



JUNIOR DIVISION RULES

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

Player Eligibility: Any girl between the ages of 7–9 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: Every player will play the entire game. Extra players will be placed in the outfield. 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. *Each player shall play the infield for at least one inning per game.* 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 eight (8) 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 the outfield. 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. 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. The visiting team gets the first base dugout; the home team gets the third base dugout. 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.

Time Limit: To keep the games on schedule, the division games shall be conducted under a 75-minute time limit, with no new inning beginning after that time. A hard stop will be used during the first game of a doubleheader using the following procedure: 1) Time will be kept from the first pitch of the game by the umpire/scorekeeper. 2) The umpire has the authority to adjust the time limit, if necessary, because of injury or other delays during the game and shall notify both coaches of any such adjustments as they happen. 3) When the 75-minute time limit is reached, the player batting will finish their at bat, and the game will end.

Canceled or Suspended Games: Games called because of the weather will not normally be made up.

Lightning: See Separate ASA Guidelines. Later games may be played at the discretion of the Division Director.

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"

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 if needed by the home plate umpire. The Division Director may intervene at his/her discretion at any time.

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

Special Junior Division Rules:

Pitching: June games will be coach pitch. July game will be player pitch every other game. All playoff games will be player pitch.

- Player Pitching Rules:
 - 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. Any part of an inning pitched counts as an entire inning. Innings pitched can be non-consecutive, and a pitcher can only return as a pitcher once per game. There are no age restrictions on pitchers within the game (e.g. 9 yr olds may pitch the entire game).
 - The ball will be considered dead when the ball is thrown back to the pitcher.
 - There shall be 4 balls and 3 strikes. Strikes will be swinging and non-swinging strikes. NO walks.
 - Ball 4 and Coach Pitch:
 - If the count reaches four balls, 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.
 - 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.
 - After a total of 4, either 4 ball counts (walks) OR any combination of walks and hit by a pitcher that total four in an inning, each at-bat for the remainder of the inning will be coach pitch.
- Coach Pitch Rules

- The batting team's coach pitch. The fielding team's pitcher will play defense within the 16' circle while the coach pitches.
- The batter will get 3 strikes to get a hit. Strikes will be swinging and non-swinging strikes.
- If the batter fouls off the 3rd or an additional pitch, she will get additional pitches until she gets a hit or strikes out.

Hitting:

- All players present will bat.
- Players must wear protective equipment when batting.
- Bunting is not permitted.
- 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. If the ball hits the ground before hitting the player, the ball is dead and the player does not get first base.
- Dropped 3rd strike is not in effect.
- The infield fly rule will not be called.

Fielding:

- The Junior Division will use a coach from the defensive team as catcher. The coach must wear face protection, which will be provided.
- Players must wear protective equipment when fielding, catching, or coaching.

General Base Running:

- Sliding is encouraged but not mandatory. 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 deliberately caused by the runner.
- 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.
- A 16 foot 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.

Guidelines for Base-Running after Overthrows:

- Base runner(s) are allowed to take, at their own risk, one extra base on the FIRST overthrow/catching error made in a defensive attempt to tag a base or tag a runner out.
- Base runner(s) are not allowed to take an additional base on a second overthrow/catching error during the same defensive play
- No advancement is allowed on an error in an attempt to get the ball back to the pitcher in the circle.
Note: all other fielding errors are not considered FIRST overthrow/error under the runner advancement rules.

Run Rules:

- A team may score a maximum of five (5) runs per inning, regardless if it is the last at-bat or not.

Draft:

- The draft for the Junior Division will be designed to divide teams' talent as equally as possible with consideration for classmates, friends, and developing future league coaches
- Pitchers and those interested in pitching will be divided equally as possible to ensure each team has a pitcher.

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 Junior Division rules. The umpire and/or Division Director's decision is final.