



# **Rules Handbook**

**Tallahassee Fast Pitch Softball Association**

**April 2018**

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## Emergency Procedures

Tallahassee Fast Pitch Softball Association (TFPSA) wants to emphasize the importance of conducting yourselves properly in dealing with medical emergencies at your facilities. Realizing we are not empowered or trained to “treat” victims, we still have the responsibility to render front line aid and supervise the situation. This may be in the way of discussing the situation with the victim, coach, parent or calling for emergency services. Listed below are guidelines to follow, which should always be coupled with good common sense.

### In the event of an accident or emergency:

1. Try to determine the extent of the injury. If in doubt to the seriousness of the accident, do not move the patient. Keep her comfortable, reassured and call an **ambulance (911 or 681-5400)**. **Any head injury call for an ambulance immediately.**
2. **For serious injuries, umpires will stop the game clock and clear the field** until the situation is resolved. Play will resume at the decision of the umpires and board member present.
3. Front line care of an accident would include the use of ice, stoppage of bleeding, restoring breathing, treatment of shock, heat exhaustion or stroke.
4. Be sure the victim remains calm. If the weather is cold, cover them. If it’s hot, loosen equipment, etc.
5. Call for additional support. Use other adults to secure necessary materials. Never leave the patient alone or with other players.
6. If an ambulance is called, be sure you have someone to direct it to the site. Assist paramedics in any way you can.
7. Always prepare an accident report (available in the concession stand or on [www.tfpsa.com](http://www.tfpsa.com)) and turn it in to the concession stand or a board member. The board needs to know immediately if any accident has occurred.
8. Submit a follow-up report of the injured person. Call to find out the extent of the injury and how she is doing.

### **Use Good Common Sense**

Above all, board members, coaches, and umpires are to take charge during these incidents and must coordinate aid rendered. Please make sure all assistant coaches are aware of these rules and procedures. If you have any questions regarding these procedures, please contact a board member (numbers on the website) for clarification.

## Philosophy

The goal of the Tallahassee Fast Pitch Board of Directors, working in cooperation with the Tallahassee Parks and Recreation Department, is to provide fun, exciting, and a satisfying softball program for as many girls as possible. In addition to teaching the physical skills and techniques of the game, we ask that you work with the social and emotional development of the girls by emphasizing self-discipline, cooperation, responsibility, and most of all, **good sportsmanship**. The rules and guidelines are written to encourage participation and enjoyment by all, rather than a strict competitive, win-at-all cost program. We hope that you will measure success not simply in terms of victories, but also in the real enjoyment of playing a wonderful sport and having a great time! Here's to a great season for the girls!

## Role of the Volunteer Coach

The TFPSA Board, along with Tallahassee Parks and Recreation Department, want to thank you for accepting responsibility of coaching one of our girls fast pitch teams. No program can be successful without good leadership.

The hours will be long and you are serving without pay, but your job is most important. You will be building moral fiber, mental health, and physical strength for our young girls who are the leaders of tomorrow.

The girls are at a very impressionable age and the training you give them, good or bad, will have a lasting effect on their young lives.

For some, playing on your team may be their only contact with organized sports. We know you will want them to remember it as a pleasurable and meaningful experience.

Each coach must fill out a Volunteer Coaches Application prior to the season. Applications can be obtained from a Board Member or at [www.tfpsa.com](http://www.tfpsa.com). All applicants will be reviewed by the Board prior to selecting coaches and assistants for the upcoming season. Each coach is encouraged to become certified by the ACE Coaching Certification Program prior to the first game of the season.

Each coach is required to follow the **Coaches Code of Conduct**. **Failure to do so may result in dismissal.**

Each coach will be re-evaluated at the end of each season using parent evaluations, umpire feedback, and Board observations. **All coaches serve at the leisure of the Board.**

Without your help, this program would not be possible. From the girls, parents, Board Members, and the City Parks and Recreation Department, **THANK YOU!!!**

## **Standards of Conduct**

The Fast Pitch Board works hard to ensure compliance with all policies and procedures of the Tallahassee Parks and Recreation Department. A representative of the City of Tallahassee will act as an advisor to the Board and assist the Board for the purpose of coordinating city facilities and resources. The Parks and Recreation representative will assist the Board in ensuring that all persons are committed to conducting themselves in a manner which will serve as a positive role model for the participants and which will be consistent with the high moral and ethical standards, and with the ideals of good sportsmanship, which the Department seeks to develop through all athletic programs. In order to assure the Department of Parks and Recreation of our continuing commitment to those goals, all Board members, umpires, and coaches hereby agree to abide, and be bound by, the following standards of conduct, and further agree to the authority of the Department to enforce those standards.

- Abstain from using any tobacco or alcohol products in or around the playing field or the sports complex in which the field is located.
- Refrain from participating in any game or practice activity when it is apparent that you have consumed alcohol prior to arriving for that activity.
- Refrain from using abusive or profane language in or around the playing field or the sports complex in which the field is located.
- Refuse to permit a player to participate in a practice or game when in doubt as to the player's health or physical condition.
- Abide by a doctor's decision in all matters relating to a player's health and physical ability to participate.
- Provide equal opportunities for all players regardless of race, color, ethnic background, religion, age, or skill level.
- Refrain from accepting or offering any gift, gratuity, or favor that might influence your judgment, or with the intent of obtaining special privileges, and from exploiting any relationship with a player for your personal gain or other advantage.
- Strive to promote good mental and physical health in all aspects of participation and refrain from any type of verbal or physical abuse of any players.

- **Always display and demand good sportsmanship** in practice and in games, including, but not limited to:
  1. Accepting decisions of game officials in a professional manner.
  2. Refrain from criticizing opposing coaches, players, fans, and umpires.
  3. Congratulate opposing players and coaches following a game.
  4. Refrain from teaching unsportsmanlike strategies.
  5. Refrain from **“running up the score”** rather than providing more players with opportunities to participate.
  
- Consistently act in a manner, which is in keeping with the positive image and high standards of personal conduct which each program should strive to teach and to foster. No volunteer who is accused or convicted of acts involving criminal conduct, moral turpitude, or other conduct which is inconsistent with the overall goals and welfare of TFPSA, shall be permitted to participate in any capacity without the prior written permission of the TFPSA Board.
  
- Conduct yourself in accordance with **all rules**, regulations, and determination of the particular league or program in which you are participating.
  
- Make any criticism “constructive” in nature and reserve it for private moments. **Be part of the solution.**
  
- Hold a **pre-season parents’ meeting** (with a Board Member in attendance), and maintain open communications with parents relating to all aspects of participation, including conduct of both parents and players.
  
- Act in the best interest of the players and the particular athletic program in which you are participating so as to provide a positive example for each player and to promote a positive image of the program.

**All volunteers serve at the pleasure of the Board. Actions or activities which are considered contrary to these standards of conduct initially will be reported to the Board. The Board shall have the final authority to take appropriate action in the regard which it believes to be in the best interest of the participants and the program. Such action may include, but shall not be limited to: removing the offender from a particular game; suspension of the offender for an appropriate period of time, or disqualification of the offender from participation in any program(s) operated by the Board.**

## **Purpose of our Softball Program**

The basic purpose of the youth softball program is to develop healthy citizens through constructive leisure activity. We believe that under good leadership our program can bring about some, and we hope most, of the benefits below:

1. **Participation should develop and keep a healthy body.** Certain physical results which are considered desirable can be attained, subject to the differences in individual ability. These are speed, strength, endurance, coordination, flexibility and agility.
2. **Self-reliance and emotional stability can be developed through athletics:**
  - a. Making decisions and accepting responsibilities.
  - b. Developing and exercising leadership.
3. **Social growth is speeded by athletics:**
  - a. Appreciating what other people are really like.
  - b. Learning how to get along with people - a living Laboratory of Democracy in Action.
  - c. Learning to cooperate - "Team Work".
  - d. Learning to compete - self-discipline, sense of emotional balance.
  - e. Making new friends.
  - f. Learning respect for rights of others.
4. **Sportsmanship is both immediate and a long range goal:**
  - a. Being responsible to law (rules) and order.
  - b. Observing fairness and custom.
  - c. Treating others with consideration.
  - d. Recognizing and applauding fine play or sportsman-like acts of opponents.
5. **There are other goals and values:**
  - a. To develop initiative - willingness to try new things.
  - b. To encourage intelligent use of leisure.
  - c. To have fun - and a satisfying experience.
  - d. To participate in a wide variety of activities.
  - e. To obtain recognition and earn respect in the community.

**Add all together, these will make our children healthier, more useful citizens, and successful.**

# **Fast Pitch Softball Program**

## MAJOR DIFFERENCES THAT MAKE THE GAME FAST PITCH

### **The PITCHER :**

1. Both of the pitcher's feet must be in contact with the pitching rubber at all times prior to the forward step.
2. When taking the signal from the catcher the ball must be either in the glove or the other hand, hands must be separated.
3. The wind-up must not stop; it must be a continuous forward motion.
4. Two windmill revolutions are illegal.
5. The delivery must be an underhand motion with the hand below the hip and the wrist not farther from the body than the elbow.
6. The release of the ball and follow through of the hand and wrist must be forward and past the straight line of the body.
7. In the act of delivering the ball, the pitcher must take one step simultaneously with the release of the ball. The step must be forward and toward the batter within the 24-inch length of the pitchers plate.
8. The pivot foot must remain in contact with or push off and drag away from the pitching plate prior to the front foot touching the ground, as long as the pivot foot remains in contact with the ground.
9. Pitch within 20 seconds of the umpire's signal to the pitcher.

**\*Please read rules from the ASA rulebook (2010 Team Edition)  
Rule 6, Pages 61-64, describing Pitching Regulations (Fast Pitch).**



# **PITCHING REGULATIONS (FAST PITCH)**

## **Section 1 - PRELIMINARY**

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

- A. The pitcher may not take the pitching position on the pitcher's plate without possession of the ball.
- B. The pitcher may not take the pitching position on the pitcher's plate without a **facemask**. (TFPSA Junior League Only)
- C. The pitcher shall not be considered in the pitching position unless the catcher is in position to receive the pitch.
- D. Both feet must be on the ground within the 24-inch length of the pitcher's plate. The pitcher's shoulders shall be in line with first and third base. The pitcher shall take a position with both feet in contact with the pitcher's plate.
- E. While on the pitcher's plate, the pitcher shall take the signal from the catcher with the hands separated. The ball must remain in either the glove or pitching hand.
- F. The pitcher shall hold the ball in both hands for not less than one second and not more than ten seconds before releasing it. Both feet must remain in contact with the pitcher's plate prior to the forward step.

## **Section 2 - STARTING THE PITCH**

The pitch starts when one hand is taken off the ball after the hands have been placed together.

### **Section 3 - LEGAL DELIVERY**

- A. The pitcher must not make any motion to pitch without immediately delivering the ball to the batter.
- B. The pitcher must not use a pitching motion in which, after having the ball in both hands in the pitching position, she removes one hand from the ball and returns the ball to both hands in front of the body.
- C. The pitcher must not make a stop or reversal of the forward motion after separating the hands.
- D. The pitcher must not make two revolutions of the arms on the windmill pitch. A pitcher may drop her arm to the side and to the rear before starting the windmill motion.
- E. The delivery must be an underhanded motion with the hand below the hip and the wrist not farther from the body than the elbow.
- F. The pitch shall be delivered on the throwing arm side of the body and not behind the back or through the legs.
- G. The release of the ball and follow through of the hand and wrist must be forward and past the straight line of the body.
- H. In the act of delivering the ball, the pitcher must take one step simultaneous with the release of the ball. The step must be forward and toward the batter within the 24-inch length of the pitchers plate. NOTE: It is not a step if the pitcher slides her foot across the pitcher's plate, provided contact is maintained with the plate. Raising the foot off the pitching plate and returning it to the plate creates a rocking motion and is an illegal act.
- I. Pushing off with the pivot foot from a place other than the pitcher's plate is illegal.
- J. Pushing off and dragging the pivot foot in contact with the ground is required. If a hole has been created, the foot may drag no higher than the level plane of the ground.
- K. The pitcher must not make another revolution after releasing the ball.
- L. The pitcher shall not deliberately drop, roll, or bounce the ball in order to prevent the batter from hitting it.
- M. The pitcher has 20 seconds to release the next pitch after receiving the ball and after the umpire indicates "play ball".

## **Section 4 - INTENTIONAL WALK**

If the pitcher desires to walk a batter intentionally, all pitches must be legally delivered to the batter. A pitchout for the purpose of intentionally walking a batter is not considered an illegal pitch.

## **Section 5 - DEFENSIVE POSITIONING**

- A. The pitcher shall not deliver a pitch unless all defensive players are positioned in fair territory, except the catcher who must be in the catcher's box.
- B. A fielder shall not take a position in the batter's line of vision or, with deliberate unsportsmanlike intent, acts in a manner to distract the batter. A pitch does not have to be released. NOTE: The offending player may also be ejected from the game.

## **Section 6 - FOREIGN SUBSTANCE**

- A. The pitcher or any other player shall not, at any time during the game, be allowed to use any foreign substance upon the ball. Under the supervision and control of the umpire, powdered resin may be used to dry the hands. Applying resin in the glove is an illegal act. Resin must be kept on the ground behind the pitcher's plate. A pitcher who licks their fingers must wipe the fingers off before bringing them in contact with the ball.  
**Effect: An illegal pitch shall be called on the first offense. If any defensive player continues to place an illegal substance on the ball, the player should be ejected from the game.**
- B. The pitcher shall not wear any item on the pitching hand, wrist, forearm, elbow, or thighs that may, in the umpire's judgment, be **distracting to the batter**. Batting gloves may not be worn on the pitching hand.

## **Section 7 - CATCHERS**

- A. The catcher must remain within the lines of the catcher's box until the pitch is released.
- B. The catcher shall return the ball directly to the pitcher after each pitch, except after a strikeout, a putout or an attempted putout made by the catcher.  
**EXCEPTION: Does not apply with a runner(s) on base or the batter becoming a batter-runner.**

## **Section 8 - THROWING TO A BASE**

The pitcher shall not throw to a base during a live ball while her foot is in contact with the pitcher's plate after she has taken the pitching position. If the throw from the pitcher's plate occurs during a live ball appeal play, the appeal is canceled.

**NOTE:** The pitcher may remove herself from the pitching position by stepping backwards off the pitcher's plate prior to separating her hands.

**Stepping forward or sideways at any time constitutes an illegal pitch.**

### **EFFECT- Section 1-5, 7a and 8:**

- A. Any infraction of Sections 1-5, 7a and 8 is an **illegal pitch**.
- B. If the batter hits the ball and reaches first base safely, and if all other runners have advanced at least one base on the batted ball, the illegal pitch is nullified. All action as a result of the batted ball stands. No option is given. When a runner passes a base, the runner is considered to have touched the base.
- C. Otherwise, the manager has the option to take the result of the play, or the illegal pitch is enforced by awarding a ball to the batter (if ball four award first base) and advancing all runners one base.
- D. If an illegal pitch hits the batter outside the strike zone, the batter is awarded first base and all runners are rewarded one base.

## **Section 9 - WARM UP PITCHES**

At the beginning of each half inning, or when a pitcher relieves another, **not more than one minute may be used to deliver not more than five pitches**. Play shall be suspended during this time. For excessive warm-up pitches, **a pitcher may be penalized by awarding a ball to the batter for each pitch in excess of five**.

This does not apply if the umpire delays the start of play due to substitution, conference, injuries, etc.

**NOTE:** A pitcher returning to pitch in the same half inning will not receive warm-up pitches.

**NOTE:** There is no limitation as to the number of times a player can return to the pitching position if she has not left the batting order or has not been removed from the pitcher's position by the umpire.

## **Section 10 - NO PITCH**

**No pitch shall be declared when:**

- A. The pitcher pitches during the suspension of play.
- B. The pitcher attempts a quick return of the ball before the batter has taken her position or when the batter is off balance as a result of a previous pitch.
- C. A runner is called out for leaving a base prior to the pitcher releasing the ball.
- D. The pitcher pitches before a runner has retouched her base after being legitimately off that base.
- E. No player, manager, or coach shall call time, employ any other word or phrase, or commit any act while the ball is live and in play for the obvious purpose of trying to make the pitcher commit an illegal pitch.

**NOTE:** A warning shall be issued to the offending team. A repeat of this act by any member of the team warned shall result in the **offender being ejected from the game.**

### **EFFECT - Section 10 A-E:**

**The ball is dead, and all subsequent action on that pitch is cancelled.**

## **Section 11 - DROPPED BALL**

If the ball slips from the pitcher's hand during her delivery, a ball is declared on the batter, the ball will remain in play and the runners may advance at their own risk.

## **Section 12 - Number of Innings Pitch per week (TFPSA)**

Any team with two drafted pitchers **must pitch both pitchers in at least 2 innings each week.**

**NOTE:** If a pitcher walks three batters in one inning, she may be pulled and it will be considered an inning pitched for her.

**\*THIS RULE DOES NOT APPLY TO TOURNAMENT GAMES (REGULAR SEASON GAMES ONLY).**

## **Section 13 - Number of Batters Hit by a Pitch (TFPSA)**

Any pitcher who hits 3 batters in an inning must be pulled from pitching for **the remainder of the inning and the next full inning only.** She may continue to play in another defensive position, and she may continue to bat. **NOTE:** The batter does not need to make an attempt to get out of the way – if a batter is hit while in the batter's box she will take her base.

## **The Catcher:**

Catchers (ASA Rule 3 Section 5 page 44) must wear masks with throat protector, approved helmet, shin guards that offer protection to the knee and body protector. Full gear must be worn in practice as well as games.

**NOTE: Any player warming up a pitcher must wear a mask with throat protector and approved helmet with ear flaps.**

The catcher must remain within the lines of the catcher's box until the pitch is released. The catcher should be prepared to throw out base runners trying to steal second, third, or home.

## **Third Strike Rule:**

When the catcher fails to catch the third strike before the ball touches the ground when there are **fewer than two outs and first base unoccupied, or any time there are two outs**, the ball is in play and the batter becomes a batter-runner with liability to be put out.

## **Hit By Pitch:**

When a pitch hits the batter, the ball is dead. The batter is entitled to one base without liability of being put out. **NOTE:** The batter does not need to make an attempt to get out of the way – if a batter is hit while in the batter's box she will take her base.

## **Base Stealing:**

Runners are entitled to advance with liability to be put out when the ball leaves the pitcher's hand on her delivery, **no leading off**.

After a batter walks on four balls, she may advance to second base with liability to be put out because the ball remains live in fast pitch.

**Review ASA 2010 Rule 8 Section 7 T. Also see Look-back Rule**

# **Rules and Regulations of Girls Fast Pitch**

## **LEAGUE**

The league shall consist of at least four (4) teams.

## **NUMBER OF PLAYERS**

Hopefully, each team will consist of no more than 12 to 14 players.

## **ELIGIBILITY OF PLAYERS**

### **1. Girls Fast Pitch League is for all girls ages 11 through 18.**

All players in their first year of eligibility for each league **must provide a copy of proof of age** by birth certificate, passport, State ID card or Driver's License for the League to keep on file.

Age determining date:

**May 1** for Spring season

**October 1** for Fall season

**Exceptions to age limit:** For those younger than 11, an exception can be made on a case-by-case basis. If an exception is made, that player must **go through evaluations** in order to play.

### **2. All new Players, All Pitchers, & All Catchers are required to attend Evaluations.**

Returning players are strongly encouraged to attend evaluations as well.

### **3. Players are asked to pay a registration fee to help defray expenses for the program. If a player is unable to pay the registration fee, her parent can appeal to the Board.**

**Note:** While encouraging players of all skill levels to participate, the TFPSA Board of Directors reserves the right of refusal by consensus of the MAJORITY of Board members for the sole purpose of the safety of the majority of players. (Ex. A college scholarship player would likely endanger beginning/low skill level players).

## ROSTERS

1. Rosters must be verified prior to the first game.
2. Under no circumstances may coaches add players to their roster.
3. Please be advised that it is illegal to play non-roster players in a league game in the Girls program.

### **If a coach is found playing a non-roster player:**

- A. The game will be forfeited.
- B. The coach will be suspended for the next two (2) ball games and cannot be physically present at the field. **Further violations will cause dismissal from the program.**

## GAME

### **ASA JUNIOR OLYMPIC FAST PITCH RULES will Govern League Play Unless Noted Below**

1. In the event a game is called due to rain, either **Three (3) innings or the time of 1 hour**, shall constitute a game, whichever comes first.  
**Note:** If a game is canceled as a **rained-out game**, the Board will reschedule games as soon as possible. However, if arrangements cannot be made, a forfeit shall not be considered for either team.
2. **Run Rule:** Umpire will call a game if any team is ahead by **12 Runs after 4 innings or 8 Runs after 5 innings.**
3. There will be a **7-run rule** in each half inning of offense regardless of the number of outs (must be less than 3 outs). The half-inning is over when the 7<sup>th</sup> run crosses the plate regardless of any runners left on base.
4. **No player can sit out two consecutive innings. No player can sit out more than two innings per game. All players will be listed in the batting order and shall bat in turn.**  
**Note:** Failure to comply will result in the following penalties to the coach during the season: **1st Offense- A warning from the Board, 2nd Offense -Forfeit of Game, 3rd Offense-Removal of the coach from the League.**
5. **Time** will be determined when the last out is made on defense in the half inning.  
**Note:** **No new inning will begin after 1 hour and 15 minutes.** Ties are allowed in the regular season.



6. The **INTERNATIONAL TIEBREAKER RULE** will be used only during the post season.

7. **Time Allowed Between Innings:**

**Offense:** Each team will have **1 minute between innings**. If the team on offense is not ready, the umpire will start calling strikes on the first batter. A strike will be called every 15 seconds until the offense is ready.

**Defense:** If the defensive team is not ready, the umpire will start calling balls on the batter every 15 seconds until the defensive team is ready.

**Note:** Section 9 Warm Up pitches- No pitcher may take more than 1 minute to deliver not more than 5 pitches. A pitcher may be penalized by **awarding a ball to the batter for each pitch in excess of five**.

8. **Catcher's equipment "speed up rule"** (optional). Any catcher who is on base with 2 outs may be replaced by the "eligible substitute" to run the bases for her. This will allow the catcher to return to the dugout and get her equipment on so play will continue in a timely fashion in the next half inning. (Remember there will only be 1 minute between innings.) The "Last Out" will be considered the "eligible substitute, courtesy, or designated" runner.

**Note:** Coaches should see that catchers have their equipment on in all other situations so play will not be delayed.

9. **Courtesy Runners:** No courtesy runners will be used for any player with the exception of injury or catcher's speed up rule (see #8 above). The "Last Out" will be considered the "eligible substitute, courtesy, or designated" runner.

10. **Thrown Bat -**

A. A bat thrown in anger will follow ASA rules (automatic ejection from game).

B. Unintentionally thrown or "slung" bat –

i. 1<sup>st</sup> team offense = warning to offending team

ii. 2<sup>nd</sup> team offense in same game = "Dead ball" and batter is out.

11. **Charged Conference (visits):**

**Defense:** The Defense is allowed **1 conference per inning without a change in pitching**. A coach must change pitchers during his/her 2nd Charged Conference of an inning.

**\*A Defensive Charged Conference:** (*ASA Rule Supplement 9*) Occurs when the defense requests a suspension of play for any reason, and a representative enter the playing field to communicate with any defensive player. Should a defensive player approach the dugout and receive instruction, this is considered a defensive conference also.

*The Umpire should advise the team when a conference has been charged.*

**Offense: The Offense is allowed 1 conference per inning.** If the offensive team insists on holding a second conference in an inning after being informed by the umpire that it is not permitted, the umpire should eject the team representative from the game.

**\*An Offensive Charged Conference:** (*ASA Rule Supplement 9*) Occurs when the offensive team requests a suspension of play and is granted time by an umpire to permit a team representative to confer with a batter, runner, or another team representative.

*The Umpire should advise the team when a conference has been charged.*

Note it is not an offensive conference when: A team representative confers with a batter and/or runner during a defensive charged conference as long as they are ready to play when the defense is ready.

A conference will not be charged to either team when time-out is called by the umpire for a legitimate reason. (injured player, scorekeeper problem, field maintenance repairs, etc.) A coach may confer with a pitcher, batter, or runner during the umpires' time-out without penalty, as long as they are ready to continue once the problem is resolved.

## 12. **Number of Players**

You may start a game with only eight players. List all eight players in your batting lineup. After all eight players have batted; you begin at the top of your batting lineup. The ninth batting spot is not an out. If another player shows up, she must be added to this spot.

**It is strongly encouraged and recommended by the Board that all players be given opportunities to play both infield and outfield during regular season games. The purpose for this league is to help develop the girls' skill levels, and to give them chances to learn a variety of positions.**

## 13. **Tournament Games**

- A. All ties after the time limit will go to ***Tie Breaker Rule***.
- B. The ***Run Rule*** will remain in effect.
- C. The ***7-run rule*** is no longer in effect for tournament games.
- D. The **Championship Games** will be a full seven innings or no new inning starting after 1 hour and 30 minutes.

## **THE PLAYING FIELD**

**The distance between all bases shall be sixty (60) feet.**

1. The distance between home plate and the pitching rubber shall be forty-three (43) feet.
2. The fence will be placed at 225 feet for the season at Messer.

## **EQUIPMENT**

All coaches will be responsible for signing an inventory form on all equipment that is checked out from the league. When the equipment is returned the inventory form will be checked to make sure all equipment is returned. **Coaches are responsible for all the equipment that is checked out.**

### **Equipment Worn by Players**

1. Softball cleats, sneakers, or one-piece sole composition soccer style shoes can be worn. **No screw-on or metal cleats allowed in Junior League.**
2. **Team uniforms** will be supplied from money obtained from sponsors. Uniforms must be visibly worn in the game. Coaches cannot require that players or parents purchase additional uniforms or equipment. **Sweatshirts must be worn under uniform jersey.** The jersey number must be visible at all times. The uniforms consist of a TFPSA-issued team jersey and solid black pants. **Each girl is required to wear the shirt provided by the Association to be eligible to play.** Any player not wearing the jersey issued to her by TFPSA and/or solid black pants will not be allowed to play. Matching socks are not required.
1. **Face Masks and chinstraps on batting helmets** must be worn at all times during practices and games. If a player steps into the batter's box without a face mask or chin strap the umpire will give a warning during the first week of games. After the first week of games, if any player steps into the batter's box without a face mask or chin strap, the umpire will call a strike on that batter. If batter continues to delay the game to obtain a correct helmet the umpire may call additional strikes. All batters, runners and on deck players must properly wear batting helmets with face masks and chin straps. **EXCEPTION:** Chin straps are no longer required in Senior League.

## COACHES

1. Each team shall have two base coaches, one in each coaching box. All coaches must be **registered with the ASA** or they are not allowed on the Field.
2. No coach may unduly delay a game. Keep in mind the impression you are making on the youth at all times. See **Charged Conferences** section of Rules.
3. Every coach will be responsible for securing a sponsor fee of \$300.00.
4. Each coach is encouraged to have a parent meeting before season games begin. A Board member must be present at this meeting. If the Team Coach is a Board Member, then another Board Member is required to attend also.
5. Each team coach will select a volunteer team representative to assist the coach.
6. At all home games the team representative will see that someone is appointed to keep the official score book. The visiting team will appoint a parent (or other adult age 18 or older) to run the scoreboard and game clock.

## UMPIRES

1. Each game shall have umpires who will be paid by the Board. However if we are unable to secure the umpires, it will be the responsibility of each team to supply an individual to serve as an umpire.
2. Please be aware that our umpires are also learning. The TFPSA Board, in conjunction with the Umpire-In-Chief, will make every reasonable effort to provide clinics for umpires.
3. The Umpires officiating during the Tournament games will be scheduled by the Umpire-In-Chief.
4. So as to not appear to show favoritism, Umpires are asked to not “hang out” and chat with either dugout. If an umpire needs to discuss an issue with a coach, then both umpires should meet with the coach out on the field.
5. Coaches **will not scream or yell at umpires**. If there are questions on a call, time is called and the coach can politely ask the umpire for ruling. A warning called by the umpire for unsportsmanlike conduct must be reported to the Board. **A second warning during a game may result in the coach being removed for the remainder of the season.**

6. Coaches should also inform players and parents that mean-spirited comments or aggressive action toward umpires can result in players and parents **being banned from the park for one or more games.**
7. The umpire's decision on matters not covered by league or softball rules shall be final, providing a Board Member is not on hand to make a decision. (Example - lightning, playing condition of field, etc.)

## **WHO PLAYS**

1. **All players must play in every game.**  
Coaches must think of the individual girl first, and winning second.
2. **No player can sit out two consecutive innings.**
3. **No player can sit out more than two innings per game.**
4. All players are listed in the batting order and shall bat in turn. Each coach will be held responsible for enforcement of this rule; this is not the duty of the umpire. Batting out of order will result in an out being recorded and correct batter will come to the plate with a new count.
5. The coach must use his own judgment if a player is late without a good reason. All players are required to notify their Coach if they will be later than 30 minutes prior to game time and/or if she will not make it to the game.
6. In the event of an injury, illness, or player needing to leave after all players have been entered in the line-up, that slot in the batting order will be skipped and no out will be called. Abuse of this rule will not be tolerated. **A coach found by the Board to be abusing this rule may not be allowed back as a coach in the future.**

## GENERAL PLAYING RULES

**The following rules are general rules, which will apply to both leagues; ASA Softball rules will govern all play except where specific league rules shall apply.**

1. One half (1/2) inning is completed when there are three (3) outs.
2. The runner may advance one (1) base on an over-throw to first or third base, if the ball goes out of play (i.e. into a dugout or over the fence). She may take as many bases as she can make on an overthrow that remains in fair territory. At Messer Park any ball that stays inside the fence is playable.
3. The batting order must be available to the opposing coach, if he/she so desires, **10 minutes prior to the start of the game.**
4. Only a Board Member or the umpires can cancel games at the field.
5. A play shall be declared terminated when, in the judgment of the umpire, play on the base runner or runners have stopped.
6. The pitcher must have TWO (2) FEET in contact with the pitching rubber to begin the pitch, and both feet must be in contact with the plate at all times prior to the forward step. **See ASA 2010 Rule 6, Pages 61-64.**
7. Bunting will be allowed.  
Note: See ASA 2010, page 114, Rules Supplement 10 for Check Swing/Bunt Strike.
8. Base stealing will be in effect.
9. **Infield Fly Rule:** The infield fly rule is applied when a fair fly ball (not including a line drive or an attempted bunt) that can be caught with normal effort by an infielder when first and second bases or first, second and third bases are occupied before there are two outs. Any defensive player who positions herself in the infield at the start of the pitch shall be considered an infielder for the purpose of this rule.  
The infield fly is ruled when the ball reaches the highest point based on the position of the closest infielder regardless of who makes the play. When it seems apparent that a batted ball will be an “infield fly”, the umpire shall immediately declare “Infield Fly” when the batted ball is at its highest point. The ball is still alive and runners may advance at the risk of the ball being caught. The runner can tag up and advance once the batted ball is touched (prior to catching), the same as on any fly ball. If a declared infield fly becomes a foul ball, it is treated the same as any foul.

10. **OBSTRUCTION** - ASA 2010 Rules Supplement 36 Page 127

If a defensive player is **blocking the base or base path without the ball**, this is impeding the progress of the runner and this is obstruction. The defensive player must catch the ball, block the base and make the tag, in that order. For the safety of the fielder and the base runner, the crash rule will be in effect if the fielder is in possession of the ball and the runner remains on their feet and crashes into the fielder with the ball. In this case, the runner will be called out. To avoid the out call, the runner may slide, jump over, or go around the defender with the ball to avoid the crash. When a defensive player is fielding a thrown ball and the flight of the ball carries or draws them into the runner, it is not a crash. When the ball, the runner, and the fielder all arrive at the same time and place, neither the crash rule nor obstruction is called. **At first base, the fielder has the side of the bag in fair territory, and the runner the side in foul territory. The defensive player at the plate (usually catcher or pitcher) must not block the plate or the base path without possession of the ball.** The crash rule will be in effect as well as the obstruction rule. The imminent play at home plate will be based on the judgment of the umpire and cannot be appealed.

11. **LOOK BACK RULE** -ASA 2010 Rule 8 Section 7-T, p 93 Rules Supplement # 34 pp 125-126.

**IN EFFECT** -When the ball is live for all runners, the batter-runner has touched first base or has been declared out, and the pitcher has possession and control (means in the glove or hand, not between the legs, under the arm, on the ground, etc.) of the ball within the 8-foot circle.

**BASICS** - When a runner is legitimately off a base after a pitch or as a result of a batter completing a turn at bat, and while the pitcher has control of the ball within an eight-foot radius (in the circle) of the pitcher's plate, the runner may stop once, but then must immediately return non-stop to the base or attempt to advance nonstop to the next base.

**TFPSA DEFINITION OF IMMEDIATELY:** IS A COUNT OF ONE-ONE THOUSAND, TWO-ONE THOUSAND --- This is to give the runner an opportunity to assess where the ball is located.

**EFFECT: THE BALL IS DEAD AND THE RUNNER IS OUT**--Only one runner can be called out if simultaneous violations occur (more than one runner violates the rule at the same time).

**COACHES - Be alert - help your runners - tell your runners  
GO OR BACK**

12. **DUGOUT CONDUCT**- Rule 5 Section 12

Coaches, players, substitutes, or other bench personnel shall not be outside the designated bench, dugout/team area except when the rule allows or justified by the umpire.

COACHES and UMPIRES--TFPSA is very lax on this rule for the coaches as long as it is not a distraction to the other team (we allow coaches to sit in a bucket outside the dugout, lean against the fence (past first and third).

**Players should remain in the dugout and off the field unless participating in the current play. For safety purposes, players not participating in the play taking place are not allowed on the field during a live ball.**

13. **External Activities**: TFPSA cannot endorse or take responsibility for team activities beyond what is established as standard procedures in conducting this activity. This includes fields that have not been approved or sanctioned by the Board for practice or games. Activities such as photography sessions, team picnics, etc., are activities that parents must understand are their personal choice and ultimate responsibility if they choose to participate in them. Coaches are advised to refrain from actually organizing “outside” activities. If parents want to undertake these activities, it must be understood that mandatory donations for these events from team members are prohibited. All donations are “optional” and cannot affect a participant’s right to any benefits afforded to any other player.

**ATTENTION - NO WARM UP AGAINST THE FENCE**

It is illegal to warm up against the fence. Teams that are observed hitting balls against the fence will be given offense warnings by the Board. Damages to the fence are costly to repair.

**1st Offense - Warning**

**2nd Offense - Player involved cannot play that day**

**3rd Offense - Game will be forfeited**



## **Forfeit Rules**

1. A team having fewer than 8 players 15 minutes after the first official game start time (6:15 pm) or at the official start time of the second game (8:00 pm) shall be considered to have forfeited the game.
2. The Coach (or a TFPSA Board Member if asked) of the team having fewer than 8 players can ask other TFPSA registered players to play in the scheduled game. This game becomes a scrimmage and is no longer considered an official game. Umpires are still provided as in an official game, but the team utilizing other TFPSA registered players is still given a forfeit.
3. The game, if played, shall be played per TFPSA rules.
4. #2 can be done during the regular season, but can not be done during the post season tournament.
5. Regardless of the score of the played game, the official score shall be non-forfeit team 7, forfeit team 0.
6. If a game is played by a “forfeit” team during the postseason tournament, regardless of the outcome on the field, the forfeited team shall not proceed further in the tournament.

## **Double Elimination Tournament Rules**

**Regular season rules and regulations will apply, with the exception of the following:**

1. Only girls who registered as pitchers or catchers are considered declared pitchers and catchers, and may pitch or catch during tournament games (even if they were not drafted as a pitcher or catcher). Exceptions apply (see following page under Draft Rules & Procedures).
2. International Tie-breaker rules are in effect. No tournament game may end in a tie.
3. Home teams will be determined by a coin toss. For championship games, the home team will be determined by a coin toss. For the “If” game, home team and visiting team will swap.
4. The run rule will remain in effect; however, the 7-run rule per half-inning is no longer in effect for tournament games.

## **Draft Rules & Procedures**

1. The Draft will be run by the Board President and at least one other Board Member that is not coaching in the league being drafted.(Preferably a Vice President)
2. The Board President will have the final say in all matters during the draft. Any objections may be brought to the Board after the Draft.
3. There is no Trading of Players - If there are any special circumstances for a player, their parent must notify the Board prior to the Draft.
4. All coaches must draft in order, according to the number that was drawn by the coach before the draft. No trading Draft “pick” number.
5. Declaring Pitchers and/or Catchers -To keep teams even in skill level, all players who would like to pitch and/or catch for that season must be declared at the draft. Failure to do so disqualifies that player from pitching and/or catching during the tournament. Any exceptions due to injuries etc. will have to be brought to the Board.
6. Removing a Player’s Pitching and/or Catching Status from the draft will result in the Player not being allowed to pitch and/or catch during that Season. Any game will be forfeited if this player pitches or catches. Any exception due to injuries etc. will have to be brought to the Board.

## **The Draft will be Conducted in the following Order:**

**1st Round:** First Pitcher draft (Beginning with #1Team)

**2nd Round:** Catcher draft (Beginning with Last #Team)

**3rd Round:** Second pitcher draft (Beginning with Last #Team)

**4th & 5th Round:** position player drafting,

(4th Round Begins with #1Team to Last #Team; 5th Round- Begins with Last #Team to #1 Team)

\*Draft will then be stopped and the President will then determine subsequent draft order until All Teams are determined equal in number of players and skill level.

**Remaining Rounds:** The Draft will continue on with Draft picks being chosen in order with the first and last picks alternating from (**#1Team to Last#Team**), then (**Last#Team to #1Team**), until all players have been chosen.

### **The Head Coach for each team is required to Attend the Draft.**

**On Draft Night:** Each coach will be given back their Evaluation Sheet from Evaluation Day. They will also be given lists with all of the players' names and their rankings (an average of all of the coach's evaluations). Their Pitching and Catching scores will also be listed if applicable.

Every effort will be made to provide all coaches with players' names and rankings at least two days prior to Draft Night; however this is not guaranteed.