



## MINOR DIVISION RULES

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**Philosophy:** This Division was organized to give Stevens Point area girls the opportunity to participate in organized softball competition. The qualities of personal and team discipline, teamwork, and sportsmanship will also be fostered in a developmental environment.

**Player Eligibility:** Any girl between the ages of 9 – 11 is eligible to play in the Division. Age will be determined as of September 1 of the current year or the corresponding age of their travel team.

**Minimum Playing Time:** No player in the minor league will sit more than one inning during a game and each player on a team should sit out at least one inning per two-three games based on roster numbers. *Also, players should not play the same position the entire game, and all players should play in the infield and outfield every other game.* Any deviation from the rule, including the discipline of a player, injury, or illness should be discussed with the opposing coach. Violations of the above rule will result in a forfeit. Every player on the roster will be listed on the batting order and will bat in that order regardless of the position she is playing in the field. A player arriving late may enter the game. The player will be added to the last spot in the batting order.

**Minimum Players:** A team must have at least six (6) players from its own team to play. If a team is short players to play the field, it is to use players from the opposing team as “defensive fill-ins” to have nine (9) defensive players. The “defensive fill-ins” are the last opposing players to bat in the previous inning (or the last players in the batting order if it is the top of the 1st inning). The “defensive fill-ins” must play in center field or right field. Each team will bat their own players in their lineup. Less than six players will constitute a forfeit and show as a loss in the record. However to allow the girls to play and practice, a team may be formed, and a game played.

**Division Games:** All games will be six innings in length if time permits. The visiting team gets the first base dugout and warms up down the 1st baseline; the home team gets the third base dugout and warms up down the 3rd baseline. Both teams are responsible for bringing out the bases before the first game. Both teams are responsible for putting away the bases after the last game. Each team shall be responsible for cleaning up their dugout and stands after their game. \*\* IF the game is tied at the end of SIX innings, OR at the end of the time limit the game will end in a tie.

### **Time Limit:**

- No inning shall start after 75 minutes after the game's first pitch has been thrown.
- The first game of a doubleheader will have a 75 minute drop dead time limit.
- The home plate umpire/scorekeeper shall keep track of this time.
- The umpire has the authority to adjust this time limit if necessary, because of injury or other delays during the game. The umpire shall notify both coaches of any such adjustments as they happen.
- A new inning starts with last out.

### **To Speed Up the Pace of the Game:**

- Catchers should have a pinch runner with two outs. The pinch runner will be the last out made.
- No infield practice between innings.
- Pitchers get 3-5 warm-up pitches between innings.
- Post your rotations & positions in the dugout.
- Limit team cheers between innings.

**Canceled or Suspended Games:** Games called because of the weather will not normally be made up. Four innings constitute a complete game.

**Lightning:** See Separate ASA Guidelines

*Amended & Adopted January 2023*

**Protests:** Protests on rule interpretations should be made according to the official ASA Softball Rules. Protests should be filed with the Division Director who shall appoint a panel of three board members to rule on the protest. Their decisions shall be final. Protests cannot be made on judgment calls.

**Uniforms:** Socks and a league t-shirt will be provided for each player to keep. Softball pants are available upon request and must be returned at the end of the season. League equipment should be used only for practices and games. Coaches are required to keep an accurate record of team equipment.

**Unsportsmanlike Conduct:** Unsportsmanlike conduct shown by players, coaches, or fans will result in one warning from the umpire. (Example: foul language, arguing calls etc.) A second offense will result in ejection from the game. That person must leave the ballpark. Division Directors should be notified of any incident. Managers, coaches, and scorekeepers are to remain in their dugout with only the coach to enter the field of play, with the umpire's permission to discuss a call. Non-team personnel are not allowed in the dugout. The use of tobacco and alcoholic beverages in any form is prohibited on the playing field, benches, and dugouts. Coaches should ask all parents to refrain from "coaching from the stands."

**Scorekeeping and Reporting:** The scorekeeper shall keep the official scorebook and notify the Point Fastpitch website coordinator.

**Umpires & Announcers:** The league will provide one umpire per game (plate umpire). A coach must remain on the field while their team is playing defense. In addition to instructing the players between pitches, this coach will also serve as the base umpire when the home plate umpire requests help on a call. The Division Director may intervene on his/her discretion at any time. In the event a league announcer is not available, the visiting team shall provide an adult announcer for the purpose of announcing batters before their at bat.

**Hit by Pitch:** A player must attempt to get out of the way. It is up to the umpire whether or not the player advances to first base.

#### **Special Minor Division Rules:**

- Pitching:
  - The pitching distance shall be 35 feet.
  - The pitcher must begin with one foot on the pitching rubber and remain in contact with the pitching rubber until the ball is released.
  - Any form of underhand pitching will be allowed, including windmill.
  - A girl may pitch a maximum of 3 innings per game. A pitcher may not pitch more than 2 consecutive innings. Any part of any inning pitched counts as an entire inning and a player may only return as a pitcher once per game. There is no age restriction on pitchers (e.g. 11 year olds may pitch the entire game). This rule is amendable at game time upon coaches' agreement and pitching availability.
  - There are walks except if:
    - The bases are loaded and the count reaches four balls or
    - Any combination of the pitchers on the pitching team have already walked three batters in the current inning and the count reaches four balls. In either case, the coach from the batting team will pitch, picking up the original strike count. The count will continue with the umpire calling balls and strikes.
  - The ball will be considered dead when the pitcher receives the ball from the catcher within the circle.
- Stealing
  - Stealing of 3rd base ONLY will be permitted.
  - Base stealers that do not attempt to slide will be called out.
  - Further advancement on an overthrow during a steal is not allowed. (No stealing home).
- Leading Off

- Players may take a lead or steal as the ball crosses the plate or when the ball hits the ground. Players can be thrown out at first by the catcher after a non-hit ball, but cannot advance on an overthrow.
- A runner leaving base early calls for the runner to return to the original base and a team warning on the first offense. The second offense by a team will result in the runner being called out.
- Bunting
  - Bunting will be permitted
  - Players may not bunt when a coach is pitching.
  - No showing bunt and swinging away.
- A player must make an effort to slide when a play is being made on her. The runner must make an effort to avoid a collision with a fielder. The runner will be called out if a collision was deemed by the umpire to have been caused by the runner.
- The infield fly rule will not be called.
- Players must wear protective equipment when batting, catching, or coaching. Catchers should keep their equipment on between innings unless they are scheduled to bat in that inning.
- A missed base by a runner must be seen and called by the base or field umpire. Coach appeals can be made but are not required for the umpire to make this call. An appeal must be made before the next pitch is made.
- All but four infielders excluding the pitcher and catcher shall be on the outfield grass and no infielder except the pitcher shall be more than three steps in front of a base at the start of a pitch.
- A 16' pitchers' circle will be used. Once the ball is in the pitcher's control inside the circle, it is a dead ball and all base runners must commit to a base or be called out.
- A team may score a maximum of five (5) runs per inning. However, unlimited runs in the 6th inning.
- All players present will bat. 10 players will be on defense with rotation (see minimum playing time section) to assure all players receive fair playing time.
- Dropped ball third strike is NOT in effect.
- The draft for the Minor Division will be designed to divide teams' talent as equally as possible.
- Coaches must start in the pitcher's circle during coach pitch.
- The fielding team's pitcher must remain within the 16' circle during a coach pitch situation.

#### General Guidelines for Running Situations:

- Base runner(s) are allowed to take, at their own risk, extra bases on overthrow/catching errors made in a defensive attempt to tag a base, tag a runner out or get the ball into the pitching circle. Players can not advance to home on error during a steal.

#### SAFETY SUGGESTION:

- On-deck batters should be in the circle on the backside of the hitter. Example: Right-handed hitter, on-deck batter should be on the 3rd base side, regardless of dugout location.

For all rules not addressed above, the current ASA rules will apply

NOTE: No set of rules can completely cover each situation that may occur during a game or during the course of the season. Coaches, players, and umpires are expected to meet any unexpected situation with common sense and with cooperation with the good of the program in mind. The Board of Directors reserves the right to make rulings or interpretations on the rules covered in the rule book and our addendums to those rules. Coaches will be expected to abide by those interpretations. Failure to do so may result in the Board taking disciplinary actions. It is not always the strict letter of the rule that may settle a dispute, but the intent of the rule must be considered, and the effect the rule violation has on the outcome of the game. ASA rules will be followed in the event a situation is not covered in the Point Fastpitch program or special Minor Division rules. The umpire and/or Division Director's decision is final.