the pitcher, or having been touched by an infielder, including the pitcher, the ball shall be considered in play.

**EFFECT:** *Sec. 3a-e: The ball is alive and in play.*

**Sec. 4 A PLAYER FORFEITS HER EXEMPTION FROM LIABILITY TO BE PUT OUT:**

- If, while the ball is in play, she fails to touch the base to which she was entitled before attempting to make the next base. If the runner put out is the batter-baserunner at first base or any other baserunner forced to advance because the batter became a baserunner, this out is a force-out.
- If, after overrunning first base, the batter-baserunner attempts to continue to second base.
- If, after dislodging the base, the batter-baserunner or baserunner tries to continue to the next base.

**Sec. 5 BASERUNNERS ARE ENTITLED TO ADVANCE WITHOUT LIABILITY TO BE PUT OUT:**

- When forced to vacate a base because the batter was awarded a base on balls.

**EFFECT:** *Sec. 5a: (FP ONLY) The ball remains in play unless it is blocked. Baserunner affected is entitled to one base and may advance further at her own risk if the ball is in play.*

**EFFECT:** *Sec. 5a: (SP ONLY) The ball is dead.*

- After a fielder has had an opportunity to make an initial play on a batted ball, the responsibility for contact changes. Once a fielder, excluding the pitcher, misplays a batted ball, that fielder should not be protected, and therefore, should not be permitted to obstruct the advancement of the runner. When a fielder obstructs the baserunner from making a base, unless the fielder is trying to field a batted ball or has the ball ready to touch the base-runner.

**EFFECT:** *Sec. 5b: When any obstruction occurs, the umpire will signal a delayed dead ball. The ball will remain live.*

- (1) If the obstructed runner is put out prior to reaching the base she would have reached had there not been obstruction, a dead ball is called, the obstructed

runner (and all other runners) will always be awarded the base they would have received, in the umpire's judgment, had there not been obstruction. An obstructed runner may never be called out between the two bases in which she was obstructed. This baserunner would either be advanced or returned to the last base touched.

- (2) If the obstructed runner is put out after passing the base, she would have reached had there not been obstruction, the obstructed runner will be called out. The ball remains live.
- (3) When a runner is obstructed while advancing or returning to a base by a fielder who neither has the ball nor is attempting to field a batted ball, or a fielder without the ball fakes a tag, the umpire shall award the obstructed runner and each other runner affected by the obstruction, the bases they would have reached, in his judgment, had there been no obstruction. If the umpire feels there is justification, a defensive player making a fake tag could be ejected from the game.

**NOTE:** *Obstructed baserunners are still required to touch all bases in proper order or could be called out on a proper appeal by the defensive team.*

- (4) Catcher obstruction is covered under Rule 9, Section 2d.

- c. (FP ONLY) When a wild pitch or passed ball goes under, over, through or lodges in the backstop.

**EFFECT:** *Sec. 5c: The ball is dead. All baserunners are awarded one base only. The batter is awarded first base only on the fourth ball.*

- d. When forced to vacate a base because the batter was awarded a base.

- (1) (FP ONLY) For being hit by a pitched ball.
- (2) For being obstructed by the catcher when striking at a pitched ball.

**EFFECT:** *Sec. 5d (1)-(2): The ball is dead, and baserunners may not advance farther than the base to which they are entitled.*

- (3) (FP ONLY) If, with a runner on third base and trying to score by means of a squeeze play or a steal, the catcher or any other fielder steps on or in front of home plate without possession of the ball or touches the batter or his bat, the pitcher shall be charged with an illegal pitch, the batter shall be awarded first base on the obstruction and the ball is dead.

- e. (FP ONLY) When a pitcher makes an illegal pitch.

**EFFECT:** *Sec. 5e: The ball is dead, and baserunners may advance to the base to which they are entitled without liability to be put out.*

- f. When a fielder contacts or catches a fair batted or thrown ball with her cap, mask, glove or any part of her uniform while it is detached from its proper place on her person.

**EFFECT:** *Sec. 5f: The baserunners would be entitled to three bases if a batted ball or two bases if a thrown ball; and in either case, the base runners may advance further at their own risk. If the illegal catch or touch is made on a fair hit ball, which in the judgment of the umpire, would have cleared the outfield fence in flight, the runner shall be awarded a home run.*

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

**EFFECT:** *Sec. 5g: All runners will be awarded two bases, and the award will be governed by the position of the runners when the ball left any fielder's hand.*

**EFFECT:** *When a fielder loses possession of the ball, such as on an attempted tag, and the ball enters the dead ball area or becomes blocked, all runners are awarded one base from the last base touched at the time the ball entered the dead ball area or became blocked. If a runner touches the next base and returns to her original base, the original base she left is considered the "last base touched" for purposes of an overthrow award.*

- h. When a fair batted fly ball leaves the playing field in fair territory, without touching the ground or going through the fence, it shall entitle the batter to a home run, unless it passes out of the grounds at a distance less than the prescribed fence distances from home plate (as outlined in Rule 2, Section 1), in which case, the batter would be entitled to only two bases. The batter must touch the bases in regular order. The point at which the fence or stand is less than the distances listed (Rule 2, Section 1) from home plate shall be clearly marked for the umpire's information.
- i. When a fair ball that bounds or rolls over, under, or through a fence; bounds out of play unintentionally off a defensive player; or a fair ball that bounds over, under or through any other obstruction marking the boundaries of the playing field.

**EFFECT:** *Sec. 5i: The ball is dead, and all baserunners are awarded two bases from the time of the pitch.*

- j. (1) When a live ball is unintentionally carried by a fielder from playable territory into dead ball territory, the ball becomes dead. All baserunners are awarded one base from the last base touched at the time "fielder" enters dead ball territory.

**NOTE:** *A fielder carrying a live ball into the dugout or team area to tag a player is considered to have unintentionally carried it there.*

- (2) If, in the judgment of the umpire, a fielder intentionally carries a live ball from playable territory into dead ball territory, the ball becomes dead and all baserunners are awarded two bases from the last base touched at the time she entered dead ball territory.

**NOTE:** *A dead ball line is considered in play.*

**Sec. 6 A BASERUNNER MUST RETURN TO HER BASE:**

- a. When a foul ball is illegally caught and so declared by the umpire.
- b. When an illegally batted ball is declared by the umpire.
- c. When a batter or baserunner is called out for interference. Other baserunners shall return to the last base which was, in the judgment of the umpire, legally touched by her at the time of the interference.
- d. (FP ONLY) When the plate umpire or her clothing interferes with the catcher's attempt to throw.
- e. When any part of the batter's person is touched by a pitched ball that is swung at and missed.
- f. (FP ONLY) When a batter is hit by a pitched ball, unless forced.
- g. When a foul ball is not caught.

**EFFECT:** *Sec. 6a-g:*

- (1) The ball is dead.
  - (2) The baserunners must return to base without liability to be put out, except when forced to go to the next base because the batter became a baserunner.
  - (3) No runs shall score unless all bases are occupied.
  - (4) Baserunners need not touch the intervening bases in returning to base, but must return promptly; however, they must be allowed sufficient time to return.
- h. (SP ONLY) Base stealing. Under no condition is a runner permitted to steal a base when a pitched ball is not batted. The runner must return to her base.

**EFFECT:** *Sec 6h: Baserunners may leave their bases when a pitched ball is batted or reaches home plate but must return to that base immediately after each pitch not hit by the batter.*

- i. When a caught fair fly ball, including a line drive (FP and SP) or bunt (FP ONLY) which can be caught by an infielder with ordinary effort is intentionally dropped with less than two outs and a runner on first base, first and second, first and third or first, second and third bases.

Refer to Rule 8, Section 11h

**Sec. 7 BATTER-BASERUNNER IS OUT:**

- a. (FP ONLY) When the catcher drops the third strike, and she is legally touched with the ball by a fielder before touching first base.
- b. (FP ONLY) When the catcher drops the third strike, and the ball is held on first base before the batter-baserunner reaches first base.
- c. When, after a fair ball is hit, she is legally touched with the ball before she touches first base.
- d. When, after a fair ball is hit, the ball is held by a fielder touching first base with any part of her person before the batter-baserunner touches first base.
- e. When, after a fly ball is hit, the ball is caught by a fielder before it touches the ground or any object other than a fielder.

- f. When, after a fair ball is hit, a base on balls is issued, or the batter legally advances to first base on a dropped third strike (FP ONLY), she fails to advance to first base and enters her team area.

**EFFECT:** *Sec. 7a-f: The ball is in play and the batter-baserunner is out.*

**EXCEPTION:** *In slow pitch, the ball is dead, and the runners cannot advance.*

**REFER TO RULE 9, SECTION 1j.**

- g. When she runs outside the three-foot (0.91 m) line, and in the judgment of the umpire, interferes with the fielder taking the throw at first base. However, she may run outside the three-foot (0.91m) line to avoid a fielder attempting to field a batted ball.
- h. When she interferes with a fielder attempting to field a batted ball, intentionally interferes with a thrown ball or (FP ONLY) interferes with a dropped third strike. If this interference, in the judgment of the umpire, is an obvious attempt to prevent a double play, the baserunner closest to home plate shall also be called out.
- i. When a batter-baserunner interferes with a play at home plate in an attempt to prevent an obvious out at home plate. The runner is also out.
- j. When she moves back toward home plate to avoid or delay a tag by a fielder.
- k. When she is discovered using an altered or illegal bat.

**EFFECT:** *Sec. 7g-k: The ball is dead, and the batter-baserunner is out. Other baserunners must return to the last base legally touched at the time of or before the illegal action.*

- l. All fast and slow pitch offensive players must wear properly, batting helmets with double ear flaps that have been approved by the National Operating Committee on Standard for Athletic Equipment (NOCSAE).

**PENALTY:** Failure to wear the batting helmet when ordered to do so by the umpire shall cause said player to be declared out. Deliberately wearing the helmet improperly or removing it during play, shall cause the violator to be declared out immediately. The ball remains alive.

**NOTE:** *In the case of an altered bat, the player is also ejected from the game.*

## **Sec. 8 THE BASERUNNER IS OUT:**

- a. When, in running to any base, she runs more than three feet (0.91m) from a direct line between that base and the next one in regular or reverse order to avoid being touched by the ball in the hand of a fielder.
- b. When, while the ball is in play, she is legally touched with the ball in the hand of the fielder while not in contact with a base.
- c. When, on a force-out, a fielder tags her with the ball or holds the ball on the base to which the baserunner is forced to advance before the runner reaches the base.

- d. When the baserunner fails to return to touch the base, she previously occupied when play is resumed after suspension of play.
- e. When a baserunner physically passes a preceding baserunner before that runner has been put out.

**EFFECT:** *Sec. 8a-e: The ball is in play and the baserunner is out.*

**EXCEPTION:** *When the preceding runner was obstructed, a runner shall not be out for passing an obstructed runner.*

- f. When a baserunner leaves her base to advance to another base before a caught fly ball has touched a fielder, provided the ball is returned to a fielder and properly appealed.
- g. 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 she missed.

**REFER TO RULE 1, SECTION 2.**

- h. When the batter-baserunner legally overruns first base, attempts to run to second base and is legally touched while off base.
- i. When in running or sliding for home plate, she fails to touch home plate and makes no attempt to return to the base when a fielder holds the ball in her hand while touching home plate and appeals to the umpire for the decision.

**EFFECT:** *Sec. 8f-i:*

- (1) 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 pitch or defensive team has the field. The defensive team has “left the field” when the pitcher and all infielders have left fair territory on their way to the bench or dugout area.
- (2) The ball is in play and the baserunner is out.
- (3) (FP ONLY) Baserunners may leave their base on live ball appeal plays when the ball leaves the eight-foot (2.44m) radius around the pitcher’s plate; or when the ball leaves the pitcher’s possession; or when the pitcher makes a throwing motion indicating a play or fake throw.
- (4) (FP and SP) Once the ball has been returned to the infield and time has been called, a manager, coach, or player with or without possession of the ball, may make a verbal appeal on a runner missing a base or leaving a base too soon. The administering umpire should acknowledge the appeal, and then make a decision on the play. Baserunners cannot leave their base during this period, as the ball remains dead until the next pitch.

**NOTE:** (a) If the pitcher has possession of the ball and is in contact with the pitching plate when making a verbal appeal, no illegal pitch is called. (b) If the umpire has

indicated “play ball” and the pitcher now requests an appeal, the umpire would again call “time out” and allow the appeal process.

- j. A runner must avoid contact with any fielder that has chance to make an initial play on a batted ball. Failure to do this will result in interference being called on the runner. A runner may not interfere 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.
- k. 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 or in the judgement of the umpire, another fielder has an opportunity to make an out.

**NOTE:** *Sec. 8j-k. When baserunners are called out for interference the batter-runner is awarded first base and credited with a base hit.*

- l. When a runner intentionally makes contact with a ball which an infielder has missed.
- m. When anyone, other than another baserunner physically assists a baserunner while the ball is in play. The ball remains live.

**EXCEPTION:** *After a runner has scored and missed home plate and is physically assisted back to home, the ball is dead, the runner is out, and the run is nullified.*

- n. When the coach near third base runs in the direction of home plate on or near the base line 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 third base shall be called out.
- o. 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.
- p. When the baserunner runs the bases in reverse order to confuse the defensive team, or to make a farce out of the game. (See Rule 9, Section 7j.)
- q. If a coach intentionally interferes with a thrown ball while in the coach’s box or interferes with the defensive team’s opportunity to make an out while outside the coach’s box.
- r. 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 declared out.

**EFFECT:** *Sec. 8j-r: The ball is dead. Other baserunners must return to the last base legally touched at the time of or before the illegal action.*

- s. When a defensive player has the ball and the runner remains on her feet and deliberately, with great force, crashes into the defensive player, the runner is to be declared out.

**NOTE:** The runner does not legally slide and causes illegal contact and/or illegally alters the actions of the fielder in the immediate act of making a play on her. Runners are never required to slide but, if the runner elects to slide, the slide shall be legal.

**EFFECT:** *Sec. 8s: The runner is out, the ball is dead, and all other runners must return to the last base touched at the time of the collision, unless Rule 9, Section 8j or Rule 9, Section 8r applies.*

**NOTE:** *If the act is determined to be flagrant, the offender shall be ejected.*

- t. (SP ONLY) When the baserunner fails to keep contact with the base to which she is entitled until a pitched ball has reached home plate or before the pitched ball is batted.

**EFFECT:** *Sec. 8t-u: The ball is dead, "NO PITCH" is declared and the baserunner is out.*

- u. When she abandons a base, does not attempt to advance to the next base, and enters the team area or leaves the field of play. The baserunner shall be declared out immediately when she enters the team area or leaves the field of play.
- v. When the baserunner positions herself behind and not in contact with the base to get a running start on any fly ball, the runner is out, and the ball remains live.

## **Sec. 9 BASERUNNER IS NOT OUT:**

- a. When a baserunner runs behind or in front of the fielder and outside the base line in order to avoid interfering with a fielder attempting to field the ball in the base path.
- b. When a baserunner does not run in a direct line to the base, providing the fielder in the direct line does not have the ball in her possession.
- c. When more than one fielder attempts to field a batted ball and the baserunner comes in contact with the one who, in the judgment of the umpire, was not entitled to field the ball.
- d. When a baserunner is hit with a fair batted ball that has passed an infielder, excluding the pitcher, and in the judgment of the umpire no other fielder has a chance to make an out.
- 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-baserunner overruns first base after touching it and returns directly to the base.
- h. When the baserunner is not given sufficient time to return to a base, she will not be called out for being off base before the pitcher releases the ball. No pitch will be called by the umpire (Rule 7, Section 10d (FP) and Section 9c (SP).

- i. When a runner, who has legally started to advance, cannot be stopped by the pitcher receiving the ball while on the pitching plate nor by stepping on the plate with the ball in her possession.
- j. When a baserunner holds her base until a fly ball touches a fielder, then attempts to advance.
- k. When hit by a batted ball when touching her base unless she intentionally interferes with the ball or a fielder making a play.

*REFER TO RULE 9, SECTION 8k.*

- l. When a baserunner slides into a base and dislodges it from its proper position. The base is considered to have followed the runner.

***EFFECT:*** *Sec. 9l: A baserunner reaching a base safely will not be out for being off that base. She may return to that base without liability to be put out when the base has been replaced. A runner forfeits this exemption if she attempts to advance beyond the dislodged base before it is again in proper position.*

- m. When a fielder makes a play on a batter or baserunner while using an illegal glove. The manager of the offended team has the option of having the entire play, including the batter's turn at bat, nullified with the batter batting over, assuming the ball and strike count she had before she hit the ball, and runners returned to the original bases they held prior to the batted ball, or taking the result of the play.
- n. When the baserunner is hit by a fair batted ball after it is touched or touches any fielder, including the pitcher.

#### **Sec. 10 COURTESY RUNNER (FP ONLY)**

- a. The team at bat may use courtesy runners for the pitcher and/or catcher at any time. The same runner may not be used for both positions. During the entire game, neither the pitcher nor the catcher will be required to leave the game under such circumstances.
- b. Players who have participated in the game in any other playing capacity are ineligible to serve as courtesy runners.
- c. A player may not run as a courtesy runner for the pitcher or the catcher and then be used as a substitute for another player in the same half inning.
- d. Once the courtesy runner is designated for that half inning, no other courtesy runner may return to run for the original courtesy runner. Exception: Should an injury occur, another courtesy runner or the catcher or the pitcher may run until she scores or is put out.
- e. If a courtesy runner fails to report, the manager will be removed from the game. Note: The plate umpire shall record courtesy runner participation.
- f. In the top of the 1<sup>st</sup> inning only, the pitcher and catcher are identified as those listed on the lineup card as pitcher and catcher. Thereafter the pitcher and catcher are identified as the last players who physically played the position on defense. If a sub enters in the following half inning and gets on base and the pitcher or catcher re-enters no C/R can be used for the player in that half inning.

## Sec. 11 LOOK BACK RULE

Look Back Rule (FP) – The “Look Back” rule will be in effect when the ball is live, the batter-runner has touched first base or has been declared out, and the pitcher has possession and control of the ball in the eight-foot (2.44m) radius of the pitcher’s plate. The pitcher is considered to be in the eight-foot (2.44m) radius of the pitcher’s plate when both feet are on or within the lines. When the baserunner fails to keep contact with the base to which she is entitled until the ball leaves the pitcher’s hand, the baserunner will be declared out. When a baserunner is legitimately off her base after a pitch or the result of a batter completing her turn at bat while the pitcher has the ball with an eight-foot (2.44m) radius on the pitcher’s plate, the runner may stop once, but then she must immediately attempt to advance to the next base or immediately return to her base.

- (1) Failure to immediately proceed to the next base or return to her base once the pitcher has the ball within the eight-foot (2.44m) radius of the pitcher’s plate will result in the baserunner being declared out.
- (2) Once the runner returns to a base for any reason, she will be declared out if she leaves said base, unless a play is made on her or another runner (a fake throw is considered a play); the pitcher no longer has possession of the ball in the eight-foot (2.44m) radius; or the pitcher releases the ball by a pitch to the batter.

**NOTE:** A base on balls or dropped third strike, on which the runner is entitled to run, is treated the same as a batted ball. The batter-baserunner may continue past first base and is entitled to run toward second base as long as she does not stop at first base. If she stops after she rounds first, she then must comply with Section 9t (1).



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## **RULE 10. DEAD BALL - BALL IN PLAY**

### **Sec. 1 THE BALL IS DEAD AND NOT IN PLAY:**

- a. When the ball is batted illegally.
- b. When the batter steps from one box to another when the pitcher is ready to pitch.
- c. When "No Pitch" is declared.
- d. When a pitched ball touches any part of the batter's person or clothing whether the ball is struck at or not.
- e. When a foul ball is not caught.
- f. When the offensive team causes the interference.
  - (1) When a batter intentionally strikes the ball a second time, strikes it with a thrown bat or deflects its course in any way while running to first base.
  - (2) When a thrown ball is intentionally touched by a coach or on-deck batter.
  - (3) When a fair ball strikes a baserunner or umpire before touching an infielder, including the pitcher, or before passing an infielder, other than the pitcher.
  - (4) When the batter interferes with the catcher or other defensive player at home plate.
  - (5) When a member of the offensive team intentionally interferes with a live ball.
  - (6) When a runner intentionally kicks a ball which a fielder has missed.
- g. When the ball is outside the established playing limits of the playing area. A ball is considered "outside the playing field" when it touches the ground, person on the ground or object outside the playing area.
- h. If an accident to a runner prevents her from proceeding to a base which she is awarded. A substitute runner shall be permitted for the injured player.
- i. (SP ONLY) When the batter bunts or chops the pitched ball.

#### *REFER TO RULE 8, SECTION 11.*

- j. (FP ONLY) When a wild pitch or passed ball goes under, over or through the backstop.
- k. When time is called by the umpire.
- l. When any part of the batter's person is hit with her own batted ball when she is in the batter's box.
- m. When a baserunner runs bases in reverse order either to confuse the fielders or to make a travesty of the game.
- n. When the batter is hit by a pitched ball.
- o. When in the judgment of the umpire, the coach near third base runs in the direction of home plate on or near the base line while the fielder is attempting to make a play on a batted or thrown ball, and thereby draws a throw to home plate.
- p. (FP ONLY) When the plate umpire or her clothing interferes with the catcher's attempt to throw.

- q. 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 a play.
- r. (FP ONLY) When the baserunner fails to keep contact with the base to which she is entitled until ball leaves pitcher's hand.
- s. (SP ONLY) When a baserunner fails to keep contact with the base to which she is entitled until a pitched ball has reached home plate or before the pitched ball is batted.
- t. (SP ONLY) After each strike or ball, or a pitched ball hitting the ground or plate.
- u. When a blocked ball is declared.
- v. When a batter enters the batter's box with or uses an altered bat.
- w. When a batter enters the batter's box with or uses an illegal bat.
- x. When a caught fair fly ball, including a line drive (FP and SP) or bunt (FP ONLY) which can be handled by an infielder with ordinary effort, is intentionally dropped with less than two outs and a runner on first base, first and second, first and third or first, second and third bases.

*REFER TO RULE 8, SECTION 11h.*

- y. When a fielder carries a live ball into dead ball territory.

**EFFECT:** *Sec. 1a-aa: The batter or baserunners may not advance on a dead ball unless awarded a base or bases by rule.*

- z. When time has been called and an appeal is being made by the defense during the dead ball.

**Sec. 2 THE BALL IS IN PLAY:**

- a. At the start of the game and each half inning when the pitcher has the ball while standing in her pitching position and the plate 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 to which they are entitled if the fielder fields a batted or thrown ball with illegal equipment.
- 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 a fair ball is legally batted.
- j. When a baserunner must return in reverse order while the ball is 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 baserunners are progressing around the bases.
- m. When a baserunner runs more than three feet (0.91m) from a direct line between that base and the next one in regular or reverse order to avoid being touched by the ball in the hand of a fielder.

- n. When a baserunner is tagged or forced 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 appeal play is legally being made.
- q. When a live ball strikes a photographer, groundskeeper, policeman, etc., assigned to the game.
- r. When a fly ball has been legally caught.
- s. When a thrown ball strikes an offensive player, except in cases of intentional interference.
- t. 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.
- u. When a thrown ball strikes an umpire.
- v. Whenever the ball is not dead, as provided in Section 1 of this rule.
- w. When a thrown ball strikes a coach.
- x. (FP ONLY) When a ball has been called on the batter. When four balls have been called, the batter may not be put out before she reaches first base.
- y. (FP ONLY) When a strike has been called on the batter.
- z. (FP ONLY) When a foul tip has been legally caught.
- aa. (SP ONLY) As long as there is a play as a result of the hit by the batter. This includes a subsequent appeal play.
- ab. (FP ONLY) If the ball slips from a pitcher's hand during her wind-up or the backswing.

**Sec. 3 (SP ONLY) THE BALL REMAINS ALIVE UNTIL THE UMPIRE CALLS "TIME," WHICH SHOULD BE DONE WHEN THE BALL IS HELD BY A PLAYER IN THE INFIELD AREA AND, IN THE JUDGMENT OF THE UMPIRE, ALL PLAY HAS CEASED.**

## RULE 11. UMPIRES

For additional information refer to umpire's manual online at [www.pony.org](http://www.pony.org).

**NOTE:** *Failure of umpires to adhere to Rule 11 shall not be grounds for protest.*

**POWER AND DUTIES.** The umpires are the representatives of the league or organization by which they have been assigned to a particular game; and, as such, are authorized and required to enforce each section of these rules. They have the power to order a player, coach, captain or manager to do or to omit any act which, in their judgment, is necessary to give force and effect to one or all of these rules; and to inflict penalties as herein prescribed. The plate umpire shall have the authority to make decisions on any situation not specifically covered in the rules.

### THE FOLLOWING IS THE GENERAL INFORMATION FOR UMPIRES:

- a. The umpire will not be a member of either team (i.e., player, coach, manager, officer, scorer, sponsor, or parent).
- b. The umpire should be sure of the date, time and place of the game and should arrive at the playing field 20-30 minutes ahead of time, start the game on time and leave the field when the game is over. His jurisdiction begins when he enters the field to check the bats and ends when he leaves the field following the third out of the last inning.
- c. It is recommended that the male and female umpire shall wear a powder blue short sleeved shirt, heather grey slacks and a cap. All other paraphernalia (i.e. socks, ball bag, jacket and/or sweater) should be dark, navy blue, and the shoes and belt should be black for both male and female umpires. A t-shirt is optional to wear under the powder blue shirt, however, if one is worn, it must be white. The plate umpire, whether male or female, in fast pitch MUST wear a mask with a throat protector. Body protectors are recommended for umpires in fast pitch and are optional in slow pitch.
- d. The umpires should introduce themselves to the captains, managers, and scorers.
- e. The umpire should inspect the playing field boundaries, equipment and clarify all ground rules to both teams and their coaches.
- f. Each umpire will have the power to make decisions on violations committed anytime during playing time or during suspension of play until the game is over.
- g. No umpire has the authority to set aside, or question decisions made by another umpire within the limits of his respective duties, as outlined in these rules.
- h. An umpire may consult his associate at any time. However, the final decision will rest with the umpire whose exclusive authority it is to make the decision and who requests the opinion of the other umpire.
- i. In order to define "respective duties," the umpire judging balls and strikes will be designated as the PLATE UMPIRE, the umpire judging base decisions will be designated as the BASE UMPIRE.
- j. The plate umpire and base umpire will have equal authority to:
  - (1) Call a runner out for leaving a base too soon.
  - (2) Call "TIME" for suspension of play.
  - (3) Eject a player, coach, or manager from the game for violation of rules.

- (4) Call all illegal pitches.
- k. The umpire will declare the batter or baserunner out, without waiting for an appeal for such decision, in all cases where such player is retired in accordance with these rules.

**NOTE:** *Unless appealed to, the umpire will not call a player out for having failed to touch a base, leaving a base too soon on a fly ball, batting out of order or making an attempt to go to second after reaching first base, as provided in these rules.*

- l. The umpire will not penalize a team for infraction of a rule when imposing the penalty would be to the advantage of the offending team.

**Sec. 2 THE PLATE UMPIRE SHOULD:**

- a. Take a position behind the catcher. He or she will have full charge of and be responsible for the proper conduct of the game.
- b. Call all balls and strikes.
- c. By agreement and in cooperation with the base umpire, call plays, fair or foul balls, legally or illegally caught balls. On plays which would necessitate the base umpire leaving the infield, the plate umpire will assume the duties normally required of the base umpire.
- d. Determine and declare whether:
  - (1) A batter bunts or chops a ball.
  - (2) A batted ball touches the person or clothing of the batter.
  - (3) A fly ball is an infield or an outfield fly.
- e. Determine when a game is forfeited.
- f. Assume all duties when assigned as a single umpire to a game.

**Sec. 3 THE BASE UMPIRE SHOULD:** Assist the plate umpire in every way to enforce the rules of the game.

**Sec. 4 RESPONSIBILITIES OF A SINGLE UMPIRE.** If only one umpire is assigned, his/her duties and jurisdiction will extend to all points. He/she will take a position in any part of the field, which, in his/her judgment, will best enable him/her to discharge his/her duties.

**Sec. 5 CHANGE OF UMPIRES.** Umpires cannot be changed during a game by the consent of the opposing teams unless an umpire is incapacitated by injury or illness.

**Sec. 6 UMPIRE'S JUDGMENT.** There will be no appeal from any decision of any umpire on the grounds that he/she was not correct in his/her conclusion as to whether a batted ball was fair or foul, a baserunner safe or out, a pitched ball a strike or ball, or on any play involving accuracy of judgment; and no decision rendered by any umpire will be reversed, except when he/she is convinced it is in violation of one of these rules. In case 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, will, if in doubt, confer with his/her associates before taking any action. But under no circumstances will 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.

- a. Under no circumstances will any umpire seek to reverse a decision made by his or her associates; nor will any umpire criticize or interfere with the duties of his or her associates, unless asked to do so.
- b. The umpire-in-chief may rectify any situation in which the reversal of an umpire's decision or a delayed call by the umpire places a batter-runner, a baserunner, or the defensive team in jeopardy. This correction is not possible after one pitch has been thrown.

**Sec. 7 SIGNALS: Refer to PONY'S Umpire Manual online at [www.pony.org](http://www.pony.org).**

**Sec. 8 SUSPENSION OF PLAY:**

- a. An umpire may suspend play when, in his/her judgment, conditions justify such action.
- b. Play will be suspended whenever the plate umpire leaves his/her position to brush the plate or to perform other duties not directly connected with the calling of plays.
- c. The umpire will suspend play whenever a batter or pitcher steps out of position for a legitimate reason.
- d. An umpire will not call "time" after a pitcher has started her windup.
- e. An umpire will not call "time" while any play is in progress.
- f. Umpires will not suspend play at the request of players, coaches, or managers until all action in progress by either team has been completed.
- g. (SP ONLY) When, in the judgment of an umpire, all immediate play is apparently completed, he should call "time."

**Sec. 9 VIOLATIONS AND PENALTIES:**

- a. Players, coaches, managers, or other members will 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. When a manager or coach is ejected from a game, he/she will immediately leave the field of play and complex; shall not participate in the management or coaching of the team for the remainder of the game; shall not participate in the management or coaching of the team during their next game.

**NOTE:** *When a manager or coach is ejected for the use of illegal player, the tournament play illegal player rules supersede this rule.*

- c. When a player is ejected from a game, she shall not participate in the remainder of the game and she shall not play in the team's next game. She shall remain under the supervision of the team's management and coaching staff.

**NOTE:** *When a player is ejected as an illegal player, the tournament play illegal player rules supersede this rule.*

- d. A manager, coach, or player who is ejected twice in the same tournament shall be suspended for the balance of the tournament and all future tournaments until he/ she is notified that they are reinstated by the Zone's Softball Director. The

manager, coach, or player shall attend an administrative hearing conducted by the Zone's Softball Director and other officials as deemed appropriate by the Zone's Softball Director. The purpose of the hearing is to gather the facts and circumstances and determine the appropriate penalties or actions, up to and including suspension and/ or withdrawing the teams PONY Membership.

## **RULE 12. PROTESTS**

**Sec. 1 PROTESTS WILL NOT BE RECEIVED OR CONSIDERED IF THEY ARE BASED SOLELY ON A DECISION INVOLVING THE ACCURACY OF JUDGMENT ON THE PART OF AN UMPIRE.** Examples of protest which will not be considered are:

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

**Sec. 2 PROTESTS THAT SHALL BE RECEIVED AND CONSIDERED CONCERN MATTERS OF THE FOLLOWING TYPES:**

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

**Sec. 3 PROTESTS MAY INVOLVE BOTH A MATTER OF JUDGMENT AND THE INTERPRETATION OF A RULE.**

*EXAMPLE: With one out and runners on second and third, the batter flies out. The runner on third tags up after the catch and the runner on second does not. The runner on third crosses the plate before the ball is played at second base for the third out. The umpire does not allow the run to score. The questions as to whether the runners left their bases before the catch and whether the play at second base was made before the runner on third crossed the plate, are solely matters of judgment and are not protestable. It is a misinterpretation of a playing rule when the umpire failed to allow the run to score and is a proper subject for protest.*

**Sec. 4 THE NOTIFICATION OF INTENT TO PROTEST MUST BE MADE IMMEDIATELY BEFORE THE NEXT PITCH.** (EXCEPTION: Player eligibility)

- a. The manager or acting manager of the protesting team shall immediately notify the plate umpire that the game is being conducted under protest. The plate umpire shall in turn notify the opposing manager and official scorekeeper.

- b. All interested parties shall take notice of the conditions surrounding the making of the decision which, will aid in the correct determination of the issue.

**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. For the purpose of this rule, the defensive team has "left the field" when the pitcher and all infielders have left fair territory on the way to the bench or dugout area.*

- c. Once the game is completed and both teams have left the field, no protest can be filed. EXCEPTION: Player eligibility.

**Sec. 5 THE OFFICIAL WRITTEN PROTEST MUST BE FILED WITHIN A REASONABLE TIME:**

- a. In the absence of a league or tournament rule fixing the time limit for filing a protest, a protest should be considered if filed within a reasonable time, depending upon the nature of the case and the difficulty for obtaining the information on which to base the protest.
- b. Within 48 hours after the scheduled time of the contest is generally considered a reasonable time.

**Sec. 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 scorers.
- c. The rule and section of the Official Rules or local rules under which the protest is made.
- d. The decision and conditions surrounding the making of the decision.
- e. All essential facts involved in the matter protested.

**Sec. 7 THE DECISION MADE ON A PROTESTED GAME MUST RESULT IN ONE OF THE FOLLOWING:**

- a. The protest is found invalid, and the game score 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 a protest for ineligibility is allowed, the team shall forfeit the game being played or the game last played to the offending team.



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## RULE 13. SCORING

**NOTE:** Failure of official scorer to adhere to Rule 13 shall not be grounds for protest. These are guidelines for the official scorer.

**Sec. 1 THE OFFICIAL SCORER SHALL KEEP RECORDS OF EACH GAME AS OUTLINED IN THE FOLLOWING RULES.** He/she shall have sole authority to make all decisions involving judgment. For example, it is the scorer's responsibility to determine whether a batter's advance to first base is the result of a hit or an error. However, a scorer shall not make a decision which conflicts with the Official Playing Rules or with an umpire's decision.

**Sec. 2 THE BOX SCORE**

- a. Each player's name and the position or positions she played shall be listed in the order in which she batted or would have batted unless she is removed or the game ends before her turn at bat.
- b. Each player's batting and fielding record must be tabulated.
  - (1) The first column will show the number of times at bat by each player, but a time at bat will not be charged against the player when:
    - (a) She hits a sacrifice fly that scores a runner.
    - (b) She is awarded a base on balls.
    - (c) (FP ONLY) She hits a sacrifice bunt.
    - (d) (FP ONLY) She is hit by a pitched ball.
    - (e) (FP ONLY) She hits a sacrifice slap hit.

**NOTE:** A slap hit is defined as a fake bunt, followed by a controlled swing, resulting in the runner advancing as would be the case with a sacrifice bunt.

- (2) The second column will show the number of runs made by each player.
- (3) The third column will show the number of base hits made by each player. A base hit is a batted ball that permits the batter to reach base safely:
  - (a) On a fair ball which settles on the ground, clears the fence or strikes the fence before being touched by a fielder.
  - (b) On a fair ball which is hit with such force or such slowness, or takes an unnatural bounce, making it impossible to field with ordinary effort in time to retire the runner.
  - (c) When a fair ball, which has not been touched by a fielder, becomes "dead" because of touching the person or clothing of a runner or umpire.
  - (d) When the fielder unsuccessfully attempts to retire a preceding runner, and in the scorer's judgment, the batter-baserunner would not have been retired at first base by perfect fielding.
- (4) The fourth column will show the number of opponents put out by each player.
  - (a) A put out is credited to a fielder each time she:
    - (1) Catches a fly ball or line drive.
    - (2) Catches a thrown ball which retires a batter or baserunner.
    - (3) Touches a baserunner with ball when the baserunner is off the base to which she is entitled.

- (4) Is nearest the ball when a runner is declared out for being struck by a fair ball or interference with the fielder, or when a runner is called out for being in violation of Rule 9, Section 8u and Section 8e.
- (b) A putout is credited to the catcher.
  - (1) When a third strike is called.
  - (2) (SP ONLY) When the batter bunts or chops the ball downward.
  - (3) When the batter fails to bat in correct order.
  - (4) When the batter interferes with the catcher.
- (5) The fifth column shall show the number of assists made by each player. An assist shall be credited:
  - (a) To each player who handles the ball in any series of plays which results in the putout of the baserunner. Only one assist shall be given to any player who handles the ball in any putout. A player who has aided in a rundown or other play of the kind shall be credited with both an assist and a putout.
  - (b) To each player who handles or throws the ball in such a manner that a putout would have resulted except for an error of a teammate.
  - (c) To each player who, by deflecting a batted ball, aids in a putout.
  - (d) To each player who handles the ball in a play which results in a baserunner being called out for interference or for running out of base line.
- (6) The sixth column will show the number of errors made by each player. Errors are recorded:
  - (a) For each player who commits a misplay which prolongs the turn at bat of the batter or life of the present runner.
  - (b) For the fielder who fails to touch the base after receiving the ball to retire the runner on a force-out when a baserunner is compelled to return to base.
  - (c) For the catcher, if a batter is awarded first base for interference.
  - (d) For the fielder who fails to complete a double play because of dropping the ball.
  - (e) For the fielder, if a baserunner advances a base because of her failure to stop or try to stop a ball accurately thrown to a base, providing there was occasion for the throw, the scorer must determine which player gets the error.

**Sec. 3 A BASE HIT SHALL NOT BE SCORED:**

- a. When a runner is forced out by a batted ball or would have been forced out except for a fielding error.
- b. When a player fielding a batted ball retires a preceding runner with ordinary effort.
- c. When a fielder fails in an attempt to retire a preceding runner and, in the scorer's judgment, the batter-baserunner could have been retired at first base.

**Sec. 4 A RUN BATTED IN IS A RUN SCORED BECAUSE OF:**

- a. A safe hit.
- b. A sacrificed bunt (FP) or sacrifice fly (FP and SP).
- c. A caught foul fly.

- d. An infield putout or fielder's choice.
- e. A baserunner forced home because of interference, or the batter being hit with a pitched ball or given a base on balls.
- f. A home run and all runs scored as a result.

**Sec. 5 A PITCHER SHALL BE CREDITED WITH A WIN:**

- a. When she is the starting pitcher and has pitched at least four innings and her team is not only in the lead when she is replaced but remains in the lead for the remainder of the game.
- b. When a game is ended after five innings of play, and the starting pitcher has pitched at least three innings, and her team scores more runs than the other team when the game is terminated.

**Sec. 6 A PITCHER SHALL BE CHARGED WITH A LOSS, REGARDLESS OF THE NUMBER OF INNINGS SHE HAS PITCHED, IF SHE IS REPLACED WHEN HER TEAM IS BEHIND IN THE SCORE AND HER TEAM, THEREAFTER, FAILS TO TIE THE SCORE OR GAIN THE LEAD.**

**Sec. 7 THE SUMMARY SHALL LIST THE FOLLOWING ITEMS IN THIS ORDER:**

- a. The score by innings and the final score.
- b. The runs batted in and by whom.
- c. Two base hits and by whom.
- d. Three base hits and by whom.
- e. Home runs and by whom.
- f. Sacrifice flies and by whom.
- g. Double plays and players participating in them.
- h. Triple plays and players participating in them.
- i. Number of bases on balls given by each pitcher.
- j. Number of batters struck out by each pitcher.
- k. Number of hits and runs allowed by each pitcher.
- l. The name of the winning pitcher.
- m. The name of the losing pitcher.
- n. The time of the game.
- o. The names of the umpires and scorers.
- p. (FP ONLY) Stolen bases and by whom.
- q. (FP ONLY) Sacrifice bunts.
- r. (FP ONLY) The names of batters hit by a pitched ball and the name of the pitcher who hit them.
- s. (FP ONLY) The number of wild pitches made by each pitcher.
- t. (FP ONLY) The number of passed balls made by each catcher.

**Sec. 8 (FP ONLY) STOLEN BASES ARE CREDITED TO A BASERUNNER WHENEVER SHE ADVANCES ONE BASE UNAIDED BY A HIT, PUTOUT, FORCE OUT, FIELDER'S CHOICE, PASSED BALL, WILD PITCH, AN ERROR OR ILLEGAL PITCH.**

**Sec. 9 ALL RECORDS OF A FORFEITED GAME WILL BE INCLUDED IN THE OFFICIAL RECORDS EXCEPT THAT OF A PITCHER'S WON-LOST RECORD.**

**Sec. 10 INTERNATIONAL TIE BREAKER (ITB).** In scoring, the run scored by the player starting as a runner at second base shall be charged to the defensive team and not the

pitcher. Depending on the judgment of the official scorekeeper, a run scored by any other player will be charged to the pitcher's ERA.



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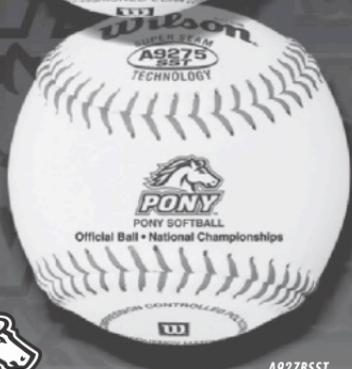
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## POINTS OF EMPHASIS

### 1. APPEALS

Appeals are described in Rule 1 Section 2, Rule 8 Section 2b-c (1-4) and Rule 9 Section 1 (f-i)

#### A. Situations.

1. Missing a base.
2. Leaving a base on a caught fly ball before the ball is first touched.
3. Batting out of order.
4. Attempting to advance to second base after making the turn at first base.

**B. Live.** In all games an appeal may be made during a live ball by any player in possession of the ball touching the base missed or left too soon on a caught fly ball, or by tagging the runner committing the violation if she is still on the playing field.

**C. Dead.** The dead ball appeal may be made:

1. Once all runners have completed their advancement and the time has been called. Any coach, manager, or player, with or without the ball, may make a verbal appeal on a runner missing a base or leaving a base too soon on a caught fly ball. The administering umpire should then make a decision on the play.
2. If the ball has gone out of play. Runners must be given the opportunity to complete their base running responsibilities before the dead ball appeal can be made.

**D. May Not Return.** A runner may not return to touch a missed base, or one left too soon on a caught fly ball if:

1. She has reached a base beyond the base missed or left too soon and the ball becomes dead.
2. She has left the field of play, or
3. A following runner has scored.

**E. When.** Appeals must be made:

1. Before the next legal or illegal pitch.
2. At the end of an inning, before the pitcher and all infielders have left fair territory on their way to the bench or dugout area.
3. On the last play of the game, and appeal can be made until the umpires leave the field of play.

**F. Advance.** Runners may advance during a live ball appeal play. If the ball is not dead in fast pitch, each runner may leave her base when:

1. The pitcher no longer has possession of the ball within the eight-foot circle.
2. When the pitcher makes a play on any runner (a fake throwing motion is considered a play). If time out is requested for an appeal, the umpire should grant it and runners may not advance until the next pitch.

**G. More Than One Appeal.** More than one appeal play may be made but guessing games should not be allowed. EXAMPLE: The runner misses second base by a step but just touches the corner of third base. Even though an appeal is made at third the umpire called the runner safe, an appeal may be made at second on the same runner.

**H. Awards.** An appeal must be honored even if the base missed was before or after an award.

- I. **Plate and Missed Tag.** If a runner misses home plate and the catcher misses the tag, the umpire should hesitate slightly. If no tag is made, he/she should declare the runner safe. If an appeal is made by tagging either the runner or home plate, the umpire should then make a decision on this appeal play.
- J. **Force Out.** If an appeal is honored at a base to which a runner was forced to advance and the run is a force out, no runs would score if it was the third out. If a forced runner, after touching the next base, retreats for any reason towards the base she had first occupied, the force play is reinstated, and she may again be put out if the defense tags the base to which she is forced. NOTE: If the batter-runner is put out or is the first out on multiple outs on the same play, this would eliminate all force outs.
- K. **Tag-Ups.** If a runner leaves a base too soon on a caught fly ball and returns in an attempt to retag, this is considered a time play and not a force out. If the appeal is the third out, all runs scored by runners in advance of the appealed runner and scored ahead of the legal appeal would count.
- L. **Missing First Base Before the Throw Arrives.** If a runner passes first base before the throw arrives, she is considered to have touched the base unless an appeal play is made. If an appeal is made, it must be made prior to the runner returning to first base while the ball is alive.
- M. **Fourth Out Appeal.** An appeal may be made after the third out as long as it is made properly. EXAMPLE: One out with runners on first and third. The batter hits a fly ball that is caught. Each runner leaves her base before the caught ball is touched. An appeal is made at first base for the third out. The defensive team then makes an appeal at third base before the infielders leave the infield. The runner on third would then be declared out also, and the run would not count.
- N. **End of Game.** If any situation arises which could lead to an appeal by the defense on the last play of the game, umpires should wait until all defensive infielders have crossed the foul line on their way to the team dugout, before leaving the infield. If teams line up for high fives, there is little chance for an appeal even if the defensive infielders have not crossed the foul line and umpires can leave the game at this point. No appeal can be made once the umpires leave the field.

## 2. BALL ROTATION PROCEDURE

A ball rotation procedure is used in championship play and many local associations are now following the same procedure. Listed below is this procedure.

- A. The pitcher has a choice of which ball to use at the start of each half inning. If both balls do not get into play in the first half of the first inning, the pitcher in the bottom half of the first inning MUST throw the unused ball. No choice is offered.
- B. The current game ball should be used until such time as it goes out of play or becomes unplayable. When the ball goes out of play, the umpire will throw another ball to the pitcher. If the pitcher does not like that ball, give her another, and place the ball the pitcher gave you, out of play for later. Do not put this ball into your ball bag. An umpire should never take a ball back from the pitcher and put it in his ball bag unless it is the start of the inning when the pitcher is selecting her game ball.
- C. After an inning is completed, the ball should be returned to the vicinity of the pitching plate by the team leaving the field or the umpire. The pitcher taking the field now has a ball with which to start the next half inning. The pitcher may request

another ball from the plate umpire, and the umpire should give her another ball, so the pitcher can select the ball she wants to use.

### **3. BAT WITH DENTS**

Legal bats are described in Rule 3 Section 1

In determining whether a bat with a dent should be legal or not, an umpire should utilize his/her bat ring to slide over the barrel of the bat. Should the bat ring continue to slide over the entire barrel, the bat would be legal. If the bat ring will not slide over the barrel of the bat, the bat would not be legal. The intent of this rule is that bats should not have a flat surface where the ball could be hit.

### **4. BATTING WITH AN ILLEGAL OR ALTERED BAT**

Batting with an illegal or altered bat is described in Rule 8 Section 1c.

If a batter uses an illegal or altered bat and receives a base hit, and the next batter plans to use the same bat, the following rule is now enforced. If noticed before a pitch (legal or illegal) is thrown to the second batter, the umpire will rule the batter who used the bat and is now on base out (if an altered bat, the batter is also ejected from the game), the bat is removed from the game, any runner(s) that is (were) put out prior to discovering the infraction remain out, and return all runners who advanced as a result of the batted ball to their position prior to the batter pitch. There is no penalty for the current batter unless a pitch (legal or illegal) has been thrown to this batter. If the pitch has been thrown to this batter, she is out (and if an altered bat, is ejected), and the first player using this bat has no penalty.

### **5. BATTER REMAINS IN BATTER'S BOX**

Batter Remains in the batter's box is described in Rule 8 Section 1

This rule is not intended to penalize the players; it is intended to speed up the game. The batter can still obtain a signal with one foot in the box and take a practice swing, however they cannot step out of the box with both feet for these purposes.

The batter may leave the box:

- A. Should there be a play made on the bases or on the batter-runner.
  - B. Time out is called.
  - C. If the ball is hit fair or foul.
  - D. On a wild pitch or passed ball.
  - E. On a swing, a slap, or a check swing.
  - F. On a three-ball pitch that the batter thinks is a ball, but the umpire rules a strike.
- If the batter leaves the box illegally a warning should be given. Any number of warnings on the same batter can be given. A strike should not be called without a warning. One, two, or three strikes can be called on the same batter under this ruling.

### **6. BATTING OUT OF THE BATTER'S BOX**

Batting out of the Batter's Box is described in Rule 8 Section 1a.

In order for the batter to be called out for batting out of the batter's box, one foot or both feet must be on the ground completely outside of the batter's box lines when contact is made with the ball. The lines of the batter's box are considered inside the batter's box. The batter is also to be called out if any part of her foot is touching home plate when contact is made with the ball even though she may be touching the lines of

the batter's box. The ball is dead. The batter is out whether the ball is fair or foul. In cases where there is no batter's box lines evident, good judgment must be used and the benefit of any doubt must go to the batter. If no contact is made with the ball, there is no penalty.

**7. CATCHER'S BOX**

The catcher's box is described in Rule 2 Section 4d.

(Slow Pitch Only) The catcher may not have any part of her body touching the ground outside the lines of the catcher's box until the ball is batted, touches the ground or plate, hits the batter, or reaches the catcher's box. It is a violation of rule 7 Section 3d and an illegal pitch. The intent of this rule is to prevent catcher's obstruction. Even if the catcher is legally within the catcher's box, catcher obstruction may occur.

(FAST PITCH ONLY) The catcher must remain in the catcher's box until the pitch is released. During a regular pitch, should the batter move toward the front of the batter's box, the catcher can move closer to the plate without penalty. At all times, the catcher must still avoid catcher's obstruction as the batter legally has the right to the entire batter's box. Obstruction does not require contact between the catcher and the bat or batter. The umpire's request for the catcher to move farther away from the batter to avoid injury or obstruction should always be obeyed. (See catcher obstruction under POE #27.)

**8. CHECK SWING/BUNT STRIKE**

Normally, there are four areas that constitute whether or not the batter has swung at the ball or checked the swing.

- A. Did she roll her wrists?
- B. Did she swing through the ball and bring the bat back, unless the batter draws the bat back before the pitch arrives?
- C. Was the bat out in front of the body?
- D. Did she make an attempt to hit the pitch?

On a bunt attempt where the batter puts the bat across the plate, unless the batter moves the bat towards the ball, a strike would not be called if the ball is out of the strike zone. In each situation, the umpire thinks in terms of priorities. First, was the pitch in the strike zone? If so, it is simply a strike. Second, did the batter swing at the pitched ball or in the case of a bunt attempt, did she move the bat toward the pitched ball? In either case, it is the plate umpire's call. If in doubt or if blocked out, he will call the pitch a ball. Umpires will not call the pitch a strike unless it was in the strike zone, or the batter swung at the ball. If the umpire calls the pitch a ball and the catcher requests help, the umpire should ask for help. On a missed bunt attempt with two strikes, the dropped third strike rule will apply. (Rule 9 Section 2b)

**9. COMMUNICATION DEVICES**

Refer to Rule 3, Sec. 12.

**10. CONFERENCES**

**A. Defensive.**

Defensive conferences are described in Rule 7 Section 11

A defensive charged conference takes place when the defense requests a suspension of play for any reason, and a representative enters live ball territory and communicates

with any defensive player. The umpire should advise the team representative when he declares a charged conference. A team is allowed three (3) charged conferences per seven innings. They may take all three in one inning or spread them out over the course of the seven innings. Once the three conferences have been taken, the pitcher must be removed for each additional charged conference. In the event of an extra inning game, there will be one (1) charged conference allowed per extra inning. On the second and subsequent defensive charged conference(s) in an extra inning game, the pitcher must be removed from the pitching position for the remainder of the game. If the pitcher returns to the pitching position after being removed and one pitch has been thrown, the pitcher is disqualified from the game. The following are not defensive conferences:

1. If the team representative enters live ball territory and informs the umpire prior to any verbal comments with any defensive player that the pitcher will be removed from the pitching position.
2. Shouting instructions from the dugout to the pitcher or other defensive player.
3. If a dugout representative confers with any defensive player during an offensive charged conference and is ready to play ball when the defense and umpires are ready.

**B. Offensive.**

Offensive conferences are described in Rule 5 Section 10

An offensive charged conference occurs when the offense requests a suspension of play and is granted time by an umpire to permit a team representative to confer with a batter, runner(s), or another team representative. Only one such conference is allowed per inning. The umpires should refuse to grant the second conference. PENALTY: If the offense insists on holding a second conference in an inning after being informed by the umpire that it is not permitted, the umpire should disqualify the team representative from the game. The following are not offensive conferences:

1. A team representative confers with a batter and/or runner(s) during a defensive charged conference and is ready to play when the defense is.
2. If the pitcher is putting on a warm-up jacket.

**C. Officials.** It will not be a charged conference to either team when the umpire for an official reason calls time-out. (EXAMPLE: An injured player, blood rule, scorekeeper problems, field maintenance repairs, etc.) A coach may confer with a pitcher, batter, or runner during the official's time-out without penalty as long as they are ready to continue once the problem has been resolved.

**11. COURTESY RUNNER (FAST PITCH ONLY)**

Courtesy Runner is described in Rule 9, Section 10

A Courtesy Runner (C/R) will be allowed for the pitcher or catcher once they have reached base safely. The C/R must be a player that has not been in the game as a substitute. She may have been a C/R in a previous inning. She cannot be a C/R for both the pitcher and catcher. The C/R may be used as a substitute in the next half inning but not in the same half inning as she was a C/R.

**12. DELAYED DEAD BALL**

There are five situations when a violation of a rule occurs, an umpire recognizes it and the ball remains live until the conclusion of the play. These situations are:

- A. An illegal pitch. (Rule 7 Sections 1-7, 9 for Fast Pitch and Rule 7 Sections 1-6, 8 for Slow Pitch)
- B. Catcher's obstruction. (Rule 9 Section 2d)
- C. Plate umpire interference. (Rule 9 Section 6d)
- D. Obstruction. (Rule 9 Section 5b)
- E. Batted or thrown ball contacted by detached equipment. (Rule 9 Section 5f) NOTE: Once the entire play is completed in each situation, the proper enforcement should be made.

### 13. DESIGNATED PLAYER (DP)/FLEX PLAYER

- A. DP rule replaces the DB rule.
- B. The DP position is never terminated.
- C. A DP does not have to be used.
- D. If used it must be noted on the starting line-up.
- E. A team using the DP starts the game with 10 but can play or end with 9 or 10.
- F. The DP is an offensive player and must be listed in one of the nine batting positions.
- G. The name of the player for whom the DP is batting (Flex) must be placed in the 10th position in line-up.
- H. A starting DP may re-enter one time but must return to the 10th position on the line-up card.
- I. The DP may be replaced by:
  - 1. Substitute hitter or runner
  - 2. Flex

**NOTE:** *In all cases, the DP has left the game, with one re-entry permitted.*

- J. The DP may play defense for any player in the top nine positions of the batting order, including the Flex.
- K. You cannot: Place the Flex player into the first nine positions for someone other than the DP, this results in an illegal substitution.

#### KEY POINTS

- A. The role of the DP/Flex player is never terminated.
- B. A team may go from 10 to nine players and back to 10 players any number of times during the game.
- C. The game may end with 10 or nine players.

#### EASY REMINDERS

- A. The DP can never be on defense only.
- B. The Flex player can never be on offense only.
- C. The DP and the Flex can never be on offense at the same time.
- D. The DP and Flex can play defense at the same time.

### 14. DUGOUT CONDUCT

This rule reflects on coaches, players, substitutes, or other bench personnel. Once the game begins, only players that are involved in the game can be outside the dugout except when the rule allows, or the reason is justified by the umpire. A coach walking on

the field for a conference is an example of a rule allowing a coach or player on the field, or if one of those in the dugout has to go to the restroom, this is an example of umpire justification. Players cannot be out of the dugout between innings standing near the batter's box observing the pitcher warming up (unless it is the on-deck batter), nor can they step outside the dugout to have a smoke or to observe the game from behind the backstop or side screen.

## **15. EQUIPMENT ON THE PLAYING FIELD**

Equipment left on the playing field is described in Rule 3 Section 10

No loose equipment, miscellaneous items or a detached part of a player's uniform other than that being legally used in the game at the time, should be within playable territory. Official equipment that may be left in the playable territory includes the batter's bat, the catcher's mask, umpire paraphernalia, any helmet which has inadvertently come off of an offensive or defensive player during the course of play or any equipment that belongs to a person assigned to the game. Loose gloves, hats, helmets, jackets, balls, bats (including the on-deck batter's bat) or any other loose equipment, miscellaneous item or detached uniform parts which are within playable territory, are not being legally used in the game at the time could cause a blocked ball or interference.

### **A. Thrown Ball**

1. If a thrown ball hits loose equipment belonging to the team at bat, a dead ball is declared immediately. If such action interferes with a play, interference is ruled. The ball is dead, the runner being played on at the time of the interference shall be declared out, and each runner must return to the last base touched prior to the thrown ball hitting the loose equipment. If no apparent play is obvious, a blocked ball is ruled, no one is called out, and all runners must return to the last base touched at the time of the dead ball declaration.
2. If the loose equipment belongs to the team in the field, it becomes a blocked ball and the overthrow rule applies.

### **B. Batted Ball**

1. A batted ball touching loose equipment is a foul ball.
2. A batted fair ball touching loose equipment belonging to:
  - a. The offense is considered a dead ball and runners return, unless they were forced to advance when the batter-runner is awarded first base on the base hit.
  - b. The defense is considered a dead ball and all runners, including the batter-runner, are awarded two bases from their position at the time of the pitch.

## **16. FAKE TAG**

Fake tag is described under Rule 9 Section 5b(3)

A fake tag occurs when a fielder without the ball deceives the runner by impeding her progress (i.e., causing her to slide, slow down, or stop running).

- a. Obstruction is called when a fake tag is made as mentioned above. The umpire will signal delayed dead ball and allow play to continue to its completion. The obstructed runner, and each runner affected by the obstruction, will always be awarded the base or bases she would have reached if there had not been obstruction under Rule 9 Section 5b (3). Remember, each runner is awarded a base

or bases only, if in the judgment of the umpire, she would have made the base or bases had there not been any obstruction.

- b. Continued fake tags should result in ejections. In flagrant cases where the player caused to slide by the fake tag and gets hurt, the offending player should be ejected without warning.
- c. If a fielder fakes a tag, but the runner continues on to the next base without sliding or breaking stride, there is no rule violation. In this case, the progress was not impeded. A warning should be given.

#### **17. FALLING OVER THE FENCE ON A CATCH**

The fence is an extension of the playing field, making it legal for a player to climb and make the catch. If she catches a ball in the air and her momentum carries her through or over the fence, the catch is legal, the batter-runner is out, the ball is dead, and with fewer than two outs, all runners are advanced one base without liability to be put out. Guidelines are:

- a. If she catches the ball before she touches the ground outside the playing area, the catch is legal.
- b. If she catches the ball after she touches the ground outside the playing area, it is not a catch. If a portable fence is used which is collapsible and a defensive player is standing on the fence, it is ruled a legal catch. A defensive player can climb a fence to make a catch, so she should be able to stand on a fence which has fallen to the ground. There should be no doubt left in an umpire's judgment whether the fence is on the ground, six inches off the ground, or three feet off the ground when the defender steps on it. As long as the defensive player has not stepped outside the playing area (other side of the fence) the catch will be legal.

#### **18. FORCE OUT**

A force out can be made by tagging a runner who is forced to advance to a base as the result of the batter becoming a batter-runner, or by touching the base. NOTE: It is not possible to have a force out on a caught fly ball, as the batter-runner is no longer a runner.

#### **19. HITTING THE BALL A SECOND TIME**

Hitting the ball, a second time is described in Rule 8 Sections 3,4,5,7,9,11

When an umpire considers the act of a batter hitting the ball a second time, the umpire should place the act into one of three categories.

- a. Bat is in the hands of the batter when the ball comes in contact with it, and the batter is inside the batter's box, it is a foul ball. If an entire foot of the batter is completely outside the batter's box, she is out. Call it a foul ball.
- b. If the bat is out of the batter's hand (dropped or thrown) and it hits the ball in fair territory, the ball is dead, and the batter-runner is out. If the ball hits the bat on the ground, the batter is not out. The umpire should then determine whether the ball is fair or foul on the fair/foul rule. If the ball rolls against the bat in fair territory, it remains live. If it stops or is touched in fair territory, it is a fair ball. If it touches the bat in fair territory and then rolls to foul ground and stops, it is a foul ball. If the ball rolls against the bat in foul territory, it is a foul ball regardless.
- c. If a batter swings and misses the pitched ball but:

1. Accidentally hits it on the follow-through, the ball is dead, and all runners must return to the base occupied prior to the pitch.
2. Intentionally hits it on the second swing, the ball is dead, and all runners must return to the base occupied prior to the pitch.
3. Hits the ball after it bounces off the catcher or her mitt, the ball is dead, and all runners must return to the base occupied prior to the pitch. In 2 and 3 if the act is intentional with runners on base, the batter will be called out for interference. If this occurs on strike three in Fast Pitch, Rule 9 Section 7 has precedence.

## **20. IMAGINARY LINE OR DEAD BALL AREA**

When a fielder carries a live ball into dead ball area, the ball becomes dead and a base or bases are awarded to all runners. If the act is unintentional, the award is one base. If the act is intentional, the award is two bases. The base awarded is governed from the last base legally touched at the time the ball became dead.

If a chalk line is used to determine an out-of-play area, the line is considered in play. If a fielder is touching the line, she is considered in the field of play and may make a legal catch or throw. If either foot is on the ground completely in dead ball territory (not touching the line), the ball becomes dead and no play may be made. If a player has one foot inside the line or touching the line, and another foot in the air at the time the catch is made, the catch is legal, and the batter is out. If the fielder then steps into dead ball area (foot on the ground), the ball becomes dead and all runners are awarded one base from the last base touched when the ball became dead.

Defensive players cannot take advantage and intentionally throw or step into a dead ball area in order to prevent a runner who has missed a base or left a base too soon from returning to the base. If it is ruled the defensive player intentionally threw the ball or stepped into the dead ball area, allow the runner to return to the base.

## **21. INTENTIONALLY DROPPED BALL**

Intentionally Dropped ball is described by Rule 8 Section 11h

The ball cannot be intentionally dropped unless the fielder has actually caught then dropped it. Merely guiding the ball to the ground should not be considered an intentionally dropped ball.

## **22. INTENTIONAL WALK**

Maximum of three (3) intentional walks per inning. The Coach, pitcher or catcher of the defensive team may request an intentional walk either before or during the plate appearance. The batter must be in the batter's box, the ball is dead, and no pitch needs to be thrown.

## **23. INTERFERENCE**

Interference is defined as the act of an offensive player or team member that impedes, hinders, or confuses a defensive player attempting to execute a play. It may be in the form of physical contact, verbal distraction, visual distraction, or any type of distraction that would hinder the fielder in the execution of the play. Defensive players must be given the opportunity to field the ball anywhere on the playing field or throw the ball without being hindered.

- a. Runner interference includes: 1) a runner or batter-runner who interferes with a fielder executing a play, 2) a runner or batter-runner who is hit by a fair untouched batted ball, or 3) intentionally interfering with a thrown ball.
  - 1. When a runner interferes with a fielder, the umpire must determine if the interference occurred before or after the runner who interfered was put out and then apply the proper rule.
  - 2. When a runner is hit by a fair batted ball, it is interference if it occurred before it passed an infielder (excluding the pitcher) provided the runner was not in contact with the base. It is not interference if the batted ball touched or was touched by a player before it hit the runner, or if the runner was standing in foul territory.
  - 3. A runner could be standing on a base and a defensive player bumps the runner while watching the flight of the ball. If the defensive player fails to make a catch on a catchable ball, it is the umpire's judgment whether interference should or should not be called. The rule provides that a runner must vacate any space needed by a fielder to make a play on a batted ball, unless the runner has contact with a legally occupied base when the hindrance occurs. In this case, the runner should not be called out unless the hindrance is intentional.
  - 4. If interference occurs by the runner on a foul fly ball not caught, the runner is out, a strike is called, the ball is dead, and the batter remains at bat.
  - 5. For crash interference, refer to POE #23h.
- b. Batter interference occurs while the batter is at bat and before she has hit a playable ball. It occurs in fast pitch when the batter intentionally interferes with the catcher's throw on an attempted steal or when she interferes with the catcher on a play at the plate. The batter's box is not a sanctuary for the batter when a play is being made at the plate. It could also occur when a batter releases her bat in such a manner that it hits the catcher and prevents her from making a play. If the batter merely drops her bat and the catcher trips over it, there is no interference. Batter interference is also described in POE #19c.
- c. On-deck batters may be charged with interference if they interfere with a throw and a possible tag on a runner, or a fielder's opportunity to make an out on a fly ball.
- d. Coach's interference occurs when a base coach runs toward home and draws a throw or when he interferes with a fielder attempting to catch or throw a ball. The coach's box is not a sanctuary.
- e. Spectator interference occurs when a spectator:
  - 1. Enters the field and interferes with a play.

***EFFECT:*** *The batter and runner(s) shall be placed where in the umpire's judgment they would have made, had the interference not occurred. The field belongs to the fielder and the stands belong to the spectators.*

- 2. Reaches onto the field from the stands and prevents a fielder from catching a fly ball in the field of play.

**EFFECT:** *A dead ball is ruled, and the batter is called out. All runners shall be placed where in the umpire's judgment they would have made, had the interference not occurred. It is not interference if the fielder reaches into the stands.*

**f.** Umpire inference occurs:

1. When an umpire is hit by a fair, untouched batted ball before it passes an infielder (excluding the pitcher). The batter-runner is awarded first base (exception to the statement that someone must be called out on inference).
2. (Fast Pitch Only) When an umpire interferes with a catcher's attempt to put out a runner stealing, or an attempted pick-off from the catcher to any base. It is interference only if the runner is not put out, in which case she is returned to her base. In no other case is umpire interference ruled.  
When batter, batter-runner, runner, on-deck batter, or coach interference occurs, the ball is dead, someone must be called out, and each other runner must return to the last base touched at the time of the interference.

**g.** Offensive team interference could occur on thrown ball striking loose equipment left on the playing field should there actually be a play interfered with (See POE #15).

**h.** Crashing into a fielder with the ball (interference)

In order to prevent injury and protect the defensive player attempting to make a play on a runner, the runner must be called out if she remains on her feet and crashes into a defensive player holding the ball and waiting to apply a tag. In order to prevent the crash ruling, the runner can slide, jump over the top of the defender holding the ball, go around the defender (if outside the three-foot lane, the runner would be called out), or return to the previous base touched.

**NOTE:** *If the act is determined to be flagrant, the offender will be ejected. A runner may slide into a fielder.*

1. When a runner is called out for crashing into a fielder holding the ball, the ball becomes dead. Each runner must return to the last base touched at the time of the interference.
2. If, in (a) above, the runner crashed into a fielder holding the ball before she was put out and, in the judgment of the umpire, it was an attempt to break up an obvious double play, the immediate succeeding runner will also be declared out under Rule 9 Section 8j.
3. If the crash occurs after the runner was called out, the runner closest to home plate will be declared out under Rule 9 Section 8r.
4. If an obstructed runner crashes into a fielder holding the ball, the obstruction call will be ignored, and the runner will be called out under Rule 9 Section 8s. An award of this type under Rule 9 Section 5b(1-2) does not give the runner the right to violate Rule 9 Section 8s.
5. If the flight of the ball carries a fielder into a runner this may not be interference.

**i.** Runner hit by fair ball

1. While in Contact With the Base. The runner will never be called out unless the act is intentional. The ball remains live or dead depending on the closest defensive player. If the closest defensive player is in front of the base the

runner is in contact with, the ball is live. However, if the closest defensive player is behind the base, the ball is dead. If the ball is ruled dead and the batter awarded a base hit, only runners forced to advance due to the batter being placed on first base shall be advanced one base.

2. While Not in Contact With the Base. The runner will be called out or ruled safe depending on the interference rule. (Rule 9 Section 8j, k, l)
- j. Throwing or carrying a bat  
If a player throws the bat intentionally in anger, the player should be ejected from the game for unsportsmanlike conduct. If the bat slips from the batter's hands, there is no penalty unless the discarded bat prevents the defense from making a play on the ball, and interference should be ruled.  
There is no penalty when a player carries a bat to first base or any other base. Should the player use the bat (intentionally or unintentionally) to prevent a defensive player from making a play, then interference should be ruled.

## **24. LOOK-BACK RULE (FAST PITCH ONLY)**

Look-Back rule is described in Rule 9 Section 11

When a runner is legitimately off her base after a pitch, or as a result of a batter completing her turn at bat and is stationary when the pitcher has the ball in the circle, the runner must immediately attempt to advance to the next base or return to the base left. The responsibility is completely on the runner. There is no obligation on the pitcher to look, fake, or throw.

- a. The runner does not have to return to base or immediately advance to the next base until batter-runner reaches first base on a walk.
- b. Failure to immediately proceed to the next base or return to her original base after the pitcher has the ball within the circle will result in the runner being declared out.
- c. Once the runner returns or stops at a base for any reason, she will be declared out if she leaves said base. EXCEPTION to (a) and (b): A runner will not be declared out if:
  1. A play is made on her or another runner.
  2. The pitcher leaves the circle or drops the ball.
  3. The pitcher releases the ball to the batter.
- d. If two runners are off base and two different umpires call each runner out, the umpires must determine which runner was called out first and return the other runner to the base she left. It is not possible to obtain two outs on the "look-back" rule.
- e. A pitcher fielding a ball in the circle is just another fielder and runners can leave their base. If they leave their base, the same rule applies while the pitcher holds the ball in the circle: once the runner stops, she must decide which way to continue or be called out.
- f. A base on balls or a dropped third strike is treated as a batted ball as long as the batter-runner continues past first base. When the batter-runner continues on to second base for scoring purposes, it is considered a stolen base. If the batter-runner stops at first base, however, and then steps off the base after the pitcher has the ball within the circle the batter-runner is out. The batter-runner cannot start back to the base, and before reaching first base, run to second base. If the

batter-runner commits to first base (moving towards first), the runner must return to this base. Umpire's judgment will determine committing towards a base.

- g. Any act on the part of the pitcher in possession of the ball within the circle that, in the umpire's judgment, causes the runner to react; is considered making a play.

**NOTE:** *Being in the eight-foot circle is defined as both feet within or partially within the lines. The pitcher is not considered in the circle if either foot is completely outside the lines.*

## 25. MEDIA COVERAGE

Media authorized by the tournament committee can be on the playing field but must not use tripods. Single pole support may be used. All media personnel must be able to move to avoid being hit by an overthrown or batted ball. Should they accidentally be hit, the ball remains live. All photographic equipment must be carried or on the photographer. No equipment can be left on the ground. If an overthrown or batted ball becomes lodged in photographer's equipment, the overthrow or out of play rule applies just like any other overthrow or batted ball that becomes lodged anywhere else on the field.

## 26. OBSTRUCTION

Obstruction is described in Rule 9 Section 5b

Obstruction is the act of a fielder:

- a. Not in possession of the ball which impedes the progress of a batter-runner or runner who is legally running the bases.
- b. Not in the act of fielding a batted ball which impedes the progress of a batter-runner or runner who is legally running the bases.

**NOTE:** *If a defensive player is blocking the base or base path without the ball, this is impeding the progress of the runner and is obstruction. In the past, coaches have taught players to block the base, catch the ball, and make the tag. Now the player must catch the ball, block the base, and make the tag.*

Whenever obstruction occurs, whether a play is being made on a runner or not, the umpire will declare obstruction and signal a delayed dead ball. The ball will remain live. If the obstructed runner is put out prior to reaching the base she would have reached had there not been obstruction, a dead ball is called and the obstructed runner, and each runner affected by the obstruction, will be awarded the base(s) she would have reached, in the umpire's judgment, had there not been obstruction. An obstructed runner could be called out missing a base or leaving a base before a fly ball was first touched. If the runner committed an act of interference after the obstruction, this too would overrule the obstruction. When an obstructed runner is awarded a base, she would have made had there been no obstruction and a preceding runner is on that base, time will be called. The obstructed runner will be awarded that base and the runner occupying that base will be entitled to the next base without liability to be put out. It should also be clear that when saying "a runner cannot be called out between the two bases which she was obstructed" does not pertain when another violation occurs while the runner is being played upon.

**EXAMPLE:** *A runner leaving second base too soon on a fly ball is returning after the ball is caught and is obstructed between second base and third base. If the runner would not have made it back to second base prior to the throw arriving, she would remain out.*

If the obstructed runner is put out after passing the base, she would have reached had there been no obstruction, she is running at her own risk, if tagged, would be called out. The ball remains live and other plays may be made. When the runner is obstructed during a rundown, a delayed dead ball is called. If the runner is tagged out after being obstructed, a dead ball is ruled, and she is awarded the base she would have made had there been no obstruction. If the ball is overthrown after the obstruction, the runner may advance. She may not be called out between two bases where she was obstructed. If other runners are advancing when an umpire calls time following a play on an obstructed runner, a rule of thumb for placement of the other runners is: If they have not reached half way to the next base, they are allowed to advance to the next base.

Catcher obstruction is described in Rule 9 Section 2d – Catcher obstruction is a delayed dead ball call. Should catcher obstruction be called when the batter hits the ball, and if she reaches first base safely, and if all other runners have advanced at least one base safely, the obstruction is canceled, all action as a result of the batted ball stands. If the batter does not reach first base safely, or if one of the other runners does not advance at least one base, the coach of the offensive team has the option of taking the result of the play or awarding the batter first base and advancing other runners only if they are forced because of the award. If catcher obstruction occurs when a batter steps out of the box in a legitimate attempt to hit the ball, the obstruction will take precedence and the penalty for catcher obstruction will be enforced. The batter must be given the opportunity to hit the ball. Should the batter delay her swing, and clearly the attempt is no longer to hit the ball but rather to interfere with the catcher's throw on a steal attempt or pickoff play, then batter's interference would be the ruling. (Also see POE #7- Catcher's Box)

## **27. OVERRUNNING FIRST BASE**

After overrunning first base, the batter-runner may legally turn to her left or right when returning to the base. If any attempt is made to advance to the second, regardless of whether she is in fair or foul territory, she is liable for an appeal; out if tagged by a defensive player with the ball, while off the base.

## **28. OVERTHROWS**

Overthrows are described by Rule 10 Section 5g

Runners are always awarded two bases on overthrows that go into dead ball territory or become blocked as a result of hitting loose equipment belonging to a team member of the defensive team that does not belong on the field. Regardless of who made the throw, two bases are awarded from the last base touched at the time the ball left the hand. Direction of runners has no bearing on the award. When an overthrow is made on a runner returning to a base, she is awarded two bases from that base. EXCEPTION: If she was returning to first base and the throw was from the outfield and it left the outfielder's hand while the runner was between second base and third base, but the runner was between first base and second base when the ball went out of play, the runner would be awarded home.

The award of bases is determined by the position of the front-runner if two runners are between the same bases at the time of the award. Two runners between first and second will be awarded second and third; however, if two runners are between second and third, both will be awarded home. Should the umpire make an error in the award of bases, after one pitch is thrown to the batter (legal or illegal) the umpire cannot change the award. When a fielder loses possession of the ball on an attempted tag and the ball then enters the dead ball area or becomes blocked, all runners are awarded one base from the last base touched at the time the ball entered the dead ball area or became blocked. (Fast Pitch Only) On pitched ball going out of play, the runners are awarded one base from the last base touched at the time of the pitch. If a batter receives a base on balls and the fourth ball gets away from the catcher and goes out of play, she will be awarded first base only.

## 29. PITCHING (FAST PITCH ONLY)

Pitching rules are described in their entirety in Rule 7

There are six basic features in the pitching rule. They are:

- a. **Contact With the Pitcher's Plate.** The pitcher must have both feet on the ground within the 24-inch length of the plate. The shoulders shall be in line with first and third base. She shall take a position with per pivot foot in contact with the pitcher's plate and her non-pivot foot on or behind the pitcher's plate. The hands shall be separated. The ball can be in the glove or pitching hand.
- b. **Signal.** A signal or the simulating of a signal must be taken by the pitcher while in contact with the pitcher's plate as described in (A). The ball must be held in either the pitching hand or the glove while taking the signal. The ball held in one hand may be in front of or behind the body. Taking a signal prevents a pitcher from walking onto the pitcher's plate and putting the batter at a disadvantage by throwing a quick pitch.
- c. **Preliminary to Delivery.** Both feet must remain in contact with the pitching plate at all times prior to the forward step. After taking the signal, the ball must be taken in both hands and held for a minimum of one second and not more than 10 seconds. The pitcher may begin her motion once the hands are brought together. No rocking movement which pulls the pivot foot off the pitcher's plate is allowed. If the pivot foot turns or slides in order to push off the pitcher's plate, this is acceptable as long as contact is maintained. It is not considered a step if the pitcher slides her foot across the pitcher's plate.
- d. **Start of Pitch.** The start of the pitch begins when the pitcher takes one hand off the ball or the pitcher makes any motion that is part of the wind-up after the hands have been brought together.
- e. **Delivery.** The delivery may not be two full revolutions. The pitcher's hand may go past the hip twice as long as there are not two complete revolutions. The wrist may not be further from the hip than the elbow. The delivery may not have a stop or reversal of the forward motion.
- f. **Step or Release.** A step (only one) must be taken, and it must be forward, toward the batter and within the 24-inch length of the pitcher's plate. Leaping, dragging, or pushing off with the pivot foot is allowed. Pushing off from a spot other than the pitcher's plate is considered a crow hop and therefore illegal.

### **30. PITCHER'S UNIFORM**

The pitcher's uniform is described in Rule 3 Section 11

A pitcher should be dressed identically to other players on the team. A pitcher may wear a batting glove and/or wristband on the glove hand and/or wrist. The batting glove may be white. A pitcher may wear the pitcher's toe plate on her shoe.

**(Fast Pitch Only)** A pitcher shall not wear any item on the pitching hand, wrist, forearm, elbow, or thighs, which may, in the umpire's judgment, be distracting to the batter. Batting gloves may not be worn on the pitching hand. Tape of any kind shall not be worn on the fingers.

**(Slow Pitch Only)** A pitcher may wear a wristband on her pitching arm and cannot have tape on the pitching fingers. No batting glove can be worn on the pitching hand. Glove cannot match color of ball.

### **31. PROTESTED GAME UPHeld AND RESCHEDULED**

Protested game upheld and rescheduled is described in Rule 12 Section 7c

When a protested game is upheld, the game is to be rescheduled from the point at which it was protested. Although the same line-ups are to be used when the game is resumed, there is no penalty for substitutions legally placed into the line-ups at this time. Even if a player was not present at the protested game, she is legal for substitution purposes when the game is rescheduled as long as she is on the roster. If a player was ejected or disqualified in the original game after the protest was filed, that player may legally play in the rescheduled game as long as she was legally in the game at the time of the protest, unless the ejection also drew suspension for unsportsmanlike conduct.

### **32. RUN SCORING ON THE THIRD OUT OF AN INNING**

Run Scoring during the third out of an inning is described in Rule 5 Section 7

A run will not score if the third out of the inning is an out at first base (batter-runner) or any another base if a preceding runner is forced because of the batter becoming a batter-runner. Missed bases could result in a force out. (i.e., if the runner from first base missed second base on a base hit and that was the third out of the inning when properly appealed. Any run(s) scored would not count.) An appeal play on a runner leaving a base too soon on a caught fly ball, or a missed touch of a bag while base running, is considered a time play and not a force. If the appeal results in the third out, any runner(s) preceding the appealed runner would score if they crossed home plate prior to the out.

### **33. SHOES**

The soles may be either smooth or have soft or hard rubber cleats. Metal spikes are allowed for 14U and above. No shoes with detachable cleats that screw ON are allowed, however, shoes with detachable cleats that screw INTO the shoe are allowed.

### **34. SHORTHANDED TEAMS**

(CONTINUING AFTER STARTING WITH FULL TEAM)

**(Fast Pitch Only)** A team may continue to play with one player less (8 players) than is required to begin a game.

**(Slow Pitch Only)** A team may continue to play with 2 players less (8 players) than it uses to begin a game.

- a. Anytime a team has less than 8 players (Fast or Slow Pitch) the game is a forfeit.
- b. If a player leaving the game is a runner, then the last previous batter who is not on base is allowed to replace the player as a temporary runner until she is put out, scores, or the half inning ends.
- c. Whenever the absent player is due to bat, an out is declared.
- d. Whenever a team plays shorthanded because a player leaves the game, the player cannot return to the line-up. EXCEPTION: A player being treated under the blood rule can return.
- e. If there is an eligible substitute at the game, or if an eligible substitute arrives before the game is over, the substitute must enter the game. Refusal to do so, makes the player ineligible for the remainder of the game.

**NOTE:** *If the team has only nine players, one is injured in the third inning, a substitute arrives in the fifth inning and is entered into the game, another player becomes injured, this is legal as the team can continue to play with eight. If the same team did not have a substitute when the second player became injured, reducing the number of players to seven, the game is forfeited.*

### **35. STEALING (SLOW PITCH)**

Stealing is described in Rule 9 Section 6h

Base stealing is illegal in slow pitch; however, the runner is not out. Because the ball is dead on balls and strikes, she is returned to the base held at the time of the pitch. Because she cannot steal, she may not be picked off either. A runner may be called out for failure to keep contact with a base to which she is entitled until a legally pitched ball is batted, touches the ground, hits the batter, or has reached home plate.

### **36. SUBSTITUTIONS**

Substitutions are described in Rule 4 Section

All substitutions should be reported to the plate umpire who, in turn, will report the changes to the official scorekeeper and opposing team. All substitute names and numbers should be listed on the official line-up card submitted to the plate umpire at the start of the game, however, if a player is not listed on the card and is on the official roster, she can be added after the game begins. A substitute is considered in the game when reported to the plate umpire.

A substitute is considered in the game after a pitch (legal or illegal) has been thrown, or a play has been made.

If a substitute has not reported, and is brought to the umpire's attention, the manager is removed from the game. All action prior to the discovery is legal. If the coach or player in violation informs the umpire prior to the offended team's protest, there is not violation and the unreported substitute becomes a legal substitute.

Any player may be substituted or replaced, and re-entered once, providing players occupy the same batting position whenever in the line-up.

A game is forfeited for substitution violation when a player, removed by the umpire (ineligible player) is back in the same game, or if the ejection or disqualification creates a situation where there are not enough players to continue the game.

37. **TIE GAMES OR GAME CALLED WHICH ARE LESS THAN REGULATION** When these games are rescheduled, the same procedure should be followed as stated in POE #32, **PROTESTED GAME UPHELD AND RESCHEDULED**.

In determining tie games after five innings (regulation game) have been played, the home team must have had the opportunity to bat and tie the score. If the home team has scored more runs than the visiting team and the game is called in the bottom of the fifth or sixth inning, the home team shall be the winner. If the visiting team has scored more runs than the home team in the sixth or seventh inning and the home team has not had the opportunity to complete its turn at bat, the game reverts back to the previous inning. If that score was tied, it would be a tie game. If the score was not tied, a winner would be declared if one team was ahead and five full innings had been played. If a game is called before five full innings have been played (four and a half if the home team is ahead), the game will be resumed at the point at which it was called.

**PONY Baseball and Softball has launched a set of new websites that are now available.**

**Corporate:** [www.pony.org](http://www.pony.org)

**Asia-Pacific Zone:** [asiapacific.pony.org](http://asiapacific.pony.org)

**Caribbean Zone:** [caribbean.pony.org](http://caribbean.pony.org)

**East Zone:** [east.pony.org](http://east.pony.org)

**European Zone:** [european.pony.org](http://european.pony.org)

**Mexico Zone:** [mexico.pony.org](http://mexico.pony.org)

**North Zone:** [north.pony.org](http://north.pony.org)

**South Zone:** [south.pony.org](http://south.pony.org)

**West Zone:** [west.pony.org](http://west.pony.org)

## TOURNAMENT PLAY RULES FOR LEAGUE TEAMS

**Section 1** Each league may enter as many teams as desired in tournament play conducted by PONY Girls Softball but must indicate the number of teams it will enter on the Membership Application. Tournament teams are to be selected from among eligible players in the league or interlock teams.

**Section 2** All leagues desiring to enter tournament competition must send to the Zone Director, not later than June 1, a completed Tournament Application form and check for tournament entry fee for each tournament team.

- a. The Tournament Application form will be provided to each league by the Zone Director.

**Section 3** Tournament teams may be selected by any manner desired by the league from among legal players who have participated in at least one-half of their team's games in league competition.

**Note: When choosing an All-Star team, only league(s) with three (3) or less teams per age division will be allowed to select players from those interlocking teams.**

- a. Tournament teams may be composed entirely of:  
FAST PITCH AND SLOW PITCH
  - (1) Pinto League: any combination of players of league age 8 and under.
  - (2) Mustang League: any combination of players of league age 10 and under.
  - (3) Bronco League: any combination of players of league age 12 and under.
  - (4) Pony League: any combination of players of league age 14 and under.
  - (5) Colt League: any combination of players of league age 16 and under.
  - (6) Palomino League: any combination of players of league age 18 and under.
  - (7) Thoroughbred League: any combination of players of league age 23 and under.
- b. Each Rec. /League tournament team affidavit shall consist of a minimum of 12 or maximum of 18 players. Any player's name that appears on the affidavit is eligible to play in a game even if her name is not on the line-up card.
- c. Each Travel/Select tournament team affidavit shall consist of a minimum of 10 or maximum of 18 players. Any player's name that appears on the affidavit is eligible to play in a game even if her name is not on the line-up card.
- d. A league may play in both fast and slow pitch tournament play.

**Section 4** Each league president shall re-examine the birth certification documents of all players on the league tournament team and, using the Eligibility Affidavit, form provided by PONY Girls Softball, shall confirm by this affidavit the eligibility of the players, as to age, residence and participation, who will represent the league on the tournament team.

- a. Any player whose name has once appeared on a PONY baseball and/or softball affidavit for any team will not be eligible to be placed on any other PONY baseball and/or softball team's affidavit for the balance of that tournament year.

Exception for the Drop/Add process for Travel/Select program.

- (1) The original copy will be returned to the winning team following the completion of the tournament and must be presented for examination at all future tournament games upon request of the Tournament Director.
  - (2) A copy of the winner's form is to be forwarded by the Tournament Director to the Zone Director concerned.
- b. The name of the player should be listed on the Eligibility Affidavit exactly as it is shown on the birth certificate.
  - c. Two copies of the Eligibility Affidavit are to be presented to the Tournament Director at the team's first tournament game.
  - d. Managers, Coaches, and players on Tournament Teams are required to wear an official Tournament Team Emblem when participating in tournament play at all levels. The Tournament Team Emblem will be worn on the right sleeve, or, if sleeveless, on the upper chest area of the jersey, on the front pant/shorts, or on a wrist band that is worn on the glove hand. Emblems must be placed in the same location on all players and coaches. These emblems are available through PONY Headquarters only. Tournament Team Emblems MUST be securely fastened to the uniform or wrist band. Staples and pins are not acceptable. *Any coach or player not wearing a Tournament Team Emblem will not be permitted to participate until the emblem(s) are presented.*
  - e. Bat boys (male or female), mascots (human or animal) shall not be permitted on the field or bench.

**Section 5** Tournament Team Managers must carry with them to all tournament games proper PONY Player Identification cards, birth certificates or other legal certification of birth, or legible photostatic copies of same, medical release forms, bearing the signature of the player's parent or legal guardian, documentary evidence of accident insurance, preferably in the form of a certificate of insurance.

- a. Birth certification documents must be presented to a credentials committee appointed by the Tournament Director before each level of tournament play begins, or upon request of an opposing team manager before a game to verify names on the Eligibility Affidavit.

**Section 6** Replacement of tournament players, after the Eligibility Affidavit has been presented to the Tournament Director at the league's first tournament game, may be made only in the event of injury or illness of a player on the roster.

- a. Replacement of a tournament team player must be supported by written certification by the attending physician and league president as to the conditions necessitating replacement. (1) Such written documentation shall be attached to the first copy of the Eligibility  
  - (1) Affidavit and carried with the team to all future tournament games.
  - (2) Allow one (1) replacement of a player with an eligible player for reason other than injury after tournament play has begun.
- b. Once removed from a tournament team roster because of illness or injury, a player may not be returned to the tournament team in that tournament year.

**Section 7** International Tiebreaker (ITB). Once play has begun in tournament game, the game shall be played to regulation length, seven innings, or six and one-half innings, (in Shetland (6U), Pinto (8U) and Mustang (12U) Leagues a regulation game is six innings or five and one-half innings) if the home team is leading, unless called because of the run rule, forfeited by the Decisions Committee, or time limit (if used).

- a. Games called for any other reason shall be continued as suspended games at the next possible scheduled time as determined by the Tournament Director.
- b. All tournament games must be played to their conclusion, producing a winner.
- c. **IN THE EVENT OF ABSOLUTE INABILITY TO COMPLETE TOURNAMENT PLAY:** In the event a level of tournament play cannot be completed before the absolute starting date of the next level of play, or the final travel day to allow the winner to reach the next level of play, the following shall govern:
  - (1) If no games have been played, all teams shall participate in elimination by the toss of a coin. Flipping sequence shall be as teams were paired on the playing bracket.
  - (2) If a portion of the first round has been played, teams which have been defeated in complete games are excluded from the coin toss, and winners of such games shall be excluded from the first round of elimination by coin toss.

**EXAMPLE:** Assume the first game of a four-team double elimination tournament has been played. Teams paired in the second game would toss a coin to determine a winner and that winner would flip a coin with the winner of the first game. The loser of the first game would be excluded from the coin toss.

- (3) After the first round of play, only teams that are undefeated shall participate in elimination by toss of a coin.
  - (4) When all teams have played and there is only one undefeated team left, that team shall be declared the winner.
  - (5) If the winner of the loser's bracket defeats the previously undefeated (or winner's bracket) team and it is not possible to play the "extra" game, a coin flip between the two remaining teams shall determine the winner.
- d. In the event of the absolute inability to complete National tournament play, the final schedule date would be the completion date.

**Section 8** Tournament teams must play at the sites and times designated by the authorized tournament officials.

- a. Tournament competition may require play at night under lights, may require teams to play more than two games in one day, and at earlier or later starting times than usual.
- b. PONY Field Directors shall have full responsibility for determination of team pairings, playing bracket, scheduling and rescheduling of games.
- c. When the official scorekeeper is not used, the home team will be the official scorekeeper and it is the obligation of the visiting team to verify the score at

the end of each half inning.

- Section 9** The various Tournament Directors shall have full responsibility for providing competent umpires for tournament play under their jurisdiction. These umpires must be PONY registered and display a PONY emblem over the heart, right sleeve of the uniform or a PONY umpire hat.
- When circumstances permit, umpires who have not worked in the games of the two competing leagues should be assigned.
  - No league official shall umpire in a game in which the league with which that official is affiliated is participating.
  - Umpires are expected to wear standard umpiring uniforms.

- Section 10** A Manager, three Coaches shall be selected with each tournament team. The Coaches must be of legal age in their state of residence, and the Manager must be 21 years of age or older. (Pinto (8U) only) It is recommended that the coach-pitcher be of legal age. It is recommended that at least one of the managing or coaching personnel be a female. When a manager and/or coach is replaced between games or levels of play, the Tournament Director shall be notified before the next game.
- The manager, assisted by the coach, shall direct the team on the field and shall be responsible for the conduct of players both on and off the field.
  - The Manager shall share in the responsibility for the conduct of players and shall be responsible for handling business affairs of the team, including supervision of transportation, feeding and housing.
    - Field Directors at each level of tournament play shall assist the Manager in matters pertaining to transportation, feeding and housing in cooperation with tournament hosts or sponsors who may be involved.
  - The Manager or Coaches shall be with the team at all times when a tournament team is traveling or housed as a unit away from home.

#### **TOURNAMENT DECISIONS COMMITTEE**

- Section 11** The Tournament Director or his appointed representative shall appoint a Decisions Committee of at least three persons, one of whom should be the Tournament Director.
- This committee shall accept any protest of an umpire's decision, other than those based upon an umpire's judgment. It shall immediately consider the protest in conference with the umpires and managers and then render a decision before play is resumed.
    - Such decisions shall be arrived at by the members of the committee only, based upon information received from the umpires and managers, and the committee's own observation of the play or situation in question.
  - If a Decisions Committee has not been appointed, an appeal shall be directed to the Tournament Director or his representative, whose decisions shall be final.
    - Managers should agree on a Decisions committee if none is appointed and the Tournament Director or his appointed representative is not

present. Should they fail to do so; the decision of the Umpire-in-Chief will be final.

- c. The Tournament Director, as a representative of PONY Girls Softball, shall be directly responsible for the supervisions of the actual playing of games and will serve as liaison between adult leaders of the competing teams and the sponsoring group.

**Section 12** The “Tournament Director” will be a PONY Girls Softball Field Director, or representative appointed by a Field Director, and will be responsible for the supervision of the actual playing of games on the field, as compared to a “Tournament Chairman” who as the head of the group hosting the tournament, is charged with arrangements for housing, feeding, preparation or playing facilities and general supervision of the host group.

### PROTESTS AND PENALTIES

**Section 13** Protests of any umpire’s ruling or other tournament conditions must be made to the Decision Committee immediately, before play is resumed.

- a. Under no condition shall a protest be made after a game is completed.
- b. Protests for use of illegal players shall be permitted at any time in tournament play.
- c. Penalty for use of an illegal player shall be removal of the player and the team manager from the game and tournament roster. The manager shall not be permitted to serve as a manager or coach for the remainder of the tournament season. The player shall not be permitted to participate in tournament play for the remainder of the tournament season. The player shall not be replaced.
  - (1) When the illegal status of the player is not established until after a game has started, or has been completed, the player and manager shall be removed at that time, but the game, or any portion of the game played up to that point, shall stand as played.
  - (2) For interpretation of this rule, the penalty shall be assessed against the person in charge, (manager or coach) when an illegal player is used.
  - (3) A manager or coach removed under this rule may not be replaced on the team roster for the remainder of the tournament season. Should the manager or coach all be eliminated under this rule, the team shall be removed from tournament competition at that point, and current bracketing adjusted by the tournament director.
- d. It is basis for protest when the Manager of a tournament team fails to present the Eligibility Affidavit, birth certification documents and medical release forms at least one hour before scheduled game time when requested to do so by the Tournament Director or his representative, or the Manager of the opposing team.
- e. The use of an ineligible player shall result in the immediate removal of the player and manager from the game and their continued ineligibility for the next scheduled tournament game played by that team.
- f. Penalty for use of illegal equipment shall be removal of such equipment from the game. Once illegal equipment is removed from the game, penalty for the

use of or reappearance of said equipment is the removal of the manager from the game.

- g. The Manager and Coaches with a tournament team are considered representatives of the league which the team represents. Seriously inappropriate conduct on the part of these adult leaders, on or off the playing field, may result in penalties assessed against the league.
  - (1) Such penalties, to be imposed by the Zone Vice Presidents following consultation with the headquarters, may involve rejection of the league's application for membership in PONY Girls Softball the following year or acceptance of the membership application on a probationary status.
- h. Grievous individual misconduct, on the part of adult leaders or players, on or off the field, such as, but not limited to, fighting, drinking, publicly audible use of foul or abusive language, may result in the removal of an individual from further tournament play for the remainder of the tournament season.
  - (1) Players removed under this section may not be replaced on the tournament roster.
- i. The forfeiture of a tournament game may result in the elimination of the team from the tournament.

**Section 14** Each entry shall assume full responsibility for expenses incurred in tournament competition.

**Section 15** Uses of artificial noisemakers are prohibited. A warning will be given to the coach, if action is not stopped; the game is a forfeited game.

#### **EQUIPMENT**

**Section 16** Both leather and synthetic covered softballs bearing the emblem of PONY Girls Softball are manufactured to specifications by several companies and are the softballs recommended for league play and required in tournament play.

#### **OLYMPIC PLAYOFF (TIE BREAKER) FORMAT**

**Section 17** For Division (or Pool) Play Only

Two or more Teams Tied - to determine the winning order the following format shall be used:

- a. Wins – Losses
- b. Head to Head
- c. Runs Allowed
- d. Runs Scored
- e. Coin Flip

## TOURNAMENT PLAY RULES FOR SELECT/TRAVEL TEAMS

### Section 1 Team

Each team may enter as many tournaments as they desire. Teams apply to attend tournaments through the online system. Each team is responsible for their expenses and tournament fees.

A team is comprised of a minimum of ten and a maximum of eighteen players, one manager, and a maximum of three coaches.

### Section 2 Qualifier Tournament Host Responsibilities

The Host's Tournament Director is responsible for the overall conduct of the qualifier tournament. This includes financial responsibility for all profit and loss; tournament schedule; verifying all participating team's birth certificates; verifying all participating team's insurance; providing fields and related facilities; providing PONY stamped balls; providing PONY umpires; accepting teams through the online system; posting winners in the online system; compliance with PONY Softball rules; and compliance with their PONY Softball tournament contract. A host who does not satisfy these requirements may be prohibited from hosting future tournaments.

### Section 3 Tournament Team Eligibility Affidavit (Roster)

- a. A player's name shall only appear on one roster at any time. A player may change teams through the add/drop process. The added player shall not play with the acquiring team until the authorized PONY Director approves the add/drop form. If a player participates in a PONY sanctioned tournament prior to receiving approval, the player and manager may be suspended for use of an illegal player.
- b. The Add/Drop process requires:
  - (1) The Add/Drop form shall be filled out completely and signed by all requested parties.
  - (2) A copy of the added player's birth certificate shall accompany the add/drop form.
  - (3) A maximum of three players shall be added to a team's roster per season, exclusive of injured player add/drops.
  - (4) After July 15, a player shall be added to a roster only to replace an injured player. Written certification by an attending physician on the injured player shall accompany the add/drop request. The injured player shall not be eligible to play for the remainder of the season. The season ends upon completion of the Nationals.
  - (5) The parent and player shall sign a new roster print out which contains the player's name.
- c. The team manager shall review the birth certificates to ensure the eligibility of players as to age, complete the online roster, obtain parent/guardian signatures, obtain player signatures and sign the roster. The player's name should be listed on the roster exactly as it appears on her birth certificate.
- d. The manager will present for compliance the roster, copies of birth certificates, proof of insurance, and approved add/drop forms to the Host's Tournament Director. These documents shall be available throughout

tournament play to the Host's Tournament Director, tournament officials, and opposing team managers.

- e. Bat boys (male or female), mascots (human or animal) shall not be permitted on the field or bench.

#### **Section 4 Games**

- a. Teams shall play at the sites and times designated by the authorized tournament official. All qualifying games must be one (1) hour and twenty (20) minutes or more, unless weather is a factor. No drop-dead time on any game played.
- b. When an official scorekeeper is not used, the home team will be the official scorekeeper. It is the obligation of the visiting team to verify the score at the end of each half inning.
- c. Once play has begun, the game must be played to its regulation length, unless called because of run rule, forfeited, or time limit. Games called for any other reason shall be continued as suspended games at the next scheduled time as determined by the tournament director. All tournament games must be played to their conclusion, producing a winner.
- d. In the event the tournament cannot be completed by the final scheduled date:
  - (1) If no games have been played, all teams shall participate in elimination by the toss of a coin. Flipping sequence shall be as teams were paired on the playing bracket.
  - (2) If a portion of the first round has been played, teams which have been defeated in complete games are excluded from the coin toss, and winners of such games shall be excluded from the first round of elimination by coin toss.
  - (3) After the first round of play, only teams that are undefeated shall participate in elimination by coin toss.
  - (4) When all teams have played and there is only one undefeated team left, that team shall be declared the winner.
  - (5) If the winner of the loser's bracket defeats the previously undefeated team and it is not possible to play the "if" game, a coin toss between the two teams shall determine the winner.
- e. In the event of the absolute inability to complete tournament play, the final scheduled tournament date would be the completion date.

#### **Section 6 Protests and Penalties**

- a. Protest of any umpire's ruling shall be made to the Tournament Umpire-In-Chief (UIC) and/or Decision Committee before play is resumed.
- b. Protests of other tournament conditions must be made to the Host's Tournament Director.
- c. An illegal player is a player not qualified to be a member of the team due to age or a player not listed on the team's roster.
- d. Protests of illegal players shall be permitted at any time during the game.
- e. Penalty for use of an illegal player shall be removal of the player and the team manager from the game and tournament roster. The manager shall not be permitted to serve as manager or coach for the remainder of the tournament

season and one additional year. The player shall not be permitted to participate in tournament play for the rest of the tournament season. The player shall not be replaced.

- (1) When the illegal status of a player is established, the player and manager shall be removed at that time and the game shall be declared a forfeit.
  - (2) For interpretation of this rule, the penalty shall be assessed against the person in charge, (manager or coach) when an illegal player is used.
  - (3) A manager or coach removed under this rule may not be replaced on the team roster for the remainder of the tournament season. Should the manager and coaches all be eliminated under this rule, the team shall be removed from tournament competition at that point, and current bracketing adjusted by the tournament director. The penalty for the use of an illegal player shall be the removal of the player and the team manager from the game. The manager shall not be permitted to serve as a manager or coach for the remainder of the tournament season and one additional year. The player shall not be permitted to participate in tournament play for the remainder of the current tournament season. (The season ends upon completion of the Nationals.)
- f. It is a basis of protest when the manager fails to present the roster and copies of birth certificates when requested to do so by the Host's Tournament Director, or his representative, or the manager of the opposing team.
  - g. The penalty for use of illegal equipment shall be removal of the equipment from the game. Once illegal equipment is removed from the game, the penalty for use of or reappearance of said equipment is the removal of the manager from the game.
  - h. Seriously inappropriate conduct on the part of a manager or coach, on or off the playing field, may result in penalties assessed against the league. Such penalty, to be imposed by the Zone Vice President following consulting with PONY Headquarters, may be rejection of the league's application for membership in PONY Girls Softball and Baseball the following year, or acceptance of the membership application on a probationary status.
  - i. Seriously inappropriate conduct on the part of a manager, coach, or player, on or off the field or play, such as, but not limited to, fighting, drinking, publicly audible use of foul or abusive language may result in the removal of the individual from further tournament play for the remainder of the tournament season. Players removed under this section may not be replaced on the roster.
  - j. Uses of artificial noisemakers are prohibited. The manager will be warned when an artificial noisemaker is used by the manager, coach, or player. If the action is not stopped, the game is forfeited.
  - k. The forfeiture of a tournament game may result in the elimination of the team from the tournament.
  - l. Spectators will not make disparaging remarks about players, managers, coaches, officials, or tournament staff; commit acts of unsportsmanlike conduct; or use artificial noisemakers. The penalty for violation is the host's

enforcement of local park rules on the spectator or such action as deemed appropriate by the Tournament Director.

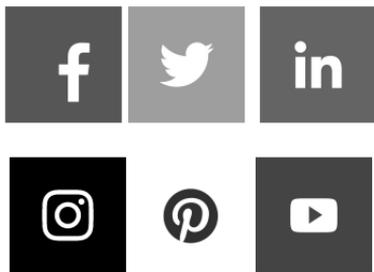
- m. When a team is removed from the field of play, for any reason, when a legal game should have continued, the umpire will grant the team one minute to re-enter the field of play and resume the game. If the team refuses to return to the field after one minute, the umpire will declare a forfeit to the opposing team. The Tournament Director will have the authority to remove the team from the tournament. Regardless of the Tournament Director's action, the manager of the team that refuses to continue play will be suspended automatically from the balance of the games to be played in the tournament and shall not be permitted to participate as team manager or coach until notified by PONY Zone administration. PONY Zone administration will conduct an administrative review into the circumstances and impose additional penalties or actions, as they deem appropriate, on the manager and league.

#### **Section 7 Tie Breaker format**

Two or more teams tied - to determine the winning order the following format shall be used:

- a. Wins – Losses
- b. Head to Head
- c. Runs Allowed
- d. Runs Scored
- e. Coin Flip

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