

2011

NSA RULE BOOK STAFF

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

General Slowpitch Playing Rules	Pages 2 - 52
Church Softball	Pages 53 - 54
Coed Softball	Pages 55 - 58
Women's Softball	Pages 59 - 60
Hispanic & Indoor Softball	Page 61
Youth Slowpitch	Pages 62 - 66
Sixteen Inch Softball	Pages 67 - 68
Coed Sixteen Inch Softball	Pages 69
Masters Softball	Pages 70 - 71
Senior Softball	Pages 72 - 76
Military Softball	Pages 77 - 79
Industrial Softball	Pages 80 - 81
Black American Softball	Page 82
Native American	Page 82
Men's Open	Page 83
Fastpitch/Modified Softball	Pages 84 – 141
Adult Men's Fast Pitch	Pages 141 - 142
Eight Under & Coach Pitch Rules	Page 143 - 149
NSA By-Laws	Pages 150 - 175

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Changes & Additions are shown in bold & highlighted print.

NSA – The Players Association

INDEX TO SLOWPITCH RULES

(References are to Rule, Section and Subsection)

	<u>Page</u>	<u>Rule</u>	<u>Sec.</u>	<u>Sub.</u>
ALTERED BAT	7	1	1	effect
Bat Specifications	15-18	3	1	a-k, note
Batter in Box	32	7	1	d, effect
APPEAL PLAY	7	1	2	
Baserunner	42-43	8	8	f-j, effect
Batting Out of Order	33	7	2	a-c
Dead Ball Appeal	46	9	1	m
Appeal Before Time is Called	47	9	2	u
APPROVED BAT	7	1	3	
BALL				
Ball Rotation	7-8	1	4	
Blocked Ball	8	1	10	effect,note
Called by Umpire	34	7	8	a-g, effect
Dead Ball	45-46	9	1	a-y
Fair Ball	34-35	7	9	a-g
Foul Ball	35	7	10	a-e
Official Ball	18-19	3	2	note
BASE HIT				
Hits Runner or Umpire	38	8	2	d 1-2
	38	8	3	d
Batter Becomes a Baserunner	37-38	8	2	a-d
BASE PATH	8	1	5	
BASERUNNER	8	1	6	
Assisted	42	8	8	f
Award of Bases on Overthrow	39-40	8	5	e, effect 1-4
Contact with Fielder	44	8	9	c
Contact with Base	45	8	9	k-effect
Hit by Batted Ball	43	8	8	l
	44-45	8	9	d, k, n
Illegal Glove Used	36	7	12	
Interferes with Play	43-44	8	8	k, n, s
Must Return to Base	41	8	6	a-f
Obstructed	39	8	5	b, effect 1-3
Out of Basepath	42	8	8	a
Passes Another Runner	42	8	8	e
Two Occupy Same Base	37	8	1	e, effect
BAT	17-18	3	1	a-k, note
Hitting Ball Second Time	33-34	7	6	effect, exc. note
BATTER				
Becomes a Baserunner	37-38	8	2	a-d
Hit by Fair Ball	34	7	9	d
Hit by Pitch	34	7	7	g-effect

	<u>Page</u>	<u>Rule</u>	<u>Sec.</u>	<u>Sub.</u>
Illegal Glove Used	36	7	12	
Intentional Walk	37	8	2	b
Not Taking Position	32	7	1	a-e
Interfered by Catcher	38	8	2	c,1-3
On-Deck Batter	36	7	13	a- f
Out	35-36	7	11	a-i
When Out is Made at Bat	35	7	11	a- d
When 3 rd Out is Made at Bat	33	7	4	
BATTER'S BOX	8	1	7	
	14	2	3	c
	32-33	7	1	a- e
BATTER-BASERUNNER	8	1	8	
	37-38	8	2	a- d
	39	8	4	a- c
Over Running 1 st Base	45	8	9	g
	38	8	4	a-b
Runs Outside 3 Foot Line	41-42	8	7	e
BATTING ORDER	8	1	9	
Out of Order	33	7	2	a-c
Extra Player (EP)	22	4	2	b
Removal of EP	22	4	4	b-d
BLOCKED BALL	8	1	10	effect,note
BUNT	8	1	11	effect
	36	7	11	h
CASTS	20	3	6	d
CATCH	8-9	1	12	note/play
CATCHER'S BOX	9	1	13	
	14	2	3	d
	30	6	3	d-penalty
CHARGED CONFERENCE	9	1	14	a-b
Defensive	31	6	9	note
Offensive	27	5	10	penalty
CHOPPED BALL	9	1	15	
	36	7	11	h
COACH	10	1	16	
Assists Runner	42	8	8	f
Box	14	2	3	e
Draws a Throw	43	8	8	o
Interferes	43	8	8	r
CONDITION OF FIELD	25	5	4	
COURTESY RUNNER	25	4	10	
DEAD BALL	10	1	17	
	45-46	9	1	a - y

	<u>Page</u>	<u>Rule</u>	<u>Sec.</u>	<u>Sub.</u>
Carried Ball into Dead Ball Area	40	8	5	g, note
DISLODGED BASE	37	8	1	c
EJECTION FROM GAME				
Altered Bat	32	7	1	d-effect
	35	7	11	c
	42	8	7	i
Deliberate Crash	44	8	8	t-note
Violation of Rules	49	10	7	a– d
EXTRA PLAYER (EP)	21-22	4	2	a-d, note
	22	4	4	b
FAIR BALL	10	1	19	a-f, note
	34-35	7	9	a– g
FAKE TAG	39	8	5	b, (3), note
FLAGRANT OBSTRUCTION	10	1	20	penalty
FORCE OUT	10	1	21	
	38	8	4	a
	41	8	7	b
FORFEITED GAME	26	5	5	d, 1-8
FOUL BALL	11	1	22	a–d, note
	34	7	7	d
	35	7	10	a-e
FOUL TIP	11	1	23	exc., note
	34	7	7	c
GROUND RULES	14	2	2	
	47	10	1	a
HOME RUN LIMITS	28	5	12	note,exc.
Exceeding the Home Run Limit	29	5	13	note
Ball Touched Goes Over Fence	29	5	14	effect
Home run – not run out	29	5	15	
ILLEGAL BAT	11	1	24	
	17-18	3	1	a-k, note
	32	7	1	c, effect
	46	9	1	t
ILLEGAL PITCH	29-31	6	1 – 7	
ILLEGAL PLAYER	11	1	27	a-c,penalty
ILLEGALLY BATTED BALL	11	1	25	a–c
	17-18	3	1	a-k, note
	32	7	1	c, effect
	46	9	1	t

	<u>Page</u>	<u>Rule</u>	<u>Sec.</u>	<u>Sub.</u>
ILLEGALLY CAUGHT BALL	11	1	26	
Detached Equipment	39	8	5	d,note,effect
Illegal Glove	36	7	12	
INELGIBLE PLAYER	11-12	1	28	a-f, note
IN JEOPARDY	12	1	29	
IN PLAY	46-47	9	2	a-w,effect
INFIELD FLY	12	1	30	note
	35	7	11	e
	46	9	1	u
INNING	12	1	31	
INTENTIONALLY DROPPED BALL	35	7	11	f,eff./note
	46	9	1	u
INTERFERENCE	12	1	32	
	43-44	8	8	k-s,effect
By Batter at Home Plate	42	8	7	g
By Catcher (Obstruction)	38	8	2	c, 1-3
JEWELRY	20	3	6	c
LEGAL PITCH	30	6	3	a- f, effect
LEGAL TOUCH	12	1	33	
LEGALLY CAUGHT BALL	12	1	34	
LIVE BALL	46-47	9	2	a-w,effect
NON-APPROVED BAT	12	1	35	
OBSTRUCTION	13	1	36	note
	39	8	5	b,eff,1-3
OVERSLIDE	13	1	37	
OVERTHROW	13	1	38	
Award of Bases	39-40	8	5	e-f
PITCH				
Arch of Pitch	30	6	3	c
Illegal Pitch	29-31	6	1 – 7	effect
No Pitch	31	6	8	a-e, effect
Returned by Catcher	30	6	3	e, eff.
Warm-Up Pitches	31	6	7	eff, no.,ex.
PITCHING DISTANCES	15	2	5	
PLAYER PARTICIPATION	13	1	39	
PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT	20	3	7	

	<u>Page</u>	<u>Rule</u>	<u>Sec.</u>	<u>Sub.</u>
PROTESTS	51-52	11	1-7	
QUICK PITCH	13	1	40	
RE-ENTRY	22	4	3	a-b
ROSTER SIGNING/PLAYER ELIG.	27	5	11	note, exp.
RUNS NOT SCORED	27	5	7	a-d
	37	8	1	f
	39	8	4	a
SHOES	19	3	4	penalty
STEALING	13	1	41	
STRIKE	34	7	7	a-g,eff.,no
STRIKE ZONE	13	1	42	
SUBSTANCES (pitchers)	31	6	6	
SUBSTITUTE				
Extra Player (EP)	21-22	4	2	a- d note
No Substitute Available	26	5	5	d,(7)-ex.
Notify Umpire	23	4	5	a,note
Officially in Game	23	4	5	b, 1-4
SUSPENSION OF PLAY	27	5	5	e, f
	49	10	6	a-e
THIRD STRIKE RULE	36	7	11	i
	41	8	6	e, effect
THREE FOOT LINE	13	1	43	
TIME	13	1	44	
By Umpire	45-46	9	1	l, m
	49	10	6	e
By Player, Manager, Coach	31	6	8	e, effect
TURN AT BAT	13	1	45	
UMPIRES	47-51	10	1-9	
UNIFORMS	19-20	3	6	a-f, note
VIOLATIONS/PENALTIES	49-50	10	7	a- d
WIND-UP	30	6	4	a-e note
WRISTBAND ON PITCHER	20	3	6	a

The National Softball Association

GENERAL PLAYING RULES

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

RULE 1 – DEFINITIONS

- Sec. 1 ALTERED BAT:** A bat is considered altered when the physical structure of a legal bat has been changed, or an illegal or non-approved bat has been changed to resemble a legal bat. Examples of altering a bat are, but not limited to, the following: painting a bat, replacing the handle of a metal bat with a wooden or other type handle, or inserting material inside the bat. A flare or cone grip that does not meet the specifications of Rule 3 is considered an altered bat. Compressing a bat in a vise or similar instruments, rolling, beating a bat with a rubber mallet, on a post or another bat; or any other process that exerts more pressure on the bat other than typical bat and ball collision is considered altering a bat.
EFFECT: *The ball is dead, the batter is out and baserunners may not advance. The batter is ejected for using an altered bat.*
- Sec. 2 APPEAL PLAY:** A play in which an umpire cannot make a decision until requested by a manager, coach or player. The appeal must be made before the next legal or illegal pitch, or before all infielders (including the pitcher) have left the field (crossed the foul lines). The appealed play does not change the type of out that is being appealed. There is such a thing as a fourth out appeal. This appeal is only done in order to prevent a run from scoring.
- Sec. 3 APPROVED BAT:** A bat model becomes approved after the bat manufacturer submits the bat to the NSA after being tested by the official test facility and said model meets the requirements of a legal bat as defined in Rule 3. Sec. 1
- Sec. 4 BALL ROTATION:** A pitcher will have a choice of balls at the start of each half inning, with the exception that if both balls do not get into play in the first half inning, the pitcher, in the bottom of the first inning, must pitch the unused ball. Thereafter, every third out, the

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

- Sec. 5 BASE PATH:** The imaginary direct line, as well as three feet to either side of the direct line, between a base and a runner's position at the time a defensive player is attempting to apply a tag.
- Sec. 6 BASERUNNER:** A player on the team at bat who has finished his/her batting turn, reached first base, and has not yet been put out.
- Sec. 7 BATTER'S BOX:** The area in which the batter is restricted to while in position to bat. The batter must have both feet entirely within the lines of the box prior to the pitch (the lines are considered to be within the box).
- Sec. 8 BATTER-BASERUNNER:** A player who has finished his turn at bat but has not yet been put out or touched first base.
- Sec. 9 BATTING ORDER:** The batting order is the official lineup of offensive players, listing the order in which team members must come to bat. A lineup card must include each player's name and defensive position; also the player's number must be indicated. (Also, the spot of the extra player when used.)
- Sec. 10 BLOCKED BALL:** A live ball that is touched, stopped or handled by a person not engaged in the game; or which touches any object that is not part of the official equipment or playing area.
EFFECT: *The ball is dead. See Rule 8, Sec. 5(e) for enforcement.*
NOTE: *A blocked ball is not called when a live ball strikes a base coach unintentionally.*
NOTE: *For offensive equipment causing a blocked ball, the runner closest to home plate will be declared out and all other runners must return to the last base touched when the ball becomes blocked.*
- Sec. 11 BUNT:** A bunt is a fair ball in which the batter does not take a full swing at the ball but holds the bat in such a manner in the path of the ball to tap the ball slowly to the infield. **EFFECT:** *The ball is dead, the batter is out, and baserunners may not advance.*
- Sec. 12 CATCH:** A catch is a legally caught ball that occurs when a fielder secures a batted or thrown ball with his/her hand or glove. If the ball is merely held in the fielder's arms, or prevented from dropping to the ground by some part of the fielder's body or clothing, the catch is not complete until the ball is in the grasp of the fielder's hand or glove. It is not a catch if a fielder, immediately after he/she contacts the ball, collides with another player, or wall (fence), or falls to the

ground and drops the ball as a result of the collision or falling to the ground. In establishing a valid catch, the fielder shall have complete control of the ball, and his/her release of the ball is voluntary and intentional. If a player drops the ball while in the act of throwing, it is a valid catch. **NOTE:** *An intentional dropped ball is a ball that has first been caught, by the definition of a catch, and is then intentionally dropped in an attempt to confuse or obtain additional outs.* **EFFECT:** *The ball is dead, the batter- baserunner is called out, and all other runners are protected under the obstruction rule.* **EXCEPTION:** *The ball remains alive in the Elite tournaments.*

PLAY... (1) A batted fly ball, before touching the ground, strikes F5 on the head, and while still in the air, is caught by F6.

RULING: *A legal caught fly ball by F6. Batter is out.*

PLAY... (2) The batter hits a sharp line drive, which after passing F4 strikes the umpire over fair ground. The ball ricocheted and is caught by F4 while still in flight.

RULING: *No catch. Ball is alive and batter would have to be thrown out or tagged out. A ball which strikes anything other than a defensive player, while in flight, is ruled the same as having struck the ground.*

Sec. 13 CATCHER'S BOX: The catcher's box is the area in which the catcher must stay until the pitched ball is batted or reaches the catcher's box (the lines of the box are considered within the box). All of the catcher's body and equipment must be within the catcher's box until the ball is batted or reaches the catcher's box. An illegal pitch is called if the batter does not swing. **EXCEPTION:** *When the batter is positioned in the front of the batter's box, the catcher may move closer without effect.*

Sec. 14 CHARGED CONFERENCE: A charged conference takes place when:

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

Sec. 15 CHOPPED BALL: When the batter strikes downward with a chopping motion so that the ball bounces high into the air, this is considered a chopped hit ball. The chopping motion should resemble that of chopping a piece of wood lying on the ground.

- Sec. 16 COACH:** A member of the team at bat who takes his place in the coach's box to direct his/her players in running the bases. Two coaches are allowed, one positioned at first base and one positioned at third base. One coach can have in his possession a scorebook and an indicator, which shall be used for scorekeeping purposes only. The defensive coaches/manager must remain in the dugout, as their normal position, when their team is playing defense. Failure to obey this rule, after a warning is issued, will result in the coach/manager being ejected.
- Sec. 17 DEAD BALL:** The ball is not in play and not considered in play again, until the pitcher has the ball in his possession and the umpire has called "play ball".
- Sec. 18 DELAYED DEAD BALL:** An infraction, signaled by the umpire, in which the ball remains alive until all play has been completed and the umpire calls time.
- Sec. 19 FAIR BALL:** A fair ball is a batted ball that:
- Settles on fair territory between home plate and 1st base or home plate and 3rd base.
 - Is on or over fair territory, including any part of 1st and 3rd bases, when bounding toward the outfield, or touches 1st, 2nd or 3rd base.
 - First falls in fair territory beyond 1st or 3rd base.
 - While in or over fair territory, touches the person of any umpire or player.
 - While over fair territory, passes out of the playing field beyond the outfield fence.
 - Hits an outfield fence on or between the foul poles.
- NOTE:** *A fair fly shall be judged according to the relative position of the ball and foul line and not as to the position of the fielder at the time he/she touches the ball. It does not matter whether the ball first touches fair or foul territory, as long as it does not touch anything foreign to the natural ground in foul territory and complies with all other aspects of a fair ball. Home plate is in fair territory.*
- PLAY (1)** Batted ball first hits foul ground, and before being touched, rolls into fair territory between home and 1st where it settles.
- RULING:** Fair ball
- Sec. 20 FLAGRANT PLAYER OBSTRUCTION:** A defensive fielder shall not at any time flagrantly, and with excessive force, impede the batter/runner or runner.
- PENALTY:** Immediate ejection of the defensive player.
- Sec. 21 FORCE OUT:** A force out is an out which can be made only when a baserunner loses the right to the base he is occupying because the batter becomes a batter-baserunner and before the batter-runner or a succeeding baserunner has been put out. **If a batted ball is caught prior to the ball touching the ground. There cannot be a force out(s)**

- Sec. 22 FOUL BALL:** A foul ball is a batted ball that:
- Settles on foul territory between home and 1st base or home and 3rd base.
 - Bounds past 1st and 3rd base on or over foul territory.
 - Falls first on foul territory beyond 1st or 3rd base.
 - While on or over foul ground, touches an umpire, player or foreign object to the natural ground.
- NOTE:** *A foul fly ball shall be judged according to the relative position of the ball and the foul line, and not the position of the fielder.*
- Sec. 23 FOUL TIP:** A foul tip is a batted ball that goes directly from the bat, not higher than the batters head, to the catcher's hands or glove/mitt, and is legally caught by the catcher. A foul tip is a strike. The batter is out if it is the third strike. A foul tip is a dead ball.
- NOTE:** *Any foul tip is a strike.*
- Sec. 24 ILLEGAL BAT:** An illegal bat is one that does not meet the requirements of Rule 3, Sec.1
- Sec. 25 ILLEGALLY BATTED BALL:** An illegally batted ball occurs when:
- A batter's entire foot is completely out of the box on the ground when he/she hits the ball, fair or foul.
 - Any part of the batter's foot is touching home plate when he/she hits the ball.
 - The batter hits the ball with an illegal, altered, or non-approved bat.
- Sec. 26 ILLEGALLY CAUGHT BALL:** Occurs when a fielder catches a batted or thrown ball with his cap, illegal glove or any part of his/her uniform detached from its proper place. See Rule 1, Sec. 12.
- Sec. 27 ILLEGAL PLAYER:** A player who enters the line-up without the right to the offensive or defensive position.
Examples of an illegal player(s) but not limited to are:
- Illegal use of the re-entry rule.
 - Using a player to pitch who was removed from the pitching position.
 - Unreported Substitute.
- PENALTY:** An illegal player violation results in the immediate ejection of the illegal player.
- Sec. 28 INELIGIBLE PLAYER:** A player who is unregistered or who does not meet requirements to register.
Examples of an ineligible player but not limited to are:
- Playing under an assumed name.
 - Players not on the team roster.
 - Violating residence requirements.
 - Violating divisional age requirements.

e. Player(s) that are listed on two (2) official NSA sanctioned rosters without an official release form on file in the State Director's Office.

f. An ejected player

NOTE: *Use of an ineligible player will result in a forfeit of the game if protested properly.*

Sec. 29 IN JEOPARDY: A term indicating that the ball is in play and an offensive player may be put out.

Sec. 30 INFIELD FLY: An infield fly is a fair ball, not including a line drive, which can be caught by an infielder with ordinary effort when 1st and 2nd or 1st, 2nd, and 3rd bases are occupied before two are out. Any fielder can catch an infield fly.

NOTE: *When it seems apparent that a batted ball will be an infield fly, the umpire shall immediately declare "INFIELD FLY – BATTER IS OUT" to aid the runners. If the ball is near the foul lines, the umpire shall declare "INFIELD FLY – BATTER IS OUT, IF FAIR". The ball is alive and runners may advance at the risk of the ball being caught, or re-touch and advance after a fielder touches the ball. If the hit ball becomes a foul ball, it is treated the same as any other foul ball.*

Sec. 31 INNING: An inning is that portion of a game within which the teams alternate between offense/defense and there are three outs for each team. A new inning begins when the third out of the bottom of an inning is recorded.

Sec. 32 INTERFERENCE: Interference is the act of an offensive player or team member, which impedes or confuses a defensive player while attempting to execute a play. If judged so by the umpire, vocal interference may be called.

Sec. 33 LEGAL TOUCH: A legal touch occurs when a runner or batter-runner, who is not touching a base, is touched by the ball while the ball is held securely in a fielder's hand. The ball is not considered as being securely held if it is juggled or dropped by the fielder after having touched the runner, unless the runner deliberately knocks the ball from the hand of the fielder. It is sufficient for the fielder to touch the runner with the glove which holds the ball.

Sec. 34 LEGALLY CAUGHT BALL: A legally caught ball occurs when a fielder catches a batted or thrown ball, provided the ball is not caught in the fielder's cap, hat, pocket, protector or any other part of his/her uniform. It must be caught and firmly held with the hand or hands.

Sec. 35 NON - APPROVED BAT: A non - approved bat is one that is not listed on the NSA Approved Bat List or that has been removed from the NSA Approved Bat List. See complete list of approved bats at www.playnsa.com.

- Sec. 36 OBSTRUCTION:** Obstruction is the act of:
A defensive team member who hinders or impedes a batter's attempt to make contact with a pitched ball or who impedes the progress of a runner or batter-runner legally running the bases, unless the fielder is in possession of the ball or is fielding a batted ball. The act may be intentional or unintentional, physical or verbal.
NOTE: *Catcher obstruction is called when the catcher obstructs the batter who is attempting to hit or swing at a pitch. Prior to the pitch, catcher obstruction does not apply, a dead ball shall be called and allow the batter to re-set themselves.*
- Sec. 37 OVERSLIDE:** An over slide is the act of the offensive player sliding over and beyond a base he is attempting to reach. This is usually caused when his/her momentum causes him/her to lose contact with the base, which then causes him/her to be in jeopardy. The batter-runner may over slide 1st base, without being in jeopardy, if he/she immediately returns to that base.
- Sec. 38 OVERTHROW:** An overthrow is a play in which a ball is thrown to retire a runner who has not yet reached or is off base and goes into foul territory beyond the boundary lines of the playing field.
- Sec. 39 PLAYER PARTICIPATION:** NSA considers a player to be a participant of a game when the line up card with substitutions is turned in to the umpire, or official scorekeeper, or is announced.
- Sec. 40 QUICK PITCH:** A quick pitch is made by the pitcher with the attempt to catch the batter off balance. This would be before the batter takes his/her position in the batter's box, or while he/she is still off balance as a result of the previous pitch.
- Sec. 41 STEALING:** The act of a runner attempting to advance during the pitch or after the pitch has reached the plate is considered to be the act of stealing.
- Sec. 42 STRIKE ZONE:** The strike zone is that space over any part of the plate between the batter's highest shoulder and his/her front knee when the batter assumes a natural batting stance. Where the ball contacts the ground or glove has no bearing on the actual strike zone.
- Sec. 43 THREE-FOOT LINE:** Is a line parallel to, and three feet from the base line, starting at a point halfway between home plate and 1st base. The batter-baserunner is declared out when he/she runs outside the three foot line, and in the judgment of the umpire interferes, intentionally or unintentionally, with the fielder attempting to field a batted ball, or interfering with a thrown ball.
- Sec. 44 TIME:** The term used by the umpire to order suspension of play.

Sec. 45 TURN AT BAT: A player's turn at bat begins when he/she enters the batter's box and continues until he/she is put out or becomes a baserunner.

RULE 2 – 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 radius of the prescribed fence distances from home plate between the foul lines.

a. <u>ADULT DIVISION</u>	<u>MINIMUM DISTANCE</u>
Male	275 feet

Sec. 2 Ground rules or special rules establishing the limits of the playing field may be agreed upon by leagues or opposing teams whenever backstops, fences, stands, vehicles, spectators, or other obstructions are within the prescribed area.

Sec. 3 The playing field layout should include, in addition to marking for foul lines, the following:

- THE THREE-FOOT LINE is drawn parallel to and 3 feet from the base line, starting at a point halfway between home plate and 1st base.
- THE BATTER'S ON-DECK CIRCLE is a 5-foot circle placed between home plate and 1st base and between home plate and 3rd base.
- THE BATTER'S BOX, one on each side of home plate, shall measure 3 feet by 7 feet. The inside lines of the batter's box shall be 6 inches from home plate. The front line shall be 4 feet in front of the center of the plate. The lines are considered as being in the box.
- THE CATCHER'S BOX shall be 10 feet in length from the rear outside corners of the batter's boxes and shall be 8 feet 5 inches wide.
- THE COACHES BOX is behind a line 15 feet long drawn outside the diamond. The line is parallel to, and eight feet from, the foul lines extended from the bases toward home plate.

Sec. 4 The official diamond shall have base lines as follows:

- MEN AND WOMEN ADULT DIVISIONS – 70 FEET.
- Distances from Home Plate to 2nd Base:
 - 90' bases – 127' 3 ¼"
 - 85' bases – 120' 2 ½"
 - 80' bases – 113' 1 ¾"
 - 75' bases – 106' 1 ¾"
 - 70' bases – 99'
 - 65' bases – 91' 11"
 - 60' bases – 84' 10 ¼"
 - 55' bases – 77' 9 ½"
 - 50' bases – 70' 8 ½"

- Sec. 5** **The official diamond** shall have Men and Women adult pitching distance of 53 feet from the rear tip of the plate to the front edge of the pitching rubber.
- Sec. 6** **If, during the playing** of any game, the base distance or pitching distance is found to be in error; the error should be corrected immediately, and the game should be continued. This is not a point to be protested.

RULE 3 – EQUIPMENT

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

NSA Altered Bat and Altered Ball Procedures

*For the past several years the NSA has embarked on more stringent testing procedures for bats and balls. NSA feels that it has the very best testing procedures in the game. However, there are always players, coaches and outside agencies who will do their best to get around these rules. The rules were implemented to keep our patrons safe and to make this game the safest it can be. With the one word “SAFETY” in mind, NSA will not tolerate anyone who would embark in any manner that would put our patrons in peril. As a Director, UIC or Umpire, if you feel that a player may be using an altered bat or ball in NSA play, the Director or UIC will have the authority to inspect the bat or ball and to suspend the suspected player(s). The offending player(s) will have two choices only: 1. He/she can allow the NSA representative to inspect the bat or ball and the NSA representative can reach a conclusion as to whether the bat or ball may be altered or he/she can refuse to allow the representative to inspect the bat or ball and take an immediate Five (5) year suspension from any and all NSA play with no right of appeal. **In addition to the immediate Five (5) year suspension by the offending player and/or team, failure to allow a site inspection of the bat or ball or, failure to allow the bat or ball to be sent into the NSA National Office for further inspection; will result in forfeit of the game in progress, and forfeiture of all remaining games in the tournament; WITH NO REFUND of entry fees.** 2.) He/she may after allowing the NSA representative to inspect the bat or ball and the NSA representative has decided that the bat or ball “could be” altered; the player may allow the director to send the bat or ball to the NSA National Office for inspection. If the NSA National Office decides that the bat or ball may be altered, the NSA will then send the bat or ball to the Manufacturer of the bat or ball for a final determination on whether the bat or ball is altered, or he/she can accept an immediate two (2) year suspension without the right of appeal. During the time of the examination of the bat or ball by NSA and/or the Manufacturer, depending on the sole discretion of the NSA National Office, the NSA may suspend the suspected offending player pending the findings from the Manufacturer and or NSA or final decision of the NSA. If the NSA and/or the Manufacturer determine in their sole discretion that the bat or ball has been*

altered, the NSA may suspend a first time offender no less than two (2) years and no more than five (5) years. A suspension decision may be appealed at the next NSA National Convention. A second time offender under this altered bat/ball suspension process will be suspended for life.

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

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

Examples of an altered ball (but not limited too) are: Any ball frozen, or kept cold in a cooler to make the core harder or livelier or any ball that has been cooked in a microwave oven, or the seams/stitches or cover that has been altered in any way. If the physical structure of the ball (inside or outside) has been altered in any way other than the alterations that is caused by usage, that ball is to be considered altered. Should an umpire or player be thrown a ball that is colder than the outside temperature, that ball is to be immediately thrown out of the game, the game forfeited and the offending person(s) suspended for altering a softball. At any time during any NSA game an umpire has the authority to not allow a ball to be played with if the umpires suspects in any way shape or form that some sort of altering has been done to the approved NSA softball that is presently being played with or attempted to be played with.

For every Division contained inside the cover of this Rule Book all equipment must be 100% conforming, 100% of the time. *The NSA reserves the right to approve or reject any softball related equipment for its intended use in the NSA Program. Equipment does not merely need to meet industry standards, but must meet NSA Standards before approval for its use is granted. **If the NSA should believe in any way shape or form that a particular piece of equipment is dangerous and/or not acceptable for fair play, the NSA reserves the right to ban such equipment immediately.** The NSA has adopted a Bat Performance Factor (BPF) of 1.20 or less. All bats with a BPF of 1.20 or less for the entire length of the barrel or hitting surface are approved for use in*

*the NSA Program, unless the NSA believes in any way shape or form that a particular bat is dangerous and/or not acceptable for fair and safe play. **The NSA reserves the right to ban such equipment immediately.** All bats used in NSA Play must be stamped with a BPF of 1.20 or less (exception: Wooden Bats do not have to be stamped with a BPF of 1.20 and may be used and are legal in all NSA Play if they meet the standards set forth in Rule 3, Sec. 1 a-l).*

Sec. 1 The official bat shall be listed on the NSA approved bat list (all bats appearing on the NSA APPROVED BAT LIST are approved for ALL divisions of NSA play. The official bat shall be of one piece or interchangeable construction and can be made of wood (hardwood) or other materials approved by the NSA; or formed from a block of wood consisting of two or more pieces of wood bonded together with an adhesive, in such a way, that the grain direction of all pieces is essentially parallel to the length of the bat. When the interchangeable barrel bat is joined together properly the two piece bat must meet all NSA official bat requirements. Below is a list of additional requirements for all approved NSA BATS:

- a. The bat shall not be more than 34 inches in length and no more than 38 ounces in weight and shall meet the NSA bat standards and also be listed on the NSA Approved Bat List. (See Above *NOTE and **NOTE for further bat standards.) Any bat which cannot be identified by markings on the bat as an approved bat shall be considered illegal.
EXCEPTION: *Wooden bats need only meet the standards described in Rule 3 Sec. 1 above.*
- b. The bat shall have a safety grip of cork, tape (not smooth plastic type), or combination material.
- c. The grip shall not be less than ten inches long and shall not extend more than 15 inches from the small end of the bat.
- d. The bat shall be listed on the NSA Approved Bat List. In the case of well used bats, sufficient markings must remain to make the bat identifiable as an NSA Approved bat. (Bat name and/or model number should suffice for this purpose.)
- e. The bat may be made of metal or other materials approved by the NSA and may be angular; however, the NSA must approve any material before it is used in Sanctioned Events.
- f. All exposed surfaces of the bat must be smooth and free of burrs, pins, rivets, DEEP DENTS OR DANGEROUS DENTS, fractures/cracks of any type, hairline or otherwise. Those bats are to be removed from the game immediately. sharp edges or any type of exterior fastener that would present a safety hazard.
EXCEPTION: *At the umpires discretion slightly dented metal bats may be considered legal.*
- g. Unless the bat is made of one-piece construction or interchangeable two – piece barrel construction with the barrel end closed, it should have a tamper resistant rubber or plastic insert in the barrel. ***Beginning with 2012 season, all manufactured bats MUST HAVE a tamper proof end cap or rolled over end.***
- h. A one-piece rubber grip and knob combination is illegal.

- i. Metal or other approved material bats must have a knob on the handle and welded or mechanically fastened.
- j. All bats must have a safety knob of a minimum of ¼ inch protruding at a 90-degree angle from the handle. The ¼ inch is measured from the outer edge of the knob 90 degrees to the outside layer of wrapping. The knob portion of the bat may be taped as long as the bat does not exceed 34 inches in length; however, the umpire may request tape to be removed from both the handle and knob, if there is any question concerning the bat being altered or illegal. After determining the bat legal, the player may tape the bat back to his/her preference, providing the bat meets the requirements set forth by Rule 3, Sec. 1 (a-k). A flare or cone grip may be attached from the factory or a factory flare or cone may be attached to the bat by the player, but the flare or cone must be installed properly to the bat. The flare or cone must be taped or covered by an approved bat grip and the bat must meet all requirements of Rule 3, Sec. 1 (a-k) after installation to be considered legal. Taped bats do not have to be of consistent thickness on the handle (Example: a player may place 5 layers of tape beginning at the knob portion of the bat and 2 layers where the players top hand would rest on the bat) ***STINGERS ARE APPROVED FOR NSA PLAY PROVIDED THEY ARE PROPERLY INSTALLED.***
- k. Shall be rounded, and shall be smooth. Shall not be more than 2 1/4 inches in diameter at its largest part. A tolerance of 1/16 inch is permitted, to allow for expansion on the round bat.
NOTE: *Sec. 1 (a-l) Any bat that does not comply with these guidelines or that is not listed on the Official NSA approved bat list (REFER TO: playnsa.com for approved bat list) must be removed from the game, penalties (if any) administered, and the bat may no longer be used in any NSA Sanctioned Play.*

Sec. 2 **The official softball** shall be a smooth-seamed, or raised seam, concealed-stitched, or flat-surfaced ball. The center of the ball may be made of either long fiber kapok or mixture of cork and rubber, and/or machine wound, with a fine twisted yarn and covered with latex or rubber cement. Or it may be made of other materials approved by the NSA. The cover of the ball shall be optic yellow, tanned horsehide, cowhide or any other materials approved by the NSA, cemented to the ball by application of cement to the underside of the cover and sewn with black waxed cotton or black linen thread to form a black stitched softball. The solid core ball must be stamped with the official NSA logo that contains the maximum C.O.R. and compression standards. The ball ***MAY NOT*** bear any other logos except for the NSA official logo unless otherwise approved by the Executive Director or the Executive Vice President of the NSA. MAXIMUM C.O.R. is .52 .44 or .40. (.47 for Women). Maximum Compression for NSA softballs is 275 pounds for the .52 C.O.R. softball with no tolerance, and 400 pounds with no tolerance for the .40, .44, and .47 C.O.R softballs.

NOTE: *The men's division will use the twelve-inch softball. The women's division will use the eleven-inch softball.*

Sec. 3 Gloves/mitts must be worn by all fielders: The catcher's glove/mitt may be any size. Gloves that are entirely gray, white or optic in color are illegal. Gloves that have circles on the outside or inside of the glove and prove to be distracting are illegal. The gloves worn by all fielders with the exception of the catcher shall be governed by the following specifications:

- a. The height of the glove measured from the bottom edge across the center of the palm to a line even with the highest point of the glove/mitt shall be a minimum of eight (8) inches and may be increased by either ½ or 1 inch to reach a maximum height of fourteen (14) inches
- b. Width of the glove measured from the bottom edge of the webbing farthest from the thumb in a horizontal line to the outside edge of the little finger shall be eight (8) inches
- c. The webbing across the glove shall be measured parallel to the top end and shall be 5 ¾ inches

Sec. 4 All players, coaches, and participants must wear shoes. Sandals are considered proper shoes for non-players. A shoe shall be made with either canvas or leather uppers or similar materials. The sole may be either smooth or have soft or hard rubber or polyurethane cleats. Metal cleats or any type of shoe that has exposed metal on the sole, other than a rivet, may not be worn in any division of play. Shoes that have steel or any type of metal tips on the cleats such as (but not limited to) soccer shoes, golf shoes, football, and track shoes are illegal.

***PENALTY:** If it is discovered that an offensive or defensive player is wearing metal cleats, the player will be ejected. If the player is an offensive player and has entered the batter's box or is on the bases, an out will be called and any baserunner(s) must return to the last base occupied at the time of the pitch. If the offending player is discovered after the player was called out, any baserunner(s) must return to the last base occupied at the time of the pitch. The defense will keep any out(s) earned on the last play prior to the discovery of the player wearing cleats. A defensive player wearing metal cleats will be ejected.

Sec. 5 No Equipment shall be left lying on the field, either in foul or fair territory.

Sec. 6 Uniform: All players on a team shall wear uniforms alike in color with same team name/logo.

Hard plastic visors; bandanas, scarf and handkerchiefs are not approved headgear.

NOTE: *Shirts may have sleeves or no sleeves and still be considered matching. Players CANNOT EXCHANGE shirts with other players*

when they are substituted for during the game. All players must have their own shirt with separate numbers.

PENALTY: For sharing shirts will be an illegal substitution.

EXCEPTION: When a jersey is saturated with blood, team members can exchange shirts.

- a. A pitcher shall not wear any item on the pitching hand, wrist, arm or thigh, which may be distracting to the batter. Players may wear solid colored undergarments under their uniform shirts or shorts. It is not mandatory that all players wear these undergarments, but if worn, they shall not be ragged, frayed, or slit on the exposed areas.
- b. Numbers must be worn on all uniforms. No players on the same team may wear identical numbers.
- c. ***THE NATIONAL SOFTBALL ASSOCIATION STRONGLY RECOMMENDS THAT ANY TYPE OF JEWELRY NOT BE WORN IN ANY NSA PLAY.***
- d. Casts, (plaster, metal or other hard substances) or other items judged dangerous by the umpire may not be worn during the game, by any coach coaching the bases or by any player.
- e. Coaches in wheelchairs MAY NOT be on the field of play during ANY live ball situation unless the chair has all exposed metal parts covered by a soft substance and taped in such a way that would eliminate the risk of bodily injury to the players playing the game or other coaches coaching the game. This pertains to ALL adult and ALL youth play.
- f. NSA Uniform requirements: In NIT and all other Post season play, violation of uniform requirements is not grounds for protest.

NOTE: In NIT and all other Post season play, if a team is not in compliance with the uniform rule, the opposing team, if in total uniform, has the choice of being the home or visiting team. If both teams are in compliance, or if both teams are not in compliance, then a flip of a coin will determine the home and visiting team.

Class B thru E

Matching shirts with numbers

- Sec. 7 Protective Equipment Recommendation:** The National Softball Association **HIGHLY RECOMMENDS** protective equipment for **ALL DIVISIONS** of softball. All players are permitted to wear any approved protective equipment including catcher's equipment, batter's helmet, and soccer style shin guards. If used, the equipment must not be detached. Detached equipment can be an obstruction. Repeated acts could be grounds for ejection.

RULE 4 – PLAYERS & SUBSTITUTIONS

Any non-player who is not yet considered an adult, may not be between the fences or boundaries that are considered the playing field without a NOCSAE approved helmet with a NOCSAE approved face mask properly attached. Any youth division bat boys/bat girls who

*are the team's official bat boy/bat girl or who are team members serving as bat boy/bat girl must wear a NOCSAE approved helmet with a NOCSAE approved face mask properly attached and worn at all times when in the playing area or dugout. **PENALTY: The player, non-player, bat boy or bat girl will put the helmet on or be removed from the playing area.***

Sec. 1 A team shall consist of nine (9), ten (10), eleven (11), or twelve (12) players if the optional extra player (EP) is used. Players of the team in the field may be stationed anywhere on fair territory, except the catcher, who must be in the catcher's box, and the pitcher, who must be in a legal pitching position at the start of each pitch. No part of the defensive player's foot (except catcher) may be on or outside the foul line, from the time when the pitcher steps on the rubber or until the pitch is released. Teams can play a maximum of ten (10) players on defense, and a minimum of nine (9). *In the case where a team starts a game with nine players, the vacant 10th spot in the batting order shall be declared an out for the entire game. However, should the 10th player arrive, the team may insert the 10th player into the line-up with no penalty. Inserting the 10th player into the line-up would eliminate the automatic out. If a team is playing the game with ten players, and a player is removed from the game for any reason, that team may continue to play with nine players, with the vacated spot in the batting order being declared an out. When a team is left with a vacant spot in the lineup because of the removal of a player or having only nine players, as described in Section 4 (a), the opposing team with two (2) outs may not intentionally or unintentionally walk the previous batter, in order to get to the "automatic out" created by the vacant spot in the batting order. Refer to Rule 4 Sec. 4 (b) & (c). Under no circumstances may a team play with less than 9 players*

- a. A team must have the required number of players present in the team area to start or continue a game. Players listed in the starting line-up and not available at game time may be substituted for and re-entered later.
 1. Official line-up cards are to be completed and submitted to the official scorekeeper or the umpire at the start of each game. The line-up shall contain the first and last name, position and uniform number of each player.
NOTE: *If a wrong number is on the line-up card, correct it and continue playing ball with no penalty.*
 2. Their last name, first name and uniform number should be listed for all available substitutes in the designated place on the line up card.
 3. Eligible roster members may be added to the available substitute list any time during the game.

Sec. 2 Extra Player (EP)

- a. Any team may use one (1) or two (2) Extra Players (EP) per game provided it is made known prior to the start of the game and properly indicated in the lineup.

- b. The (EP) must remain in the same position in the batting order for the entire game.
- c. The (EP) may play defense at any time without his/her status being affected. He/she may go in and out of the defensive lineup as often as needed as long as his/her position in the official batting order is not altered.
- d. The (EP) may be substituted for at any time with the substitute becoming the new (EP). The substitute must be a player who has not been in the game.

NOTE: See Rule 4, Section 4, for removal of the (EP) from the game.

Sec. 3 Any of the starting players may be withdrawn from the game and re-entered once (including the starting EP), provided that the players occupy the original position in the batting order whenever in the game.

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

- a. Violation of the re-entry rule results in the use of an illegal player. Penalty shall be the immediate ejection of the illegal player when the violation is brought to the attention of the umpire by the offended team. **EFFECT:** An illegal player violation results in the immediate ejection of the illegal player. In youth play the coach is also ejected.
- b. Violation of the re-entry is handled as an appeal, which can be made anytime during the game.

Sec. 4 A team must have the required number of players to start or continue a game. Requirements are:

- a. A team must have a minimum of nine (9), ten (10), eleven (11), or twelve (12) players with which it started the game with the exception of vacated spots where players are removed for any reason. At no time may a team play more than ten (10) players defensively.
- b. If a team starts with the EP'S and any player is removed, injured, or ejected from the game with no substitute to replace the removed, injured or ejected player, the vacated spot automatically becomes an out each time the vacant spot comes to bat or anytime a runner is removed from the base with no legal substitution.
- c. When a team is left with a vacant spot in the lineup because of the removal of a player, as described in Section 4 (a), the opposing team may not with two (2) outs intentionally or unintentionally walk the previous batter, in order to get to the "automatic out" created by the vacant spot in the batting order.
- d. If the previous batter is walked, the vacant spot in the batting order is skipped, the "automatic out" is waived, and the next batter is the player whose name follows the vacant spot in the batting order. This only applies when there are two (2) outs.

- Sec. 5** A player shall be officially in the game when his/her name has been entered on the official score sheet or has been announced. The following regulations govern the substitution of players:
- a. The manager or team representative shall notify the plate umpire at the time a substitute enters the game. Failure to notify the umpire of a substitution would create an illegal substitution with the penalty – IMMEDIATE EJECTION FROM THE GAME WHENEVER THE INFRACTION IS DISCOVERED.
NOTE: *Re-entry is considered a substitution, and if an illegal entry occurs, the penalty is the immediate ejection of the illegal player.*
 - b. Substitute players will be considered in the game as follows:
 1. When a batter, when he/she takes his/her place in the batter's box.
 2. When a fielder, when he/she takes the place of the fielder he/she is substituting.
 3. When a runner, when he/she replaces the player on the base he/she is holding.
 4. When a pitcher, when he/she takes his/her place on the pitcher's plate.

In 1-4 above, in each case a pitch has to be thrown or a play has to have been made.
 - c. Each pitcher (starter or substitute) must pitch until the first batter facing him/her has completed his/her turn at bat, the side has been retired or he/she has been removed from the game. Unless the pitcher sustains an injury or illness which in the judgment of the home plate umpire incapacitates the pitcher from pitching. A pitcher removed from the game, by rule or ejection, is not subject to this rule 5 (c). Any other player may be removed from the game at any time.
 - d. A player substituted for in the game shall not participate in the games except as a coach.
EXCEPTION: *The starting lineup, including the "EP" may re-enter once.*
NOTE: *Any player participating in any NSA sanctioned event must be physically able to participate. By physically able, the player must be able to walk on and off the field and play the game as intended. This is intended to keep injured people from further injury.*
***NOTE:** *A player's correct name supersedes error if an incorrect number has been entered on the score sheet.*

Sec. 6 Divisions of play:

The National Softball Association has divisions for men and women, and a coed division for both to compete in jointly. The men's division is specifically for men ages 16 and older, and the women's division is specifically designed for women ages 16 and older. With the exception of CO-ED division, women may not compete in the men's program and men may not compete in the women's program of any division. This also applies to the Youth Program.

Sec. 7 The Tournament Director or the Tournament Umpire-in-Chief may declare a higher-class player ineligible immediately without having a team protest, no matter their roster status.

Sec. 8 Illegal player:

The use of an illegal player is handled as an appeal that can be made at any time while the player is in the game. A player will not violate the illegal player provision until he/she enters the game and one (1) pitch is thrown. Any action before one pitch is thrown is correctable. An illegal player violation results in the immediate ejection of the illegal player (in youth play the coach is also ejected). In addition, the following penalties will apply:

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

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

PLAY (1) Smith enters the game in the 4th inning and was not reported. In the 6th inning the opposing team reports this to the umpire.

RULING: The player (Smith) is immediately ejected from the game. All play by or on Smith is legal.

PLAY (2) Smith enters the game in the 4th inning and was not reported. Smith legally reaches 1st base and before the next pitch is reported to the Home Plate Umpire.

RULING: The player Smith is called out and immediately ejected from the game. All runners must return to the base occupied when Smith first came to bat.

Sec. 9 Communicable disease procedures:

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

the home plate umpire and will be no less than 5 minutes. Soiled clothing must be changed, and the change of clothing need not be matching team clothing. This is not a point of protest.

- Sec. 10 COURTESY RUNNER:** A Courtesy Runner may be used once per inning. **The Courtesy Runner can be any player on the team roster. If the courtesy runner comes to bat while on base, it is an out. For the purpose of the Courtesy Runner Rule; Rule 7, Sec. 3 IS NOT in effect.**

RULE 5 – THE GAME

Softball is a contact sport, played with Composite, Aluminum, Wood and other approved materials in design of approved bats. The game of softball can be a dangerous sport to participate in. In playing the game of softball, the player and the parents of the youth players participating in the game of softball assume for themselves and for the youth children participating in the game of softball the risk of serious injury or possible death. By agreeing to be placed on an NSA roster, the participants or parents of participants understand these risks.

NOTE: *It is the option of the Tournament Director to either use or not use an official scorekeeper. If an official scorekeeper is not used, the home team will be the official scorer and it is the obligation of the visiting team to verify the score at the end of each half inning. Scorekeepers are NOT mandatory in Super World Series Tournaments if the host has operable scoreboards.*

- Sec. 1** **No alcoholic beverages** will be allowed in the dugouts or on the field during any NSA sanctioned event.
- Sec. 2** **No youth player will be charged admission** to any NSA youth tournament, above and beyond the team entry fee.
- Sec. 3** **The choice of the** first or last bat in the inning shall be decided by the toss of a coin unless otherwise stated in the rules of the organization under which the schedule of games is being played. If a team is not in compliance with the uniform rule, the opposing team has the choice of being the home or visiting team if they are in total uniform compliance.
- Sec. 4** **The fitness of the** grounds for a game shall be decided by the Tournament Director, Tournament Umpire-In-Chief and the Home Plate Umpire.
- Sec. 5** **A regulation game** shall consist of seven (7) innings: A regulation game officially begins when the defensive team has taken the field and the umpire indicates (verbally or physically) play ball. A full seven (7) innings need not be played if the home team (the team

second at bat) scores more runs in six innings or before the third out of the seventh inning.

NOTE: *The game is officially over when BOTH umpires have left the playing field.*

EXCEPTION: *Run Rules: Men's Class B will use the 20 runs after 3 & 4 innings and 12 runs after 5 innings. Men's Classes C and below and all other adult classes, unless otherwise stated in this rule book, will use 20 runs after 3 innings, 15 runs after 4 innings and 10 runs after 5 innings as run rules in all Tournament Play. If one team is ahead by the above listed runs after 3 or 4 innings, or if the home team is ahead by the above listed runs after 2½ or 3½ innings, the team with the lead shall be the winner. If one team is ahead by the above listed runs after 5 innings of play, or if the home team is ahead by the above listed runs after 4 ½ innings, the team with the lead shall be the winner. Men's Open and A Division, the run rule will be 25 after 3 innings or 20 after 4 innings and 15 after 5 innings. If the home team is trailing, by any number of runs, they get to bat in their half of the inning.*

- a. A game that is tied at the end of seven innings shall be continued by playing additional innings, or until one side has scored more runs in their half of the inning before the third out is made.
 - b. The umpire is empowered to call a game at any time because of darkness, rain, fire, panic, or other causes that place the patrons or players in peril.
 - c. These provisions do not apply to any acts on the part of the players or spectators that might call for the forfeiture of the game. The umpire may forfeit the game if attacked physically by any team member or spectator.
 - d. The umpire shall forfeit a game in favor of a team not at fault in the following cases:
 1. If a team fails to appear on the field, or being on the field refuses to begin a game at the time the team is scheduled to play, or within a time set for forfeitures (grace period) by the organization in which the team is playing.
 2. If after the game has started, one team refuses to continue play unless the game has been suspended or terminated by the umpire.
 3. If after the umpire has suspended the game, one side fails to resume playing within two minutes after the umpire has called "play ball".
 4. If a team uses tactics to delay or to hasten the game.
 5. If, after being warned by the umpire, any one of the rules is willfully violated.
 6. If the order for the removal of a player or manager/coach, from the game, is not obeyed within one minute.
 7. If because of the removal of a player by the umpire, or for any reason, there are less than 9 players on the team.
- EXCEPTION:** *See Rule 4, Sec. 1*
8. The score of a forfeited game will be 7-0 to the winning team.

- e. During all tournament play (Qualifying, State, Regional, NIT'S, World Series, Super World Series), in the event of rain or any other causes which interrupt a game, the game must be resumed at the exact point where it was stopped unless the teams mutually agree to accept the existing score as the final score.
NOTE: *Players not listed in the lineups, and not available at game time, may be substituted for when the game is resumed.*
- f. In the event that a tournament cannot be completed, an official game may be called after 5 innings of play or 4 ½ innings of play, if the home team is ahead.

Sec. 6 **The winner of the game** shall be the team that scores the most runs in a regulation game. The score of a called regulation game shall be the score at the end of the last complete inning, unless the home team has scored more runs than the visiting team in the incomplete inning. In this case, the score shall be that of the incomplete inning.

Sec. 7 **A run shall not be** scored if the third out of the inning is a result of:

- a. The batter being put out before legally touching 1st base.
- b. A baserunner being forced out due to the batter becoming a baserunner.
- c. A baserunner leaving base before a pitched ball reaches home plate or before the pitched ball is batted.
- d. An appeal play at 1st base on the batter/runner for the 3rd out of the inning.

Sec. 8 **No succeeding runner** shall score a run when a preceding runner has been declared the third out of an inning.

Sec. 9 **A baserunner shall** not score a run ahead of the baserunner preceding him/her in the batting order, if the preceding runner has not been put out.

Sec. 10 **A manager and/or** team representative, on or off the field, shall be allowed only one charged conference with a batter or baserunner in any one inning.

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

Sec. 11 **Player eligibility/rosters**

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

FOR COMPLETE PLAYER ELIGIBILITY/ROSTER INFORMATION REFER TO THE BY-LAW SECTION ARTICLES XIV, SECTION 4 (a-o).

Sec. 12 Home run limits for independent teams: (Any untouched ball hit over the fence)

Open	Eight - (8) – one-up home run rule
Class A	Eight - (8) - one-up home run rule
Class B	Four - (4) - one-up home run rule
Class B/C Combo	Three - (3) - one-up home run rule
Class C	Two - (2) - one-up home run rule
Class D	One - (1) – the first homerun over the limit will be declared an out and any subsequent homeruns will have the progressive homerun rule in effect.
Class E	Zero – Progressive Home Run Rule

NOTE: *The one-up home run rule is in effect. Once both teams have reached their respective home run limits, either team may hit an additional home run; however, no team may ever go more than one home run up on the other team. Any additional home runs above the one-up will be scored as an out. **Example:** Both Class “B” Teams have hit their respective four (4) home runs by the bottom of the fourth inning. In the 5th inning, the visiting team is now allowed to hit another home run, and do so. In the bottom of the 5th the home team can now hit 2 home runs, which is allowed, because they are no more than one home run up on the visiting team. If one team does not hit their allotted home run limit, the one-up home run rule will not be used. The home team, in the bottom of the 7th or later innings, may hit one home run to pull even in the number of home runs as the opposing team, but may not hit a home run to go one up.*

NOTE:** *In the case of inclement weather, or other unforeseen circumstances, and a time limit is implemented, the home team cannot go one-up once the time limit has **expired.

****NOTE:** *The progressive penalty home run rule is in effect for this division. Once a team reaches its home run limit, a batter shall be declared out for hitting any additional home runs, and the defensive team is awarded a progressive number of runs for each un-touched home run hit over the fence. For the first home run hit, the defensive team will receive one (1) run, for the second home run hit, the defensive team will receive (2) runs, three (3) runs for the third homerun etc.*

*****NOTE:** *In all programs that have competitive and recreation divisions, the recreational teams can hit one (1) home run, then any home runs hit after one will come under the progressive penalty home run rule. The competitive teams can hit the number of home runs specified for that particular program, and then the one-up home run rule is in effect.*

EXCEPTION: *For all Home Run Rules: If a player has batted out of turn or has been substituted for illegally and has been called out by proper appeal after hitting a home run, that home run DOES NOT count against the teams total.*

- Sec. 13 Each untouched ball** over the fence, exceeding a team’s home run limit, will be scored as an out.
NOTE: *Any untouched batted ball that goes over the fence in fair territory shall be considered a home run against the teams home run total, regardless if the batter/baserunner or baserunners miss a base, pass a runner or otherwise get called out in the act of running the bases.*
- Sec. 14 Any ball touched by** a defensive player which then goes over the fence in fair territory, shall not be included in the total of over the fence home runs. **EFFECT:** *The ball is dead. The batter is awarded 4 bases. All other runners are entitled to advance to home plate without liability to be put out.*
Play #1 Fly ball to the outfield that first strikes the fence and ricochets to the player who is in the field of play, then ricochets over the fence is a ground rule double.
Play #2 Fly ball to the outfield that ricochets over the fence off the outfielder’s glove who is jumping to catch the ball. Ruled as a homerun but is not included in the total of over the fence home runs.
- Sec. 15 The tournament director can declare that the homeruns do not have to be run out for all divisions. This would include the Competitive Division in special programs. IF THIS RULE IS INSTITUTED, THE PLAYERS SHALL BE INSTRUCTED TO “HIT AND SIT”. In all “Hit and Sit” play; the Batter-runner and all baserunners are not required to touch the succeeding base. EFFECT: In all “Hit and Sit” play; each over the fence home run is a dead ball.**

RULE 6 – PITCHING REGULATIONS

- Sec. 1 The pitcher shall** take a position with one or both feet in contact with the pitcher’s plate.
- a. Preliminary to pitching, the pitcher must come to a full stop with the ball held in the pitching hand or both hands in front of the body.
 - b. This position must be maintained at least one (1) second and not more than five (5) seconds before making the delivery.
EXCEPTION: *Sixteen (16) inch program will use ten (10) seconds.*
 - c. The pitcher shall not be considered in the pitching position unless the catcher is in the catcher’s box.
- Sec. 2 The pitch starts** when the pitcher makes any motion that is part of his/her wind-up after the required pause. Prior to the required pause any wind up may be used. The pivot foot must remain in contact with the pitcher’s plate until the ball leaves the hand.

- a. It is not necessary to step, but if a step is taken, the step may be forward, backward or sideways as long as the ball remains within six (6) inches of the hip.

Sec. 3 A legal delivery shall be delivered with an underhand motion.

- a. The pitch shall be released at a moderate speed. The speed is left up to the judgement of the umpire who shall warn the pitcher who delivers a pitch with excessive speed. If the pitcher repeats such an act after being warned, he/she shall be removed from the pitcher's position for the remainder of the game.
- b. The hand shall be below the hip.
- c. The ball must be delivered with an arch and reach a height of at least 6 feet from the ground while not exceeding a maximum height of 10 feet from the ground.
- d. The catcher must be within the lines of the catcher's box until the pitched ball reaches the plate or until the ball is batted.
PENALTY: The ball is dead, a ball is called on the batter, and a warning given to the catcher and the defensive coach that if the catcher repeats such an act after this warning, they will be removed from the catcher's position for the remainder of that game.
- e. The catcher shall return the ball directly to the pitcher after each pitch, except after a strike out or put out made by the catcher. The pitcher has five seconds to release the next pitch.
EFFECT: *Sec. 3 (e) – An additional "BALL" is awarded to the batter.*
- f. Any action or motion by the pitcher (i.e. stops or pauses in the pitching motion or fakes a pitch or any other illegal action prior to the release of the pitch) while on or off the pitching rubber shall result in:
EFFECT: *Dead ball, a ball shall be called on the batter and a warning issued to the pitcher, that a similar act would be grounds for removal from the pitching position. These acts are considered illegal pitching actions, and are not to be considered illegal pitches.*

Sec. 4 The pitcher may use any wind-up desired providing:

- a. He/she does not make any motion to pitch without immediately delivering the ball to the batter whether on or off the pitching rubber.
- b. His/her wind-up is a continuous motion.
- c. He/she does not use a windup in which there is a stop or reversal of the forward motion.
- d. He/she delivers the ball on the first forward swing of the pitching arm past the hip.
- e. He/she does not pitch the ball behind his/her back or between his/her legs.
NOTE: *(a-e) are illegal pitching actions. Refer to Rule 6, Sec. 3 (f).*

- Sec. 5** The pitcher shall not deliberately drop, roll, or bounce the ball to the batter either on or off the pitching rubber.
- Sec. 6** The pitcher shall not at any time during the game, be allowed to use tape or other substances on the ball, the pitching hand or fingers; nor shall any other player apply a foreign substance to the ball. Under the supervision of the umpire, powdered resin may be used to dry the hands.
- Sec. 7** At the beginning of each half inning or when a pitcher relieves another, not more than 1 minute may be used to deliver not more than 3 pitches to the catcher or other teammate. Play shall be suspended during this time. **EFFECT:** *Sec. 1 – 7 is an illegal pitch and the ball is dead. A ball shall be called on the batter and baserunners do not advance.*
EXCEPTION: *If a batter strikes at any illegal pitch, it shall be a strike and there shall be no penalty. The ball remains in play if hit by the batter.*
NOTE: *The umpire shall not or will not give a vocal warning or a delayed dead ball signal to the batter on an illegally pitched ball. An umpire will declare “Dead Ball, No Pitch” on any illegal pitching action. These are illegal actions by the pitcher prior to the release of the pitched ball. A pitched ball that hits the ground or home plate is a dead ball and may not be hit by the batter.*
EXCEPTION: *In the Men’s Elite division the ball that hits the ground or the plate is not dead, however, the ball may not be hit.*
- Sec. 8** No pitch shall be declared when:
- The pitcher pitches during the suspension of play.
 - The runner is called out for leaving the base too soon.
 - The pitcher pitches before a base runner has retouched his/her base after a foul ball and the ball is dead.
 - The ball slips from the pitcher’s hand during his/her wind-up or during the back swing.
 - No player, manager or coach shall call “Time”, employ any other word or phrase, or commit any act while the ball is alive and in play for the obvious purpose of trying to make the pitcher commit an illegal pitch.
EFFECT: *No pitch shall be declared and a warning issued to the offending team. A repeat of this type of act shall result in the offender being removed from the game.*
- Sec. 9** There shall be only one charged conference between the manager or other team representative from the dugout with each and every pitcher in an inning. The second charged conference shall result in the removal of the pitcher from the pitching position for the remainder of the game.
NOTE: *It is not a charged conference when the coach or team representative enters the field of play and removes the pitcher from the pitching position. The player may return to the pitching position.*

Sec. 10 At no time during the game shall an offensive or defensive player or coach be allowed to leave their positions on the field or come from the dugouts to argue whether a pitch was a strike or a ball. The three players involved (pitcher, catcher, batter) may be allowed to question balls or strikes.

NOTE: *Anyone other than the pitcher, catcher or batter who leaves his/her positions on the field or the dugout to question balls and strikes, will be immediately ejected.*

RULE 7 – BATTING

Sec. 1 The batter shall take his position within the lines of the batter's box. In taking his/her position in the batter's box; the batter automatically assumes a one (1) ball and one strike (1) count.

- a. The batter shall not have his/her entire foot touching the ground completely outside the lines of the batter's box or touching home plate when the ball is hit.
- b. The batter shall not step directly across in front of the catcher to the other side of the batter's box while the pitcher is in position to pitch.

EFFECT: *Sec. 1(a-b) The ball is dead, the batter is out, baserunners may not advance.*

- c. The batter shall not enter the batter's box with an illegal bat.
EFFECT: *The ball is dead; batter is out and ejected; baserunners may not advance.*
- d. The batter shall not enter the batter's box with an altered bat or non-approved bat.

EFFECT: *The ball is dead, the batter is out, and without warning, is ejected from the game. Baserunners may not advance. (In youth play the coach is ejected).*

- e. The batter must take his/her position within five (5) seconds after the umpire has called "play ball". He/she must have both feet within the lines of the box before the start of the pitch. He/she may touch the line, but no part of his/her foot may be outside of the lines prior to the pitch.

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

Sec. 2 Each player of the side at bat shall become a batter in the order in which his/her name appears on the score sheet. The batting order of each team must be on the score sheet and delivered by the manager or captain to the home plate umpire. The batting order must be followed throughout the entire game unless a player is substituted for. When this occurs, the substitute must take the place of the player he/she is replacing in the batting order. The first batter in each inning shall be the batter whose name follows that of the last player who completed a turn at bat in the preceding inning.

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

- a. If the error is discovered while the incorrect batter is at bat, the correct batter takes his/her place and legally assumes any balls and strikes.
- b. If the error is discovered after the incorrect batter has batted, and before the next pitch to the following batter, the player who should have batted is out, and any out(s) that has been made prior to the discovering the infraction remain an out(s). Any advance or score made because of a batted ball by the improper batter's advance to 1st base on a hit, error or a base on balls shall be nullified. The next batter is the player whose name follows that of the player called out for failing to bat.
- c. If the error is discovered after the first pitch to the next batter, the turn at bat of the incorrect batter is legal, all runs scored and bases run are legal and the next batter shall be the one whose name follows that of the incorrect batter. No one is called out for failure to bat. Players who have not batted and who have not been called out have lost their turn at bat until reached again in the regular order.

Sec. 3 No baserunner shall be removed from the base he/she is occupying to bat in his/her proper place. He/she merely misses his/her turn at bat with no penalty. The batter following him/her in the batting order becomes the legal batter. .

Sec. 4 When the third out of the inning is made before the batter has completed his/her turn at bat, he/she shall be the first batter in the next inning and shall have the ball and strike count on him/her canceled.

Sec. 5 Members of the team at bat shall not interfere, either physically or vocally, with a player attempting to field either a fair or foul ball. This includes a base coach.

EFFECT: *The ball is dead, the batter is out, and any baserunner(s) must return to the base that they occupied at the time of the pitch.*

Sec. 6 The batter shall not hit a fair ball a second time with the bat in fair territory.

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

EXCEPTION: *If the batter is standing in the batter's box and*

contact is made while the bat is in the batter's hands, it is a foul ball even if the ball is hit a second time over fair territory.

NOTE: *If the batter drops the bat and the ball rolls against the bat in fair territory and in the umpires judgement, 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. 7 A strike is called by the umpire:

- a. For each legally pitched ball entering the strike zone before touching the ground and at which the batter does not swing. It is not a strike if the ball touches home plate and is not swung at.
- b. For each pitched ball swung at and missed by the batter.
- c. For each foul tip held by the catcher. The batter is out if it is the third strike. The ball is dead on any strike.
- d. For each foul ball not legally caught, including the 3rd strike.
- e. For each pitched ball swung at and missed which touches any part of the batter.
- f. When any part of the batter's person is hit with his/her own batted ball, when he/she is in the batter's box, and he/she has less than two strikes.
- g. When a pitched ball hits the batter while the ball is in the strike zone.

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

NOTE: *A pitched ball that hits the ground or home plate is a dead ball and may not be hit by the batter.*

Sec. 8 A ball is called by the umpire:

- a. For each pitch, which does not enter the strike zone, or touches home plate, which is not hit or swung at by the batter.
- b. For each illegally pitched ball not hit or swung at by the batter.
- c. When a pitch hits the batter outside of the strike zone.
- d. When the catcher fails to return the ball directly to the pitcher as required in Rule 6, Sec. 3 e.
- e. When the pitcher fails to pitch within five (5) seconds.
- f. For each excessive warm-up pitch (See Rule 6, Sec. 7).
- g. When the pitcher attempts a quick return pitch, the pitcher shall be given a warning.

EFFECT: *Rule 7, Sec. 7 a-g. The ball is dead and baserunners may not advance.*

Sec. 9 A fair ball is a legally batted ball which:

- a. Settles or is touched on fair ground between home and 1st or home and 3rd.
- b. Bounds past 1st or 3rd base on or over fair ground.
- c. Touches 1st, 2nd or 3rd base.
- d. While on or over fair ground, touches the person or clothing of an umpire or player.
- e. First falls on fair ground beyond 1st or 3rd base. A fair fly ball must be judged according to relative position of the ball and the

foul line, regardless of whether the fielder is on fair or foul ground at the time he/she touches the ball.

EFFECT: *Rule 7, Sec. 7(a-e) The ball is in play and baserunners are entitled to advance any number of bases with liability to be put out. The batter becomes a baserunner unless the infield fly rule applies.*

- f. While on or over fair ground, lands behind a fence or into a stand beyond the outfield fence, this is a home run.
- g. Hits a foul pole on the fly. If the ball hits the pole above the fence level, it shall be a home run.

Sec. 10 A foul ball is a legally batted ball which:

- a. Settles on foul ground between home and 1st base or between home and 3rd base.
- b. Bounds past 1st or 3rd base on or over foul ground.
- c. First touches on foul ground beyond 1st or 3rd base.
- d. While on or over foul ground, touches the person or clothing of an umpire or player, or it is blocked.

EFFECT: *Rule 7, Sec. 8 a-d The ball is dead. A strike is called on the batter for each foul ball, including the third strike. Baserunners must return to their bases without liability to be put out. Baserunners may not advance on a third strike foul ball, including a legally caught foul ball; however, all runners may advance on any other legally caught foul ball.*

- e. Is caught, with less than two strikes, allowing all runners to tag-up and advance at their own risk of being put out.

Sec. 11 The batter is out:

- a. When the batter has three strikes.
- b. When the 3rd strike is struck at, missed including if the ball touches any part of the batter's person.
- c. When a batter appears in the batter's box with, or is discovered using an illegal bat, altered bat or a non-approved bat, prior to or after hitting the ball. The batter is also ejected from the game for using an altered or non-approved bat. *In Youth Divisions, the coach is ejected.*
- d. When a fly ball is legally caught.
- e. Immediately when he/she hits an infield fly and the umpire has declared "Infield Fly". Refer to Rule 1, Sec. 30.
- f. If a fielder intentionally drops, or lets drop, a fair fly ball, including a line drive, which can be caught by an infielder with ordinary effort with 1st, 1st & 2nd, 1st & 3rd or 1st, 2nd & 3rd bases occupied with less than two outs.

EFFECT: *Rule 7, Sec. 9 e. The ball is dead, the batter is out and baserunners must return to the last base touched at the time of the pitch. This does not apply to an infield fly; the dropped ball remains alive on an infield fly.*

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

- g. If a preceding runner, in the umpire's judgement, intentionally interferes with a fielder who is attempting to catch a thrown ball, or is attempting to throw a ball in an attempt to complete a play, the preceding runner and the batter are both declared out.
- h. When the batter bunts or chops the ball downward. (See Rule 1, Sec. 11 and Sec. 15)
- i. When hit by his/her own-batted ball, in fair territory, outside the batter's box.

Sec. 12 The batter or baserunner is not out if a fielder making a play on him/her uses an illegal glove. The manager of the offended team has the option of having the batter bat over and assuming the ball and strike count he/she had prior to the pitch he/she hit (baserunner return), or taking the result of the play. The umpire(s) will signal a delayed dead ball.

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 either of the on deck circles without interfering with the view of any manager or coach.
- c. The on-deck batter may loosen up with two official softball bats, an official warm up bat, or the player may use the Power Wrap, Worth WBS, H & B BW1, Swing Sock, or any other official warm-up bat or product that has been approved by the NSA National Office. Nothing else may be attached, such as a donut, fan etc. when loosening up.
- d. The on-deck batter may leave the on-deck circle when he/she becomes the batter or to direct baserunners advancing from 3rd base to home plate.
- e. When the on-deck batter interferes with the defensive player's opportunity to make a play on a runner, the runner closest to home plate at the time of the interference is declared out.
- f. The provision of Rule 7, Sec. 3 shall apply to the on-deck batter.

RULE 8 – BASERUNNING

Sec. 1 The baserunner must touch bases 1st, 2nd, 3rd and Home Plate in that order. **EXCEPTION: The batter-runner and all baserunners do not have to run the bases on a homerun in “Hit and Sit” play.**

- a. When a baserunner must return to bases while the ball is in play, he/she must touch the bases in reverse order.
EFFECT: *The ball is in play and baserunners must return with liability to be put out.*
- b. When a baserunner acquires the right to a base by touching it before being put out, he/she may hold the base until he/she has legally touched the next base in order or is forced to vacate it for a succeeding runner.

- c. When a runner dislodges a base from its proper position neither he/she nor the succeeding runners in the same series of plays are compelled to follow a base unreasonably out of position. The ball is in play and runners may advance with liability of being put out.
- d. A baserunner may not run the bases in reverse order, either to confuse the fielders, or to make a travesty of the game.
EFFECT: *The ball is dead and the runner is out.*
NOTE: *A runner in a double play situation who stops or retreats back towards the base left is not to be considered as running the bases in reverse order or considered making a travesty of the game.*
- e. Two baserunners may not occupy the same base simultaneously.
EFFECT: *The runner who first legally occupied the base is entitled to it. The other runner can be put out by being touched with the ball.*
- f. Failure of a preceding runner to touch a base or to leave a base legally on a caught fly ball and who is declared out, does not affect the status of a succeeding runner who touches the bases in proper order. However, if the preceding runner were to be called out for the third out of the inning, no succeeding runner may score a run.
- g. No runner may return to touch a missed base, or one left illegally, after a succeeding runner has scored.
- h. When the ball is dead, no runner may return to touch a missed base, a base he/she has left illegally, even after the ball becomes alive. However, when a dead ball occurs, a runner may return to a missed base or a base he/she left illegally, if he/she is required to by the umpire in the awarding or determination of bases. The runner is not liable to be put out for missing a base beyond the base he/she is required to by the umpire in the awarding or determination of the bases. The runner is not liable to be put out for missing a base beyond the base he/she is required to return to.
- i. No runner may return to touch a missed base or one left illegally once he/she enters his/her dugout or bench area.
- j. When the umpire has called four (4) balls or when a walk is issued, all runners must touch all bases in legal order. Baserunners do not advance unless forced.
- k. Bases left too soon on a caught fly ball must be retouched before advancing to awarded bases. Awarded bases must also be touched in proper order.

Sec. 2 The batter becomes a batter-baserunner:

- a. As soon as he/she hits the ball.
- b. When the umpire has called four (4) balls, the ball is dead. Baserunners do not advance unless forced. A batter may be awarded an intentional walk by the defensive team by merely notifying the umpire. A second intentional walk cannot be administered until the first walked batter reaches 1st base.

- c. When the catcher or any other fielder obstructs or hinders the batter from striking at or hitting a pitched ball.
 1. The umpire will signal “delayed dead ball”.
 2. The offensive team manager has the option of taking the base awarded the batter for catcher’s obstruction or he/she may take the result of the play.
 3. If the batter reaches first base safely and all other runners advance at least one base on the batted ball, catchers obstruction is cancelled and no other options are given.
- d. When a fair ball strikes the umpire or baserunner on fair ground.
 1. If the ball hits the umpire or baserunner after passing an infielder, other than the pitcher or touches an infielder, including the pitcher, the ball is in play.
 2. If the ball hits the umpire or baserunner before passing an infielder, the ball is dead and the batter is entitled to first base without liability of being put out. Runners not forced by the batter-runner must return.

Sec. 3 Baserunners are entitled to advance with liability to be put out:

- a. When the ball is thrown into fair territory or foul territory and is not blocked.
- b. When the ball is batted into fair territory and is not blocked.
- c. When a legally caught fly ball is first touched.

EXCEPTION: *Baserunners may not advance on a caught third strike foul ball.*
- d. If a fair ball strikes an umpire or a runner after passing an infielder other than the pitcher, or having been touched by an infielder, including the pitcher, the ball shall be in play.
- e. Runner(s) may not attempt to steal on a third strike out, nor can a runner(s) steal a base if the pitched ball hits any part of the batter’s person, other than the bat, while the pitched ball is in the air, or if the pitched ball hits the ground and bounces into the batter’s person before being touched by the catcher. Any interference of the live-pitched ball by a batter, or offensive player will negate any attempted steal, and runner(s) must return to the base occupied at the time of the pitch.

Sec. 4 A player forfeits his/her exemption from liability to be put out:

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

- Sec. 5 Baserunners are** entitled to advance without liability to be put out:
- a. When forced to vacate a base because the batter was awarded a base on balls, the ball is dead. **EXCEPTION:** *Open, the ball remains alive.*
 - b. When a fielder obstructs a baserunner from making a base, unless the fielder is trying to field a batted ball or has the ball ready for a tag.

EFFECT: *When obstruction occurs, the umpire shall call “OBSTRUCTION” and give a delayed dead ball signal for obstruction. **NOTE:** *Failure of the umpire to call Obstruction DOES NOT negate the Obstruction.**

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

EXCEPTION: *A baserunner obstructed in a run down shall be awarded the lead base at the time of the obstruction. Any proceeding runners forced to advance by the award of bases for obstruction shall advance without liability to be put out.*
 2. If no play is being made on the obstructed runner at the time of obstruction, the play shall proceed until the play is completed. The umpire shall call “time” and impose such penalties, if any, as in his judgement, will nullify the act of obstruction.
 3. If a fielder without the ball fakes a tag, the umpire may award the obstructed runner and each other runner affected by the obstruction, the bases they would have reached had there been no obstruction.

NOTE: *In the case of a “fake tag”, the fielder will be automatically ejected from the game.*
 - c. When forced to vacate a base because the batter was awarded a base for catchers obstruction.
 - d. When a fielder contacts or catches a batted or thrown ball with his/her cap, glove or any part of his/her uniform while detached from its proper place.

NOTE: *The umpire(s) will give the “delayed dead ball” signal. **EFFECT:** *The runner shall be entitled to three (3) bases if a batted ball or two (2) bases if a thrown ball. In either case runners may advance further at their own risk. If the illegal act was made on a fair ball that, in the judgement of the umpire, would have cleared the outfield fence in flight, a home run shall be awarded, and a four (4) base error will be scored on the play with the home run not counting against the teams home run total.**
 - e. When the ball is in play and is overthrown (beyond the boundary lines) or is blocked.

EFFECT: *Awarded bases shall be determined by the position of the baserunners at the time of the infraction.*

EFFECT: *For offensive equipment or an offensive player causing a blocked ball, the player closest to home plate is declared out, and all other runners must return to the last base touched when the ball becomes blocked.*

1. The ball is dead. In all cases where a thrown ball goes into the spectators' seats, goes over, through, or under any fence surrounding the playing field; hits any person or object not engaged in the game, including bats lying near benches, goes into the players benches, whether the ball rebounds onto the playing field or not, or remains in the meshes of any wire screen, each and every baserunner shall be awarded two (2) bases.
 2. When the first throw is made by an infielder, two (2) bases shall be awarded. The award shall be governed by the position of each runner at the time the pitch was made; however, if all runners, including the batter-runner, have advanced at least one (1) base when the infielder makes the wild throw, on the first play after a pitch, the award shall be governed by the position of the runners, when the wild throw was made.
 3. When a throw is made by an outfielder or is the result of any succeeding play or attempted play, the two (2) base award shall be governed by the position of each runner and the last base he/she has touched at the time the throw was made. If two runners are between the same base, the award is based on the position of the lead runner.
 4. When a fielder loses possession of the ball such as on an attempted tag and the ball enters a dead ball area or becomes blocked, all runners are awarded one (1) base from the last base touched at the time the ball entered the dead ball area or became blocked. If a runner touches the next base and returns to his/her original base, the original base he/she left is considered the "last base touched" for the purposes of an over throw award.
- f. When a ball bounds or rolls into a stand, over, under, or through a fence; bounds out of play unintentionally off a defensive player or other obstruction marking the boundaries of the playing field.

EFFECT: *The ball is dead and all baserunners are awarded two (2) bases from the time of the pitch.*

- g. When a live ball is unintentionally carried by a fielder from playable territory into a dead ball area, the ball becomes dead immediately. All baserunners are awarded one base from the last base touched at the time the fielder enters dead ball territory. If, in the judgement of the umpire, a fielder intentionally carries a live ball into dead ball territory, the ball becomes dead and all baserunners are awarded two (2) bases from the last base touched at the time he/she entered the dead ball area.

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

Sec. 6 A baserunner must return to his/her base:

- a. When a foul ball is illegally caught and so declared by the umpire.
- b. When the umpire declares an illegally batted ball.
- c. When a batter or baserunner is called out for interference, other baserunners shall return to the last base touched at the time of the interference.
- d. When a pitched ball that is swung at and missed touches any part of the batters' person.
- e. When a foul ball is not caught.
EFFECT: *Sec 6.(a – e) . The ball is dead and baserunners must return to last base occupied prior to the pitch except when forced by the batter becoming a baserunner. Baserunners need not touch the intervening bases in returning, but must return promptly; however, they must be allowed sufficient time to return.*
- f. Base stealing. Under no circumstances is a runner permitted to steal a base when a pitched ball is not batted.

Sec. 7 Batter – baserunner is out:

NOTE: *1st base double base – At facilities that use the **White and Orange** double bag at first base, the following rules will be implemented. If the first play is at first base, either from the infield or outfield, a batter/runner will be called out for touching the inside base. If the play is elsewhere, the inside base may be tagged in a continuation or possible continuation toward second (2nd) base. The batter/runner running toward first (1st) base may cross over to the inside bag to avoid a collision if a wild throw occurs. The fielder may tag the outside of the bag to record the out in this situation. This is only permissible on the initial play at first base. The inside bag will be used by the batter/runner/runner if attempting to get back to first (1st) base. If a batter/runner on the first play at first base touches “ANY” part of the orange bag, that runner is considered to have touched the bag legally. If the runner touches “ANY” part of the white bag in a continuation or possible continuation to 2nd base, the runner is considered to have touched the bag legally.*

- a. When, after hitting a fair ball, he/she is legally touched with the ball before he/she touches 1st base.
- b. When after hitting a fair ball, the ball is held by a fielder touching 1st base with any part of his/her person, before the batter-baserunner touches 1st base.
- c. When, after a fly ball is hit, a fielder catches the ball before it touches the ground or any object other than a fielder.
- d. When, after hitting a fair ball or a base on balls is awarded, he/she fails to advance to the next base.
EFFECT: *Rule 8, Sec. 7(a – d). The ball is in play and the batter-runner is out.*
- e. When he/she runs outside the three foot line, and in the judgement of the umpire, interferes with the fielder taking the

- throw at 1st base; however, he/she may run outside the three foot line to avoid a fielder attempting to field a batted ball.
- f. When he/she interferes with a fielder attempting to field a batted ball or intentionally interferes with a thrown ball. If the interference, in the judgement of the umpire, is an obvious attempt to prevent a double play, the baserunner closest to home plate shall be called out.
 - g. When a batter runner interferes with a play at home in an attempt to prevent an obvious out at home plate, the runner is also out.
 - h. When he/she moves back towards home plate to avoid or delay a tag by a fielder.
 - i. When he/she is discovered using an altered or illegal bat.
EFFECT: *Rule 8, Sec. 7(e-i). The ball is dead and the batter-runner is out. Other baserunners must return to the last base legally touched at the time of the illegal action.*
 - j. Any batter-runner who carries the bat and legally reaches or touches first base, while still holding the bat, during a live ball situation (including a homerun), will be declared out. Should this be the 3rd out of an inning, no preceding runner shall score.
EFFECT: *If less than two (2) outs, a delayed ball signal will be given and the ball will remain alive.*

Sec. 8 The baserunner is out:

- a. When in running to any base, he/she runs more than three feet from a direct line between that base and the next base in regular or reverse order to avoid being touched by the ball in the hand of a fielder. When a play, such as a rundown, is made on a runner who has “rounded” a base, and that runner is outside of a direct line between bases, the runner establishes his/her baseline as a direct line between him/her and the next base in regular or reverse order.
- b. When, while the ball is in play, he/she is legally touched by the ball in the hand of a fielder while not in contact with a base.
- c. When on a force out, a fielder tags him/her with the ball or tags the base.
- d. When the baserunner fails to return to touch the base he/she previously occupied when play is resumed after suspension of play.
- e. When a baserunner physically passes a preceding runner before that runner has been put out.
- f. When anyone, other than another baserunner, physically assists a baserunner while the ball is in play.
- g. When the baserunner leaves his/her base to advance to another base before a caught fly ball has been touched by a fielder, provided the ball is returned to a fielder and legally held on that base, or a fielder legally touches the baserunner before he/she returns to his/her base.
- h. When the baserunner fails to touch the intervening base or bases, in regular or reverse order, and the ball is in play and

legally held on that base; or the baserunner is legally touched while off the base he/she missed.

- i. When the batter runner legally over runs 1st base attempts to run to 2nd base and is legally touched while off the base.
- j. In running or sliding for home plate, he/she fails to touch home plate and makes no attempt to return to the base, when a fielder holds the ball in his/her hand while touching home plate and appeals to the umpire for a decision.

EFFECT: *Rule 8, Sec. 8(g – I). These are appeal plays, and the defensive team loses the privilege of putting the baserunner out if the appeal is not made before the next legal or illegal pitch. If an appeal is made after the ball is dead and before the next pitch is made, the ball remains dead and runners may not advance. The pitcher must have the ball in his/her possession, around the area of the pitcher's plate. Any player in the game, coach or manager may then make an appeal by announcing to the umpire, which runner is being appealed; which base has been missed; or which base has been left too soon. Any player may also make an appeal while the ball is still alive, and before the ball becomes dead, by tagging the runner or the base being appealed, with the ball.*

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

on another runner. The runner closest to home plate at the time of the interference shall also be called out.

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

- t. When a defensive player has the ball and is waiting for the runner and the runner remains on his feet and deliberately, with great force, crashes into the defensive player, the runner is declared out. The ball is dead and all runners must return to the last base touched at the time of the collision unless Rule 8, Sec. 8 (j) or Rule 8, Sec. 8 (s) applies.

NOTE: *IF THE ACT IS DETERMINED TO BE FLAGRANT, THE OFFENDER SHALL BE EJECTED.*

- u. When the baserunner fails to keep contact with his/her base until a legally pitched ball has reached home plate, the ball is dead. “No Pitch” is declared and the baserunner is called out.
- v. When he abandons a base, does not attempt to advance to the next base, and enters the team area or leaves the field of play. The base runner shall be called out immediately when he/she enters the team area or leaves the field of play.
- w. If hit by an infield fly when not in contact with the base, the ball is dead and the runners and the batter are both declared out. Other runners must return to the base occupied, without liability to be put out, at the time of the pitch.
- x. When prior to a pitch being made to the next batter, it is discovered that the previous batter used an altered, illegal or a non-approved bat.

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

Sec. 9 Baserunner is not out:

- a. When a baserunner runs behind or in front of a fielder and outside the baseline in order to avoid interfering with a fielder who is attempting to field the ball in the baseline.
- b. When a baserunner does not run a direct line to the base, providing the fielder, in the direct line, does not have the ball in his/her possession.
- c. When more than one fielder attempts to field a batted ball, and the baserunner comes into contact with the one who, in the umpires judgement, was not entitled to field the ball.
- d. When a baserunner is hit with a fair-batted ball that has passed through an infielder, excluding the pitcher, and in the judgement of the umpire, no other fielder has a chance to make a play on the ball.
- e. When a baserunner is touched with a ball not securely held by a fielder.

- f. When the defensive team does not request the umpire's decision on an appeal play until after the next pitch.
- g. When a batter runner over runs 1st base, after touching it, and makes no attempt to advance to the next base.
- h. When the baserunner is not given sufficient time to return to a base, he/she shall not be called out for being off the base before the pitcher pitches the ball. The umpire shall call no pitch.
- i. When a runner, who has legally started to advance, cannot be stopped by the pitcher receiving the ball while on the pitching plate, nor by stepping on the plate with the ball in his/her possession.
- j. When a baserunner holds his/her base until a fly ball touches a fielder, and then attempts to advance.
- k. When a runner is in contact with the base, and is hit by a batted ground ball or fly ball in fair territory, the baserunner is not out and the ball is dead. All runners advance one (1) base if forced. **EFFECT:** *Ball is dead; all runners advance one (1) base, if forced.*
- l. When a baserunner slides into a base and dislodges it from its proper place. The base is considered to have followed the runner. See Rule 8, Sec. 1 (c) and Rule 8, Sec. 4 (c).
- m. When a fielder makes a play on a batter or baserunner while using an illegal glove. See Rule 7, Sec. 12 for option given to the manager of the offensive team.
- n. When a fair-batted ball hits the baserunner, after it touched or touches any fielder, including the pitcher.

RULE 9 – DEAD BALL – BALL IN PLAY

Sec. 1 The ball is dead and not in play:

- a. When the ball is batted illegally.
- b. When a batter steps from one box to another when the pitcher is ready to pitch.
- c. When a ball is pitched illegally. **EXCEPTION:** *If the batter swings at an illegal pitch, the play stands.*
- d. When the umpire declares “No Pitch”.
- e. When a pitched ball touches any part of the batter's person or clothing, whether or not the ball is struck at.
- f. When a foul ball is not caught.
- g. When a baserunner is called out for leaving a base too soon on a pitched ball.
- h. When the offensive team causes interference.
- i. When the ball is outside the playing limits of the playing field. A ball is considered “out of play” when it touches the ground, person on the ground or object outside the playing area.
- j. In case of interference with the batter or fielder.
- k. When the batter bunts or chops a pitched ball.
- l. When the umpire calls time.

- m. When the umpire calls time and an appeal play follows, the ball remains dead throughout the appeal.
- n. When any part of the batters person is hit by his own batted ball while he is in the batter's box.
- o. When a runner runs the bases in reverse order.
- p. When a coach near third base runs in the direction of home plate on or near the baseline while the fielder is attempting to make a play, and thereby draws a throw to home plate.
- q. When a baserunner fails to keep contact with his/her base until the pitched ball has reached home plate.
- r. When a play is being made on an obstructed runner, or if the batter-runner is obstructed before he/she reaches first base.
- s. When a blocked ball is declared.
- t. When the batter enters the batters box with, or uses, an illegal bat or altered bat.
- u. When a caught fair ball, including a line drive, which can be handled by any infielder with ordinary effort, is intentionally dropped, with less than two outs, and with a runner on 1st, 1st and 2nd, 1st and 3rd or 1st, 2nd or 3rd bases.
- v. When a fielder carries a live ball into dead ball territory.
- w. When a foul ball is caught and the batter has 2 strikes.
- x. When a batter is hit with his/her own-batted ball in fair territory outside the batter's box.
- y. When a fair ball strikes an umpire or baserunner on fair ground before passing or touching an infielder.

Sec. 2 The ball is in play:

- a. At the start of each half inning, when the pitcher has the ball in the pitching position and the umpire has called "Play Ball".
- b. When the infield fly rule is enforced.
- c. When a thrown ball goes past a fielder and remains in playable territory.
- d. When a fair ball strikes an umpire or baserunner on fair ground after passing or touching an infielder.
- e. When a fair ball strikes an umpire on foul ground.
- f. When the baserunners have reached the bases which they are entitled, when the fielder illegally fields a batted or thrown ball.
- g. When a baserunner is called out for passing a preceding runner.
- h. When no play is being made on an obstructed runner, the ball shall remain alive until the play is over.
- i. When the batter legally hits a fair ball.
- j. When a baserunner must return, in reverse order, while the ball is already in play.
- k. When a baserunner acquires the right to a base by touching it before being put out.
- l. When a base is dislodged while runners are running the bases.
- m. When a runner runs out of the base line in regular or reverse order to avoid a tag by a fielder.
- n. When a runner is forced or tagged out.

- o. When the umpire calls the baserunner out for failure to return and touch the base when play is resumed, after a suspension of play.
- p. When a live ball strikes a groundskeeper, photographer, policeman etc. assigned to the game.
- q. When a thrown ball strikes an offensive player.
- r. If the batter drops the bat and the ball rolls against the bat in fair territory, and in the judgement of the umpire, there was no intention to interfere with the course of the ball. The batter is not out and the ball is alive and in play.
- s. When a thrown ball strikes an umpire.
- t. When a thrown ball strikes a coach.
- u. As long as there is a play as a result of the hit by the batter. This would include an immediate live ball appeal before the umpire has called “time”. Once the umpire has called “time” however, the ball remains dead during a subsequent appeal play.
- v. When a foul ball is caught and the batter has less than two strikes.
- w. When, in the judgment of the umpire, a coach touches or physically helps a runner.

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

Sec. 3 **The ball remains alive** until the umpire calls “time”, which should be done when the ball is held by a player in the infield area, and in the judgement of the umpire, all play has ceased.

RULE 10 – UMPIRES

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

Sec. 1 **Powers and duties:** The umpires are the representatives of the league or organization for the particular game that they have been assigned. They are authorized and required to enforce the rules contained in this book. The umpires have the power to order a player, coach, captain, or manager to do or refrain from doing, any act that is necessary to enforce any of these rules; and to inflict any penalties prescribed. The plate umpire shall have the authority to rule on any situation not specifically covered in these rules.

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

- a. The umpire should inspect the playing field, equipment, and clarify all ground rules to both teams and managers/coaches prior to the start of the game.
- b. Each umpire shall have the power to make decisions on violations committed anytime during playing time or suspension of play until the game is over.

- c. No umpire has the authority to set aside or question decisions made by another umpire within the limits of his/her respective duties.
- d. An umpire may consult with his/her partners at any time; however, the final decision shall rest with the umpire whose authority it is to make the decision and who requested the opinion of the other umpires.
- e. The plate and base umpires shall have equal authority to :
 - 1. Call a runner out for leaving a base too soon.
 - 2. Call “time” for suspension of play.
 - 3. Remove a player, manager, coach, or other team member from the game for violation of the rules.

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

Sec. 2 The plate umpire:

- a. Shall take a position behind the catcher and have full responsibility for the proper conduct of the game.
- b. Shall call all balls and strikes.
- c. Shall be in agreement and in cooperation with the base umpire(s) call on plays, fair or foul balls, legally or illegally caught balls. On plays, which require the base umpire to leave the infield, the plate umpire shall assume the duties that the base umpire is normally required to cover.
- d. Shall determine and declare whether a batter chops or bunts a ball, whether a batted ball touches the person or clothing of the batter, and also whether a fly ball is an infield fly.
- e. Shall render decisions on the bases when required by the instruction in the umpire’s manual.
- f. Shall determine when a game is forfeited.

Sec. 3 The base umpire:

- a. Shall take a position(s) on the playing field as outlined in the Umpire’s Manual.
- b. Shall assist the plate umpire in every way to enforce the rules of the game.
- c. Can call an Infield Fly.

Sec. 4 Changing of umpire:

Umpires cannot be changed during a game unless injury or illness incapacitates an umpire.

Sec. 5 Umpires judgment:

There shall be no appeal of any decision of any umpire on the grounds that he/she was not correct in his/her decision that a batted ball was fair or foul, a baserunner was out or safe, a pitched ball was a ball or a strike, or any other play involving accuracy of judgement. Any argument is grounds for a player or coach to be ejected from the

game. No decision of an umpire shall be reversed, except when he/she is convinced it is in violation of a rule. If the manager, captain, or either team does not seek reversal of a decision based solely on a point of rules, the umpire whose decision is in question, shall, if in doubt, confer with his/her associates before taking any action. But under no circumstances shall any player or person, other than the manager or captain of either team, have any legal right to protest any decision and seek its reversal on a claim that it is in conflict with these rules. Under no circumstances should any umpire seek to reverse a decision made by his/her associates, nor shall any umpire criticize or interfere with the duties of his/her associates, unless asked to do so.

Sec. 6 Suspension of play:

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

Sec. 7 Violations and penalties:

- a. Players, managers, coaches or other team members shall not make disparaging or insulting remarks to or about any opposing players, officials, or spectators; or commit other acts that could be considered unsportsmanlike conduct.
- b. There shall be no more than two coaches for each team to give words of assistance and direction to the members of the team while at bat. One coach shall be stationed near first base and the other near third base. Each coach must remain in the coach's box.
- c. The penalty for violations by a player is prompt removal of the offender from the game and grounds. For the first violation the manager or coach may be warned. For second offense the player is removed from the game. The offender shall go directly to the dressing room (if available) for the remainder of the game or leave the grounds. Failure to do so will warrant a forfeiture of the game.
- d. Any player or coach who leaves his/her position on the field, including the dugout, to argue balls and strikes, or to argue whether a batter stepped on or over home plate, will be ejected. Only the three players involved with the pitch (pitcher, catcher, and batter) will be allowed to question balls and strikes.

Sec. 8 All NSA Umpires must be registered and have a valid registration number, prior to placing an order for uniforms or taking the field. All NSA Umpires must wear an Official NSA umpiring uniform consisting of the following:

1. Official NSA umpire shirt w/embroidered logo.
NOTE: Any clothing worn under the official umpire shirt must be plain white with no writing or graphics of any kind.
EXCEPTION: The embroidered official NSA mock turtleneck.
2. Black trousers with belt loops (Slow-pitch).
3. Heather grey trousers with belt loops (Fastpitch).
NOTE: Trousers do not include jeans, sweatpants, jogging pants, or other pants or slacks that **would not** be considered dress trousers.
4. Black shorts with belt loops w/official NSA Logo.
***NOTE:** Black shorts, with belt loops, may be worn at all levels of NSA sanctioned play. **EXCEPTION: Fastpitch Softball.** It is up to the discretion of the Tournament Director to allow umpires to wear shorts or trousers during all Post season play. It is recommended that Umpires, in cooperation with the league/tournament Umpire-In-Chief, coordinate their uniforms to look alike, i.e. one Umpire wears shorts, both wear shorts. This is the same for trousers. When shorts are worn, solid white crew socks must be worn. Footie's/no show socks are not acceptable as part of the NSA OFFICIAL UNIFORM.
5. Black Belt.
6. Black socks with trousers and white crew socks or **white or black socks that cover the ankle with black shorts. Partners sock color MUST match if shorts are worn.**
7. Black jacket w/official NSA logo.
8. Black half sleeve jacket w/official NSA logo.
9. Black shoes. Black official (umpire) shoes bearing the white logo, trademark or manufacturers name is legal. **NO WALKING BOOTS OR CASTS PERMITTED.**
10. White mock with official NSA logo or plain white regular turtleneck.
11. Black rain gear (top and bottom).
12. Black cap w/official NSA Logo.
13. Black ball bag w/official NSA logo. Ball bag must be worn on the hip or slightly to the rear of hip.
14. Any umpire apparel (hat, jacket, etc) that is issued to an umpire for being assigned to a special event (NIT, World Series, a Super World Series, etc) may NOT be worn after the conclusion of said special event as a part of the official NSA Umpire uniform.
15. The following item sold by NSA that bears the official NSA logo is mandatory wear and to be purchased from the NSA National Office. NSA Official Jacket, NSA Official Shorts, NSA Official Half Sleeve Jacket, NSA Official Cap, NSA Official Shirt, NSA Official Rain Gear, NSA Official Mock

Turtle Neck, NSA Official Ball Bag. To place an order, go to www.NSASportingGoods.com

Sec. 9 No player during the course of any NSA sanctioned softball event may wear any part of the NSA official umpire's uniform.

RULE 11 – PROTESTS

Sec. 1 Protests shall not be allowed or considered if they are based solely upon a decision involving judgement on the part of any umpire.

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

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

Sec. 2 Protests that shall be received and considered concerning matters of the following types:

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

Sec. 3 Protests may involve the interpretation of a rule.

Sec. 4 The notification of intent to protest must be made immediately before the next pitch. **EXCEPTION:** *Player eligibility.*

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

Sec. 5 The official protest must be filed within a reasonable time:

- a. Within forty-eight hours after the scheduled time of the contest is generally considered a reasonable amount of time in league play. In tournament play, all play ceases until the protest is resolved.

- b. A protest fee of seventy-five dollars (\$75.00) cash will be paid in all qualifying and Post season tournaments sanctioned by the NSA. In tournament play, the fee must be paid immediately. If the protest is upheld, the protest fee shall be returned. If protesting player eligibility, the fee is \$75.00 cash per player. Bat protests are \$200.00 per bat. Ball protests will be \$75.00 per ball.
- c. In tournament play, protest concerning player eligibility must be filed before the end of the game being protested.
NOTE: *The Tournament Director/Coordinator or Tournament UIC may require a copy of the birth certificate or picture I.D. at anytime. Play ceases until the protest is resolved. ALL PLAYERS MUST CARRY A GOVERNMENT ISSUED PICTURE ID ON HIS/HER PERSON AT ALL TIMES DURING TOURNAMENT PLAY.*

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

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 stands as played.
- b. When protest is allowed for misinterpretation of a playing rule, the game is replayed from the point at which the incorrect decision was made with the decision corrected.
- c. When protest for eligibility is allowed, the team shall forfeit the game played to the offended team.

PART II

CHURCH SOFTBALL

Any softball rules not covered or found in this section will be covered or found in Part I of the current edition of the Official NSA Rulebook. All Church World Series Tournaments will be held on the same weekend.
CLASSIFICATION OF CHURCH SOFTBALL TEAMS: Competitive & Recreational.

RULE 1 – DEFINITIONS

No Changes. Refer to Rule 1, “General Playing Rules”.

RULE 2 – THE PLAYING FIELD

No Changes. Refer to Rule 2, “General Playing Rules”.

RULE 3 – EQUIPMENT

Sec. 6 UNIFORM

- a. NSA CHURCH UNIFORM REQUIREMENTS:
 - Competitive - Matching uniforms with numbers
 - Recreational - Matching shirts with numbers.

RULE 4 – PLAYERS AND SUBSTITUTIONS

Refer to Rule 4, “General Playing Rules”.

RULE 5 – THE GAME

Sec. 10 Home run limits for Church Play:

- (Any untouched ball hit over the fence is considered a Home Run)
- | | |
|-------------|---|
| Competitive | 2 with the One-up Home Run Rule. |
| Recreation | 1 with the Progressive Penalty Home Run Rule. |
- NOTE:** See Rule 5, Sec. 12, page 22 for explanation of each home run rule.

Sec. 14 Church Eligibility

- a. A player or team is eligible to play Church Softball if he/she, or they, meet the active membership of the Church, certified by the signature of the Official of the Church.

Sec. 15 Qualification for Post Season Church Play

- a. A team must compete in a Qualifying or State Tournament to qualify to play in the NSA Church World Series.
NOTE: If there are no qualifying or state tournaments in a state or region, invitations can be issued by the National Office for a team to participate in the World Series.

- Sec. 16** The roster should be frozen by the State Director when that church team qualifies to play in the NSA Post Season Tournament.

RULE 6 – PITCHING REGULATIONS

No changes, Refer to Rule 6, “General Playing Rules”.

RULE 7 – BATTING

No changes, Refer to Rule 7, “General Playing Rules”.

RULE 8 – BASERUNNING

No changes, Refer to Rule 8, “General Playing Rules”.

RULE 9 – DEAD BALL/BALL IN PLAY

No changes, Refer to Rule 9, “General Playing Rules”.

RULE 10 – UMPIRES

No changes, Refer to Rule 10, “General Playing Rules”.

RULE 11 – PROTESTS

No changes, Refer to Rule 11, “General Playing Rules”.

RULE 4 – PLAYERS AND SUBSTITUTIONS

Sec. 1 A team shall consist of:

- a. Coed (Slowpitch) with extra players. Twelve (12) players, six (6) males and six (6) females. In Coed Indoor, a male player must play the pitching position.
NOTE: *If the “EP” is used in Coed, twelve (12) players must be used. It is not permissible to use eleven (11) players because of the alternate player rule for the batting order.*
- b. Coed (Slowpitch). Ten (10) players; five (5) males and five (5) females.
- c. A team must start a game with a minimum of ten (10) players and finish a game with ten (10) players. Coed teams may use the extra player (EP) rule.
- d. Five (5) male and five (5) female players must play defense at all times.
- e. There must be two (2) of each sex in the outfield and infield positions. Positioning is left up to the individual manager.
EXCEPTION: *There cannot be a Rover (male or female). There must be two male and two female outfielders in the outfield at the time the ball is pitched and it is the umpire’s discretion to determine if the defensive team is in compliance.*
PENALTY: This is a Delayed Dead Ball Situation. The manager of the offended team has the option of having the batter bat over and assuming the ball and strike count he/she had prior to the pitch he/she hit (baserunners return), or taking the result of the play.
- f. Outfielders may not be on the infield surface.
- g. Each team must have a male/female pitcher/catcher combination.

Sec. 2 EXTRA PLAYER (EP)

If the extra player (EP) is used, a team must use two (2) extra players, one male and one female. These players may play defense at any time, but they must retain their original positions in the batting order. The batting order must remain the same unless a substitution is used in the offensive line-up. **NOTE:** *When a team is using the extra player(s) (EP), and in the event a player or players are removed for any reason during the course of the game and no substitution is available, the player removed shall be scored as an out when his/her turn comes up in the batting order. In the event this occurs, the player immediately following the removed player is simply by-passed as a batter, but may still remain in the game as a defensive player.*

Sec. 3 COURTESY RUNNER: A Courtesy Runner of the same sex may be used once per inning for a total of two (2) courtesy runners per inning one (1) male and (1) female. The courtesy runner *must be of the same sex. The Courtesy Runner can be any player on the team roster. If the courtesy runner comes to bat while on base, it is an out. For the purpose of the Courtesy Runner Rule; Rule 7, Sec. 3 IS NOT in effect.*

RULE 5 – THE GAME

Sec. 3 Coed Program run rule is as follows:

- a. Twenty (20) runs after 3 innings
- b. Fifteen (15) runs after 4 innings
- c. Ten (10) runs after 5 innings

Sec. 9 Teams must have registered and entered their roster online with all information correct and complete or the player(s) and/or team(s) will be considered ineligible to participate in any National Softball Association sanctioned Tournaments, including Qualifiers, NIT's or Post Season Tournaments.

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

Sec. 10 Home Run Limit for Coed (Slow Pitch) Teams

- a. UPPER Division – Two (2) HR's with the one up Home Run Rule.
- b. LOWER Division – One (1) HR, second (2) HR will be declared an out with any additional HR's starting the Progressive HR penalty.
- c. Industrial/Military Division – One (1) home run. Any home runs hit after one will be scored as an out.
- d. 35 & Over Master Coed – One (1) home run with the "One – up"

NOTE: See Rule 5, Sec. 12, for explanation of home run rules.

RULE 6 – PITCHING REGULATIONS

No changes, Refer to Rule 6, "General Playing Rules".

RULE 7 – BATTING

Sec. 1 Each player on the side at bat shall become a batter in the order in which their names appear on the score sheet.

- a. Male and female players must alternate in the batting order. Either a male or female batter may bat first in the line-up. This order must also be maintained when using the extra player (EP) rule.
- b. When a male batter is walked intentionally or unintentionally, the male batter is awarded second base, and WITH TWO OUTS the following female batter has the option to bat or walk.
- c. It is the defensive team's responsibility to know whether or not the wrong ball is in the game. Only the team at bat shall be allowed to make the appeal on the wrong ball being pitched.

EFFECT: The offensive team shall have the choice to either take the result of the play or bat again.

RULE 8 – BASERUNNING

No changes, Refer to Rule 8, “General Playing Rules”.

RULE 9 – DEAD BALL/BALL IN PLAY

No changes, Refer to Rule 9, “General Playing Rules”.

RULE 10 – UMPIRES

No changes, Refer to Rule 10, “General Playing Rules”.

RULE 11 – PROTESTS

No changes, Refer to Rule 11, “General Playing Rules”.

PART IV

WOMEN'S SOFTBALL

Any softball rules not covered or found in this section will be covered or found in Part 1 of the Official NSA Rule book. The National Softball Association has divisions for men and women, and a coed division for both to compete in jointly. The men's division is specifically for men ages 16 and older, and the women's division is specifically designed for women ages 16 and older. With the exception of CO-ED division, women may not compete in the men's program and men may not compete in the women's program of any division.

RULE 1 – DEFINITIONS

No changes, Refer to Rule 1, "General Playing Rules".

RULE 2 – THE PLAYING FIELD

- Sec. 1 Fence Distance** – Women's Adult Slow Pitch Divisions
a. Minimum Fence Distance – 250 feet
- Sec. 4 The Official Diamond** shall have base lines as follows:
a. Women's Adult Slow Pitch Divisions – 70 feet
- Sec. 5 The Official Diamond** shall have a pitching distance as follows:
f. Women's Adult Slow Pitch Divisions – 53 feet

RULE 3 – EQUIPMENT

- Sec. 2** The Official Softball shall be the 11 inch softball. No other changes, Refer to Rule 3, General Playing Rules.
- Sec. 4** No changes, Refer to Rule 3, "General Playing Rules".
- a. NSA Women Uniform Requirements:
- | | |
|-------|------------------------------|
| Upper | Matching shirts with numbers |
| Lower | Matching shirts with numbers |

RULE 4 – PLAYERS AND SUBSTITUTIONS

Refer to Rule 4, "General Playing Rules".

RULE 5 – THE GAME

Women's Slow Pitch Softball will have Two (2) divisions: Upper and Lower
Upper Division – All Players are eligible to compete
Lower Division – No Upper Players allowed.

Sec. 4 Women's Home Run Rules:

Upper – HR Rule – Two (2) with one up

Lower – Zero (0) – with Progressive HR Penalty

Women's Varsity Military – 2 HR's with the one up home run rule

The progressive penalty home run rule is in effect for this division. Once a team reaches its home run limit, a batter shall be declared out for hitting any additional home runs, and the defensive team is awarded a progressive number of runs for each un-touched home run hit over the fence. For the first home run hit, the defensive team will receive one (1) run, for the second home run hit, the defensive team will receive (2) runs, three (3) runs for the third homerun etc.

RULE 6 – PITCHING REGULATIONS

No changes, Refer to Rule 6, "General Playing Rules".

RULE 7 - BATTING

No changes, Refer to Rule 7, "General Playing Rules".

RULE 8 – BASERUNNING

No changes, Refer to Rule 8, "General Playing Rules".

RULE 9 – DEAD BALL/BALL IN PLAY

No changes, Refer to Rule 9, "General Playing Rules".

RULE 10 – UMPIRES

No changes, Refer to Rule 10, "General Playing Rules".

RULE 11 – PROTESTS

No changes, Refer to Rule 11, "General Playing Rules".

PART V

HISPANIC SLOWPITCH SOFTBALL

Any rules not covered or found in this section will be covered or found in Part I of the Official NSA Rulebook. A four-game format will be used in State Tournaments and above.

Classifications of Hispanic softball divisions:

a. Divisions

Open Division – 4 Home runs with the one – up rule.

Class C Division – 2 Home runs with the one – up rule.

Class D Division – 1 Home run with any additional home run will be scored as an out.

Class E Division – 0 Home Runs with the Progressive Home Run Penalty.

NOTE: See Rule 5, Sec. 12, of the Official Slow Pitch Rules for explanation of home run rules.

b. Hispanic rosters are allowed four (4) non-Hispanic players, three of which may play at a time.

RULE 4 – PLAYERS AND SUBSTITUTIONS

Refer to Rule 4, “General Playing Rules”.

PART VI

INDOOR SLOWPITCH SOFTBALL

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

RULE 4 – PLAYERS AND SUBSTITUTIONS

Refer to Rule 4, “General Playing Rules”.

RULE 6 –PITCHING

Sec. 1 In the indoor Coed Division a male must be used in the pitching position.

RULE 7 –BATTING

RULE 8 –BASERUNNING

No changes, Refer to Rule 8 See “General Playing Rules”.

PART VII

YOUTH SLOWPITCH

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

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

RULE 1 – DEFINITIONS

No changes, Refer to Rule I “General Playing Rules”.

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 with a radius of the prescribed fence distances from home plate between foul lines.

THE FENCE DISTANCE (Slowpitch)

<u>YOUTH DIVISION</u>	<u>MINIMUM FENCE DISTANCE</u>
Girls 8 & Under thru 12 & Under	200 feet
Boys 8 & Under thru 12 & Under	200 feet
Girls 14 & Under	225 feet
Boys 14 & Under	275 feet
Girls 16 & Under	250 feet
Boys 16 & Under	275 feet
Girls 19 & Under	250 feet
Boys 19 & Under	275 feet

Sec. 2 The official diamond shall have base lines as follows:

<u>YOUTH DIVISION</u>	<u>BASE DISTANCE</u>
Girls 8 & Under	60 feet
Boys 8 & Under	60 feet
Girls 10 & Under	60 feet
Boys 10 & Under	60 feet
Girls 12 & Under	60 feet
Boys 12 & Under	60 feet

Girls 14 & Under	65 feet
Boys 14 & Under	65 feet
Girls 16 & Under	70 feet
Boys 16 & Under	70 feet
Girls 19 & Under	70 feet
Boys 19 & Under	70 feet

Sec. 3 The official diamond shall have pitching distances as follows:

YOUTH DIVISION

PITCHING DISTANCES

Girls 8 & Under	35 feet with 8' circle around the pitching
Boys 8 & Under	35 feet mound – both 8 & Under only
Girls 10 & Under	40 feet
Boys 10 & Under	40 feet
Girls 12 & Under	46 feet
Boys 12 & Under	46 feet
Girls 14 & Under	46 feet
Boys 14 & Under	46 feet
Girls 16 & Under	53 feet
Boys 16 & Under	53 feet
Girls 19 & Under	53 feet
Boys 19 & Under	53 feet

RULE 3 – EQUIPMENT

Sec. 2 The official softball shall be a smooth-seamed, concealed-stitched or flat-surfaced ball. The center of the ball may be made of either long fiber kapok or mixture of cork and rubber, and or machine wound, with a fine twisted yarn and covered with latex or rubber cement. Or it may be made of other materials approved by the NSA. The cover of the ball shall be optic yellow, tanned horsehide, cowhide or any other materials approved by the NSA, cemented to the ball by application of cement to the underside of the cover and sewn with black waxed cotton or black linen thread to form a black-stitched softball. The solid core ball must be stamped with THE official NSA logo that contains the maximum C.O.R. and compression standards. The ball MAY NOT bear any other logos except for the NSA official logo unless otherwise approved by the Executive Director or the Executive Vice President of the NSA. MAXIMUM C.O.R. is .44, or .40. Maximum Compression for NSA softballs is 400 pounds *Refer to Part 1 of the Official Playing Rules for further information.*

In the girls division of youth softball, all divisions will use the eleven (11) inch softball.

- a. In the boys division of youth softball, the eleven (11) inch softball will be used in the 8 & Under, 10 & Under, and 12 & Under age groups.
- b. In the boys division of youth softball, the twelve (12) inch softball will be used in the 14 & Under, 16 & Under, and the boys 19 & Under age groups.

Sec. 3 All players, coaches and participants must wear shoes. Sandals are considered proper shoes for non-players.

- a. No metal spikes are allowed in any Youth Division Softball play. No hard plastic or polyurethane spikes similar to metal sole and heel plates are allowed in any Youth Division play. ***PENALTY: If it is discovered during the game that an offensive player is wearing metal cleats an out will be called and the player will be ejected and any baserunner(s) must return to the last base occupied at the time of the pitch. A defensive player who is wearing metal cleats will be ejected.**

Sec. 4 Uniform:

- a. Casts (plaster, metal or other hard substances) may not be worn during the game. Any exposed metal may be considered legal if covered by soft material and taped. Coaches in wheelchairs **MAY NOT** be on the field of play during ANY live ball situation unless the chair has all exposed metal parts covered by a soft substance and taped in such a way that would eliminate the risk of bodily injury to the players playing the game or other coaches coaching the game. This pertains to ALL adult and ALL youth play.
- b. Uniform shirts are required to have a six (6) inch number.

Sec. 5 Helmets: A batting helmet bearing the NOCSAE stamp is mandatory for each batter, on-deck batter, players, and youth coaches in the coaches' boxes, and all runners. The batting helmet worn by each batter, on-deck batter, player, youth coach in the coach's box, and all runners must have extended ear flaps which cover both ears and temples. If a pitcher wears a batting helmet while pitching, the outer covering must have a non-glare surface. Plastic visors are prohibited for players, coaches, and managers. At all times the batting helmet must be worn properly.

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

NOTE: When an umpire detects a runner (including the batter/runner) deliberately removing his/her batting helmet during playing action, a dead ball will be declared immediately.

PENALTY: The violator is declared out immediately, and if a force play was in order at the time of the pitched ball, the runner closest to

home plate will also be declared out, with other runners returning to the base occupied at the time of the pitch.

NOTE: *No runner shall score a run when a batter/runner or runner has been declared the 3rd out of an inning for deliberately removing his/her batting helmet.*

Sec. 6 Catcher's Protective Equipment:

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

RULE 4 – PLAYERS AND SUBSTITUTIONS

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

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

NOTE: *In the youth division only: Violation of an ineligible player constitutes the immediate forfeiture of the game. Violation of an illegal player constitutes the immediate ejection of both the illegal player and his/her coach.*

***NOTE:** *Any team may use two (2) extra players per game. All other rules pertaining to the extra player remain as written.*

RULE 5 – THE GAME

***NOTE:** *THE NSA HAS ESTABLISHED A YOUTH COED DIVISION FOR EACH AGE DIVISION.*

Sec. 1 A regulation game shall consist of seven innings.

- a. A game will be forfeited if, because of the removal of the player(s) from the game by the umpire, or for any cause, there are less than ten (10) players on either team.
- b. During all tournament play (Qualifying, State, Regional, NIT, World Series and Super World Series) in the event of rain or any cause which interrupts a game, the game must be resumed at the exact point where it was stopped.
- c. In the event that a tournament cannot be completed, an official game may be called after 5 innings of play or 4 ½ innings of play if the home team is ahead.

NOTE: *Players listed in the line-up and not available at game time may be substituted for.*

- d. At the discretion of the Tournament Director a 1 hr. and 15 min. time limit is recommended by the National Softball Association.
- e. Run Rules for Youth Slow Pitch are Fifteen (15) runs after three (3) innings; Twelve (12) runs after four (4) innings; Ten (10) runs after five(5) innings.

Sec. 2 Youth Division age eligibility: The cut-off date for the youth age eligibility is December 31st. Whatever age the child is on December 31st, is the eligible age division for the entire year. Birth Certificates must accompany youth players at all times.

- a. All players can play in only one age group.
- b. A player cannot play in two (2) age divisions in one tournament.
- c. A player may play up one age group but not down in an age group.

EXCEPTION: *A player who turns 11, 13, or 15 years of age in the current year may move up two (2) divisions and may play in the 14, 16, or the 19 Under age divisions, respectively.*

- d. Teams may have no more that twenty (20) players on their rosters.
- e. Proof of age must be verified by one of the following: government issued I.D. and/or birth certificate copies. Proof of age must accompany the player at all times.

Sec. 3 **At all levels of youth play**, certificates of team insurance must be presented to either the League or Tournament Director. Teams are not required to purchase NSA Team Insurance, but the team insurance purchased must be equal to or greater than the team insurance offered by the National Softball Association.

RULE 6 – PITCHING REGULATIONS

No changes, Refer to Rule 6, “General Playing Rules”.

RULE 7 - BATTING

No changes, Refer to Rule 7, “General Playing Rules”.

RULE 8 – BASERUNNING

No changes, Refer to Rule 8, “General Playing Rules”.

RULE 9 – DEAD BALL/BALL IN PLAY

No changes, Refer to Rule 9, “General Playing Rules”.

RULE 10 – UMPIRES

No changes, Refer to Rule 10, “General Playing Rules”.

RULE 11 – PROTESTS

No changes, Refer to Rule 11, “General Playing Rules”.

PART VIII

SIXTEEN-INCH SOFTBALL

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

RULE 1 - DEFINITIONS

No changes, Refer to Rule 1, "General Playing Rules".

RULE 2 – THE PLAYING FIELD

- Sec. 4** **The official diamond** shall have base lines as follows:
- a. Sixteen (16) inch softball base lines will be sixty (60) feet.
- Sec. 5** **The official diamond shall** have pitching distance as follows:
- a. Sixteen (16) inch softball pitching distance will be thirty-eight (38) feet.
 - b. There shall be no batters box in the 16" Program

RULE 3 – EQUIPMENT

- Sec. 1** **The official bat**
- a. The bat shall have a safety grip of cork, tape or any combination of materials.
 - b. The grip should not be less than ten (10) inches long and shall not extend more than fifteen (15) inches from the small end of the bat.
 - c. The bat can be any ounce and length and does not have to have the BPF of 1.20 permanently stamped by the manufacture.
 - d. The bat can be made of wood, metal or other materials approved by the NSA.
- Sec. 2** **The official softball**
- a. The sixteen (16) inch ball shall be between 15 ¾ and 16 ¼ inches in circumference and weigh between 9 and 10 ounces.
- Sec. 3** **Gloves**
- a. Gloves are optional at the state tournament and above in the Men's 16 Inch Program.
 - b. No gloves are allowed in the Chicago land area for men or women. Other states or teams outside the Chicago land area may wear gloves. In the World Series, the teams from the Chicago land area can wear gloves when they play a team from outside the Chicago land area but cannot wear gloves when playing teams from within the Chicago land area. When teams from outside the Chicago land area play against each other, gloves are approved for play.

RULE 4 – PLAYERS AND SUBSTITUTIONS

Refer to Rule 4, “General Playing Rules”.

RULE 5 – THE GAME

Classifications: Men’s Major – Class “A” – Recreational
Women – Class “A”

RULE 6 – PITCHING REGULATIONS

- Sec. 1 A legal delivery shall** be delivered with an under handed motion.
- The pitcher must present the ball to the batter while standing on the pitching rubber.
 - After presenting the ball for one (1) second, the pitcher may take one (1) step in any direction.
 - Once a pitcher has taken the step, the ball must be presented again before the ball is delivered.
NOTE: *The non-pivot foot may be placed in any direction except in front of the pivot foot.*
 - The minimum and maximum pitching arcs from the ground are six (6) feet and twelve (12) feet, respectively.
 - The pitcher shall be allowed two (2) fake delivery motions to either home plate or an occupied base. On the third motion, the ball must be delivered to home plate.
 - At no time may a pitcher use a windmill motion.

RULE 7 – BATTING

No changes, Refer to Rule 7, “General Playing Rules”.

RULE 8 – BASERUNNING

- Sec. 1 Base stealing is not permitted**
- A baserunner is permitted to lead off the base but is subject to being picked off of that base.
 - If a pick-off delivery is made on a baserunner off first, second, or third base, he/she may advance at his/her own risk to the next base if it is unoccupied.

RULE 9 – DEAD BALL/BALL IN PLAY

No changes, Refer to Rule 9, “General Playing Rules”.

RULE 10 – UMPIRES

No changes, Refer to Rule 10, “General Playing Rules”.

RULE 11 – PROTESTS

No changes, Refer to Rule 11, “General Playing Rules”.

COED SIXTEEN-INCH SOFTBALL

RULE 4 – PLAYERS AND SUBSTITUTIONS

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

Sec. 1 A team shall consist of:

- a. 9, 10, or 12 with the extra players. If a team uses the optional EP rule and plays twelve (12) players, six (6) must be male and six (6) must be female. **NOTE:** *It is never permissible to use eleven (11) players.*
- b. If the team uses 10 players, five (5) must be male and five (5) must be female.
- c. A team can start a game with a minimum of Nine (9) players. If a team has only nine (9) players, the 10th position in the batting order is scored as an out. **NOTE:** *When a team is left with a vacant 10th spot in the lineup, for any reason, the opposing team may not with two (2) outs intentionally or unintentionally walk the previous batter, in order to get to the “automatic out” created by the vacant spot in the batting order.*
- d. There must be one (1) female in the outfield at all times. All other positioning is left up to the individual manager.
- e. If a female player plays first base, she has the option of wearing a glove.
- f. Outfielders may not be on the infield surface until the pitch is released.
- g. Each team must have a male /female pitcher and catcher combination.

COURTESY RUNNER: : A Courtesy Runner of the same sex may be used once per inning for a total of two (2) courtesy runners per inning one (1) male and (1) female. The courtesy runner must be the same sex. **The Courtesy Runner can be any player on the team roster. If the courtesy runner comes to bat while on base, it is an out. For the purpose of the Courtesy Runner Rule; Rule 7, Sec. 3 *IS NOT* in effect.**

PART IX

NSA MASTERS SOFTBALL

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

35, 40, 45 & Over Competitive & Recreation Divisions

A player is eligible to play in any particular division if the player's birthday falls within the calendar year. (i.e.—If a player turns 35 years of age on December 31st that player is eligible to compete in the 35 and Over Division for the entire year.)

Both competitive and recreation divisions shall be offered with the Tournament Director having the right to combine the two divisions due to the lack of teams. The Executive Director or the National Office must approve any change in the format or the combining of the divisions.

RULE 3 – EQUIPMENT

Sec. 6 Uniform: All players on a team shall wear uniforms alike in color with same team name/logo.

NOTE: *Shirts may have sleeves or no sleeves and still be considered matching.*

***NOTE:** *Players CANNOT EXCHANGE shirts with other players when they are substituted for during the game. All players must have their own shirt with separate numbers.*

PENALTY: *For sharing shirts will be an illegal substitution.*

EXCEPTION: *When a jersey is saturated with blood, team members can exchange shirts.*

Ball caps or visors must be alike and must be worn properly. Caps or visors are not a mandatory part of the uniform. All headgear must be of the same predominant color and worn as intended by the manufacturer. Hard plastic visors, bandanas, and handkerchiefs are not approved headgear.

- a. A pitcher shall not wear any item on the pitching hand, wrist, arm, or thigh which may be distracting to the batter. Players may wear solid colored undergarments under their uniform shirts or shorts. It is not mandatory that all players wear these undergarments, but if worn they shall not be ragged, frayed, or slit on the exposed areas.
- b. Numbers must be worn on all uniforms. No players on the same team may wear identical numbers.
- c. NSA uniform requirements: In NIT and all other Post season play, violation of uniform requirements is not grounds for protest.

NOTE: *In NIT and all other Post season play, if a team is not in compliance with the uniform rule the opposing team, if in total uniform, has the choice of being the home or visiting team. If both teams are in compliance or if both teams are not in*

compliance, a flip of a coin will determine the home and visiting team.

RULE 4 – PLAYERS AND SUBSTITUTIONS

Refer to Rule 4, “General Playing Rules”.

RULE 5 - THE GAME

Sec. 3 Masters Run Rule:

- a. Competitive Division Twenty (20) runs after Three (3) innings
Twenty (20) runs after Four (4) innings
Twelve (12) runs after Five (5) innings
- b. Recreational Division Twenty (20) runs after Three (3) innings
Fifteen (15) runs after Four (4) innings
Ten (10) runs after Five (5) innings

NOTE: *If the Tournament Director is running a combination tournament, the run rule used will be the Recreational Division Run Rule.*

Sec. 10 Classification and Home Run Limits

- a. Competitive - four (4) home runs plus the one up home run rule.
- b. Recreational - one (1) home run plus the progressive home run rule.
- c. Combined Division - two (2) home runs plus the one up home run rule.

NOTE: *Refer to the General Rules for the one up home run rule and the progressive home run rule.*

***NOTE:** *Teams that have a player on their roster who has in the current season competed in the Class “B” Division or above, that team must play in the Masters Competitive Division.*

RULE 8 – BASERUNNING

NOTE: *A courtesy runner may be used once per inning. The Courtesy Runner can be any player on the team roster. If the courtesy runner comes to bat while on base, it is an out. For the purpose of the Courtesy Runner Rule; Rule 7, Sec. 3 IS NOT in effect.*

PART X

NSA SENIORS SOFTBALL

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

RULE 2 - PLAYING FIELD

- Sec. 4** **The Official Diamond** will have base distances of 65 feet.
NOTE: *The NSA Senior Division will use a double base at 1st base.*
- If the first play is at first base, either from the infield or outfield a runner will be called out for touching the inside of the base.
 - If the play is elsewhere the inside of the base may be tagged in a continuation toward 2nd base.
 - A runner running toward 1st base may cross over to the inside of the base to avoid a collision if a wild throw occurs.
 - The batter-runner or the baserunner can use the inside of the base if they are attempting to get back to 1st base.
 - If in the judgment of the Umpire, the batter-runner touches the inside bag solely in an effort to avoid collision, the play will be called as though the batter-runner actually touched the outside base.
- Sec. 5** **The Official Diamond** will have a pitching box 53 feet from home plate and extending back three feet perpendicular to the pitcher's mound towards second base.
- Sec. 6** A strike mat will be used in all senior play and will be 17" wide by 32.5" long to include home plate. Strike mat includes the plate.

RULE 3 - EQUIPMENT

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

Refer to Part I of the Official Playing rules for complete information concerning all equipment.

- Sec. 6** Players must wear visible numbers of a minimum of 6 inches in height with no number being identical on the same team.

RULE 4 -PLAYERS & SUBSTITUTIONS

- Sec. 1**
- a. **A team is allowed 10 players** on defense in the 50+, 55+, 60+ and 65+ divisions.
 - b. **AAA and AA team is allowed 11 players on defense in the 65+ Division.**
 - c. **A Team is allowed 11 players on defense in the 70+ and 75+ division.**
 - d. **A team is allowed 15 players** on offense in the 50+, 55+, 60+, 65+ and 70+ and **75+ divisions.**

RULE 5 - THE GAME

- Sec. 1 National Softball Association Senior teams 50+ to 70+ must** participate in a NSA sanctioned tournament to be eligible to advance to the NSA World Series. All teams and their rosters will be subject to the National Senior Softball Ratings. The NSA Senior Softball Program will use a three (3) to five (5) tournament game format.
- a. If a five (5) game format is used, the tournament format will consist of a three (3) game pool play and then a double elimination championship bracket.
 - b. **Teams must play in pool play to participate in the bracket play. Failure to participate in the pool play (round robin) will result in elimination from the tournament and a last place finish.**
- Sec. 2 In the 50+ to 70+ age divisions:** When the game has been played 60 minutes (1 hr), the home plate umpire will notify the teams that they will finish that inning and play one (1) additional inning. No time limit will be played in the Semi Final, Championship and IF Game. A regulation game shall consist of seven (7) innings. A full seven (7) innings need not be played if the home team (the team 2nd at bat) scores more runs in six innings or before the third out of the seventh inning. **EXCEPTION:** *When the ten (10) run rule is in effect.*
- a. A game that is tied at the end of seven innings or time limit will use the tie-breaker rule in the top of the succeeding inning and continues with each successive inning.
 - b. **TIE BREAKER RULE:** The last batter of the previous inning whose turn at bat had been completed, assumes 2nd base with no outs and the game continues until one team scores more runs at the end of a completed inning (bottom of the inning)
- Sec. 3 The NSA Senior Softball Division** will have the following run rules
- a. 10 runs after 4 and a half or (5) innings.
 - b. Senior games will have the following maximum run rule of five (5) runs scored in an inning. **EXCEPTION:** *When the last inning is reached or declared or is in the tie breaker; this inning*

will be an “open run inning” which allows the team unlimited runs scored.

- c. In any inning where the five (5)run rule applies, a team is allowed to score enough runs to bring them inside the five (5) run rule. (Example: Team B is trailing Team A by 16 runs in the 5th inning. Team B is allowed to score up to 7 runs).

Sec. 9 Senior Competition shall begin at the age of 50 and will advance each five years thereafter to include the following age divisions of play: 55+, 60+, 65+ and 70+ and 75+. Eligibility for all senior players pertaining to age shall be the calendar year. Senior players must have a legal picture identification card (i.e., photo ID, in their possession at all sanctioned events. Senior players may **participate with Two (2) teams in a** Qualifying and Post Season Tournament on the same weekend. Senior Players may play down in another age division but must maintain the same classification level. (Example: 60+ major could play in either a 55+ or 50+ Major Division, but would not be permitted to play in a 55+ or 50+ AAA or AA Division. An Official Senior Roster shall not exceed twenty (20) players. Rosters will be based upon state boundaries. A player may only play with a team from their home state or a state whose borders touch the borders of the player’s own state. The teams “home state” is established by where the majority of players reside with their primary residence. The Senior Women’s Program have NO state boundary restrictions. **EXCEPTION:** *Major+ and Major teams may have One (1) additional player from outside the State Boundaries restrictions. This player must be noted on the roster when turned into the Stat Director and/or Tournament Director. The NSA National Office must approve any exceptions.*

Sec. 10 Senior Softball Team Classifications:

- a. Major Plus
- b. Major
- c. Class AAA
- d. Class AA

Sec. 11 Senior Home Run Limits:

- a. Major Plus - Six home runs plus the one up home run rule
- b. Major - Four home runs plus the one up home run rule
- c. Class AAA - One home run plus the one up home run rule. Each untouched ball that goes over the fence which exceeds the team’s home run limit will be scored as a single. Runners advance one base if forced
- d. Class AA - Zero home runs – Each untouched ball that goes over the fence will be scored an out.

RULE 6 – PITCHING REGULATIONS

Sec. 1 The pitcher must release the ball after coming to a complete stop with one foot or both feet in contact with the pitcher's plate or anywhere within the pitcher's box. One foot must remain in contact with the plate/box when the pitch is released with an underhand motion. A step simultaneous with release of the ball may be taken (but not mandatory) in any direction with the non-pivot foot. The pitcher must be facing the batter when delivering the pitch. The catcher must remain within the lines of the catcher's box until the pitched ball is swung at or reaches the plate. If, anytime during the course of the game the pitching distance is found to be in error, the error should be corrected immediately, and the game should continue. **THIS IS NOT A POINT OF PROTEST.**

RULE 7 - BATTING

No changes, Refer to Rule 7, "General Playing Rules".

RULE 8 - BASERUNNING

Sec. 1 The three (3) foot commitment line shall be marked across and perpendicular to the foul line and placed twenty (20) feet from home plate. Once a runner's foot touches the ground on or past this line, the runner is committed to advance to the scoring plate.

NOTE: *If a runner retreats across the commitment line, he will be declared out and the ball will remain alive. A runner may retreat across the commitment line to retag base on a caught fly ball.*

Sec. 2 A scoring plate shall be located with its right corner eight (8) feet from the back of home plate. The scoring plate shall be situated on an imaginary extension of the first base foul line. The scoring plate should be anchored to the ground to prevent slippage and changes of position of the plate during the game. The offensive team must always touch the scoring plate when scoring a run.

EFFECT: *If the runner touches home plate that runner is automatically out. The defensive team must have possession of the ball and always touch home plate to record the out. If the defensive team attempts to tag the runner, the runner is automatically safe.*

Sec. 9 Sliding is permissible at second base, third base and returning to 1st base. No sliding at home plate or going to 1st base the first time.

EFFECT: *The runner is declared out.*

Sec. 10 Running off or through a base is not permissible in Senior Competition. It is permissible at 1st base and home plate.

Sec. 11 Courtesy Runner(s). In the NSA Senior Division an unlimited number of courtesy runners shall be allowed in all divisions. A courtesy runner may not be used more than once per inning. Any courtesy runner caught running more than once per inning, or when it

is their turn to bat will be declared out. If a courtesy runner is on base when it's their time to bat an out will be recorded on that runner on base with the runner being allowed to bat. In all Senior Divisions, the courtesy runner may not run for another courtesy runner, with the exception of a courtesy runner being injured. If a courtesy runner is substituted for illegally, the infraction must be caught before the next pitch.

Part XI

MILITARY RULES

NOTE: Any softball rules not covered or found in this section will be covered or found in Part I of the official NSA Rulebook.

RULE 4- PLAYERS & SUBSTITUTIONS

Sec. 10 Divisions of Play:

- a. **MEN'S MILITARY OPEN.** The Open Division teams will be a team comprised of male players that can provide a valid Common Access Card or Department of Defense Card. **EXCEPTION:** This will not be a Department of Defense Service team.
- b. **MEN'S VARSITY "A".** The Varsity A Division teams will be a team comprised of male players from one- (1) installation or a team that is comprised of male players from combining of two- (2) installations from the same State.
- c. **MEN'S VARSITY "B".** The Varsity B teams will be a team comprised of male players from one- (1) installation.
- d. **MEN'S INTRAMURAL.** The Intramural Division teams will be a team comprised of players- (teams may have women play) from the same unit.

The following levels of Command apply:

1. Air Force Squadron or lower
 2. Army Company or lower
 3. Navy Command, squadron or unit of 1,000 or less
 4. Marine Corps Division or lower
 5. Coast Guard Group of 1,000 or less
- e. **WOMEN'S VARSITY "A".** The Varsity A Division teams will be a team comprised of female players from one- (1) installation or a team that is comprised of female players from combining two- (2) installations from the same State.
 - f. **WOMEN'S VARSITY "B".** The Varsity B Division teams will be a team comprised of female players from one- (1) installation/

***NOTE.** To participate in the NSA Military World Series a team will have to play in one- (1) Military Tournament or two- (2) NSA Sanctioned Tournaments.

RULE 5 -THE GAME

Sec. 11 Player Eligibility/Rosters:

- a. An Official Men's Military team will consist of Active Duty, Reserves, National Guard, Active Duty dependents- (18 years or older), Military Retirees along with Department of Defense civilians assigned to the same duty installation.
- b. An Official Women's Military team will consist of Active Duty, Reserves, National Guard, Active Duty dependents- (18 years or older), Military Retirees along with Department of Defense civilians assigned to the same duty installation.
- c. All players must have a valid DoD ID card or a Common Access card- (CAC) for verification. Retired military personnel and retired Department of Defense civilians are eligible to play with a team from the State where they retired or a team from the State of their proven place of residence. If the distance of that installation is over a reasonable distance away, the player with the Military Program Director's approval may be able to play with the installation geographically closest to their residence.
- d. Personnel who are on Temporary Duty- (TDY) for 45 days or more may participate in any NSA Military Tournament. Personnel will present a copy of their orders to the tournament director for eligibility. Personnel who have Permanent Change of Station- (PCS'D) have a 30 day grace period in which they may participate in any NSA Military Tournament with the installation that they have left. Personnel will present a copy of their orders to the tournament director for eligibility.
- e. A person who wants to participate in the NSA Military World Series and they do not have a base team that is participating in the tournament must submit in writing to the NSA Military Program Director to request to play. If approved the Director will put the Personnel in a players pool, that any Open or Varsity "A" team may be able to pick up.

***NOTE:** *All players must have a Department of Defense ID Card.*

Sec. 12 HOME RUN LIMITS

MEN'S PROGRAM

OPEN	Seven- (7) one-up home run rule
Varsity "A"	Five - (5) one-up home run rule
Varsity "B"	Three- (3) one-up home run rule
Intramural	One- (1) progressive home rule

***Refer to NSA page 28, Rule 5, Section 12**

WOMEN'S PROGRAM

Varsity "A"	Three- (3) one-up home run rule
Varsity "B"	One - (1) one-up home run rule

****NOTE. When a lower Class team plays an upper Class team, the home run rule will be the split difference between the 2 teams.**

Example. Team "A" versus team "B". The home run rule will be four- (4) with the one-up home run rule.

Example. If an Intramural team plays any Varsity team, the home run rule will be two- (2) with the one-up home run rule.

PART XII

INDUSTRIAL RULES

RULE 3 – EQUIPMENT

Sec. 6 Industrial teams can have uniforms that have additional sponsors' names on them. The entry form should show the team's employer company name with a (/) then the additional sponsors' names.

RULE 4 – PLAYERS AND SUBSTITUTIONS

Refer to Rule 4, "General Playing Rules".

RULE 5 - THE GAME

Sec. 3 Industrial Run Rule is as follows:

- a. 20 runs after three (3) innings
- b. 15 runs after four (4) innings
- c. 10 runs after five (5) innings

Sec. 9 **NOTE:** *Industrial teams participating in Post Season Tournaments must submit with their roster, a letter signed by an executive of the Personnel Department or an officer of the company in order to certify that each player listed on that teams roster is a bonafide full-time employee with more than sixty (60) days of continuous service with that team's sponsor.*

Industrial guidelines for player eligibility:

- a. Full time employee of the team sponsor at the time the tournament is played. This would include any Board of Director(s) of the mentioned corporation sponsor.
- b. A full time employee with less than sixty (60) days of continuous service with the team sponsor will not be eligible to compete in the Industrial Program as an employee, but is eligible to play if he/she is listed on the roster as one of the three (3) non-employee players.
- c. Industrial sponsors, that would include full-time or retired personnel of corporations, unions, businesses, government, hospital, and military teams, shall be allowed to compete in the Industrial Program.
- d. Any of the agencies and/or organizations that operate in more than one location within a state may be considered as one sponsor. Such sponsors will not be allowed to combine teams with an out of state location.
- e. If any team members are also from a registered Men's "B" or above team, they must participate in the NSA Class "A" Industrial Program.
- f. Industrial team will be allowed to have three (3) non-employees on their roster for any Industrial Tournament play.

NOTE: *The team must designate those three (3) non-employee player(s) on the roster.*

***NOTE:** *Union teams are eligible to participate in the Industrial Program as long as they meet the following requirements:*

1. *All players must be active members of the union they are representing.*
2. *All players must have sixty (60) days of continuous service with the union they are representing.*

Sec. 10 Industrial Home Run Rule

- a. Industrial Class A - Four (4) with the one-up rule
- b. Industrial Class B - One (1) with progressive penalty

PART XIII

BLACK AMERICAN SOFTBALL

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

***NOTE:** A four (4) game format will be used in all Post season play.

RULE 4 - PLAYERS AND SUBSTITUTIONS

NOTE: Black American Rosters are allowed **four (4) non-blacks**. **No more than three (3) non-blacks may be in the line-up at one time.** If origin is in question, a birth certificate must be supplied to show proof of origin.

RULE 5 - THE GAME

Sec. 10 Homerun Limits:

Class A*	Eight (8) Home runs
Class B*	Four (4) Home runs
Class C*	Two (2) Home runs
Class D **	One (1) Home run
Women's	16-Inch Unlimited
Men's 50+	Super Division Unlimited

NOTE: In Class A – C the one-up homerun rule will be in effect.

***NOTE:** In Class D the progressive homerun penalty will be in effect.

Part XIV

NATIVE AMERICAN

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

RULE 4 - PLAYERS AND SUBSTITUTIONS

NOTE: Native American Rosters are allowed three non-Native Americans on any team.

RULE 5 - THE GAME

Sec. 1 Classification: Class A will be the only division in Native American.

Sec. 2 Federally recognized tribes are eligible to participate in the Native American Program.

Sec. 10 Homerun Limits:

- a. Class A - Eight (8) Home runs with the one up rule in effect

Part XV

MEN'S OPEN

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

RULE 3 – EQUIPMENT

Sec. 6 Uniforms – matching shirts with numbers

RULE 4 - PLAYERS AND SUBSTITUTIONS

NOTE: Open uses paper rosters and will not affect the classification on any player or team in the Men's B,C,D or E programs.

Sec. 1 All teams must be sanctioned with a NSA sanction number and use paper rosters when playing in the Open Division.

Sec. 2 Tournament Host sanctions all teams.

RULE 5 - THE GAME

Sec. 1 Homerun Limits:
Eight (8) Home runs with the one up rule in effect.

Sec. 2 Tournament must be posted on www.PlayNSA.com along with what awards will be given.

Sec. 3 Directors of Open Division tournaments will set their own tournament fees and awards with the approval of the appropriate Zone VP.

Sec. 4 Rule Rules:
20 runs after 3 & 4 innings and 12 runs after 5 innings.

National Softball Association

FASTPITCH & MODIFIED

INDEX TO RULES

	<u>Page</u>	<u>Rule</u>	<u>Sec.</u>	<u>Sub.</u>
ALTERED BAT	90	1	1	effect
Bat Specifications	99-102	3	1	a-l, note
Batter Box	119	7	1	d, effect
APPEAL PLAY	90	1	2	
Baserunner	130	8	8	g-j, effect
Batting Out of Order	120	7	2	a-c
Dead Ball Appeal	134	9	1	m
Appeal Before Time Called	135	9	2	u
APPROVED BAT	90	1	3	
AUTOMATIC OUT	107-108	4	4	a-b, note
BALL				
Blocked Ball	92	1	12	note, effect
Called by Umpire	121	7	8	a-g
Dead Ball	133-134	9	1	a-v
Fair Ball	121-122	7	9	a-h
Foul Ball	122	7	10	a-d, effect
Official Ball	103	3	2	a, exception
Rotation	91	1	4	
BASE HIT				
Hits Runner or Umpire	126	8	2/3	g (1-2),e
Batter Becomes a Runner	125-126	8	2	a-g
BASERUNNER	91	1	6	
Assisted	130	8	8	f
Awarded of Bases on Overthrow	127-128	8	5	e-h
Base on Balls	125	8	1	j
Basepath	91	1	5	
Baserunner is Out	129-132	8	8	a-y,penalty
Batting Helmet	91	1	10	
Contact with Fielder	131	8	8	t, penalty
	132	8	9	c
Contact with Base	133	8	9	k, effect
A Player Forfeits His Exemption From				
Liability to be Put Out	126	8	4	a-c
Hit by Batted Ball	130	8	8	k, 1
	132-133	8	9	d, k, n
Illegal Glove Used	123	7	12	a
Interferes with Play	130-131	8	8	m, s, effect
Liability to be Put Out	126	8	3	a-e
Must Return to Base	128-129	8	6	a-e, effect
Obstructed	126-127	8	5	b(1-3)
Out of Base path	129	8	8	a
Passes Another Runner	130	8	8	e

	<u>Page</u>	<u>Rule</u>	<u>Sec.</u>	<u>Sub</u>
Two Occupy Same Base	124	8	1	e-effect
BAT	99-102	3	1	a-1, note
Hitting Ball a Second Time	121	7	6	eff.,ex.,note
BATTER				
Becomes a Baserunner	125-126	8	2	a-g
Hit by Fair Ball	121	7	7	f
Hit by Pitch	91	1	7	exception
	121	7	7	g, effect
Illegal Glove Used	123	7	12	a
Not Taking Position	119-120	7	1	e, effect
Obstructed by Catcher	127	8	5	c
On-Deck Batter	124	7	13	a-f
Position within Lines	119-120	7	1	a-e
When Out is Made While at Bat	122-123	7	11	a-j
3rd Out is Made While at Bat	120	7	4	
BATTER'S BOX	91	1	8	
	99	2	4	c
	119-120	7	1	a-e, effect
BATTER-BASERUNNER	91	1	9	
	125-126	8	2	a-g
	126	8	4	a-c
Batting Helmet	91	1	10	
	105	3	7	ex.,pen.
Overrunning 1st Base	130	8	8	i
Runs Outside 3 Foot Line	129	8	7	e
BATTING ORDER	91	1	11	
Out of Order	120	7	2	a-c
Extra Player (EP)	107	4	2	b, 1-4
Removal of EP	108	4	4	b
BLOCKED BALL	92	1	12	note,eff.,note
	127-128	8	5	e-h
BLOOD RULE	111	4	11	note
BUNT	92	1	13	
	123	7	11	h
BUNT ATTEMPT	92	1	14	
	122	7	11	e,eff.,note
CAPS	104	3	6	a
CASTS	104	3	6	g
CATCH	92	1	15	
CATCHER'S BOX	92	1	16	
	99	2	4	d
	116	6	5	d

	<u>Page</u>	<u>Rule</u>	<u>Sec.</u>	<u>Sub</u>
CHARGED CONFERENCE	92-93	1	17	a-b
Defensive	118	6	15	ex.,note,note
Offensive	114	5	8	penalty
COACH	93	1	18	
Assists Runner	130	8	8	f
Box	99	2	4	e
Draws a Throw	131	8	8	o
Interferes	131	8	8	r
CONDITION OF FIELD	112	5	2	
COURTESY RUNNER	109	4	6	
CROW HOP	93	1	19	
	115	6	4	note 2
DEAD BALL	93	1	20	
	133-134	9	1	a-v
Ball Carried into Dead Ball Territory	128	8	5	g, note
Delayed	93	1	21	
Delivery	93	1	22	
DESIGNATED HITTER (DH)	106-107	4	2	a, 1-4
DISLODGED BASE	124	8	1	c
	126	8	4	c
DOUBLE FIRST BASE	132	8	8	z
EJECTION FROM GAME	90	1	1	effect
Altered Bat	119	7	1	d, effect
	122	7	11	b
Deliberate Crash	131	8	8	t, penalty
Violation of Rules	137	10	7	a-d
ELIGIBILITY (Youth)	110-111	4	8	a-f, note
EQUIPMENT	101-105	3	1-8	
Softball	103	3	2	a, exception
Gloves & Mitts	103	3	3	
Batting Helmet	105	3	7	exc,pen...,note
Catcher Protective Equip.	105	3	8	
EXTRA PLAYER (EP)	107	4	2	b,1-4
	107	4	3	note
FAIR BALL	93	1	23	a-e, note
	121-122	7	9	a-h
FAKE TAG	126-127	8	5	b, (3)¬e
FLAGARANT OBSTRUCTION	94	1	24	penalty

	<u>Page</u>	<u>Rule</u>	<u>Sec.</u>	<u>Sub</u>	
FORCE OUT	94	1	25		
	126	8	4	a	
	129	8	7	b	
FORFEITED GAME	113	5	3	d, e, 1-8	
FOUL BALL	94	1	26	a-e & note	
	121	7	7	c & d	
	122	7	10	a-d & effect	
FOUL TIP	94	1	26	note	
	121	7	7	c	
GROUND RULES	135	10	1	a	
ILLEGAL BAT	94	1	28		
	101-102	3	1	a-l, note	
	119	7	1	c	
	134	9	1	r	
ILLEGAL PITCH	94	1	29		
	115-117	6	1-8		
	Modified	115	6	1-3	
ILLEGALLY BATTED BALL	95	1	31	a -c	
	119	7	1	c-d, effect	
ILLEGALLY CAUGHT BALL	95	1	32		
	Detached Equipment	127	8	5	d, effect
	Illegal Glove	123	7	12	a
IN JEOPARDY	95	1	34		
IN PLAY	134-135	9	2	a-v	
INFIELD FLY	95	1	35	note	
	122	7	11	d	
INJURED RUNNER	133	9	1	j	
INNING	95	1	36		
INSURANCE	111	4	9	note	
	111	4	10		
INTENTIONALLY DROPPED BALL	122	7	11	e, eff., note	
	134	9	1	s	
INTERFERENCE	96	1	37		
	130-131	8	8	j-s, effect	
	By Batter at Home Plate	130	8	8	n
	By Catcher (Obstruction)	125-126	8	2	f, 1-3
JEWELRY	104	3	6	b, f	
LEAP	96	1	38		

	<u>Page</u>	<u>Rule</u>	<u>Sec.</u>	<u>Sub</u>
LEAP	115	6	4	note, 2
LEGAL PITCH	115	6	1	a-e
Modified	118	6	1	a-e
LEGAL TOUCH	96	1	39	
LEGALLY CAUGHT BALL	96	1	40	
LIVE BALL	134-135	9	2	a-v
LOOK BACK RULE	131	8	8	x
NON-APPROVED BAT	96	1	41	
OBSTRUCTION	96	1	42	note
	126-127	8	5	b, eff., 1-3
OVERSLIDE	96	1	43	
OVERTHROW	96	1	44	
Award of Bases	127-128	8	5	e, eff.,note 1-4
PASSED BALL	97	1	45	
PITCH Fastpitch				
Illegal Pitch	115-117	6	1-8	penalty
No pitch	117	6	9	a-c.penalty
Returned by Catcher	116	6	5	e
Warm up Pitches	117	6	11	penalty, note
PITCHING CIRCLE	99	2	4	f
	131	8	8	x
PITCHING DISTANCES	98	2	2	
PITCHING REGULATIONS				
Modified	115	6	1 - 3	
PIVOT FOOT	97	1	46	
PLAYING FIELD DIMENSIONS	98	2	2	
PROTESTS	139-140	11	1-7	
QUICK PITCH	97	1	47	
RE-ENTRY	107	4	3	a - b
ROSTER SIGNING DATE	114	5	9	
RUNS NOT SCORED	114	5	5-7	
	124-125	8	1	f
SACRIFICE	97	1	48	

	<u>Page</u>	<u>Rule</u>	<u>Sec.</u>	<u>Sub</u>
SHOES	103	3	4	penalty
SQUEEZE	97	1	49	
	126	8	3	a
STOLEN BASE	97	1	50	
STRIKE	121	7	7	a-g effect
STRIKE ZONE	97	1	51	
SUBSTITUTE				
Extra Player (EP)	107	4	2	b, 4
No Substitute Available	113	5	3	e (7)
Notify Umpire	108	4	5	note
Officially in the Game	108-109	4	5	
SUSPENSION OF PLAY	113-114	5	3	f,g,h
	137	10	6	a-d
THIRD STRIKE RULE	122-123	7	11	a, h & i, notes
THREE FOOT LINE	97	1	52	
TIE BREAKER	97	1	53	
TIME	97	1	54	
By Umpire	134	9	1	l, m
Player, Coach, Manager	117	6	14	penalty
TURN AT BAT	98	1	55	
UMPIRES	135-139	10	1-9	
UNIFORMS	104	3	6	a-d
VIOLATIONS	137	10	7	a-d
WILD PITCH	98	1	56	
WINDUP	116	6	6	a-e
WRISTBAND OF PITCHER	116-117	6	8	penalty

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

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

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

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

RULE 1 - DEFINITIONS

- Sec. 1 ALTERED BAT:** A bat is considered altered when the physical structure of a legal bat has been changed, or an illegal or non-approved bat has been changed to resemble a legal bat. Examples of altering a bat are, but not limited to, the following: painting a bat, replacing the handle of a metal bat with a wooden or other type handle, or inserting material inside the bat. A flare or cone grip that does not meet the specifications of Rule 3 is considered an altered bat.
EFFECT: *The ball is dead, the batter is out and baserunners may not advance. The batter is ejected for using an altered bat (In Youth Play the coach is also ejected).*
- Sec. 2 APPEAL PLAY:** A play in which an umpire cannot make a decision until requested by a manager, coach, or player. The appeal must be made before the next legal or illegal pitch or before all infielders (including the pitcher) have left the field (crossed the foul lines). The appealed play does not change the type of out that is being appealed.
- Sec. 3 APPROVED BAT:** A bat model becomes approved after the bat manufacturer submits the bat to NSA after being tested by the official test facility and said model meets the requirements of a legal bat as defined in Rule 3. Sec. 1.

- Sec. 4 BALL ROTATION:** A pitcher will have a choice of balls at the start of each half inning, with the exception that if both balls do not get put into play in the first half of the first inning; the pitcher in the bottom of the first inning must pitch the unused ball. Thereafter, every third out, the ball in play must be returned to the eight-foot circle. The pitcher now taking the field has a ball to start the next half inning. Before throwing a warm-up pitch, the pitcher may request to pitch the other ball giving the ball in his/her possession to the plate umpire. A choice has now been made, and the pitcher must pitch this ball until it goes out of play or becomes blocked.
- Sec. 5 BASE PATH:** The base path is an imaginary line three feet on either side of a direct line between the bases.
- Sec. 6 BASERUNNER:** A player on the team at bat who has finished his batting turn, reached first base, and has not yet been put out.
- Sec. 7 BATTER HIT BY PITCH:** A legal or illegally pitched ball that hits the batter's person or clothing, provided the batter does not strike at the pitched ball. The plate umpire will award first base to the batter hit by the pitch. Any runners will advance one base if forced due to the batter being awarded first base. If an illegal pitch hits the batter, all baserunners will advance one base without liability to be put out. **EXCEPTION:** *If the batter makes no effort to avoid being hit by the pitched ball or if the umpire calls the pitched ball a strike, the ball striking the batter is disregarded, and the ball is dead. The pitched ball is a strike or ball depending on the location of the pitched ball.*
- Sec. 8 BATTER'S BOX:** The area that the batter is restricted to while in position to bat. The batter must have both feet entirely within the lines of the box prior to the pitch. The lines are considered to be within the box.
- Sec. 9 BATTER-RUNNER:** A player who has finished his turn at bat but has not yet been put out or touched first base.
- Sec. 10 BATTING HELMET:** A batting helmet bearing the NOCSAE stamp is mandatory for each batter, on-deck batter, player, youth coach in the coach's box and any runner. The batting helmet worn by each batter, on-deck batter, player and youth coach in the coaches boxes and all runners must have extended ear flaps which cover both ears and temples. If a pitcher wears a batting helmet, the outer covering must have a non-glare surface. **ALL HELMETS SHALL BE FITTED WITH A NOCSAE APPROVED FACE GUARD.**
- Sec. 11 BATTING ORDER:** The batting order is the official lineup of offensive players listing the order in which team members must come to bat. A lineup card must include each player's name, number, and defensive position. Extra Players (EP) and Designated Hitters (DH) must also be included.

- Sec. 12 BLOCKED BALL:** A live ball that is touched, stopped, or handled by a person not engaged in the game; or which touches any object that is not part of the official equipment or playing area.
NOTE: *A blocked ball is not called when a live ball strikes a base coach unintentionally.*
EFFECT: *The ball is dead. See Rule 8. Sec. 5. (e) for enforcement.*
***NOTE:** *When offensive equipment causes a blocked ball, the runner closest to home plate will be declared out and all other runners must return to the last base touched at the time the ball became blocked.*
- Sec. 13 BUNT:** A bunt is a fair ball in which the batter does not take a full swing but holds the bat in such a manner in the path of the ball to tap the ball slowly to the infield.
- Sec. 14 BUNT ATTEMPT:** Any non-swinging movement of the bat intended to tap the ball into play. The mere holding of the bat in the strike zone is considered a bunt attempt no matter the placement of the pitch. To take a pitch the batter must withdraw the bat away from the ball.
- Sec. 15 CATCH:** A catch is a legally caught ball, which occurs when a fielder secures a batted or thrown ball with his/her hand or glove. If the ball is merely held in the fielder's arms or is prevented from dropping to the ground by some part of the fielder's body or clothing, the catch is not completed until the ball is in the grasp of the fielder's hand or glove. It is not a catch if a fielder, immediately after he/she contacts the ball, collides with another player or wall or falls to the ground and drops the ball as a result of the collision or falling to the ground. In establishing a valid catch, the fielder shall have complete control of the ball and his/her release of the ball is voluntary and intentional. If a player drops the ball while in the act of throwing, it is a valid catch.
- Sec. 16 CATCHER'S BOX:** The catcher's box is the area in which the catcher must stay until the pitched ball is released. The lines of the box are considered within the box. All of the catcher's body and equipment must be within the catcher's box until the pitcher releases the ball. The umpire indicates an illegal pitch if the catcher is not in this position.
- Sec. 17 CHARGED CONFERENCE:** A charged conference takes place when:
- a. **Defensive Conference** - The defensive team requests a suspension of play for any reason, and a representative not on the field enters the playing field and delivers a message (by any means) to the pitcher or any defensive player. It is not a charged conference when the representative enters the field and removes the pitcher, or if the defensive team confers while the offensive team is in conference.

- b. **Offensive Conference** - The offensive team requests a suspension of play to allow the manager or other team representative, on or off the field, to confer with a batter or baserunner. It is not a charged conference when an offensive pitcher is putting on a warm-up jacket on base or if the offensive team confers while the defensive team is in conference.

Sec. 18 COACH: A member of the team at bat who takes his/her place in the coach's box to direct his/her players in running the bases. Two coaches are allowed, one positioned at 1st base and one positioned at 3rd base. One coach can have in his/her possession, a scorebook and an indicator that shall be used for scorekeeping purposes only. A defensive coach or manager must remain in the dugout at their normal position. If the manager or coach does not comply after a warning from the umpire, he/she will be ejected from the game.

Sec. 19 CROW HOP: Prior to delivering the pitch, the pitcher replants the pivot foot and pushes off from a spot other than the pitcher's plate.

Sec. 20 DEAD BALL: The ball is not in play, and not considered in play again, until the pitcher has the ball in his/her possession and the umpire has called "play ball".

Sec. 21 DELAYED DEAD BALL: An infraction, signaled by the umpire, in which the ball remains alive until all play has been completed and time has been called.

Sec. 22 DELIVERY: Delivery of the pitch begins when the hands separate and ends with the release of the ball

Sec. 23 FAIR BALL: A fair ball is a batted ball that:

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

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

Sec. 24 FLAGRANT PLAYER OBSTRUCTION: Is the act of a defensive fielder flagrantly, and with excessive force, impedes the runner or batter/runner.

PENALTY: Immediate ejection of the defensive player.

Sec. 25 FORCE OUT: A force out is an out which can be made only when a baserunner loses the right to the base he/she is occupying because the batter becomes a batter-runner, and before the batter-runner or a succeeding baserunner has been put out.

Sec. 26 FOUL BALL: A foul ball is a batted ball that:

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

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

Sec. 27 FOUL TIP: A foul tip is a batted ball that goes directly from the bat, not higher than the batter's head, to the catcher's hands or glove/mitt, and is legally caught by the catcher. A foul tip is a strike. The batter is out if it is the third strike. A foul tip remains alive. A runner may advance with liability to be put out from one base to another on a foul tip without tagging. The foul tip is treated as if it were a swing and miss. A batted ball that travels directly from the bat not higher than the batter's head to any part of the catcher's body or equipment other than the hand(s) or glove/mitt is a foul ball is dead and is not a foul tip. A batted ball that goes higher than the batter's head is a foul ball. It is not a foul tip. If legally caught, the batter is out.

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

Sec. 28 ILLEGAL BAT: An illegal bat is one that does not meet the requirements. Rule 3 Sec. 1

Sec. 29 ILLEGAL PITCH: An illegal pitch is a delayed dead ball and is any infraction of the pitching. Rule 6 Sec. 1 – 8

Sec. 30 ILLEGAL PLAYER: A Player who enters the line-up without the right to an offensive or defensive position.

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

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

- Sec. 31 ILLEGALLY BATTED BALL:** An illegally batted ball occurs when:
- A batter's entire foot is completely out of the box, on the ground, when he/she hits the ball fair or foul.
 - Any part of the batter's foot is touching home plate when he/she hits the ball.
 - The batter hits the ball with an illegal or altered bat.
- Sec. 32 ILLEGALLY CAUGHT BALL:** Occurs when a fielder catches a batted or thrown ball with his/her cap, illegal glove or any part of his/her uniform, detached from its proper place. See Rule 1. Sec. 15.
- Sec. 33 INELIGIBLE PLAYER:** A player who is unregistered or who does not meet the requirements to register.
- NOTE:** *The penalty for using an ineligible player is a forfeit of any/all games played or in progress.*
- Examples of an ineligible player but not limited to are:
- Playing under an assumed name.
 - Players not on a team roster.
 - Violating residency requirements.
 - Violating divisional age requirements.
 - Player(s) that are listed on two (2) official NSA Sanctioned Rosters without an Official Release Form on file in the State Director's Office.
 - An ejected player.
- Sec. 34 IN JEOPARDY:** A term indicating that the ball is in play and an offensive player may be put out.
- Sec. 35 INFIELD FLY:** An infield fly is a fair ball (not including a line drive or an attempted bunt), which can be caught by an infielder with ordinary effort when 1st and 2nd or 1st, 2nd and 3rd bases are occupied before two are out. Any fielder can catch an infield fly.
- NOTE:** *All divisions play with an infield fly rule.*
- *NOTE:** *When it seems apparent that a batted ball will be an infield fly, the umpire(s) shall immediately declare, "infield fly, the batter is out" to aid the runners. If the ball is near the foul lines, the umpire(s) shall declare "infield fly, the batter is out if fair". The ball is alive and runners may advance at the risk of the ball being caught or re-touch and advance after the ball is touched by a fielder. If the hit ball becomes a foul ball, it is treated the same as any other foul ball.*
- Sec. 36 INNING:** An inning is that portion of a game in which the teams alternate between offense/defense. There are three outs for each team. A new inning begins when the third out of the bottom of an inning is declared.

- Sec. 37 INTERFERENCE:** Interference is the act of an offensive player or team member, who impedes or confuses a defensive player while attempting to execute a play. If judged so by the umpire, vocal interference may be called.
- Sec. 38 LEAP:** The pivot foot must remain in contact with the pitcher's plate or the ground until the non pivot (front foot) touches the ground or the pitcher shall be considered leaping.
EFFECT: *An illegal pitch is called on the pitcher.*
- Sec. 39 LEGAL TOUCH:** A legal touch occurs when a runner or batter-runner who is not touching a base, is touched by the ball while the ball is held securely in a fielder's hand(s). The ball is not considered as being securely held if it is juggled or dropped by the fielder after having touched the runner, unless the runner deliberately knocks the ball from the hand of the fielder. It is sufficient for the fielder to touch the runner with the glove that holds the ball.
- Sec. 40 LEGALLY CAUGHT BALL:** A legally caught ball occurs when a fielder catches a batted or thrown ball, provided it is not caught in the fielder's cap, hat, pocket, protector, or any other part of his/her uniform. It must be caught and firmly held with the hand or hands.
- Sec. 41 NON - APPROVED BAT:** A non - approved bat is one that has not been placed on the NSA Approved Bat List or that has been removed from the Approved Bat List. Entering the batters box with or using a Non-Approved bat carries an ejection penalty of both the batter and manager.
- Sec. 42 OBSTRUCTION:** Obstruction is the act of a defensive team member who hinders or impedes a batter's attempt to make contact with a pitched ball, or who impedes the progress of a runner or batter-runner who is legally running the bases, unless the fielder is in possession of the ball or is fielding a batted ball. The act may be intentional or unintentional, physical, or verbal.
NOTE: *Catcher obstruction is called when the catcher obstructs the batter who is attempting to hit or swing at a pitch. Prior to the pitch catcher obstruction does not apply, a dead ball shall be called and the batter shall be allowed to re-set himself/herself.*
- Sec. 43 OVERSLIDE:** An over slide is the act of the offensive player sliding over and beyond a base he/she is attempting to reach. This is usually caused by his/her momentum making him/her lose contact with the base which causes him/her to be in jeopardy. The batter-runner may over slide first base without being in jeopardy if he immediately returns to that base.
- Sec. 44 OVERTHROW:** An overthrow is a play in which a ball is thrown to retire a runner who has not yet reached or is off base and goes into foul territory beyond the boundary lines of the playing field.

- Sec. 45 PASSED BALL:** A pitch the catcher fails to, with ordinary effort, stop or control and which enables a runner(s) to advance.
- Sec. 46 PIVOT FOOT:** The pitcher's foot that must be in contact with the pitcher's plate or ground until the pitcher steps towards home plate.
- Sec. 47 QUICK PITCH:** A quick pitch is made by the pitcher with the attempt to catch the batter off balance. This would be before the batter takes his/her position in the batter's box or while he/she is still off balance as a result of the previous pitch.
- Sec. 48 SACRIFICE:** A batter is credited with a sacrifice when, with not more than one out, a bunt or hit fly ball enables a runner to score. In either case, the batter-runner would be put out before reaching first base or would have been put out if the hit had fielded without error.
- Sec. 49 SQUEEZE:** A play in which the runner advances toward home plate from third base following the release of the pitched ball, and the batter bunts the ball permitting the runner to score.
- Sec. 50 STEALING (STOLEN BASE/DOUBLE STEAL):** The act of a runner attempting to advance to the next base without the aid of a base hit, putout, or a fielding (including batter) error. An attempted steal involving more than one runner (two or three) is considered a double or triple steal. The act of a runner attempting to advance during the pitch or after the pitch has reached the plate is considered to be the act of stealing.
- Sec. 51 STRIKE ZONE:** The strike zone is that space over any part of home plate that is between the batter's armpit and the top of the batter's knees when the natural batting stance is assumed. Any part of the ball passing through this strike zone is considered a strike. The umpire is instructed to determine the batter's strike zone according to the batter's usual stance when swinging at a pitch.
- Sec. 52 THREE-FOOT LINE:** The three-foot line is a line parallel to, and three feet from the base line, starting at a point halfway between home plate and first base. The batter-runner is declared out when he/she runs outside the three-foot line, and in the judgement of the umpire, interferes with the fielder attempting to field a batted ball or interfering with a thrown ball.
- Sec. 53 TIE BREAKER/EXTRA INNINGS:** After the completion of seven (7) innings or when the time limit has expired and the score is still tied, the tie-breaker procedure will begin. This would involve the last batter of the previous inning, whose turn at bat had been completed, assuming a position on second base. This would be done at the beginning of each half inning; until, at the conclusion of a full inning, a winner is determined.
- Sec. 54 TIME:** The term used by the umpire to order the suspension of play.

Sec. 55 TURN AT BAT: A player's turn at bat begins when he/she enters the batter's box and continues until he/she is putout or becomes a baserunner.

Sec. 56 WILD PITCH: A pitch that cannot be handled by the catcher 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.

Sec. 2 The playing field dimensions for youth and adult fastpitch/modified softball programs are as follows:

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

***In 2011 states have the option to pitch from 40 or 43 feet. The 14 & U World Series will be from 43 feet.**

****In 2011 states have the option to pitch from 40 or 43 feet. The 16 & U World Series will be from 43 feet.**

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

Sec. 3 Ground rules or special rules establishing the limits of the playing field may be agreed upon by leagues or opposing teams whenever

backstops, fences, stands, vehicles, spectators, or other obstructions are within the prescribed area.

Sec. 4 The playing field layout should include, in addition to marking for foul lines, the following:

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

Sec. 5 If during the course of any game, the base distance or pitching distance is found to be in error, the error should be corrected immediately, and the game should continue. This is not a point to be protested.

RULE 3 – EQUIPMENT

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

NSA Altered Bat and Altered Ball Procedures

For the past several years the NSA has embarked on more stringent test procedures for bats and balls. NSA feels that it has the very best testing procedures in the game. However, there are always players, coaches and outside agencies who will do their best to get around these rules. The rules were implemented to keep our patrons safe and to make this game the safest it can be. With the one word "SAFETY" in mind NSA will not tolerate anyone who would embark in any manner that would put our patrons in peril. As a Director, UIC or Umpire if you feel that a player may be using an altered bat or ball in NSA play, the Director, or UIC will have the authority to inspect the bat or ball and to suspend the suspected player(s). The offending player(s) will have two choices only: 1.) He/she can allow the NSA representative to inspect the bat or ball and the NSA representative can reach a conclusion as to whether the bat or ball may be altered or he/she can refuse to allow the director to inspect the bat or ball and take an immediate Five (5) year

suspension from any and all NSA play with no right of appeal. **In addition to the immediate Five (5) year suspension by the offending player and/or team, failure to allow a site inspection of the bat or ball or, failure to allow the bat or ball to be sent into the NSA National Office for further inspection; will result in forfeit of the game in progress, and forfeiture of all remaining games in the tournament; WITH NO REFUND of entry fees.** 2.) He/she may after allowing the NSA representative to inspect the bat or ball and the NSA representative has decided that the bat or ball “could be” altered; the player may allow the director to send the bat or ball to the NSA National Office for inspection. If the NSA National Office decides that the bat or ball may be altered, the NSA will then send the bat or ball to the Manufacturer of the bat or ball for a final determination on whether the bat or ball is altered or he/she can accept an immediate two (2) year suspension without the right of appeal. During the time of the examination of the bat or ball by NSA and/or the manufacturer, depending on the sole discretion of the NSA National Office, the NSA may suspend the suspected offending player pending the findings from the manufacturer and or NSA or final decision of the NSA. If the NSA and/or the manufacturer determine in their sole discretion that the bat or ball has been altered, the NSA may suspend a first time offender no less than two (2) years and no more than five (5) years. Such suspension decision may be appealed at the next NSA National Convention. A second time offender under this altered bat/ball suspension process will be suspended for life.

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

An altered bat is considered altered when the physical structure of the legal bat has been changed in any way or when an illegal or non approved bat has been made up in such a way as to appear to be a legal bat. Examples of altering a bat are, but not limited to the following: Painting a bat, replacing the handle or shaving the handle or barrel or the taper changed in any way such as by sandpapering or applying a solvent to the surface such as fingernail polish remover or by any other means. Had the plug removed/replaced or changed in any way. Had the knob removed/ replaced or changed in any way or had anything removed or added to the inside or outside of the bat other than the legal way to tape the bat the specified and appropriate place as described in Rule 3.

Examples of an altered ball (but not limited too) are: is any ball frozen, or kept cold in a cooler to make the core harder or livelier. Any ball that has been cooked in a microwave oven, or the seams/stitches or cover that has been altered in any way whatsoever. If the physical structure of the ball (inside or outside) has been altered in any way whatsoever other than the alterations that

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

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

NOTE:** The NSA has adopted a Bat Performance Factor (BPF) of 1.20 or less. All bats with a BPF of 1.20 or less for the entire length of the barrel or hitting surface are approved for use in the NSA Program, unless the NSA believes in any way shape or form that a particular bat is dangerous and/or not acceptable for fair and safe play. *NOTE:** The NSA reserves the right to ban such equipment immediately. All bats used in NSA play must be stamped with a BPF of 1.20 or less (exception: wooden bats do not have to be stamped with a BPF of 1.20 and may be used and are legal in all NSA play if they meet the standards set forth in Rule 3, Sec. 1 a-1).

Sec. 1 The official bat shall be listed on the NSA approved bat list (all bats appearing on the NSA APPROVED BAT LIST are approved for ALL divisions of NSA play. The Official bat shall be of one piece or interchangeable barrel construction and can be made of wood (hardwood) or other materials approved by the NSA; or formed from a block of wood consisting of two or more pieces of wood bonded together with an adhesive, in such a way, that the grain direction of all pieces is essentially parallel to the length of the bat. When the interchangeable barrel bat is joined together properly the two piece bat must meet all NSA official bat requirements. Below is a list of additional requirements for all approved NSA BATS:

- a. The bat shall not be more than 34 inches in length and no more than 38 ounces in weight and shall meet the NSA bat standards and also be listed on the NSA Approved Bat List. (See Above *NOTE and **NOTE for further bat standards.) Any bat which cannot be identified by markings on the bat as an approved bat shall be considered illegal.
EXCEPTION: *Wooden bats need only meet the standards described in Rule 3 Sec. 1 above.*
- b. The bat shall have a safety grip of cork, tape (not smooth plastic type), or combination material.
- c. The grip shall not be less than ten inches long and shall not extend more than 15 inches from the small end of the bat.

- d. The bat shall be listed on the NSA Approved Bat List. In the case of well used bats, sufficient markings must remain to make the bat identifiable as an NSA Approved bat. (Bat name and/or model number should suffice for this purpose.
- e. The bat may be made of metal or other materials approved by the NSA and may be angular; however, the NSA must approve any material before it is used in Sanctioned Events.
- g. All exposed surfaces of the bat must be smooth and free of burrs, pins, rivets, DEEP DENTS OR DANGEROUS DENTS, fractures/cracks of any type, sharp edges or any type of exterior fastener that would present a safety hazard.
EXCEPTION: *At the umpires discretion slightly dented bats may be considered legal.*
- h. Unless the bat is made of one-piece construction or interchangeable two – piece barrel construction with the barrel end closed, it should have a tamper resistant rubber or plastic insert in the barrel. ***Beginning with 2012 season, all manufactured bats MUST HAVE a tamper proof end cap or rolled over end.***
- i. A one-piece rubber grip and knob combination is illegal.
- j. Metal or other approved material bats must have a knob on the handle and welded or mechanically fastened.
- k. All bats must have a safety knob of a minimum of ¼ inch protruding at a 90-degree angle from the handle. The ¼ inch is measured from the outer edge of the knob 90 degrees to the outside layer of wrapping. The knob portion of the bat may be taped as long as the bat does not exceed 34 inches in length; however, the umpire may request tape to be removed from both the handle and knob, if there is any question concerning the bat being altered or illegal. After determining the bat legal, the player may tape the bat back to his/her preference, providing the bat meets the requirements set forth by Rule 3, Sec. 1 (a-k). A flare or cone grip may be attached from the factory or a factory flare or cone may be attached to the bat by the player, but the flare or cone must be installed properly to the bat. The flare or cone must be taped or covered by an approved bat grip and the bat must meet all requirements of Rule 3, Sec. 1 (a-l) after installation to be considered legal. ***STINGERS ARE APPROVED FOR NSA PLAY PROVIDED THEY ARE PROPERLY INSTALLED.***
- l. Shall be rounded, and shall be smooth. Shall not be more than 2 1/4 inches in diameter at its largest part. A tolerance of 1/16 inch is permitted, to allow for expansion on the round bat.
NOTE: *Sec. 1 (a-k) Any bat that does not comply with these guidelines or that is not listed on the Official NSA approved bat list (REFER TO: playsna.com for approved bat list) must be removed from the game, penalties (if any) administered, and the bat may no longer be used in any NSA Sanctioned Play.*

- Sec. 2** **The official softball** shall be a raised-seamed, concealed-stitched or flat-surfaced ball. The center of the ball may be made of either long fiber kapok, or mixture of cork and rubber, and/or machine wound with a fine twisted yarn and covered with latex or rubber cement. Or it may be made of other materials approved by the NSA. The cover of the ball shall be optic yellow, tanned horsehide, cowhide or any other materials approved by the NSA, cemented to the ball by application of cement to the underside of the cover and sewn with black waxed cotton or black linen thread to form a black stitched softball. The solid core ball must be stamped with THE official NSA logo that contains the maximum C.O.R. and compression standards. The ball MAY NOT bear any other logos except for the NSA official logo unless otherwise approved by the Executive Director or the Executive Vice President of the NSA. MAXIMUM C.O.R. shall be .47. Maximum Compression for NSA softballs is 400 pounds. **EXCEPTION:** *The NSA approves a .52 C.O.R. 275 pound compression ball.*
- a. The official softball used for all divisions of the fast pitch program will be the 12" raised-seam softball.
EXCEPTION: *The youth division, boys and girls 10 & Under, will use the 11" softball.*
- Sec. 3** **All fielders must wear gloves or mitts made of leather or other approved materials. Only the catcher and first baseman may wear mitts. The glove worn by a pitcher must be uniform in color. Gloves or mitts optic yellow circles on the outside, giving the appearance of a ball, may not be worn by any player and will be considered illegal.**
- Sec. 4** **All players, coaches, and participants must wear shoes. Sandals are considered proper shoes for non-players. A shoe shall be made with either canvas or leather uppers or similar materials. The sole may be either smooth or have soft or hard rubber or polyurethane cleats. Metal cleats or any type of shoe that has exposed metal on the sole other than a rivet may not be worn in any division of youth play. EXCEPTION: *Shoes with metal cleats are optional in the 16U and the 18U age divisions. EXCEPTION: When a ball park has specific rules that prohibit the use of metal cleats, the official park rules will take preference and be observed.* Metal cleats may be worn in all divisions of adult FP play. **PENALTY: IF IT IS DISCOVERED DURING THE GAME THAT AN OFFENSIVE PLAYER IS WEARING METAL CLEATS AN OUT WILL BE CALLED AND THE PLAYER WILL BE EJECTED. A DEFENSIVE PLAYER WHO IS WEARING METAL CLEATS WILL BE EJECTED. Any baserunner(s) must return to the last base occupied at the time of the pitch.****
- Sec. 5** **No equipment shall be left lying on the field either in fair or foul territory.**

Sec. 6 Uniform: All players on a team shall wear uniforms alike in color and style.

NOTE: *If a team is not in compliance with the uniform rule, the opposing team, if in total uniform, has the choice of being the home or visiting team. If both teams are in compliance or if both teams are not in compliance, a flip of a coin will determine the home and visiting team.*

- a. Ball caps or visors must be alike and must be worn properly. Caps or visors are not mandatory but when worn by one or more players must be identical and must be a team cap or visor. Hard plastic visors, bandanas, handkerchiefs and the like are not approved headgear.
- b. **In the umpires judgment:** No player may wear any object on their person, that would be a distraction, or wear any object that may be dangerous to the player's person or any other player involved in the contest. *Examples are but not limited to: Glitter or sparkles; looped ear rings, necklaces that could create a hazard, Pitchers with a helmet that creates a glare.*
- c. Players may wear solid colored undergarments under their uniform shirts or shorts. It is not mandatory that all players wear these undergarments, but if worn, they shall not be ragged, frayed, or slit on exposed areas.
- d. Players may wear scrunchies or tie-ups if worn in good taste and not worn in a derogatory fashion. Scrunchies may not be worn in a fashion to hide or prohibit the viewing of the player's number.
- e. Numbers must be worn and visible on all uniforms and be a minimum of six (6) inches in height. No players on the same team may wear identical numbers. If this occurs, the umpire must ensure that this is corrected immediately.
- f. **THE NATIONAL SOFTBALL ASSOCIATION STRONGLY RECOMMENDS THAT ANY TYPE OF JEWELRY NOT BE WORN IN ANY NSA PLAY.**
- g. Casts, (plaster, metal, or other hard substances) or other items judged dangerous by the umpire may not be worn during the game by any coach coaching the bases or by any player.
- h. Coaches in wheelchairs MAY NOT be on the field of play during ANY live ball situation unless the chair has all exposed metal parts and/or surfaces covered by a soft substance and taped in such a manner that would eliminate the risk of bodily injury to the players playing the game or other coaches coaching the game. This pertains to ALL adult and ALL youth play.
EXCEPTION: *In some cases a protective device may be attached to an approved head protector, with prior approval by the local NSA Director.*
NOTE: *Play prior to detection of jewelry is not affected by violation of the jewelry rule. Violation of the jewelry rule is not grounds for protests.*
***NOTE:** *Prosthesis may be worn; however, any metal that is part of a brace or support must be covered by ½"soft foam or soft material and taped. Casts are prohibited.*

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

Sec. 7 A **batting helmet** bearing the NOCSAE stamp is mandatory for each batter, on-deck batter, player, any runner, and youth coach in the coach's box. The batting helmet worn by each of these individuals must have extended earflaps that cover both ears and temples. For all youth Fast Pitch play: The helmet must have a properly attached face guard and the face guard must bear the NOCSAE stamp to be approved. If a pitcher wears a batting helmet while pitching, the outer covering must have a non-glare surface. Plastic visors are prohibited for players, coaches and managers. The batting helmet must be worn properly at all times.

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

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

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

Sec. 8 Protective Equipment:

The catcher must wear an approved head protector, a protective mask, with throat protector (**May be an extension of the mask**) or a commercially manufactured, properly attached, and not altered in any manner.), body protector, and baseball/softball shin guards. The male catcher or any male player warming up a pitcher shall wear an approved protective cup. Any player warming up a pitcher at any location within the confines of the park or facility will be required to wear an approved head protector and an approved mask with throat protector. All protective equipment must conform to industry standards. The National Softball Association **HIGHLY RECOMMENDS** protective equipment for **ALL DIVISIONS** of softball. All players are permitted to wear any approved protective equipment including catcher's equipment, batter's helmet, and soccer-style shin guards. If used, the equipment must not be detached. Detached equipment can be an obstruction. Repeated acts could be grounds for ejection. For all additional Equipment that is approved for NSA play, refer to www.playnsa.com

RULE 4 - PLAYERS/SUBSTITUTION

*Any non-player who is not yet considered an adult, may not be between the fences or boundaries that are considered the playing field without a NOCSAE approved helmet with a NOCSAE approved face mask properly attached and worn at all times when inside the playing area. Any youth division bat boys/bat girls who are the teams official bat boy/bat girl or who are team members serving as bat boy/bat girl must wear a NOCSAE approved helmet with a NOCSAE approved face mask properly attached. **PENALTY: The player, non-player, bat boy or bat girl will put the helmet on or be removed from the playing area.***

Sec. 1 A team shall consist of a minimum of nine (9) players and a maximum of twelve (12) players if the two (2) optional Extra Player (EP) and the Designated Hitter (DH) are used. Teams can play a maximum of nine (9) players on defense. **EXCEPTION: IN POOL PLAY ONLY** – teams will be allowed to start with 8 players with the 9th spot in the batting order being an out. **If the 9th player shows up, she can be immediately inserted into the 9th spot in the batting order.** Players of the team in the field may be stationed anywhere on fair territory, except the catcher, who must be in the catcher’s box, and the pitcher who must be in a legal pitching position at the start of each pitch. No part of the defensive player’s foot (except catcher) may be outside the foul lines, from the time when the pitcher steps on the pitching rubber or until the pitch is released.

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

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

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

Sec. 2 The Designated Hitter (DH) and the Extra Player (EP):

- a. **The designated hitter – (DH)** may play defense at anytime during the game. This would eliminate the Designated Hitter (DH) for the remainder of the game.
 1. A Designated Hitter (DH) may be used for any player in the line-up.

2. The Designated Hitter (DH) must be made known prior to the start of the game, and his/her name and number indicated on the line-up sheet or score sheet.
 3. The player listed as (DH) must remain in the same position in the batting order for the entire game.
 4. The (DH) may be substituted for at any time, if the substitute is a pinch runner or pinch hitter other than the player being hit for, she must be a player who has not yet been in the game. The substitute then becomes the (DH).
- b. The Extra Player (EP) can play defense. Coaches have the option of using two (2) (EP's).
An EP(s) is optional, but if one is used, it must be made known prior to the start of game and be listed on the line-up sheet or score sheet.
1. If the EP(s) is used, he/she must be used the entire game.
 2. The EP(s) must remain in the same position in the batting order for the entire game.
 3. If an EP(s) is used, all players (10 or 11) must bat and any nine (9) can play defense. Defensive positions can be changed, but the batting order must remain the same.
 4. The EP(s) may be substituted for at any time, either by a pinch runner or a pinch hitter who then becomes the (EP). The substitute may be a player who has not yet been in the game.

Sec. 3 **Any of the starting and substitute players** may be withdrawn from the game and re-entered once. (This includes the EP(s) and/or DH, provided that the players occupy the original position in the batting order whenever in the game).

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

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

Sec. 4 **A team must have the required number of players** to start or continue a game.

- a. Nine (9) Players, Ten (10) if one DH only; or one EP only is used. Eleven (11) players if two EP's or one EP and one DH are used, twelve (12) players if the two EP's and the DH is used. If a team starts the game with the EP(s), the team must finish the game with the EP(s) or be penalized as follows. If the EP(s) or any other player is removed with the exception of the Designated Hitter (DH), injured or ejected from the game with no substitute to replace the player, the vacated spot automatically becomes an out each time the vacant spot comes to bat or anytime a runner is removed from the base with no legal substitution. Neither the (DH) nor the player being DH'd for may be used to replace the injured (EP). A team playing with nine (9) players and no available substitute may finish the

game with eight (8) players if an injury occurs with the vacant spot being an out as described in Rule 4 Sec 4 (c). However, the team must start the game with the minimum of nine (9) players.

- b. When a team is left with a vacant spot in the lineup because of a player as described in Sec. 4 (b), the opposing team may not, with two outs, intentionally or unintentionally walk the previous batter in order to get the "AUTOMATIC OUT" created by the vacant spot in the batting order. This would also include catcher obstruction to the previous batter or the previous batter being hit by a legal or illegally pitched ball. If the previous batter is walked or hit by a legal or illegally pitched ball, the vacant spot is skipped, the "AUTOMATIC OUT" is waived, and the next batter is the player whose name follows the vacant spot in the batting order. This only applies when there are two (2) outs.

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

Sec. 5 **A player shall be officially in the game** when her name has been entered on the official score sheet or has been announced. The following regulations govern the substitution of players:

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

The manager or team representative shall notify the plate umpire at the time a substitute enters the game. Failure to notify the umpire of a substitution would create an illegal substitution with the penalty - IMMEDIATE EJECTION FROM THE GAME WHENEVER THE INFRACTION IS DISCOVERED.

- a. Substitute players will be considered in the game as follows if one pitch has been thrown:
 - 1. When a batter takes his/her place in the batter's box.
 - 2. When a fielder takes the place of the fielder for which he/she is substituting.
 - 3. When a runner replaces the player on the base he/she is holding.
 - 4. When a pitcher takes his/her place on the pitcher's plate.
 - 5. An unreported substitute (In Youth Play). However, the coach shall be ejected for an un-reported substitute.
- b. Each pitcher (starter or substitute) must pitch until the first batter facing him/her has completed his/her turn at bat, the side has been retired or he/she has been removed from the game, unless the pitcher sustains an injury or illness which in the judgment of the home plate umpire, incapacitates the pitcher from pitching. A pitcher removed from the game by rule or ejection is not subject to this rule (5c). Any other player may be removed from the game at any time.
- c. A player substituted for a second time in the game shall not participate in the game except as a coach or a courtesy runner.

EXCEPTION: *The starting line-up, including the (EP),(DH)and substitutions may re-enter once.*

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

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

Sec. 6 Courtesy Runner: The player in the batting order where the last out was recorded or any player not currently in the game may replace the current (the player physically playing the position when the 3rd out was recorded) pitcher or catcher as a courtesy runner at any time. The pitcher or catcher will remain in the game and the courtesy runner will retain all substitution rights (if the courtesy runner has substitution rights). A player can be used only once per inning as a courtesy runner. Should the player that made the last recorded out be on base for any reason or is the pitcher or catcher, or batting or has already been a courtesy runner in that inning; the new courtesy runner would be determined by going back previous outs to the next allowable courtesy runner or to any player not currently in the game. If in the first inning a courtesy runner is used for either the pitcher or the catcher (who are listed in the line up when the line ups are turned in) and there are no outs recorded, the courtesy runner will be the player furthest removed from the pitcher or catcher needing the courtesy runner or any player not currently in the game.

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

Sec. 7 Illegal Player: The use of an illegal player is handled as an appeal that can be made at any time, while the player is in the game. A player will not violate the illegal player provision until he/she enters the game and one (1) pitch is thrown. Any action before one pitch is thrown is correctable. An illegal player violation results in the immediate ejection of the illegal player and his/her coach. In Youth Play, an un-reported substitute is not a violation of the Illegal Player Rule, however the coach shall be ejected if Rule 4, Sec. 5 (a) is met. In addition, the following penalties will apply:

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

field), the offensive team has the option of 1) the result of the play or 2) replaying the last pitch.

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

PLAY ... (1) Smith enters the game in the 4th inning and was not reported. In the 6th inning the opposing team reports this to the umpire.

RULING: The Coach is immediately ejected from the game. All play by or on Smith is legal.

PLAY ... (2) Smith enters the game in the 4th inning, and was not reported. Smith legally reaches 1st base and before the next pitch, is reported to the Home Plate Umpire.

RULING: The player (Smith) is called out and immediately ejected from the game. All runners must return to the base occupied when Smith first came to bat.

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

Sec. 8 Divisions of Play:

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

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

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

*****NOTE:** *The 23 & Under teams are considered adult teams. The 23 & Under division will play by the adult rules including the age eligibility rule.*

The cut-off date for the youth age eligibility is December 31st. Whatever age the child is on December 31st of the prior year is the eligible division for the current year. Birth certificates must accompany youth players at all times.

Example: A child turns age 12 on Dec. 31st is eligible to play 12 & Under.

A child who turns age 13 on Jan. 1st is eligible to play 12 & Under.

- a. All players must play in one age group only.
- b. A player cannot play in two (2) age divisions in one tournament.

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

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

Sec. 9 At all levels of Youth Fastpitch play certificates of team insurance must be presented to either the League or Tournament Director.

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

Sec. 10 Adult division teams, including the 23 & Under teams, must purchase the adult insurance if purchasing insurance.

Sec. 11 Communicable Disease Procedures:

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

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

RULE 5 - THE GAME

Softball is a contact sport, played with Composite, Aluminum, Wood and other approved materials in design of approved bats. The game of softball can be a dangerous sport to participate in. In playing the game of softball, the player and the parents of the youth players participating in the game of softball assume for themselves and for the youth children participating in the game of softball the risk of serious injury or possible death. By agreeing to be placed on an NSA roster, the participants or parents of participants understand these risks

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

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

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

- Sec. 1** **The choice of the first or last at bat in the inning** shall be decided by the toss of a coin unless otherwise stated in the rules of the organization under which the schedule of games is being played. If a team is not in compliance with the uniform rule, the opposing team, if in total uniform compliance, has the choice of being the home or visiting team.
- Sec. 2** **The fitness of the grounds** for a game shall be decided by the Tournament Director, Tournament Umpire-In-Chief and the Home Plate Umpire.
- Sec. 3** **A regulation game shall consist of seven (7) innings.**
- a. A full seven (7) innings need not be played if the home team (the team second at bat) scores more runs in six innings or before the third out of the seventh inning.
- EXCEPTION:** *The NSA will use the 12, 10 and 8 run rule in all tournament play. If one team is 12, 10 or 8 runs ahead after 3, 4 or 5 innings, or after 2½, 3½ or 4½ innings, if the home team is ahead by 12, 10 or 8 or more runs respectively, the team with the 12, 10 or 8 run lead shall be the winner.*
- b. A game that is tied at the end of seven innings will use the tie-breaking rule. This would involve the last batter of the previous

inning whose turn at bat had been completed, assuming a position on second base. This would be done at the beginning of each half inning until, at the conclusion of a full inning a winner is determined. A game that is tied at the end of the time limit must complete the full inning if the time elapses during any part of an inning.

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

- c. The umpire is empowered to call a game at any time because of darkness, rain, fire, panic, or other causes which place the patrons or players in peril.
- d. These provisions do not apply to any acts on the part of the players or spectators, which might call for the forfeiture of the game. The umpire may forfeit the game if attacked physically by any team member or spectator.
- e. The umpire shall forfeit a game in favor of a team not at fault in the following cases:
 1. If a team fails to appear on the field, or being on the field, refuses to begin a game at the time the team is scheduled to play, or within a time set for forfeitures (grace period) by the organization in which the team is playing.
 2. If after the game has started, one team refuses to continue play unless the game has been suspended or terminated by the umpire.
 3. If after the umpire has suspended the game, one side fails to resume playing within two minutes after the umpire has called "play ball".
 4. If a team uses tactics to delay or to hasten the game.
 5. If after being warned by the umpire, any one of the rules is willfully violated.
 6. If the order for the removal of a player, coach, or manager from the game is not obeyed within one minute.
 7. If because of the ejection of a player by the umpire, a team can no longer field nine (9) defensive players or for any other reason can no longer field eight (8) defensive players.
 8. The score of a forfeited game will be 7-0 to the winning team.
- f. During all tournament play (Qualifying, NIT, State, Regional and World Series) in the event of rain or any other cause which interrupts a game, the game must be resumed at the exact point where it was stopped, unless the teams mutually agree to accept the existing score as the final score. **NOTE:** *Players listed in the line-ups and not available at game time may be substituted.*

- g. In the event that a tournament cannot be completed, an official game may be called after 5 innings of play or 4 ½ innings of play if the home team is ahead.
- h. Original lineups may be changed when the game is replayed.

Sec. 4 **The winner of the game shall be the team which scores** the most runs in a regulation game. The score of a called regulation game shall be the score at the end of the last complete inning unless the home team has scored more runs than the visiting team in the incomplete inning. In this case, the score shall be that of the incomplete inning.

Sec. 5 **A run shall not be scored if the third out of the inning is a result of:**

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

Sec. 6 **No succeeding runner shall score a run** when a preceding runner has been declared the third out of an inning.

Sec. 7 **A baserunner shall not score a run ahead** of the baserunner preceding him in the batting order if the preceding runner has not been put out.

Sec. 8 **A manager and/or team representative**, on or off the field, shall be allowed only one charged conference with a batter or baserunner in any one inning.
PENALTY: A strike will be called on the batter if more than one conference occurs.

Sec. 9 Teams must have registered and entered their roster online with all information correct and complete or the player(s) and/or team(s) will be considered ineligible to participate in any National Softball Association sanctioned Tournaments, including Qualifiers, NIT's or Post Season Tournaments.

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

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

Sec. 10 a. Refer to Article XIV Sec 9 (a-d) of the Official NSA By-Laws for Youth team try-out rosters.

- b. Refer to Article XVI Section 8 regarding information for Youth Fast-Pitch Fall Tournaments and World Series Qualifiers.

RULE 6 - PITCHING REGULATIONS

- Sec. 1 Before starting the delivery (pitch), the pitcher shall comply with the following:**
- a. The pitcher shall take a position with both feet on the ground and in contact with the pitching plate. The hands shall be separated with the ball being held in either the glove or pitching hand.
 - b. While in this position, the pitcher shall take, or simulate taking, a signal from the catcher.
 - c. The pitcher shall bring the hands together or touch them together for no more than ten seconds.
 - d. The pitcher shall not be considered in the pitching position, unless the catcher is in position to receive the pitch.
 - e. The pitcher may not take the pitching position on or near the pitching plate without having the ball in his/her possession.
- Sec. 2 The pitch starts when the hands are separated** or the pitcher makes any motion that is part of his/her wind-up. The hands may only be separated one (1) time per pitch. In the act of delivering the ball, the pitcher shall not take more than one step which must be forward, toward the batter, and simultaneous with the delivery of the ball to the batter.
- NOTE:** *It is not a step if the pitcher slides his/her foot across the pitching rubber, provided contact is maintained with the pitching rubber.*
- Sec. 3 After taking the signal, the pitcher may not step backward** with the non-pivot foot.
- EXCEPTION:** *Men may step backward but this step must be taken simultaneously with or prior to starting the pitch.*
- Sec. 4 The pivot foot must remain in contact with the pitcher's plate** or ground until the non-pivot foot (front foot) touches the ground. There is no restriction on position or movement of the free foot except that if a step is taken forwards with the free foot, the step must be taken within or partially within the 24" length of the pitching plate. ***Women and Youth Girls may not step backwards.***
- EXCEPTION:** *For Men only: There is no restriction on position or movement of the free foot except that if a step is taken backwards or forwards with the free foot, the step must be taken within or partially within the 24" length of the pitching plate.*
- *NOTE:** *It is not considered a step, if the pitcher slides their foot on the pitching plate, provided contact with the pitching plate is maintained.*
- **NOTE:** *Such techniques as the "crow hop" and "leap" are illegal.*

Sec. 5 A legal delivery is one in which the ball is delivered to the batter with an underhand motion.

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

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

Sec. 6 A pitcher may use any wind-up desired providing:

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

Sec. 7 While in the pitching position, the pitcher may not deliberately drop, roll or bounce the ball in order to prevent the batter from striking it.

Sec. 8 During the game, the pitcher may not use tape or other substances on the ball, pitching hand or fingers; nor shall any player apply any foreign substance to the ball. With the umpire's approval, powdered resin may be used to dry the hand. The wearing of any item on the pitching hand, wrist, or arm that may be distracting to the batter will not be allowed.

PENALTY: Any infraction of Sec. 1 through Sec. 8 constitutes an illegal pitch. A ball is awarded to the batter and all base runners advance one base without liability to be put out; Runners may advance beyond the awarded base but do so with liability to be put out. If the illegal pitch is hit and all runners including the batter-runner, advance one base, the play stands. If all baserunners including the batter-runner do not advance at least one base, the

offensive coach has the option of taking the result of the play or the result of the pitch. Failure of players to hear the call shall not void the call.

Sec. 9 The umpire will declare no pitch when:

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

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

Sec. 10 Umpire will declare an illegal pitch when:

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

NOTE: *Foul line considered fair territory.*

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

Sec. 11 At the beginning of each half inning or when a pitcher relieves another, not more than one (1) minute may be used to deliver not more than five (5) pitches to the catcher or other teammate. Play shall be suspended during this time. Each pitcher during an inning may only warm up one (1) time per inning.

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

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

Sec. 12 If the ball slips from the pitcher's hand during the wind-up or during the backswing, a ball shall be called on the batter, and the ball remains in play and runners may advance at their own risk.

Sec. 13 After assuming the pitching position, the pitcher may not throw to a base while a foot is in contact with the pitching plate.

PENALTY: An illegal pitch is declared.

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

Sec. 14 No player, manager, or coach shall call "TIME", or employ any other word or phrase, or commit any act while the ball is alive and in play for the obvious purpose of trying to make the pitcher commit an illegal pitch.

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

Sec. 15 There shall be only one charged conference between the manager and other team representative from the dugout with each and every pitcher in an inning. The second charged conference shall result in the removal of the pitcher from the pitching position for the remainder of the game. If the pitcher is removed from the pitching position as the result of a second charged conference, the pitcher can remain in the game in any other position excluding the pitching position for the remainder of the game.

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

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

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

NSA MODIFIED SOFTBALL

RULE 6 - PITCHING RULES

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

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

Sec. 2 The pitch starts when one hand is taken off the ball or the pitcher makes any motion that is part of his/her wind-up.

- a. In the act of delivering the ball, the pitcher shall not take more than one step which must be forward, toward the batter, and simultaneous with the delivery of the ball to the batter.
NOTE: *It is not a step if the pitcher slides his/her foot across the pitching rubber, provided contact is maintained with the pitching rubber.*
- b. Major Division only: The only restriction on the pitch is that the elbow must remain locked until the release of the pitch. The windmill pitch is not allowed in any division.

Sec. 3 A legal delivery shall be a ball that is delivered to the batter with an underhand motion.

- a. No windmill or sidearm type of delivery.
- b. The pitcher must release the ball on the first forward swing of the pitching arm past the hip.
- c. The ball must not be outside the pitcher's wrist at the top of the backswing and during the complete forward delivery.
- d. The elbow and wrist must be locked throughout the entire delivery.

PENALTY: Rule 6, Sec. 1 - 3. The penalty for an illegal pitch is the same as Rule 6, Sec. 8. Penalty, in the Fastpitch Pitching Rule.

- e. If the ball slips from the pitcher's hand during his wind-up or during the back swing, a ball shall be called on the batter. The ball will remain in play and runners may advance at their own risk.

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

RULE 7 – BATTING

Sec. 1 The batter shall take his position within the lines of the batter's box.

- a. The batter shall not have his entire foot touching the ground completely outside the lines of the batter's box or touching home plate when the ball is hit.
- b. The batter shall not step directly across in front of the catcher to the other side of the batter's box while the pitcher is in position to pitch.

EFFECT: Sec. 1 (a-b) The ball is dead, the batter is out, baserunners may not advance.

- c. The batter shall not enter the batter's box with an illegal bat.

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

- d. The batter shall not enter the batter's box with an altered bat or non approved bat.

EFFECT: The ball is dead, the batter is out, and without warning is ejected from the game (in youth play the coach is also ejected). Baserunners may not advance.

- e. The batter must take his position within ten (10) seconds after the umpire has called "play ball". He/she must have both feet within the lines of the box before the start of the pitch. He/she may touch the line, but no part of his/her foot may be outside of the lines prior to the pitch.

EFFECT: The ball is dead. The umpire will call a strike on the batter and will also issue a warning to the batter to take his/her position or risk being called out. If the batter refuses to take his/her position after the warning, he/she will be called out. The warning will be given to a batter only one time per game. Any

repeated violation during the game by the player will result in an out being called. This rule is intended to help speed up the play of the game. Umpires, while using good judgement in enforcement of this rule, must prohibit the batter from delaying the game by taking excessive or unnecessary amount of time entering the batter's box.

Sec. 2 **Each player of the side at bat shall become** a batter in the order in which his name appears on the score sheet. The batting order of each team must be on the score sheet and delivered by the manager or captain to the home plate umpire. The batting order must be followed throughout the entire game unless there is a substitution. When this occurs, the substitute must take the place of the player he/she is replacing in the batting order. The first batter in each inning shall be the batter whose name follows that of the last player who completed a turn at bat in the preceding inning.

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

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

Sec. 3 **No baserunner shall be removed** from the base she is occupying to bat in her proper place. She merely misses her turn at bat with no penalty. The batter following her in the order becomes the legal batter.

Sec. 4 **When the third out of the inning** is made before the batter has completed his/her turn at bat, he/she shall be the first batter in the next inning and shall have the ball and strike count on him/her canceled.

Sec. 5 **Members of the team at bat** shall not interfere either physically or vocally with a player attempting to field either a fair or foul ball. This includes a base coach.

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

Sec. 6 **The batter shall not hit a fair ball a second time** with the bat in fair territory.

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

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

NOTE: *If the batter drops the bat and the ball rolls against the bat in fair territory and, in the umpire's judgement, 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. 7 **The umpire calls a strike:**

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

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

Sec. 8 **The umpire calls a ball:**

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

Sec. 9 **A fair ball is a legally batted ball which:**

- a. Settles or is touched on fair ground between home and first base or home and 3rd base.

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

Sec. 10 A foul ball is a legally batted ball which:

- a. Settles on foul ground between home and 1st base or between home and 3rd base.
- b. Bounds past 1st or 3rd base on or over foul ground.
- c. First touches on foul ground beyond 1st or 3rd base.
- d. While on or over foul ground touches the person or clothing of an umpire or player, or the ball is blocked.
EFFECT: *Rule 7, Sec. 8 (a-d) The ball is dead. A strike is called on the batter for each foul ball, and baserunners must return to their bases without liability to be put out.*

Sec. 11 The batter is out:

- a. When the 3rd strike is struck at and missed including if the ball touches any part of the batter's person.
- b. When a batter appears in the batter's box with or is discovered using an altered, non-approved or an illegal bat prior to hitting the ball. The batter is also ejected from the game for using an altered bat or non-approved bat.
- c. When a fly ball is legally caught.
- d. Immediately when he/she hits an infield fly and the umpire has declared "Infield Fly". Refer to Rule 1, Sec. 35.
- e. If a fielder intentionally drops or lets drop a fair fly ball, including a line drive, and an attempted bunt which can be caught by an infielder with ordinary effort with 1st, 1st & 2nd, 1st & 3rd or 1st, 2nd & 3rd bases occupied with less than two (2) outs.
EFFECT: *The ball is dead, the batter is out, and base runners must return to the last base touched at the time of the pitch. This does not apply to an infield fly. The dropped ball remains alive on an infield fly.*
NOTE: *A trapped ball shall not be considered as having been intentionally dropped.*

- f. If a preceding runner, in the umpire's judgement, intentionally interferes with a fielder who is attempting to catch a thrown ball, or is attempting to throw a ball in an attempt to complete a play; the preceding runner and the batter are both declared out.
- g. Any batter-runner who carries the bat during a live ball and legally reaches or touches 1st base while still holding the bat, will be declared out. Should this be the 3rd out of the inning, no preceding runner shall score.
EFFECT: *If less than two (2) outs, a delayed ball signal will be given and the ball will remain alive.*
- h. When the batter attempts a bunt on the 3rd strike and bunts the ball foul.
- i. On a legally caught 3rd strike foul ball or foul tip.
NOTE: *If, with less than two (2) outs and 1st base is unoccupied or with two (2) outs, the batter is not out unless the 3rd strike is caught. If the ball is not caught, the batter is eligible to reach 1st base before being tagged out or thrown out. Runners occupying any other base(s) may also advance with liability to be put out.*
***NOTE:** *Any foul tip that is caught is a strike and the ball is in play.*
- j. When hit by his/her own-batted ball, in fair territory, outside the batters box, the batter shall not:
1. Hinder the catcher from catching or throwing the ball by stepping out of the batter's box.
 2. Intentionally hinder the catcher while standing within the batter's box.
 3. Intentionally interfere with a thrown ball in or out of the batter's box.
 4. Interfere with a play at home plate.
EFFECT: *The ball is dead, the batter is out, and each runner must return to the last base that, in the judgment of the umpire, was touched at the time of the interference.*
EXCEPTION: *If no play is being made and the batter accidentally interferes with the catcher's return throw to the pitcher and a runner(s) advances safely, the umpire should call time and return the runner(s) to the base occupied at the time of the accidental interference.*
***EXCEPTION:** *If the batter interferes with a play at the plate with less than two (2) outs, the baserunner is out.*

Sec. 12 The batter or baserunner is not out

- a. 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 over and assuming the ball and strike count her had prior to the pitch she hit (baserunners return), or taking the result of the play. The umpire will signal a delayed dead ball.
- b. If a fielder commits Flagrant Player Obstruction.
PENALTY: Immediate ejection of the defensive player.

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

RULE 8 – BASERUNNING

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

- a. When a baserunner must return to a base while the ball is in play, he/she must touch the bases in reverse order.
EFFECT: *The ball is in play and baserunners must return with liability to be put out.*
- b. When a baserunner acquires the right to a base by touching it before being put out, he/she may hold the base until he has legally touched the next base in order or is forced to vacate it for a succeeding runner.
- c. When a runner dislodges a base from its proper position, neither he nor the succeeding runners in the same series of plays are compelled to follow a base unreasonably out of position. The ball is in play and runners may advance with liability of being put out.
- d. A baserunner may not run the bases in reverse order, either to confuse the fielders or to make a travesty of the game.
EFFECT: *The ball is dead and the runner is out.*
- e. Two baserunners may not occupy the same base simultaneously.
EFFECT: *The runner who first legally occupied the base is entitled to it. The other runner may be put out by being touched with the ball.*
- f. Failure of a preceding runner to touch a base or to leave a base legally on a caught fly ball and who is declared out does not affect the status of a succeeding runner who touches the bases in proper order. However, if the preceding runner were to be

- called out for the 3rd out of the inning, no succeeding runner may score a run.
- g. No runner may return to touch a missed base or one left illegally after a following runner has scored.
 - h. When the ball is dead, no runner may return to touch a missed base, a base he/she has left after he/she has left illegally, even after the ball becomes alive. However, when a dead ball occurs, a runner may return to a missed base if he/she is required to by the umpire in the awarding or determination of bases. The runner is not liable to be put out for missing a base beyond the base he/she is required to by the umpire in the awarding or determination of the bases. The runner is not liable to be put out for missing a base beyond the base he is required to return to.
 - i. No runner may return to touch a missed base or one left illegally once he/she enters his/her dugout or bench area.
 - j. When the umpire has called four (4) balls, baserunners do not advance unless forced or successful in an attempt to steal.
 - k. Bases left too soon on a caught fly ball must be retouched before advancing to awarded bases. Awarded bases must also be touched in proper order.

Sec. 2 The batter becomes a batter-baserunner:

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

3. If the batter reaches 1st base safely and all other runners advance at least one base on the batted ball, catcher obstruction is canceled and no other options are given.
- g. When a fair ball strikes the umpire or baserunner on fair ground:
 1. If the ball hits the umpire or baserunner after passing an infielder other than the pitcher or touches an infielder including the pitcher, the ball is in play.
 2. If the ball hits the umpire or baserunner before passing an infielder, the ball is dead and the batter is entitled to 1st base without liability of being put out. Runners not forced by the batter-runner must return.

Sec. 3 Baserunners are entitled to advance with liability to be put out:

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

Sec. 4 A player forfeits his/her exemption from liability to be put out:

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

Sec. 5 Baserunners are entitled to advance without liability to be put out:

- a. When forced to vacate a base because the batter was awarded a base on balls.
- b. When a fielder obstructs a baserunner from making a base unless the fielder is trying to field a batted ball or has the ball ready for a tag.

EFFECT: *When obstruction occurs, the umpire shall call obstruction and signal a delayed dead ball.*

1. If a play is being made on the obstructed runner or if the batter-runner is obstructed before reaching 1st base, the ball is dead and all runners advance without liability to be put

out to the bases they would have reached, in the umpire's judgement, if there had been no obstruction.

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

2. If no play is being made on the obstructed runner at the time of obstruction, the play shall proceed until the play is completed. The umpire shall call "time" and impose such penalties, if any, as in his judgement, will nullify the act of obstruction.
3. If a fielder without the ball fakes a tag, the umpire may award the obstructed runner, and each other runner affected by the obstruction, the bases they would have reached, had there been no obstruction.

NOTE: *In the case of a fake tag, the fielder will be automatically ejected from the game.*

- c. When forced to vacate a base because the batter was awarded a base for catcher obstruction.
- d. When a fielder contacts or catches a batted or thrown ball with his/her cap, glove, or any part of his/her uniform while detached from its proper place.

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

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

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

NOTE: *For offensive equipment causing a blocked ball, the runner closest to home plate will be declared out and all other runners must return to the last base touched when the ball becomes blocked.*

1. The ball is dead. In all cases where a thrown ball goes into the spectators seats, goes over, through, or under any fence surrounding the playing field. Or hits any person or object not engaged in the game, goes into the players' benches, including bats lying near benches, whether the ball rebounds onto the playing field or not; or remains in the meshes of any wire screen, each and every baserunner shall be awarded two (2) bases.
2. When the first throw is made by an infielder, two (2) bases shall be awarded. Award shall be governed by the position of each runner at the time the pitch was made. However, if

all runners, including the batter-runner, have advanced at least one (1) base when an infielder makes a wild throw on the first play after a pitch, the award of the bases shall be governed by the position of the runners when the wild throw was made.

3. When a throw is made by an outfielder or is the result of any succeeding play or attempted play, the two (2) bases awarded shall be governed by the position of each runner and the last base he/she had touched at the time the throw was made. If two runners are between the same base, the award is based on the position of the lead runner.
4. When a fielder loses possession of the ball, such as on an attempted tag and the ball enters a dead ball area or becomes blocked, all runners are awarded one (1) base from the last base touched at the time the ball enters the dead ball area or becomes blocked. If a runner touches the next base and returns to his/her original base, the original base he/she left is considered the "last base touched" for the purpose of an overthrow award.
- f. When a fair ball bounds or rolls into a stand, over, under, or through a fence, or bounds out of play unintentionally off a defensive player, or other obstruction marking the boundaries of the playing field.

EFFECT: *The ball is dead and all baserunners are awarded two (2) bases from the time of the pitch.*

- g. The ball becomes dead when a live ball is unintentionally carried by a fielder from playable territory into a dead ball area. All baserunners are awarded one (1) base from the last base touched at the time the fielder enters the dead ball territory. If, in the judgement of the umpire, a fielder intentionally carries a live ball into dead ball territory, the ball becomes dead and all baserunners are awarded two (2) bases from the last base touched at the time he/she entered the dead ball area.

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

- h. When any pitched ball goes directly out of play (through, over, under fence/backstop).

EFFECT: *The ball is dead and all runners advance one (1) base from the time of the pitch.*

NOTE: *On ball four (4) the batter/runner is awarded 1st base only.*

Sec. 6 A baserunner must return to his/her base:

- a. When a foul ball is illegally caught and so declared by the umpire.
- b. When the umpire declares an illegally batted ball.
- c. When a batter or baserunner is called out for interference, other baserunners shall return to the last base touched at the time of the interference.

- d. When a pitched ball that is swung at and missed touches any part of the batter's person.
- e. When a foul ball is not caught.
EFFECT: *The ball is dead, and baserunners must return to base, except when forced by the batter becoming a baserunner. Baserunners need not touch the intervening bases in returning but must return promptly. Runners must be allowed sufficient time to return.*

Sec. 7 Batter-baserunner is out:

- a. When after a fair ball is hit, he/she is legally touched with the ball before he/she touches 1st base.
- b. When after a fair ball is hit, the ball is held by a fielder touching 1st base with any part of his/her person, before the batter-baserunner touches 1st base.
- c. When after a fly ball is hit, a fielder catches the ball before the ball touches the ground or any object other than a fielder.
- d. When after a fair ball is hit or a base on balls is awarded, he/she fails to advance to 1st base and enters his/her team area.
EFFECT: *Rule 8, Sec. 7 (a-d). The ball is in play and the batter-runner is out.*
- e. When he/she runs outside the three (3) foot line and, in the judgment of the umpire, interferes with the fielder taking the throw at 1st base; however, he/she may run outside the three (3) foot line to avoid a fielder attempting to field a batted ball.
- f. When he/she interferes with a fielder attempting to field a batted ball or interferes (intentionally) with a thrown ball. If the interference, in the judgement of the umpire, is an obvious attempt to prevent a double play, the baserunner closest to home plate, shall be called out.
- g. When a batter-runner interferes with a play at home plate, in an attempt to prevent an obvious out at home plate, the runner is also out.
- h. When he/she moves back toward home plate to avoid or delay a tag by a fielder.
EFFECT: *Rule 8, Sec. 7. (e-h), the ball is dead and the batter-runner is out. Other baserunners must return to the last base legally touched at the time of the illegal action.*

Sec. 8 The baserunner is out:

- a. When in running to any base, he/she runs more than 3 feet from a direct line between that base and the next base, in regular or reverse order, to avoid being touched by the ball in the hands of a fielder. When a play, such as a rundown is made on a runner who has "rounded" a base, and that runner is outside a direct line between bases, the runner establishes his/her baseline as a direct line between him/her and the next base in regular or reverse order.
- b. If, while the ball is in play, he/she is legally touched with the ball in the hands of a fielder while not in contact with a base.

- c. When, on a force out, a fielder tags him/her with the ball or tags the base.
- d. If the baserunner fails to return to touch the base he/she previously occupied when play is resumed after suspension of play.
- e. If a baserunner physically passes a preceding runner before that runner has been put out.
- f. When anyone, other than another baserunner, physically assists a baserunner while the ball is in play.
- g. When the baserunner leaves his/her base to advance to another base before a caught fly ball has been touched by a fielder, provided the ball is returned to a fielder and legally held on that base or a fielder legally touches the baserunner before he/she returns to his/her base.
- h. When the baserunner fails to touch the intervening base or bases in regular or reverse order and the ball is in play and legally held on that base or the baserunner is legally touched while off the base he/she missed.
- i. When the batter-runner legally overruns 1st base, attempts to run to 2nd base, and is legally touched while off the base.
- j. In running or sliding for home plate, he/she fails to touch home plate and makes no attempt to return to the base, when a fielder holds the ball in his/her hands while touching home plate and appeals to the umpire for a decision.
EFFECT: *Rule 8, Sec. 8. (g - j), These are appeal plays and the defensive team loses the privilege of putting the baserunner out if the appeal is not made before the next legal or illegal pitch. If an appeal is made after the ball is dead and before the next pitch is made, the ball remains dead and runners may not advance. The pitcher must have the ball in his/her possession inside the 16' circle. Any manager, coach, or player may then make an appeal by announcing to the umpire, which runner is being appealed, which base has been missed, or which base has been left too soon. Any player in the game may also make an appeal while the ball is still alive and before the ball becomes dead by tagging the runner or the base being appealed with the ball.*
- k. When the baserunner interferes with a fielder attempting to field a batted ball or intentionally interferes with a thrown ball. If this interference, in the judgement of the umpire, is an obvious attempt to prevent a double play and occurs before the baserunner is put out, the immediate succeeding runner shall also be called out.
- l. When a baserunner is struck with a fair-batted ball in fair territory while off base and before it passes an infielder, excluding the pitcher.
- m. When a runner intentionally kicks a ball that an infielder has missed.
- n. When, with a baserunner on 3rd base, the batter interferes with a play being made at home plate with less than two (2) outs.

- o. When the coach near 3rd base runs in the direction of home plate on or near the baseline while a fielder is attempting to make a play on a batted or thrown ball, and thereby draws a throw to home plate. The baserunner nearest to 3rd base shall be declared out.
- p. When one or more members of the offensive team stand or collect at or around a base which a baserunner is advancing, thereby confusing the fielders and adding to the difficulty of making the play. This includes the batboy or any other person authorized to sit on the team's bench.
- q. When any baserunner runs the bases in reverse order to confuse the defensive team or to make a farce of the game. This includes the batter-runner moving backwards towards home plate to avoid or delay a tag.
- r. If a coach intentionally interferes with a thrown ball.
- s. When a runner, after being declared out or after scoring, interferes with a defensive player's opportunity to make a play on another runner. The runner closest to home plate at the time of the interference shall also be called out.
EFFECT: *Rule 8, Sec. 8. (k-s). The ball is dead, and the baserunner is out. Other runners must return to the last base legally touched at the time of the illegal action.*
- t. When a defensive player has the ball and is waiting for the runner and the runner remains on his/her feet and deliberately, with great force, crashes into the defensive player; the runner is declared out. The ball is dead and all other runners must return to the last base touched at the time of the collision, unless Rule 8, Sec. 8 (j) or Rule 8, Sec. 8 (s) applies.
PENALTY: *If the act is determined to be flagrant, the offender is ejected from the game.*
- u. When the baserunner(s) fail to keep contact with their base until a legally pitched ball leaves the pitcher's hand. The ball is dead, "NO PITCH" is declared and the baserunner(s) is declared out.
- v. When he/she abandons a base, does not attempt to advance to the next base, and "LEAVES THE FIELD OF PLAY"; the baserunner shall be called out immediately "UPON LEAVING THE FIELD OF PLAY".
- w. If hit by an infield fly when not in contact with the base. The ball is dead, and the runner and the batter are both declared out. Other runners must return to the base occupied, without liability to be put out, at the time of the pitch.
- x. Look Back Rule: When a runner is legitimately off a base after a pitch, or as a result of a batter completing a turn at bat, with the batter/runner being out or reaching first base, and while the pitcher has the ball within the sixteen- (16) foot circle. The runner may stop once, but then must immediately attempt to advance to the next base or return to the last base touched. Failure to immediately return non-stop to the base or proceed non-stop to the next base will result in the runner being declared out.

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

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

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

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

- z. **1st base double base** – At facilities that use the white and orange double bag at first base, the following rules will be implemented. Any throw to the person covering the base can go to any of the two bases to avoid contact or if the first baseman has to go to the base unassisted and is in foul territory, would be able to touch either side of the base in order to avoid contact. If the first play is at first base from either the infield or outfield the batter/ runner “must touch” the orange bag unless trying to avoid a collision as the result of an errant throw. If the first play is elsewhere the batter/runner may tag the inside (white bag) in a continuation or possible continuation to 2nd base. If a runner on the first play at first base touches “ANY” part of the orange bag, that runner is considered to have touched the bag legally. If the batter/runner touches “ANY” part of the white bag in a continuation or possible continuation to 2nd base, the runner is considered to have touched the bag legally. The 1st base double base is recommended although not mandatory for all Post season play (NIT, State, Regional, and World Series).

Sec. 9 Baserunner is not out:

- a. When a baserunner runs behind or in front of a fielder and outside the baseline in order to avoid interfering with a fielder who is attempting to field the ball in the baseline.
- b. When a baserunner does not run a direct line to the base, providing the fielder in the direct line does not have the ball in his/her possession.
- c. When more than one fielder attempts to field a batted ball and the baserunner comes into contact with the one who, in the umpire's judgment, was not entitled to field the ball.
- d. When a baserunner is hit with a fair-batted ball that has passed through an infielder, excluding the pitcher.
- e. When a baserunner is touched with a ball not securely held by a fielder.

- f. When the defensive team does not request the umpire's decision on an appeal play until after the next pitch.
- g. When a batter-runner overruns 1st base after touching it and makes no attempt to advance to the next base.
- h. When the baserunner is not given sufficient time to return to a base, he/she shall not be called out for being off the base before the pitcher pitches the ball. The umpire shall call no pitch.
- i. When a runner, who has legally started to advance, cannot be stopped by the pitcher receiving the ball while on the pitching plate nor by stepping on the pitching plate with the ball in his/her possession.
- j. When a baserunner holds his/her base until a fly ball touches a fielder, and then attempts to advance.
- k. When the runner is in contact with the base, and is hit by a batted fly or ground ball in fair territory (unless he/she intentionally interferes with the ball), the baserunner is not out and the ball is dead.
EFFECT: *Ball is dead, and all runners advance one base if forced.*
- l. When a baserunner slides into a base and dislodges it from its proper place, the base is considered to have followed the runner. See Rule 8, Sec.1 (c) and Rule 8. Sec. 4 (c).
- m. When a fielder makes a play on a batter or baserunner while using an illegal glove. See Rule 7, Sec. 12 for option given to the manager of the offensive team.
- n. When the baserunner is hit by a fair-batted ball after it touches any fielder, including the pitcher.

RULE 9 - DEAD BALL/BALL IN PLAY

Sec. 1 The ball is dead and not in play:

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

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

Sec. 2 The ball is in play:

- a. At the start of each half inning, when the pitcher has the ball in his/her pitching position and the umpire has called "Play Ball".
- b. When the infield fly rule is enforced.
- c. When a thrown ball goes past a fielder and remains in playable territory.
- d. When a fair ball strikes an umpire or baserunner on fair ground after passing or touching an infielder.
- e. When a fair ball strikes an umpire on foul ground.
- f. When the baserunners have reached the bases that they are entitled, when the fielder illegally fields a batted or thrown ball.
- g. When a baserunner is called out for passing a preceding runner.
- h. When no play is being made on an obstructed runner, the ball shall remain alive until the play is over.
- i. When the batter legally hits a fair ball.
- j. When a baserunner must return in reverse order while the ball is already in play.
- k. When a baserunner acquires the right to a base by touching it before being put out.
- l. When a base is dislodged while runners are running the bases.
- m. When a runner runs out of the base line in regular or reverse order to avoid a tag by a fielder.
- n. When a runner is forced or tagged out.
- o. When the umpire calls the baserunner out for failure to return and touch the base, when play is resumed after a suspension of play.
- p. When a live ball strikes a groundskeeper, photographer, policeman, etc. assigned to the game.
- q. When a thrown ball strikes an offensive player.

- r. If the batter drops the bat and the ball rolls against the bat in fair territory, and in the judgement of the umpire, there was no intention to interfere with the course of the ball. The batter is not out and the ball is alive and in play.
- s. When a thrown ball strikes an umpire.
- t. When a thrown ball strikes a base coach.
- u. As long as there is a play as a result of the hit by the batter. This would include an immediate live ball appeal before the umpire has called "time". Once the umpire has called "time" however, the ball will continue to be dead during a subsequent appeal play.
- v. When, in the judgment of the umpire, a coach touches or physically helps a runner; or when a coach near 3rd base, runs in the direction of home plate on or near the baseline, while the fielder is attempting to make a play, and thereby draws a throw to home plate.
EFFECT: *A delayed dead ball signal will be given and play shall continue. The assisted runner shall be ruled out and all other subsequent play will be ruled upon accordingly.*

RULE 10 - UMPIRES

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

Sec. 1 Powers and duties:

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

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

- a. The umpire should inspect the playing field, equipment, and clarify all ground rules to both teams and coaches prior to the start of the game.
- b. Each umpire shall have the power to make decisions on violations committed anytime during playing time or suspension of play until the game is over.
- c. No umpire has the authority to set aside or question decisions made by another umpire within the limits of his/her respective duties.
- d. An umpire may consult with his/her partners at any time; however, the final decision shall rest with the umpire whose authority it is to make the decision, and who requested the opinion of other umpires.
- e. The plate and base umpire shall have equal authority to:

1. Call a runner out for leaving a base too soon.
2. Call "time" for suspension of play.
3. Remove a player, coach, manager or other team member from the game for violation of the rules.

NOTE: *Unless appealed to, the umpire shall not call a player out for having failed to touch a base, leaving a base too soon on a caught fly ball, batting out of order or making an attempt to go to 2nd base after reaching 1st base as provided in these rules.*

Sec. 2 The Plate Umpire:

- a. Shall take a position behind the catcher and have full responsibility for the proper conduct of the game.
- b. Shall call all balls and strikes.
- c. Shall be in agreement and in cooperation with the base umpire(s) call on plays, fair or foul balls; legally or illegally caught balls.
- d. Shall determine and declare whether a batted ball touches the person or clothing of the batter, and also whether a fly ball is an infield fly.
- e. Shall render decisions on the bases when required by the instruction in the Umpire's Manual.
- f. Shall determine when a game is forfeited.

Sec. 3 The Base Umpire:

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

Sec. 4 Changing of Umpires:

- a. Umpires cannot be changed during a game unless injury or illness incapacitates an umpire.

Sec. 5 Umpire's judgement:

There shall be no appeal of any decision of any umpire on the grounds that he/she was not correct in his/her decision that a batted ball was fair or foul, a baserunner was safe or out, a pitched ball was a ball or strike or any other play involving accuracy of judgment. Any argument is grounds for a player, coach, or manager to be ejected from the game. No decision of an umpire shall be reversed except when he/she is convinced it is in violation of a rule. If the manager, captain, or either team does not seek reversal of a decision based solely on a point of rules, the umpire whose decision is in question shall, if in doubt, confer with his associates before taking any action. But under no circumstances shall any player or person, other than the manager or captain of either team, have any legal right to protest any decision and seek its reversal on a claim that it is in conflict with these rules. Under no circumstances shall any umpire

seek to reverse a decision made by his associates, nor shall any umpire criticize or interfere with the duties of his associates unless asked to do so.

Sec. 6 Suspension of play:

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

Sec. 7 Violation and duties:

- a. Players, coaches, managers, or other team members shall not make disparaging or insulting remarks to or about opposing players, officials, or spectators; or commit other acts that could be considered unsportsmanlike conduct.
- b. There shall be no more than two (2) coaches for each team to give words of assistance and direction to the members of the team while at bat. One coach shall be stationed near 1st base and the other near 3rd base. They must remain in the coach's box.
- c. The penalty for violations by a player is prompt removal of the offender from the game and grounds. For the first violation, the coach or manager may be warned. For the second offense, the player is removed from the game. The offender shall go directly to the dressing room (if available), for the remainder of the game, or leave the grounds. Failure to do so will warrant a forfeiture of the game.
- d. Any player or coach who leaves his/her respective position on the field, including the dugout, to argue balls and strikes or to argue whether a batter stepped on or over home plate, will be ejected.

Sec. 8 Protective Equipment:

- a. Umpires who work fast-pitch softball (especially the home plate umpire) should wear a chest protector and shin guards. Male umpires must wear an approved protective cup. It is mandatory for the home plate umpire to wear a facemask (with a throat protector). It is **STRONGLY RECOMMENDED** that the mask be a black mask with black or natural pads. Hockey style masks are considered approved umpire equipment. The Hockey mask must be plain black and be free of ANY decorations other than the manufacture's logo(s).

NOTE: *An official NSA umpire cap must be worn under any mask at all times and must remain on the head when the mask is*

removed. There is **NO RESTRICTION** as to which official umpire cap must be worn (some state association may have stricter guidelines) by the plate or base umpire, however, **AN OFFICIAL UMPIRE CAP** sold by the NSA National Office must be worn at all times.

Sec. 9 All NSA Umpires must be registered and have a valid registration number, prior to placing an order for uniforms or taking the field. All NSA Umpires must wear an Official NSA umpiring uniform consisting of the following:

1. Official NSA umpire shirt w/embroidered logo
NOTE: Any clothing worn under the official umpire shirt must be plain white with no writing or graphics of any kind.
EXCEPTION: The embroidered official NSA mock turtleneck.
2. Black trousers with belt loops (Slowpitch)
3. Heather grey trousers with belt loops (Fastpitch)
NOTE: Trousers do not include jeans, sweatpants, jogging pants, or other pants or slacks that **would not** be considered dress trousers.
4. Black shorts with belt loops
NOTE: Black shorts, with belt loops, may be worn at all levels of NSA sanctioned play.
EXCEPTION: Fastpitch Softball. It is up to the discretion of the Tournament Director to allow umpires to wear shorts or trousers during all Post Season play. It is recommended that umpires, in cooperation with the league/tournament Umpire-In-Chief, coordinate their uniforms to look alike, i.e. one Umpire wears shorts, both wear shorts. This is the same for trousers. When shorts are worn, solid white crew socks must be worn. Footie's are not acceptable as part of the NSA OFFICIAL UNIFORM.
5. Black Belt
6. Black socks with trousers and white crew socks or **white or black socks that cover the ankle with black shorts. Partners sock color MUST match if shorts are worn**
7. Black jacket with official NSA logo
8. Black half sleeve jacket w/official NSA logo
9. Black shoes
NOTE: Black official (umpire) shoes bearing the white logo, trademark or manufacturers name is legal.
10. White mock with official NSA logo or plain white regular turtleneck
11. Black rain gear (top and bottom)
12. Black cap with official NSA Logo
13. Black ball bag with official NSA logo
NOTE: Ball bag must be worn on the hip or slightly to the rear of hip.
****NOTE:** Any umpire apparel (hat, jacket, etc) that is issued to an umpire for being assigned to a special event

(NIT, World Series, etc) may NOT be worn after the conclusion of said special event as a part of the official NSA Umpire uniform.

*****NOTE:** The following item sold by NSA that bears the official NSA logo is mandatory wear and to be purchased from the NSA National Office. NSA Official Jacket, NSA Official Shorts, NSA Official Half Sleeve Jacket, NSA Official Cap, NSA Official Shirt, NSA Official Rain Gear, NSA Official Mock Turtle Neck, NSA Official Ball Bag. To place an order, go to www.NSASportingGoods.com

RULE 11 - PROTESTS

Sec. 1 **Protests shall not be allowed or considered** if they are based solely upon a decision involving judgement on the part of any umpire.

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

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

Sec. 2 **Protests shall be received and considered** concerning matters of the following type:

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

Sec. 3 **Protests may involve** the interpretation of a rule.

Sec. 4 **The notification of protest** must be made immediately before the next pitch. **EXCEPTION:** *Player eligibility.*

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

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

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

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

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

Sec. 5 The official protest must be filed within a reasonable time:

- a. Within forty-eight (48) hours after the scheduled time of the contest is generally considered a reasonable amount of time in league play.
- b. A protest fee of seventy-five dollars (\$75.00) cash will be paid in all qualifying and Post season tournaments sanctioned by the NSA.
- c. In tournament play, a protest (player eligibility) must be filed before the end of the game being protested.

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 scorekeepers.
- c. The Rule and Section of the Official Rule Book, or local rules under which the protest is based.
- d. The decision and conditions surrounding the making of the decision.
- e. All essential facts involved in the matter protested.

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 stands as played.
- b. When a protest is allowed for misinterpretation of a playing rule, the game is replayed from the point at which the incorrect decision was made with the decision corrected.
- c. When protest for eligibility is allowed, the team shall forfeit the game played to the offended team.

ADULT MEN'S FAST PITCH RULES

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

RULE 1 DEFINITIONS

Sec. 10 Batting Helmet: A batting helmet bearing the NOCSAE stamp is mandatory for each batter and baserunner. If a pitcher wears a helmet it must have a non-glare surface. Helmets will have an extended earflap on one or both sides. If the helmet has only one flap it must cover the ear on the side facing the pitcher.

RULE 2 THE PLAYING FIELD

- Sec. 2**
- a. **The minimum fence distance will be 225 ft**
 - b. **The maximum fence distance will be 250 ft**
 - c. **The base distance will be 60 ft**
 - d. **The pitching distance will be 46 ft**

RULE 3 EQUIPMENT

Sec. 7 A batting helmet bearing the NOCSAE stamp is mandatory for each batter and baserunner. If a pitcher wears a helmet it must have a non-glare surface. Helmets will have an extended earflap on one or both sides. If the helmet has only one flap it must cover the ear on the side facing the pitcher.

Sec. 8 Protective Equipment: It is highly recommended, but not mandatory that the catcher wear an approved head protector, protective mask with a throat protector, body protector, shin guards and a protective cup. All protective equipment must conform to industry standards. All players are permitted to wear any approved protective equipment and if used, the equipment must not be detached. All catchers are **REQUIRED** to wear a face mask.

RULE 4 PLAYERS/SUBSTITUTIONS

Sec. 2 The Designated Hitter (DH)

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

EFFECT: *When the designated hitter (DH) enters the game on*

defense, the player on defense he was hitting for is removed for the remainder of the game.

- Sec. 8 Divisions of play:** For Players who have reached their 16th birthday to compete in adult fast pitch events.
- a. Major
 - b. Class A
 - c. Class B
 - d. Class C

RULE 5 THE GAME

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

- Sec. 9** Teams must have registered and entered their roster online with all information correct and complete or the player(s) and/or team(s) will be considered ineligible to participate in any National Softball Association sanctioned Tournaments, including Qualifiers, NIT's or Post Season Tournaments.
- a. Teams must PRINT a copy of the Official NSA ONLINE ROSTER (complete & correct), ATTAIN SIGNATURES of participants (and Parents or guardian if Youth) to turn in at ALL NSA sanctioned tournaments prior to their scheduled start or they will not be allowed to participate.
EXCEPTION: See Youth Tryout Rosters

RULE 6 PITCHING REGULATIONS

- Sec. 1** **The pitcher shall take a position with both feet** on the ground with at least one foot in contact with the pitching plate. The hands shall be separated with the ball being held in either the glove or pitching hand.
- Sec. 4** **The pivot foot initially in contact with the pitching plate** and the non-pivot or free foot once lifted must not come in contact with the ground, as described in the definition of the crow hop, before the release of the ball. There is no restriction on movement or position of the feet, except that if a step is taken forward or backward, the step and feet must be within or partially within the 24-inch lane width of the pitching plate extended.

EIGHT & UNDER FASTPITCH RULES

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

1. **RULE 1 SECTION 35**

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

2. **RULE 1 SECTION 45**

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

3. **RULE 2 SECTION 2**

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

4. **RULE 2 SECTION 2**

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

5. **RULE 3 SECTION 2(a)**

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

6. **RULE 7 SECTION 11 (1st NOTE)**

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

7. **RULE 8 SECTION 3 (a-g)**

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

a. Runners starting at first base or second base are entitled to steal one base only per pitch with liability to be put out.

NOTE: *Runner(s) are not allowed to advance more than one base per pitch even in the event of an overthrow at any base.*

b. Runner starting at third base may not steal home, but are liable to be put out if they are off the base.

c. A runner(s) attempting to advance beyond the one base they are entitled to steal may be put out while between bases or in contact with a base to which he/she are not entitled to.

d. After all play ceases and the ball becomes dead, if a runner(s) occupies a base beyond the one he/she was entitled to steal, the

- runner(s) will be returned to the correct base without liability to be put out.
- e. A batter/runner who has received a base on balls can attempt to steal second base.
 - f. Awarded bases will apply to all runners. This would include an overthrow into dead ball territory.
 - g. Runner can only score on:
 - 1. A batted ball.
 - 2. A base on balls.
 - 3. A hit batter with the bases loaded.
 - 4. An awarded base when the ball goes out of play.
 - 5. An illegal pitch.
 - 6. When a play is made on her.

Eight & Under Coach Pitch

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

RULE 2 – THE PLAYING FIELD

Sec. 4: The base distance will be 60 feet.

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

RULE 3 – EQUIPMENT

Sec. 1 The official bat should be made of one piece of wood (hardwood), metal, or other materials approved by the NSA; or formed from a block of wood consisting of two or more pieces of wood bonded together with an adhesive, in such a way, that the grain direction of all pieces is essentially parallel to the length of the bat. Below is a list of additional requirements:

- a. The bat shall not be more than 34 inches in length and no more than 38 ounces in weight. The bat shall have a safety grip of cork, tape (not smooth plastic type), or combination material.
- b. The grip shall not be less than 10 inches long and shall not extend more than 15 inches from the small end of the bat.
- c. The bat shall be marked “OFFICIAL SOFTBALL” by the manufacturer.

NOTE: *If the words “OFFICIAL SOFTBALL” cannot be read due to normal wear, the bat shall be declared legal, if it is legal in all other aspects.*

- d. The bat may be made of composite, metal and a bat may be angular; however, the NSA must approve any material, before it is used in sanctioned events.
- e. All exposed surfaces of the bat must be smooth and free of burrs, pins, and rivets, **DEEP DENTS OR DANGEROUS DENTS, fractures of any type**, sharp edges or any type of exterior fastener that would present a safety hazard.
EXCEPTION: *At the umpires discretion slightly dented bats may be considered legal.*
- f. Unless the bat is made of one-piece construction with the barrel end closed, it should have a rubber or plastic insert in the barrel.
- g. A one-piece rubber grip and knob combination is illegal.
- h. All bats must have a knob on the handle and welded or mechanically fastened.

- i. All bats must have a safety knob of a minimum of ¼ inch protruding at a 90-degree angle from the handle. The knob portion of the bat may be taped as long as the bat does not exceed 34 inches in length; however, the umpire may request tape to be removed from both the handle and knob if there is any question concerning the bat being altered or illegal. After

determining the bat legal, the player may tape the bat back to his/her preference, providing the bat meets the requirements set forth by Rule 3, Sec. 1 (a-k).

- j. A flare or cone grip may be attached from the factory or a factory flare or cone may be attached to the bat by the player, but the flare or cone must be installed properly to the bat. The flare or cone must be taped or covered by an approved bat grip and the bat must meet all requirements of Rule 3, Sec. 1 (a-k) after installation to be considered legal.
- k. Shall be rounded, smooth, and not be more than 2-1/4 inches in diameter at its largest part. A tolerance of 1/16 inch is permitted, to allow for expansion on the round bat.

NOTE: *Sec. 1 a-k. Any bat that does not comply with these guidelines must be removed from the game, and the bat may no longer be used in any NSA Sanctioned Play.*

***NOTE:** *The BPF of 1.20 does not apply to eight & under bats.*

Sec. 2 **The official softball** shall be a smooth-seamed, concealed stitched or flat-surfaced ball. The center of the ball may be made of either long fiber kapok or mixture of cork and rubber, and/or machine wound with a fine twisted yarn and covered with latex or rubber cement. Or it may be made of other materials approved by the NSA. The cover of the ball shall be optic yellow, tanned horsehide, cowhide or any other materials approved by the NSA, cemented to the ball by application of cement to the underside of the cover and sewn with black waxed cotton or black linen thread to form a black stitched softball. The solid core ball must be stamped with THE official NSA logo which contains the maximum C.O.R. and compression standards. The ball MAY NOT bear any other logos except for the NSA official logo unless otherwise approved by the Executive Director or the Executive Vice President of the NSA. MAXIMUM C.O.R. is .44 or .40. Maximum Compression for NSA softballs is 400 pounds or 525 pounds. Directors have the option as to which compression and which C.O.R. are to be used.

Sec. 7 **Batters and baserunners** must wear NOCSAE approved helmets and the face guard must be NOCSAE approved.

Sec. 8 **No jewelry is allowed.** Medical ID bracelets are allowed. For further information pertaining to the Jewelry Rule refer to the Fast Pitch Section of the Official NSA Rule Book. Rule 3 Sec 6 (f).

RULE 4 – PLAYERS AND SUBSTITUTIONS:

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

- Sec. 1** A team may play with an Optional tenth (10th) player on defense. This Optional player must be positioned in the outfield and must stay a minimum of ten (10) feet outside of the baseline (umpires judgment) until the ball is hit.
- a. If the Optional tenth (10th) player is used, that team has only one (1) optional EP for their use. If a team decides not to use the Optional (10th) player; letters a, b and c below apply.
 - b. If the Optional tenth (10th) player is used; the team must complete the game with the Optional tenth (10th) spot in the line-up. If an Optional tenth (10th) player gets hurt or becomes ill, this must be brought to the attention of the opposing team and the umpires. If no substitute is available:
PENALTY: Failure for the optional tenth (10th) player to bat is an automatic out each time that vacant spot in the line-up comes to bat.
Should the ill or injured batter be able to return to the line-up; the batter will resume their correct position in the batting order when returning to the game.
 - c. A team shall consist of nine (9) players and a maximum of eleven (11) players if two optional Extra Players (EP's) are used.
 - d. A team must have a minimum of nine (9) players to start a game but can finish with eight (8) if one is injured or becomes ill.
 - e. All other rules concerning players should be the same as girl's fast pitch rules with the exception of using a DH.

RULE 5 – THE GAME

- Sec. 1 Addition to Part One (1) of the Official Playing Rules:**
- a. An Offensive coach will pitch to his/her team.
 - b. The game shall be six (6) innings or 1 hour time limit, when the time limit is up, the teams must finish the inning unless the home team is ahead when the top half of the inning is over.
 - c. All defensive players must play by position. Outfielders must be a minimum of ten (10) feet outside of the baseline (umpires judgment) until the ball is hit.

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

RULE 6 – PITCHING

Sec. 1 Addition to the General Playing Rules:

- a. The player playing the position of pitcher shall keep both feet within the sixteen (16) foot diameter pitching circle until the ball is hit.
- b. The defensive coach may move the pitcher behind 2nd base for safety reasons, and must be a minimum of ten (10) ft. behind 2nd base.
NOTE: *Violation of the above rule will result in the offensive team having the option of taking the result of the play or declaring no play.*
- c. If the batted ball hits the adult pitcher the ball is dead. An adult pitcher must make an effort to keep from being hit by the batted ball. **PENALTY: If no effort is made in the judgment of the umpire, the batter is called out. First offense draws a**

warning or ejection, based on severity. Second offense draws an automatic ejection.

- d. The catcher may be positioned anywhere from the catcher's box to the screen.
- e. Catchers must wear a NOCSAE approved mask until the ball is hit, then it may be removed to field the ball.

RULE 7 – BATTING

Sec. 1 Addition to the General Playing Rules:

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

RULE 8 – BASERUNNING

Sec. 1 Addition to the General Playing Rules:

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

BY-LAWS PERTAINING TO NSA SANCTIONED TOURNAMENTS

It is the responsibility of coaches/managers/sponsors to know the NSA Rules and By-Laws. Ignorance of these Rules and By-Laws is not grounds for protest or appeal.

ARTICLE XIII INDIVIDUAL PLAYER ELIGIBILITY

- Section 1** A player is eligible to compete as an amateur player, as long as he/she does not accept payment for participating in the game of softball.
- Section 2** A player is considered an amateur, if he/she plays the game solely for the pleasure, physical, mental, and social benefits derived from participation.
- Section 3** An amateur player may be reimbursed by his team manager for actual necessary expenses incurred for travel, lodging or meals.
- Section 4** An amateur player is eligible to participate in the NSA program, as long as he/she is listed on an official online roster of a team sanctioned by the association. The player's name must be entered on the online roster identical to his/her state driver's license, military id or a government issued id.
- Section 5** An amateur player is not permitted to accept awards other than a watch, charm, trophy, jacket, bat or other like award that is acceptable to the association, as an award in which amateur status should be retained.
- a. Travel Money Tournaments. The award of travel money must be given to the team at the time they have participated in the respective Super Regional, World Series or Super World Tournament.
 - b. Money Tournaments will be permitted in NSA – MUST be approved by the appropriate Zone VP and have all details of how money will be award posted on www.PlayNSA.com. Directors must also, have team representative sign off that they received money at tournament site.
- Section 6** It is the responsibility of each Zone Vice President and/or State Director to adopt a system to justly classify participants as to which Class; B, C, D and E they may participate. A Tournament Director or the Tournament UIC may declare a higher-class player illegal or ineligible immediately, before an official protest is filed.
- Section 7** A player may not participate in a sanctioned NSA Tournament with more than one team during the same tournament.

Section 8 A Tournament Director, Tournament Umpire-in-Chief or an Umpire of the National Softball Association may not manage, coach, play, or umpire in any tournament in which he/she serves as part of the tournament committee staff. However, if the tournament director or other tournament committee staff is a sanctioned NSA umpire, they may, due to emergencies or other special circumstances, umpire until replacements arrive. All NSA Post Season tournaments must have a tournament Umpire-in-Chief present during the playing of that tournament.

Section 9 A player is eligible to participate in any church sanctioned tournament, as long as the player is a member of the church for which he/she is playing, prior to July 1st of any given year, and conforms to any other requirements as outlined in these by-laws.

- a. A church roster that appears questionable must be verified through the church pastor, minister, or elder.
- b. A player that participates in the Church World Tournament must have been on the participating team's roster in the State Church Tournament or one Church Tournament during the current season.

Section 10 Any men/women players qualified to compete in a Super Regional or World Series Tournament will also be eligible to compete in any NSA World Series Specialty Program provided all qualifications are met as outlined in these By-Laws.

Section 11 A player who is under contract to play professional softball or any player playing professional softball is ineligible to participate as a player in the NSA program. Any player who has been released as a professional softball player may apply for reinstatement as an amateur player with the NSA. The player must submit a written request to the National Office of the National Softball Association, applying for reinstatement to be eligible to compete as an amateur. If reinstatement is approved, the player may participate as an amateur player in NSA sanctioned events.

- a. If a player has been released for two or more years, that player is automatically reinstated to participate as an amateur player in NSA sanctioned events, and is not required to apply for written reinstatement as outlined above.

ARTICLE XIV PLAYER ROSTERS (ADULT & YOUTH)

Section 1 a. Teams must have registered and entered their roster online with all information correct and complete or the player(s) and/or team(s) will be considered ineligible to participate in any National Softball Association sanctioned Tournaments, including Qualifiers, NIT's or Post Season Tournaments.

- b. Teams must PRINT a copy of the Official NSA ONLINE ROSTER (complete & correct), ATTAIN SIGNATURES of participants (and Parents or guardian if Youth) to turn in at ALL NSA sanctioned tournaments prior to their scheduled start or they will not be allowed to participate. **EXCEPTION:** *See Youth Tryout Rosters*
- c. No written additions to the Online Roster other than signatures shall be made at any tournament site.
- d. When a team qualifies for a World Series or the Super World Series the team's roster will be frozen and no player on the qualified team's roster will be eligible to transfer to another qualified team during the current year. A team manager may not release a player from a qualified team roster after September 1, of the current year. The Executive Director, President, or Executive Vice President of the National Softball Association must approve any exceptions to the above.
- e. Teams "home state" shall be determined by:
 - 1) NSA League Registration.
 - 2) Where the majority of players reside with their primary residence.
 - 3) Where coach resides with his/her primary residence.

Section 2 Under the guidelines set by each Zone Vice President and/or State Director, an equitable system of classifying teams and controlling team rosters will be instituted. Teams will be classified A, B, C, D, E, Competitive, Recreational, Upper or Lower depending on the overall strength of the team offensively and defensively. Teams are not to be classified strictly on the number of home run hitters or the number of home runs produced.

Section 3 The appropriate NSA State Director or Zone Vice President must approve the roster and entry forms of any team participating in NSA Post Season events.

Section 4 **ADULT PLAYER ROSTERS:**
The National Softball Association Official Roster must be entered online with all information correct and complete or the player(s) and/or team(s) will be considered ineligible to participate in any National Softball Association sanctioned Tournaments, including Qualifiers, NIT's or Post Season Tournaments.

- a. Teams must PRINT a copy of the Official NSA ONLINE ROSTER, ATTAIN SIGNATURES of participants to turn in at ALL NSA sanctioned tournaments prior to their scheduled start or they will not be allowed to participate.
- b. Teams not qualifying before their State Tournament date will have their rosters frozen immediately by the State Director and/or Zone Vice President.

- c. Teams are limited to twenty (25) players per roster. A release, injury, or a player(s) quitting the team does not open a new roster position. Only roster positions that were never occupied by a player(s) are eligible or open to add additional player(s) **EXAMPLE:** A team which has all twenty (25) positions filled on their roster shall not be able to add any additional player(s) even though player(s) have been released, injured or quit.
- d. Adult Division (male/female) softball players are eligible for adult play when they have reached their sixteenth (16th) birthday
- e. A team manager may release any player(s) provided a letter or an Official Release Form that would state which player(s) is being released along with the effective date of the said release. A team manager may not release a player(s) after September 1st of the current year. This letter or release form must be submitted to and approved by the Zone Vice President and/or the State Director prior to the player(s) participating in a game with a new team.
 - 1. Released player(s) can be added only to unqualified teams for the remainder of the current season.
 - 2. Player(s) can be added to a higher classified team at anytime after being officially released. Player(s) who have advanced to a higher classified team cannot return to the original or a lower classified team for the remainder of the calendar year.
 - 3. A player(s) can only be released one (1) time per current playing season. Released player(s) does not free up a spot on the official roster.
- f. Disbanded team must have letter of disbandment on file and signed by the listed team manager and submitted to the State Director fourteen (14) days prior to the state tournament.
 - 1. Teams that disband lose any berths, points and travel monies they have earned.
 - 2. Teams being reformed with players from disbanded teams must be re-classified by state director with approval of Zone Vice President.
 - 3. Player(s) from a disbanded team can be added to any roster that has not met their 25 player max of the same or higher classification even if they have already qualified.
 - 4. Player(s) coming from a disbanded roster does not count against their one (1) release per year.
 - 5. Team must re-qualify to participate in state tournament.
- g. Player(s) may not be added who have participated on any other World Series or Super World Series qualified team's roster for that current season.
- h. Any added player(s) must be of the same or lower classification of the team to which they are added.
- i. Player(s) are **LIMITED** to dropping no more than one classification per calendar year and must be approved by

State Director and/or Zone VP for proper classification. (The NSA calendar year is from January 1st to December 31st). **EXCEPTION:** C & D players from a Move Up team (Mandatory or with Appeal) **CAN NOT** move down in classification. **EXCEPTION:** Men's Class E players listed on a Mandatory Move Up team roster **MUST ALL** move up.

- j. Players/teams not participating in the NSA program for one (1) or more seasons will retain the classification they were moved up to prior to taking an absence from the National Softball Association.
- k. After State two (2) players may be picked up from a World/Super World unqualified team for Super Regional or World Series prior to the tournament Deadline. Two (2) additional players may be picked up for the Super Worlds and they **MUST** come from non Super World Series qualified NSA 2010 Tournament roster of same or lower classification prior to tournament deadline. Teams must have vacant spots on their twenty (25) man roster.
- l. Any player(s) release or addition to the team's roster must be approved by the appropriate State Director, or in the absence of a State Director, the Zone Vice President.
- m. The Executive Director and/or the Executive Vice President must approve any exceptions to the above By-Laws. **PENALTY:** Violation of any part(s) of the above By-Law will cause the player(s) and/or the team(s) to become ineligible to participate in any officially sanctioned National Softball Association tournament.

Section 5

Industrial/Military teams participating in Post Season tournaments, must submit, with their roster, a letter signed by an Executive of the Personnel Department certifying that each player listed on the team roster is a genuine full time employee of the teams sponsor. Department of Defense service teams are not allowed to enter and/or participate in the NSA Military World Series.

- a. An Official Men's Military team can consist of Retirees, Active Duty, Reserve and/or Guard Personal, along with Department of Defense civilians assigned to the same duty installation. Military dependents eighteen (18) years of age or older are authorized to participate with their sponsor's installation. **EXCEPTION:** *A person who wants to participate in the NSA Military World Series and their unit/installation does not enter a team in that year's Military World Series must submit a written request to participate with another unit/installation for approval to his MWR Director. Once approved, the request then must be forwarded and approved by their new unit/installation MWR Director. The request must then be sent to the NSA Headquarters for final approval. The above request must be completed prior to the team's entry into the NSA*

Military World Series. All players must have a Department of Defense ID Card.

- b. Military teams participating in any Post Season Industrial/Military tournament, must submit with their roster, a letter signed by their Installation Personnel Officer certifying each players status, (i.e. active duty, retired, reserve, etc.), and that each active duty member and DOD civilian's personnel records are maintained by his/her installation.

Section 6 Church teams participating in Post Season tournaments must submit with their roster a letter signed by the Church Elder, Pastor or Minister certifying that each player is presently a member of the Church being represented.

Section 7 YOUTH PLAYERS ROSTERS

Unless approved by the National Headquarter or Zone Office. The National Softball Association Official Roster must be entered online with all information correct and complete or the player(s) and/or team(s) will be considered ineligible to participate in any National Softball Association sanctioned Tournaments, including Qualifiers, NIT's or Post Season Tournaments.

Roster will be frozen by the date of the State tournament.

NOTE: *Player additions must be added to the roster prior to the tournament entry deadline.*

- a. No college player may play on a "B" Division team. Players who have officially signed to play college softball and have not yet played in an official college game are eligible to play in NSA Youth Fast Pitch Class "B".
- b. The State Director/State Youth Director may reclassify a team in a division at anytime during the season.
- c. The State Director/State Youth Director who registers a "B" Division team must approve any out-of-state player(s) on the team roster.
- d. Any player that qualifies with an "A" Division team may not play in the "B" Division for that year.
- e. In the "B" Division, after the State Tournament, two (2) "B" players may be picked up and added to the roster. These added players must have played in a NSA Tournament. No Class "A" players can be added.
- f. All player(s) shall be entered into the online NSA system to be eligible to play in any National Softball Association tournaments.
- g. All player(s) regardless of age shall have a parent's (or legal guardian) signature on the youth roster unless the player(s) are of legal age.
- h. Player(s) are considered on the Official Roster when the player(s) and parent(s) have signed the roster.
- i. All rosters shall be printed from the On-line System. No written in additions other than signatures shall be made unless approved by the appropriate State Director with

approval of Zone Vice President. The appropriate State Director shall be responsible and required to contact the Tournament Director to rectify any late additions to the official tournament roster.

- j. Roster is limited to twenty five (25) players per roster. A release, injury, relocation or a player quitting the team does not open a new roster position. Only roster positions that were never occupied by a player(s) are eligible or open to add additional player(s). **EXAMPLE.** A team that has all twenty five (25) positions filled on their roster shall not be able to add any additional player even though player(s) have been released, injured or quit.
- k. Teams must PRINT a copy of the Official NSA ONLINE ROSTER, ATTAIN SIGNATURES of participants and Parent or guardian (unless legal age) to turn in at ALL NSA sanctioned tournaments prior to their scheduled start or they will not be allowed to participate.
EXCEPTION: *See Youth Tryout Rosters*
- l. Teams can add a maximum of two (2) players to the team roster prior to the State tournament with the approval of the Zone Vice President and the State Director. A roster addition at the discretion of the State Director or above shall be allowed for injury or other legitimate reason after the cut-off date, but not at the tournament site. Player(s) additions must be added to the roster prior to the Tournament Entry deadline in the State Championship, NIT, and World Series.
- m. **The cut off date for the youth age eligibility is December 31st. Whatever age the child is on December 31st, of the prior year, is the eligible age division for the entire upcoming year that starts Sept. 1 of prior year to Aug. 31 of that current year. A copy of the original birth certificate and/or a Government Issue photo ID must accompany youth players at all times.**
- n. **Player(s) may be released one (1) time between September 1st and December 31st and one (1) time between January 1st and August 31st.** Player(s) playing in a higher age group may play down in the same season and must be eligible age wise.
 - 1. Player(s) from a disbanded team do not loose their right of release or to be picked up by another team.
 - 2. Player(s) may be released at anytime at the request of the team manager or parent/guardian with approval of their State Director before they participate with another team.
- o. Teams may add two (2) players before the World Series Tournament. Added player(s) must be of the same of lower class. Approval for a youth player(s) to play in the next highest age group must be obtained from the State Director or the Zone Vice President.

Section 8 YOUTH TEAM TRYOUT ROSTERS

- a. Team(s) involved in tournaments designated as a team tryout shall be held after the World Series and shall submit a paper roster until the online fall rosters are developed.
- b. All rosters shall be opened to allow player(s) movement for team(s) to begin the process of forming their team for the following year.
- c. Team rosters shall be considered open for a designated team trial tournament and players shall be exempt from obtaining roster releases to participate.
- d. Team trial tournaments are to be held no later than March and are at the discretion of the State Director to allow for team formation in the fall and spring.
- e. These are non qualifying tournaments and no berths can be awarded.

ARTICLE XV CLASSIFICATIONS

Section 1 Under the guidelines set by each Zone Vice President and /or State Director, an equitable system of classifying teams and controlling team rosters will be instituted. Teams will be classified A, B, C, D, E, Competitive, Recreational or Upper and Lower depending on the overall strength of the team offensively and defensively. Teams are not to be classified strictly on the number of home run hitters or the number of home runs produced.

Section 2 Teams that are mandatory move up must play the following year in a Qualifier, NIT, State and either a Super Regional or World Series to appeal classification the next year. If a team fails to earn a berth to the Super Regional or World Series, they may also appeal their move up the following year. If a team fails to afford themselves of this process in the following year, they will forfeit this option. Appeal to reclassify after being a Mandatory Move up means they will have to appeal to the Classification Committee.

Section 3 **National Classification Committee – Appeals are to be submitted to the State Director on the appropriate Appeal Form located at www.NSASuperWorld.com. The State Director will make his/her decision on the appeal and mark the Appeal Form appropriately and send to the National Classification Committee.**
Appeals must be made no later than May 1st of current season to the National Classification Committee.

Section 4 The following Men's (B,C,D,E) teams should be upgraded at least one (1) classification. A team must have a minimum of five

(5) players of any combination of fine (5) players from its preceding years roster or rosters before moving up in classification. The coach's name should also be included on the roster.

UPGRADED or MOVED UP TEAMS - BYLAWS

Deadline to Appeal is May 1st

Appeals received after this date will be denied.

	Upgraded: With Appeal MUST appeal in writing to remain in the same class.	Mandatory Upgrade: NO APPEAL IF team retains less than 5 players from roster MUST appeal in writing to remain same class.
Men's	<u>REASON for UPGRADE:</u>	<u>REASON for MANDATORY UPGRADE:</u>
Class B	Top 3 or Top 10% of World Series Top 20% of Super World Series Classification Committee State Director	Classification Committee
Class C	State Champions Winner of NIT Winner of Super Berth from a B/C NIT Top 2 or Top 10% of Super Regional Top 3 or Top 10% of World Series Top 30% of Super World Series State Director	Top 10% of World Series Top 10% of Super World Series Classification Committee
Class D	State Champions Winner of NIT Top 2 or Top 10% of Super Regional Top 3 or Top 10% of World Series Top 40% of Super World Series State Director	State Champions with 20 + teams Winner of NIT with 16 + teams Top 2 of Super Regional with 16 + teams Top 3 of World Series with 16 + teams Top 20% of Super World Series Classification Committee
Class E	State Champions Winner of NIT Top 2 or Top 10% of Super Regional Top 3 or Top 10% of World Series Top 50% of Super World Series State Director	State Champions with 20 + teams Winner of NIT with 16 + teams Top 2 of Super Regional with 16 + teams Top 3 of World Series with 16 + teams Top 30% of Super World Series Classification Committee Class E Players listed on a Mandatory Move Up team roster MUST ALL move up.
<p>See: How to Appeal</p> <p>Deadline to Appeal is May 1st - Appeals received after this date will be denied.</p>		

- a. Players/teams not participating in the NSA program for one (1) or more seasons will retain the classification they were moved up to prior to taking an absence from the National Softball Association.
- b. The Zone Vice President and/or the State Director have the authority to upgrade other teams in class if necessary. A Zone Vice President and/or the State Director may upgrade any team up in class, at any time, due to the advanced play of the team in question.

Section 5 Winners of the Super World Series in Men’s Class C, D and E will have their entire roster of players moved up including those player(s) who have not checked or signed in at the tournament site to the next Class for the following year. The team(s) shall not be allowed to play in the same Class or a lower Class they played in the previous year. Player(s) have appeal privileges approved by the State Director and the National Classification Committee.

Section 6 Players are **LIMITED** to dropping no more than one classification per calendar year and must be approved by the State Director and /or Zone VP for proper team classification. (The NSA calendar year is from January 1st to December 31st). **EXCEPTION: C & D players from a Move Up team (Mandatory or with Appeal) CAN NOT move down in classification.** **EXCEPTION: Men’s Class E players listed on a Mandatory Move Up team roster MUST ALL move up.**

Section 7 Teams that have played, as an At-Large team will have their Classification reviewed by the State Director and the National Classification Committee before their classification is changed.

Section 8 Any team that wins multiple berths to Post Season events must participate in the highest class in which the team has qualified, and forfeits any berths, and is not allowed to participate, in the lower classification. Forfeited berths are to be handled the same as in Section 1.

ARTICLE XVI QUALIFYING TOURNAMENTS

Section 1 Only a properly registered team with the National Softball Association may compete in a Qualifying or State Tournaments sanctioned by the NSA. Teams must have registered and entered their roster online with all information correct and complete or the player(s) and/or the team(s) will be considered ineligible to participate in any National Softball Association

Qualifiers, NIT or Post Season Tournament. All rosters shall be printed from the NSA On-line System. No written in additions other than signatures shall be made unless approved by the appropriate State Director with approval of Zone Vice President. The appropriate State Director shall be responsible and required to contact the Tournament Director to rectify any late additions to the official tournament roster.

Section 2 All applicable Team and Umpire Registration Fees must be paid to the Home Headquarters of the National Softball Association before any tournament is considered a sanctioned NSA tournament.

Section 3 All qualifying leagues and tournaments, in which a berth to a Post Season tournament shall be awarded, must be completed one (1) week prior to the particular Post Season Tournament.

Section 4 The following is a list of the ways teams may qualify to participate in Super Regional or World Series tournaments:

- a. A preceding years champion and runner-up will automatically be invited back, in the appropriate class of play; however, each team must pay their own entry fee. In order to be eligible, a team must have a minimum of fifty (50) percent of the players of its preceding years roster returning in order to receive the automatic berth to either a State, Super Regional or World Series Tournament. To be eligible for this exemption, eligible teams must register in the NSA program prior to participating in at least one Qualifying Tournament, NIT and the State tournament prior to the Super Regional or World Series tournament in the teams proper classification for that particular year.
- b. A registered team of the National Softball Association which qualifies either through qualified league or tournament, NIT must also participate in the state championship in order to validate the berth.
- c. A registered team of the National Softball Association that is named as a host team from the area where the Super Regional or World Series tournament is being played. The host team must play in the state tournament and must be approved by the Zone Vice President and the National Headquarters.

Section 5 A team may receive a refund of an entry fee for a sanctioned NSA tournament only under the following condition:

- a. A request for refund, sent by certified mail, return receipt requested, sent to the Tournament Director and received prior to the published cut off date for receiving entries. The U.S. Post Office postmark will be considered as the date of the refund request. The Tournament Director will forward a check to the team making the request. A refund is not

required, regardless of when the request for refund was postmarked, if received after the tournament is drawn.

- b. **Super World refund policy is no refunds given after Sept. 1. All refunds must be requested in writing to the Super World Series Coordinator prior to the Sept. 1 date.**

Section 6

Only NSA approved black stitched; optic yellow softball can be used. Refer to Rule 3 of the Official Playing Rules for softball specifications. The Executive Committee of the National Softball Association must approve any deviation from this in advance.

Section 7

YOUTH FALL TOURNAMENTS AND WORLD SERIES QUALIFIERS

- a. Teams must participate in age and class they are trying to qualify for the following year World Series.
- b. Teams qualifying under these conditions must retain a minimum of six (6) players or 50% of the qualified roster whichever is greater to retain their berth. The appropriate State Director could impose or set higher standards in this regard.
- c. Teams must participate in no less than one (1) qualifier and the State Tournament the following year to validate a fall berth.

EXCEPTION: Eighteens (18) may by pass their State Tournament in order to participate in the World Series. However, they must have obtained a berth by participating in a World Series Qualifier in the fall or spring and retain 50% of the qualified roster whichever is greater to retain their berth. The appropriate State Director could impose or set higher standards in this regard.

- d. Online rosters are mandatory for Fall Qualifiers.
- e. **Youth State Tournament – youth teams may be required to participate in a NSA Sanctioned league or qualifying tournament in order to participate in the State Tournament. Check with your State Director**

ARTICLE XVII

POST SEASON TOURNAMENTS (NIT, State, Super Reg., World Series)

Section 1

All teams must participate in a NSA Sanctioned league, Qualifier or an NIT during the current season in order to be eligible to play in a NSA State Championship. This refers to Men's Class A, B, C, D, E, Women's Upper, Lower only. Teams that participate in any NSA Specialty Softball Programs (church, senior, open, industrial/military etc.) can compete in

that Specialty State Tournament plus a Men's or Women's State Tournament.

Team(s) cannot qualify from a cancelled tournament and no berths will be awarded from a tournament that is not physically played. Teams that play in Classes B, C, D and E may only participate in State Tournaments within the State borders from which it is sanctioned per calendar year. **EXCEPTION:** *Would be an approved dual, tri and/or quad State Tournaments.*

A team that wins its respective State Championship Tournament in the Men's Class B, C, D, and E division shall be awarded a berth to the Super World Series in their respective classification. In order for this berth to be valid the team must participate in either the Super Regional or the World Series. This berth can be passed down until a team accepts.

- Section 2** **All sanctioned tournaments** conducted by a State or Area Director shall be conducted in accordance within the Rules and Regulations of the Association. That director must ensure that proper administration is being conducted at all times. Team(s) will hit their own NSA approved softballs for all NSA adult softball tournaments with the exception of the World and Super World Series Tournaments. The softballs used must meet NSA specifications; any deviations must be approved by the NSA National Headquarters.
- Section 3** The Tournament Director's report along with all other paper work and travel money should be sent to the NSA National Headquarters within seven (7) days of the Tournament.
- Section 4** The National Headquarters of the National Softball Association shall determine the amounts to be charged as entry fee for all Post Season and Invitational Tournaments. **EXCEPTION:** *Qualifying tournaments are left up to the discretion of the State or Area Director, but should remain within the accepted guidelines of the industry.*
- Section 5** Under the guidelines set by each Zone Vice President and/or State Director, an acceptable system must be developed to qualify teams for Post Season tournaments. Teams may qualify directly from an approved qualified league. The Zone Vice President and/or the State Director approval, in conjunction with the National Headquarters, must be sought for determining how many berths will be awarded from league play.
- Section 6** Teams that win a State Slow-Pitch Championship will automatically receive a State berth the following year, provided the team properly registers with the National Softball Association that next year. The previous years state champion will receive the automatic berth in its proper team classification, if they retain at least fifty (50) percent of their previous year's

roster. The team must also have participated in a NSA Qualifier, NIT prior to participating in the State Tournament.

Section 7 All Invitational and Post Season tournaments must be scheduled as a minimum of a double elimination format or higher or by the format issued in the Official Post Season Packet. Any change to this, prior to the start of the tournament, must be obtained from the National Headquarters of the NSA. The Tournament Director, once the tournament has begun, may change this format only because of weather conditions or other acts of God that would jeopardize the completion of the tournament. The Tournament Committee will decide on an alternate plan at the tournament site. This alternate plan should be posted as quickly as possible, with a plan to ensure that all managers of the participating teams are informed of any such change.

Section 8 The Youth Fast Pitch World Series Director, must play with a four (4), (5) or (6) game format that is approved by the NSA National Office.

Section 9 No State Tournament is allowed to be conducted on that day(s) if a Super Regional or World Series Tournament, within that region, is being conducted in the same classification on Labor Day. No competitive tournament can be run on the same weekend as a NSA World Series.

Section 10 Travel money to Super World should be passed to the highest finishing teams participating in Super World Series. If it passes to a place in NIT, State, Super Regional or World Series with multiple teams, then they would split the fund equally if they are all attending the Super Worlds. If no team from a tournament that issued travel money doesn't attend the Supers, those funds would be retained by the National Office.

Section 11 The Executive Committee of the National Softball Association will decide each year, at the annual National Convention, what tournaments will be classified as N.I.T.'S, Super Regional or World Series Tournaments. The Executive Committee will also determine all dates and locations of such tournaments. Anyone wishing to hold such tournaments must submit a written request at the National Convention.

- a. All N.I.T.'S will be treated the same as World Series Tournaments. The National Headquarters must approve any changes to this procedure.
- b. The Executive Committee at the National Convention will determine the number of N.I.T.'S per Zone/Region. No tournament will be considered an N.I.T. unless approved in writing by the National Headquarters and accompanied with a contract executed by the proper personnel.

- c. The Champion of an N.I.T. will win a direct berth to the World Series Tournament of the same or higher classification. The Tournament Committee in conjunction with the National Headquarters will determine this classification.
- d. If the Champion of an N.I.T. does not accept the automatic World berth, the berth may be awarded to the next highest finishing team, but approval must come from the National Headquarters.

Section 12 An applicant may submit a written request to conduct such tournaments; provided the applicant has one year of proven participation with the NSA. Only in the case where a new program in a State, has less than one year of proven experience, will a written request to conduct an N.I.T., Super Regional, or World Series Tournament be accepted.

Section 13 Any written application requesting to conduct an N.I.T., Super Regional or World Series Tournament must include complete and detailed information concerning all aspects of the tournament. This information will be included in the mandatory contract for these tournaments.

- a. Any Tournament Sponsor must be approved and specified by the National Headquarters.
- b. A complete description of the facilities must be submitted. This description must include the number of playing fields, dimensions, lighting, location, seating arrangements, scoreboards, sound systems, and any other details pertinent to the tournament location and the facilities it may provide.
- c. A complete list of motels, their accommodations, prices, addresses, and phone numbers; plus the proximity to the playing fields must be submitted. Included in this listing must be discounted team prices and adequate comp. rooms for out of State Umpires and NSA Personnel.
- d. The availability of any media; this would include newspaper, radio, and television coverage.
- e. A list of special events or attractions for participating teams. This would include parties, opening ceremonies, manager's breakfast, and any other social activities provided.
- f. The financial responsibilities of the tournament must be specified between that of the Sponsor, Tournament Director, Park Owner, and the National Softball Association.
- g. All trophies and awards will be in accordance with detailed specifications outlined in Article XVII, Section 23 of these By-Laws.
- h. Any other facts or aspects of the tournament, not covered in (a) through (g), will be incorporated and made a part of the application and contract for the specific tournament being requested.

- Section 14** Any sponsor of a N.I.T., Super Regional or World Series Tournament, must sign a contract with the National Headquarters of the NSA. The contract will define the roles and responsibilities of both the Sponsor and the NSA, as they pertain to the specific tournament.
- Section 15** The playing fields, under contract, to be used in a N.I.T., Super Regional or World Series tournament must meet the guidelines and specifications as outlined in the Official Rule Book of the NSA. All playing fields must have outfield fences. The Executive Committee of the National Softball Association must approve any on field specifications that deviate from the Official Rule Book in advance.
- Section 16** The amount a team is to pay, as entry fee for an N.I.T., Super Regional, World Series or Super World Series tournament will be decided by the Executive Committee of the NSA. The Executive Committee will also decide the distribution and percentage of this entry fee.
- Section 17** Travel expense money shall not be paid to any team winning a N.I.T., Super Regional or World Series tournament. The Executive Committee of the NSA must make any exception to this procedure. Travel expense money may be awarded to teams that participate in qualifying tournaments. This money is not to be paid directly to any team, but must be forwarded to the National Headquarters. The National Headquarters will ensure that these monies are properly distributed to the team advancing to the N.I.T., Super Regional or World Series tournament.
- Section 18** All N.I.T., State, Super Regional and World Series tournament play will be under the jurisdiction and direction of the Executive Board with full cooperation from the host city committee. The NSA Executive Director shall appoint a qualified individual to serve as Tournament Director and a qualified person to serve as Tournament Umpire-in-Chief. The Zone Vice President of the region that is hosting the tournament, will act as liaison officer between the host city committee and the Executive Board. All Post Season Tournaments will have an appointed tournament committee that will ensure that the tournament is run according to the guideline rules and By-Laws of the NSA. This committee will also rule on any protest. The tournament committee will be under the direction of the Tournament Director and the Tournament U.I.C.
- Section 19** The following is a list of the ways teams may qualify to participate in Super Regional or World Series tournaments:
- a. A preceding years champion and runner-up will automatically be invited back, in the appropriate class of play; however, each team must pay their own entry fee. In

order to be eligible, a team must have a minimum of fifty (50) percent of the players of its preceding years roster returning in order to receive the automatic berth to either a State, Super Regional or World Series Tournament. To be eligible for this exemption, eligible teams must register in the NSA program and have their online roster filled out and submitted and participate in at least one Qualifying Tournament, NIT and the State tournament prior to the Super Regional or World Series tournament in the teams proper classification for that particular year.

- b. A registered team of the National Softball Association which qualifies either through a qualifying league or tournament must also participate in the state championship in order to validate the berth.
- c. A registered team of the National Softball Association that is named as a host team from the area where the Super Regional or World Series tournament is being played. The host team must play in the state tournament and must be approved by the Zone Vice President and the National Headquarters.

Section 20 Only properly registered teams of the NSA are allowed to compete in any Post Season play. Teams must have registered and entered their roster online with all information correct and complete or the player(s) and/or the team(s) will be considered ineligible to participate in any NSA Qualifiers, NIT and Post Season tournaments. All rosters shall be printed from the NSA Online System. No pen and/or ink additions other than the signatures shall be made unless approved by the appropriate State Director. The appropriate State Director shall be responsible and required to contact the Tournament Director to rectify any late additions to the official tournament roster.

Section 21 If a team has qualified to compete in a Post Season tournament and due to a legitimate reason cannot attend; they may be replaced by the next qualified team chosen by the Zone Vice President, State or Area Director.

Section 22 The Tournament Director, with approval from the Executive Director of the NSA, will set a deadline for accepting entries for Super Regional or World Series tournaments. A one (1) week minimum is required.

Section 23 The intent of awards is to acknowledge the accomplishment of teams during the entire season. Awards presented must represent these accomplishments and be of the finest quality possible. All awards presented must represent the high quality and standards for which NSA is known for. It is mandatory that the following trophies or awards be presented at all World Series tournaments. All World Series must give a minimum of 1st – 4th place. All World Series with 20 or more teams must award 1st –

6th place. Super World Series must award 1st – 8th place. All awards must be approved by the Zone Vice President and the National Office.

- Section 24** Any team that wins multiple berths to Post -Season events must participate in the highest class in which the team has qualified, and forfeits any berths and travel money, and is not allowed to participate, in the lower classification.
- Section 25** A team that wins a World Series Tournament and the Runner-Up, shall automatically be invited to participate one class higher, in the following years World Series Tournament provided the following requirements are met:
- The rosters of these teams must have at least 50% of its preceding year's players returning in order to receive the automatic World Series berth.
 - The rosters will be automatically frozen when the team completes play in its first NSA qualifying tournament or prior to the State tournament deadline.
 - The defending World Series champion and runner-up must become a registered team with NSA. The defending World Series champion and runner-up must play in at least one (1) qualifying tournament or NIT and the State tournament the year following its championship.
 - The National Point Leader without a berth **at completion of the last State Championship posted results in each class**, must validate by participating in either a Super Regional or World Series.
- Section 26** Once a World Series Tournament is scheduled, a State Director may issue a travel permit (or give permission) with the approval of the Zone Vice Presidents and the National Headquarters to a team to participate in a World Series outside of the scheduled area that the team is from; provided that the World Series Tournament that the State Director is sending the team to, is geographically closer and more economical for the team. The National Headquarters must approve any such permission. If there are not enough teams to conduct a scheduled World Series, a team may be allowed to travel to the closest World Series available to them, provided the National Headquarters grants permission.
- Section 27** In all National Softball Association World and Super World Series it will be mandatory that all team rosters be checked and all players on that roster to show government issued id of who they are and sign the roster in front of the Tournament Officials prior to the first game played and at any time deemed necessary during that tournament. This includes teams in both the winner and loser brackets.

ARTICLE XVIII

SUPER WORLD SERIES

Section 1

How to qualify for Super World Series and validate those berths. Team must receive a berth from a Super World NIT, State Championship, Super Regional, World Series or be the states highest National Points leader without a berth in each classification. (Men's B, C, D and E) **at completion of the last State Tournament posted results in each class.**

- a. Super World NIT berths must validate by participating in state and either the Super Regional or World Series.
- b. State Championship berth must validate by participating in either the Super Regional or World Series.
- c. Super Regional berths will receive a direct berth to the World Series and Super World Series.
- d. World Series berths will receive a direct berth to the Super World Series.
- e. State Classification National Points berth awarded must validate by participating in state plus four (4) other qualifiers, NIT's to be eligible.

Section 2

Super World berth awarding

- a. State Point Winner, Super World NIT, State Champion, Super Regional berths can be passed until accepted.
- b. **States that run multiple state tournaments will be able to award a Super berth to each champion and then if they run a Super State, they would have another Super berth to award that champion. Must be approved by Zone VP and the National Office.**
- c. World Series is top 3 teams or top 30% whichever is greater berths with no pass down berths.
EXCEPTION: In World Series with 12 or fewer teams the 3 awarded berth's can be passed down until accepted but to no 0-2 record teams.
- d. Sixteen (16) or more teams in a Super World NIT, will be awarded a second berth without travel funds.
- e. Men's B/C NIT'S the highest finishing in each class B & C will receive a Super World Berth and the travel will be retained by the respective classifications. (One "B" berth and One "C" berth will be given, regardless of number of teams in tournament).
- f. When teams qualify for World Series or Super World Series the team's roster will be frozen and no player on a World Series or Super World Series qualified team's roster will be eligible to transfer to another qualified team during the current year.

Section 3

Super World Series Rosters

- a. Teams must have registered and entered their roster online with all information correct and complete or the player(s) and/or team(s) will be considered ineligible to participate in any National Softball Association Qualifiers or Post Season Tournaments.
- b. Rosters have 25 player spots throughout the season. Super World Series a team can add two additional players for the Super Worlds as long as it doesn't exceed the 25 player roster limit prior to tournament deadline.
- c. Super World Series additional players pick-ups must come from a current NSA **Men's Tournament Roster** of the same or lower class that has not WON or RECEIVED a berth to the Super World Series of the same or lower class.
- d. All rosters shall be printed from the NSA On-line system and have signatures.
- e. No pen and or ink additions other than signatures shall be made at the Super World site.
- f. Super World player additions will be final on the listed deadline date. No longer October 1st.
- g. Mandatory roster check and wrist bands applied to only players listed on the playing roster.

Section 4

Super World Travel Funds

** Teams must post the appropriate tournament fee to secure the berth.

When a team wins a Super World Series NIT (top 2 teams in an NIT with 16 or more teams) they receive an unpaid berth to the appropriate Super Regional, World Series and the Super World Series Tournament, but must validate the Super World Berth by playing in the State and either Super Regional or World Series.

- a. Teams that finish in first (1st) place in a Super World N.I.T. will be the only team that will receive travel money that is based on \$50.00 per team in the NIT Tournament with a maximum of \$1,250.00 being received.
- b. Teams in a B/C NIT that finish as the highest B and C teams will receive travel money that is based on \$50 per team in the NIT Tournament with a maximum of \$1250 being awarded. The travel money will be given based on the number of teams in each classification and awarded to the appropriate classification at the Super Worlds.
- c. Each State Champion will receive a berth to the Super World Series Tournament. Teams must post the

- appropriate tournament fee to secure the berth. The berth can be passed down until accepted in all classification.
- d. Teams that finish in first (1st) place in a Super Regional Tournament will receive travel money that is base on \$25.00 per team in the Super Regional Tournament. The second (2nd) place team will receive a berth to the Super World Series. Teams must post the appropriate tournament fee to secure the berth.
 - e. Teams that finish first (1st) and second (2nd) places in the World Series will receive travel money that is based on \$12.50 per team in the World Series Tournament. The third (3rd) place team will receive a berth to the Super World Series.
 - f. The NSA National Headquarters shall make all At-Large berths to the Super World Series.
 - g. Directors may give a second Super World Series berth if there are sixteen (16) or more teams in the Super World NIT tournament. The second berth would be awarded with no travel money and must be validated by playing in State and either the Super Regional or World Series.
 - h. Winners of the Super World Series in Men's Class C, D and E will have their entire roster of players moved up including those player(s) who have not checked or signed in at the tournament site to the next Class for the following year. The team(s) shall not be allowed to play in the same Class or a lower Class they played in the previous year. Player(s) have appeal privileges approved by the State Director, Zone Vice President and National Classification Committee.

Section 5

Payment Procedure for the Adult Super World Tournament:

- a. Teams that win berths to the Super World Series from a Super World Series NIT, State Championship or Super Regional Tournament, must submit a paid Super World Series entry fee to the **Super World Series Coordinator**, within 14 days after the completion of the tournament.
- b. All berths award at the World Series Tournament must submit a paid Super World Series entry fee to the **Super World Series Coordinator** within 7 days after the completion of the World Series Tournament. Failure to submit the entry fee by the deadline listed above will result in the team losing the berth and the berth being passed down to the next highest team and losing all travel monies won.
- c. Super World refund policy is no refunds given after Sept. 1. All refunds must be requested in writing to the

Super World Series Coordinator prior to the Sept. 1 date.

ARTICLE XIX PROCEDURES FOR COMPLETION OF TOURNAMENTS

Section 1 The National Softball Association shall use the following format for completing Adult Super Regional, NIT, and World Series tournaments:

- a. Normal rain delay, push games back without any changes. Look at the option of playing games throughout the night with no changes in the format.
- b. One (1) pitch tournament with a forty-five (45) minute time limit.
- c. Drop the loser's bracket. Refer to Section 2 below, for order of finish at a point and time when the tournament cannot be completed.

Section 2 The National Softball Association shall use the following methods in determining the order of finish in a Post Season tournament that cannot be completed:

- a. Any single undefeated team will be declared the Tournament Winner.
- b. If there is more than one (1) undefeated team in the Winner's Bracket, those teams will be declared Co-Champions.
- c. Head to head competition.
- d. Average per game of the total runs allowed in the tournament.
- e. Average per game of the total runs scored in the tournament. If a tie still remains from the results of the above criteria, then and only then can a Tournament Director use a coin flip or other approved methods to determine the final standings in the Tournament. The National Headquarters must approve any method not listed above.

NOTE: For more information on how to determine a winner or how to give awards to co-champions, refer to www.PlayNSA.com and click on the Rulebook link.

ARTICLE XX ACTS OF DISBARMENT OR SUSPENSION

Section 1 Any team, player, manager/coach or other team representative, whose conduct on or off the field that would be detrimental to the National Softball Association will be dealt with immediately. The National Softball Association expects that all manager/coaches, players and team representatives to act in a

manner where sportsmanship is always practiced. The Association also expects team coaches or officials to have complete control of their players at all times during the playing of a National Softball Association sanctioned tournament. The National Softball Association through its Zone Vice Presidents and the National Headquarters shall have and reserve the right to withdraw Membership during the playing of any NSA Sanctioned Tournament.

Section 2

The National Softball Association will not tolerate any of the following unsportsmanlike behaviors.

- a. Any coach, player, team official or parent that displays abusive behavior or language in any form during the playing of a NSA event.
- b. Any coach, player or team official using words or actions that will incite demonstrations.
- c. Using any form of intimidation tactics (profanity, baiting, ridicule, etc.) in the taunting of the opposing team and its members.
- d. The use of any behavior that is not conducive to fair play.
- e. Fighting and/or leaving the bench area when a fight has broken out will cause all participants engaged in the altercation to be immediately ejected from the game.
- f. Any type of physical attack on a player, umpire or tournament official during the playing of the game or immediately following the game. **EFFECT:** *Any coaches, players or team officials that take part in any of the above conduct shall be ejected and/or suspended for one (1) or more games during the remainder of the tournament. Upon further investigation by the NSA Director if any of the above unsportsmanlike conduct is warranted to be severe enough in its nature the NSA has the right to issue additional penalties. Such penalties can involve the suspension of further play of the team and/or its members in the tournament. Any of the above behaviors can also warrant the NSA to issue further suspensions and even disbarment of the guilty parties from the National Softball Association.*

Section 3

Acts of disbarment or suspension:

- a. Any type of physical attack of any player, umpire, league or tournament official or any Officer of the National Softball Association during a game or immediately following a game, being held under the administration of/ or Sanctioned by the National Softball Association. A person that has pending charges or a conviction of battery toward a NSA Official or any NSA Representative may be banned from participating in any NSA activity with the approval of the National Softball Association's Executive Vice President and/or NSA CEO.

- b. A team member(s) using audible obscene language or any display of flagrant actions considered as unsportsmanlike gestures.
- c. A player or team receiving money or financial benefits in consideration of participating in softball competition.
- d. A team or player knowingly competes with or against ineligible, illegal or suspended players.
- e. A team or player participating in or permitting a fraud to be perpetrated.
- f. Any NSA Official who refuses to submit collected or owed funds that are due the National Softball Association.
- g. Any player or team that competes under an assumed name.
- h. Any person or persons submitting a bad check/or credit card charge to the National Softball Association or to any Director acting on their behalf.
- i. The failure of a team to show up after entering a National Invitational, State, Super Regional, or World Series Tournament, unless reasonable advance notice is given. Reasonable advance notice, in most cases, will be five (5) working days.
- j. Any person who purposely uses false information to damage the reputation, image, or credibility of the National Softball Association.

Section 4

Suspensions:

- a. Any NSA Officer, Director or persons representing the NSA that violates any Articles of this Constitution/By-Laws or does not adhere to the Policies or Procedures of the National Softball Association, may be suspended.
- b. Any NSA Officer, Director, or persons representing the NSA that fail to submit fees and/or information due the NSA, in a timely manner, may be suspended.
- c. Any Officer, Director, Umpire, Participant, or persons representing the NSA that are suspended for any reason, will not be allowed to participate in any capacity within the Association, until such suspension has been lifted. This would include any Sanctioned event or any event being conducted under the Administration of the National Softball Association.
- d. The NSA has adopted the following procedure with regard to disagreements that threaten legal action or that lead to legal action. By any of the following, but not limited to, a player, coach, team or related persons against any affiliated person director, park, umpire or facility of the NSA. Any participant, team, coach, sponsor or any other party who threatens in writing, through legal council or otherwise to take legal action against the NSA, files a legal action against the NSA or has a lawyer contact the NSA verbally regarding a dispute will automatically and immediately be suspended from all NSA activities until the legal discussions are concluded to the satisfaction of the NSA.

Additionally, if legal action is filed against NSA or a NSA affiliated person, park, or facility by any participant, team, coach or any other person, the person filing the action, the person's team (if a player or coach), and each of its members may be suspended from any and all NSA events until the legal actions are resolved to the satisfaction of NSA.

**ARTICLE XXI NATIONAL SOFTBALL
ASSOCIATION APPEAL PROCESS
PROCEDURES**

Section 1 Outline of the National Softball Association's Appeal Procedures:

- a. Step 1. Any team or player affected by the occurrence or condition that would cause an appeal may present that appeal in writing to the appropriate Zone Vice President within fifteen (15) days after the occurrence or condition. If not filed within fifteen (15) days the applicant loses their right to appeal.
- b. Step 2. If the appealing team/person does not receive a satisfactory resolution to the first appeal, the applicant may indicate dissatisfaction with the first appeal. The applicant may then submit the proper forms within fifteen (15) days to the appropriate National Softball Association Vice President duly appointed by the Executive Director to conduct the second step of the appeal process. If not filed within fifteen (15) days the applicant loses their right to appeal.
- c. If the appealing team/person does not receive a satisfactory resolution to the second appeal, the applicant may indicate dissatisfaction with the second appeal. The applicant may submit within ten (10) days the proper forms to the Executive Director of the National Softball Association, unless there has been a mutual agreement for an extension. The applicant may submit this final appeal in writing or may request that a hearing be conducted. All parties involved may have legal counsel and any witnesses at this hearing. The applicant must pay all financial responsibilities for such legal counsel or witnesses. The Executive Director must render a decision within ten (10) days pertaining to the final appeal. The decision rendered by the Executive Director is final and under no circumstances will another appeal be granted.